

CLASSICAL DESTINATIONS

An armchair guide to classical music

CLASSICAL DESTINATIONS PRESENTER - NIKI VASILAKIS

23 year-old Niki Vasilakis appears as both presenter and violinist in the thirteen-part television documentary series **CLASSICAL DESTINATIONS**, which premieres on Australian television in January 2006.

Widely regarded as one of the most exciting violinists to have emerged in Australia in recent years, Niki will perform throughout the series on location in some of Europe's most beautiful cities. Her appearances on Australian television and a busy international schedule of concerts and recordings have already made her name familiar to a wide public.

Niki commenced her violin studies in Adelaide at the age of four, and has since received many awards, including the Elder Conservatorium Concerto Prize, the Nelly Apt Scholarship, and the Perry Hart Memorial Prize (twice). In 2003 she won the String Final of Symphony Australia's Young Performer of the Year, the premier competition in Australasia for emerging musicians.

Now one of Australia's busiest soloists, Niki has performed with the Melbourne, Tasmanian, Queensland and Wellington symphony orchestras. In January 2004 she appeared with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in the southern hemisphere's biggest outdoor concert event, the Symphony in the Domain,

to an audience of over 100,000 people. This followed her successful debut with that Orchestra for the Sydney Opera House 30th Anniversary celebrations.

International orchestras with whom she has performed include the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra of China in July 2004, and the Prague Symphony Orchestra. With the latter she has recorded her debut album of violin classics, scheduled for release in 2006.

Niki is passionate about a successful musician's social responsibilities and maintains an involvement in volunteer programs, and teaching for community groups. Her work in these areas has been acknowledged by nominations as Young Australian of the Year (2003-2004). In October 2003 she was included in The Bulletin magazine's 'Smart 100' list. Niki has recently been appointed as an Ambassador for World Vision supporting their great humanitarian work globally with a focus on woman's rights and support to Africa's Children with AIDS.

In 2005 Niki recorded her debut concerto album with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra for the ABC Classics label distributed by Universal Music.

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