



AUSTRALIAN  
STRING  
QUARTET

MEDIA RELEASE  
3 February 2016

**FRESH VIBES –The Australian String Quartet is set to team up with award-winning percussionist Claire Edwardes for the inaugural tour of its new line-up.**

The much anticipated new line-up of the Australian String Quartet (ASQ), featuring violinists Dale Barltrop and Francesca Hiew, violist Stephen King and cellist Sharon Draper, makes its official public debut at the 2016 Adelaide Festival with 'Alleged Dances'.

The first of three ASQ National Season tours in 2016, 'Alleged Dances' premieres at the Adelaide Town Hall on Monday 29 February ahead of touring to Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra and Perth.

The program begins with Beethoven's breakthrough op 18 no 6, the most forward-looking of his early quartets, and finishes with the luscious first quartet of Robert Schumann. Juxtaposed with these choice selections from the great masters of the string quartet repertoire will be two exciting contemporary works.

In an all-Australian collaboration, the Quartet welcomes dynamic percussionist Claire Edwardes to the stage for the World Premiere of a percussion quintet by Matthew Hindson. Hot-on-the-heels of Hindson's acclaimed 'Ngeringa' string quartet, the ASQ is proud to commission this substantial new work as part of its on-going commitment to promote Australian music and it heralds the first of many future artistic collaborations for the new ASQ line-up.

Widely regarded as one of Australia's leading composers, Hindson's music is quickly garnering a global audience and has been performed by all of Australia's leading orchestras and set by dance companies such as the Birmingham Royal Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, National Ballet of Japan and the Sydney Dance Company. His work, which often displays the influence of popular music styles, has been described as delivering a 'high-octane experience' that often leaves audiences and players alike in a state of joyous exhilaration.

Award-winning percussionist Claire Edwardes has been described in the press as the 'sorceress of percussion' performing with 'spellbinding intensity'. In this compelling program, Edwardes' theatrical energy and charisma will also bring to life a selection of irresistibly funky dances by American minimalist, John Adams, arranged for percussion and string quartet.

Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Adelaide, the ASQ was established in 1985 and has had a major impact on the musical life of Australia, commissioning, premiering and performing many works by leading Australian composers. The ASQ is privileged to perform on a matched set of instruments handcrafted by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini between c.1743-1784. The exquisite instruments are on loan to the ASQ for their exclusive use through the generosity of Ulrike Klein and Ngeringa Arts.

For further information on the ASQ and the *Alleged Dances* tour visit the website at [asq.com.au](http://asq.com.au) or phone 1800 040 444 for details.

**ENDS**

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**[asq.com.au](http://asq.com.au)**

## **TOUR DATES & TICKET PRICES**

### **Adelaide\***

Monday 29 February, 7pm, Adelaide Town Hall  
Standard \$75, Festival Friends \$60, Concession \$55, Under 30 \$30  
To book: Bass 131 246, [www.bass.net.au](http://www.bass.net.au)

### **Sydney**

Tuesday 1 March, 7pm, City Recital Hall  
Standard \$83, Concession \$63, Under 30 \$30  
To book: City Recital Hall (02) 8256 2222, [cityrecitalhall.com](http://cityrecitalhall.com)

### **Brisbane**

Wednesday 2 March, 7pm, Conservatorium Theatre, South Bank  
Standard \$77, Concession \$55, Under 30 \$30  
To book: QTIX 136 246, [qtix.com.au](http://qtix.com.au)

### **Melbourne**

Thursday 3 March, 7pm, Melbourne Recital Centre  
Standard \$83, Concession \$63, Under 30 \$30  
To book: Melbourne Recital Centre 03 9699 3333, [melbournerecital.com.au](http://melbournerecital.com.au)

### **Canberra**

Sunday 6 March, 2pm, Gandel Hall, National Gallery of Australia  
Standard \$75, Concession \$60, Under 30 \$30  
To book: Call 02 6240 6701 or [www.nga.gov.au](http://www.nga.gov.au)

### **Perth**

Monday 14 March, Government House Ballroom, 7pm\*  
Standard \$83, Concession \$63, Under 30 \$30  
To book: Ticketek 1300 795 012, [ticketek.com.au](http://ticketek.com.au)

\$15 Student Rush tickets available at all venues one hour prior to the concert.

*\* Presented in association with the Adelaide Festival of Arts*

## **SUMMARY**

### **WHAT:**

- Australian String Quartet launches National Season 2016 with 'Alleged Dances'

### **FEATURES:**

- Debut concert tour for new ASQ line-up with new violinists Dale Barltrop and Francesca Hiew
- World premiere of ASQ commission from leading Australian composer, Matthew Hindson for string quartet and percussion
- ASQ touring with internationally acclaimed percussionist Claire Edwardes

### **WHEN:**

- February/March 2016
- First concert during Adelaide Festival – 29 February 2016

### **Background Material and Photography:**

- Background material on the Australian String Quartet and guest percussionist Claire Edwardes and composer Matthew Hindson follows in this release.
- Photography is available via [dropbox](#) link.
- ASQ photography credits: Jacqui Way.

### **Available for Comment:**

- Angelina Zucco – Chief Executive
- Dale Barltrop – Violin I
- Francesca Hiew – Violin II
- Stephen King – Viola
- Sharon Draper – Cello

### **Contact:**

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For further information about the Australian String Quartet's national tour of 'Alleged Dances' and its generous [supporting partners](#) visit the website at [asq.com.au](http://asq.com.au) or phone 1800 040 444 for details.

## BACKGROUND

### Australian String Quartet Biography



With a rich history spanning over 30 years, the Australian String Quartet (ASQ) has a strong national profile as an Australian chamber music group of excellence, performing at the highest international level. From its home base at the University of Adelaide, Elder Conservatorium of Music, the ASQ delivers a vibrant annual artistic program encompassing performances, workshops, commissions and education projects across Australia and abroad.

One of Australia's finest music exports, the ASQ has appeared at international music festivals and toured extensively throughout the United Kingdom, Europe, New Zealand and Asia in recent years. The Quartet frequently performs with leading guest artists and in recent years has appeared with internationally acclaimed artists including pianists Angela Hewitt and Piers Lane, mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter, clarinettist Michael Collins, violist Brett Dean and cellist Pieter Wispelwey.

The Quartet's performance calendar for 2016 comprises its National Season featuring three unique concert programs presented in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney; its own flagship festivals in the Southern Grampians and Margaret River and international and regional touring. With an active focus on recording, the ASQ will embark on a range of recording initiatives in 2016, including a project to record an anthology of Australian string quartets. The Quartet's commitment to secondary and tertiary education programs will expand as regional residencies also become a regular event for the ASQ.

The members of the ASQ are privileged to perform on a matched set of Guadagnini instruments. Hand crafted by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini between c.1743-1784 in Turin and Piacenza, Italy, these exquisite instruments were brought together through the vision of Ulrike Klein. The instruments are on loan to the ASQ for their exclusive use through the generosity of Ulrike Klein and Ngeringa Arts.

*Dale Barltrop plays a 1784 Guadagnini Violin, Turin.*

*Francesca Hiew plays a 1748-49 Guadagnini Violin, Piacenza.*

*Stephen King plays a 1783 Guadagnini Viola, Turin.*

*Sharon Draper plays a c.1743 Guadagnini Violoncello, Piacenza, 'Ngeringa'.*

## ASQ BIOGRAPHIES

### Dale Barltrop – Violin I



Brisbane-born violinist, Dale Barltrop, returns to Australia after 18 years abroad to take up his new position with the ASQ. He is Concertmaster of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and has served as Concertmaster of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra since 2009.

Barltrop began his career as Principal Second Violin of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra in the United States. He has appeared with all three of these orchestras as soloist and director on numerous occasions. He has also appeared as Concertmaster of the Australian World Orchestra under Sir Simon Rattle, guest director of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, ACO2 and the Camerata of St John's chamber orchestra.

Barltrop began his violin studies in Brisbane, made his solo debut with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra at the age of 15 and was Concertmaster of the Queensland and Australian Youth Orchestras for numerous years. His teachers have included William Preucil, Gerald Fischbach, the members of the Guarneri Quartet, Elizabeth Morgan and Marcia Cox.

## **ASQ BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Francesca Hiew – Violin II**



Francesca Hiew's passion for chamber music began at an early age as a student of Emin Tagiev and Mark Lakirovich at the Stoliarsky School of Music in Brisbane. Having completed a Bachelor of Music with Michele Walsh at the Queensland Conservatorium, Francesca continued her studies with William Hennessy at ANAM where she completed a Fellowship focusing on chamber music for mixed string ensembles. In 2012 Francesca co-founded the Auric Quartet, selected as a finalist for the 2013 Asia Pacific Chamber Music Competition and the Trondheim International Chamber Music Competition. The quartet performed in the Melbourne and Perth International Arts Festivals, Dunkeld Festival of Music and was Quartet-in-Residence at the Four Winds Festival.

Francesca became a permanent member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in 2014 and is a core member of the Melbourne Chamber Orchestra (MCO). She has performed with the Sydney, Tasmanian and Vancouver Symphony Orchestras, Orchestra Victoria, Victorian Opera, MCO's Australian Octet and has also appeared as soloist with the MCO and Orchestra Victoria.

## ASQ BIOGRAPHIES

### Stephen King – Viola



Stephen King plays the viola because he loves its role in the string quartet. It is both the agitator and the peacemaker, the consonance and the dissonance, the harmonic pulse and always the meat in the sandwich. Stephen played violin while growing up in Canberra and turned to the deep side after all but completing an architecture degree in Brisbane. Following the inspiring teaching there of Elizabeth Morgan, he completed his studies in the United States with James Dunham (Cleveland Quartet), Kathy Murdock (Mendelssohn Quartet) and Michael Tree (Guarneri Quartet). Stephen holds a Doctorate in Chamber Music from the University of Maryland.

From 1997 Stephen was violist of the Coolidge String Quartet based in Washington DC and later Associate Principal Viola of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and part of the Boston Modern Orchestra Project.

Stephen returned to Australia in 2003 to join the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and in 2012 he became the violist of the Australian String Quartet.

## ASQ BIOGRAPHIES

### Sharon Draper – Cello



Born in Melbourne, Sharon studied at Melbourne University and ANAM under David Berlin, Philip Green, and Howard Penny. During her university studies she played regularly with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO), Australia Pro Arte (now Melbourne Chamber Orchestra), Academy of Melbourne Orchestra and Orchestra Victoria.

She has toured extensively with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and in 2008 Sharon was appointed a position with the MSO which she held until 2012. She was a regular participant in the MSO's *Chamber Players* series and in 2009 she formed the Hopkins String Quartet. Whilst living in Berlin in 2012 Sharon performed with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra and Spira Mirabilis Chamber Orchestra.

Sharon also has a passion for teaching, and has tutored ensembles such as the Melbourne Youth Orchestra, AYO's National Music Camp orchestras, and has been a guest chamber music tutor at ANAM. In 2015 Sharon performed as a guest with the Australia Ensemble and the Australian World Orchestra, as well as forming a duo with guitarist Slava Grigoryan.

## GUEST ARTIST BIORAPHIES

### Claire Edwardes – Guest Percussionist



Internationally acclaimed percussion soloist, chamber musician and artistic director of Ensemble Offspring, Claire Edwardes has been described by the press as a ‘sorceress of percussion’ performing with ‘spellbinding intensity’ and ‘graceful virtuosity’. Her award-winning performances combine a theatrical energy with charismatic and original interpretations bringing to life the varied array of music she performs.

In 2014, Claire was granted a prestigious Australia Council Music Fellowship, she is the two-time winner of the AMC/APRA Art Music Award for her contribution to Australian music (2012/2007) and was the most recent percussionist to win the Symphony Australia Young Performers Award back in 1999. Between 1999 and 2006, Claire was resident in The Netherlands during which time she was the winner of numerous international instrumental competitions.

In Australia she has performed concertos with all of the leading orchestras, and in 2015 she championed three Australian percussion concertos including a world premiere by Iain Grandage with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

## **GUEST ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Matthew Hindson – Guest Composer**



Matthew Hindson AM is one of the most-performed and most-commissioned composers in the world, and the leading Australian composer of his generation. As well as being performed by every Australian orchestra, the London Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Royal Philharmonic among many others, Matthew's music has been set by dance companies such as the Birmingham Royal Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, National Ballet of Japan and the Sydney Dance Company.

Matthew is the Acting Head of School and Acting Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. From 2004-2010 he was the artistic director of the Aurora Festival which is dedicated to the work of living composers. In 2006 Matthew was made a member of the Order of Australia (AM) for his contributions to music education and composition. From 2009-2013 Matthew was the Chair of the Music Board of the Australia Council for the Arts, and from 2013-2015, a board member of the same organisation.