

Foreword

Hello and welcome to *Classical Masterpieces for Electric Bass!* Although you may never get a chance to sit in with an orchestra and plug in and play one of these pieces, I think the pieces selected in this book will definitely find their way into your heart and into your practice routine.

Working with this book will expand your horizons and make you a better player. You'll find your musical vocabulary expanded and you'll be able to speak on your bass as a man or a woman of the world. Throw away any mindless finger exercises you may have been practicing, the pieces in here are perfectly suited for exercising all of your fingers and yet they're much cooler than exercises because they're deeply musical!

Inside of this book you will find a treasure-trove of music that was never envisioned for anything called an electric bass. While violinists, pianists and flutists have all had a tradition of growing up on a healthy diet of classical music, I have found that there are a great number of electric bassists out there who have yet to be introduced to world of classical music. Perhaps this has something to do with the fact that the electric bass is an instrument that is only some fifty years old. When someone talks about "classic" basslines, they're most likely talking about something like James Jamerson funkifying a Motown song from the '60's or Chris Squire laying down a groove on some 1970's progressive rock than talking about anything composed two or three hundred years ago.

When I realized then, that this book would serve as an introduction for a lot of bassists to the world of classical music, I decided that it would also be a great opportunity to acquaint people with the lives of the composers behind the music. Of course, I remain totally in debt to all those who did the actual historical research themselves as well as to the bookstores and libraries which carried the biographies of the great composers, and I admit that at first my intention in seeking as many sources as possible in preparing these biographical sketches was simply to avoid plagiarizing from one source too heavily, but the more I got to know the personalities behind the music, the more I wanted to find out. What I came to realize was that there was not a single one of these composers whose life story was not totally compelling and inspirational.

In discovering some of the events that shaped the different personalities behind the music, I think you come away with so much more of an appreciation for the character and emotion unique to each composer's music. They had God-given talent on a level that's almost scary, but the talent they had would have never amounted to anything had they also not had an even greater passion for the music. I think it's important then, for a practicing musician to realize that for most of the great composers of classical music, their ascensions into immortality can be attributed in even greater degree to their love for music than to their aptitude for music.

These guys are not just "some old dead guys" as one of my students once put it. These guys lived and breathed and loved. They had successes and failures and strengths and weaknesses like the rest of us, but on a scale as grand as any character in Greek mythology. Compare the great composers of classical music to the superstars of today and then ask yourself if you really think that today's artists have any chance of standing the test of time that these men have stood. Only time can tell, but I would venture to guess that the great majority of today's pop icons will end up having been mere flashes in the pan compared to these old dead guys.

"For the glory of the most high God alone / And for my neighbor to learn from." – Johann Sebastian Bach