Defying Gravity puts pizzazz into percussion with Latin American grooves, voodoo drumming and wooden spoons!

Get ready for an evening of percussion with pizzazz! Composer and percussionist extraordinaire Paul Tanner takes to the stage with award-winning percussion ensemble Defying Gravity in Beats 'n’ Pieces, at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts on Wednesday 6 and Thursday 7 May at 7.30pm.

Tanner will lead Defying Gravity through four of his best-known Latin American compositions, including the fabulous ‘Cuba’. With musical direction by Tim White, Beats ‘n’ Pieces will also feature the high-energy voodoo drumming of ‘Ogoun Badagris’, the hilarious wooden spoons of ‘Dinnertime!’ and Iannis Xenakis’ astonishing percussion masterpiece ‘Peaux’.

Tanner graduated as Dux of Music from Churchlands Senior High School’s special music program. He went on to complete a Bachelor of Music degree with First Class Honours at the University of Western Australia, winning the Hodges Prize for Musical Composition and the V.H. Cooper Memorial Prize for performance.

In 1991, Tanner was the recipient of an Australian Postgraduate Research Award, and travelled to San Diego to study with virtuoso percussion soloist, Steve Schick. He then spent five months in Latin America, where he attended the Folk Cuba workshops (Havana, Cuba) and Carnivale (Olinda, Brasil). In 1997, he travelled through Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali and Zimbabwe, furthering his study of world percussion music.

Tanner has been a founding member of new music groups Magnetic Pig and Nova, and a regular performer with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, including time as Principal Percussionist. He has played with such diverse groups as Scope (original jazz), The Elastic Band (world music), Tropicana (salsa) and numerous musical theatre productions.

For Beats ‘n’ Pieces, Tanner joins with Defying Gravity, a student ensemble formed in 1987 by 19 percussionists from the WA Academy of Performing Arts and the University of WA. Since then, Defying Gravity has established a national following through its recordings and broadcasts for ABC Classic FM, and performs regularly for WA’s Totally Huge New Music Festival and the Perth International Arts Festival.

Performance Information:
Beat ‘n’ Pieces – Defying Gravity with special guest artist Paul Tanner
Wednesday 6 and Thursday 7 May at 7.30pm.
Music Auditorium, WAAPA, Edith Cowan University, 2 Bradford St, Mt Lawley.
Tickets are $20 full/$15 concession. Bookings through WAAPA Box Office on 9370 6636.

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For further information or to discuss interview opportunities, please contact:
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