



AUSTRALIAN
STRING
QUARTET

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**MEDIA RELEASE
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The Australian String Quartet showcases European Masterpieces

This August marks the largest tour of the nationally acclaimed Australian String Quartet (ASQ) in 2014 as the quartet returns to stages across all major cities as well as regional Victoria and New South Wales.

The quartet comprising violinists Kristian Winther and Ioana Tache, violist Stephen King and cellist Sharon Draper, will captivate audiences with a program featuring three masterpieces from the string quartet repertoire by Haydn, Beethoven and Bartók performed on the Quartet's rare and exquisite set of Guaragnini instruments.

Haydn's opus 77 no 1 is the grand, crowning achievement of a life inventing, exploring and perfecting the genre. Regarded as the 'father' of the string quartet, Haydn wrote the work towards the end of his career and it is widely considered to be among the finest examples of string quartet writing. Written 10 years later around 1810, Beethoven's *Serioso* Quartet is among the composer's shortest works for string quartet and is highly regarded for its intensity and tight compositional structure.

The 'Boundless' concert program concludes with the fifth string quartet by the master of 20th century string quartets – Béla Bartók. This piece is among Bartok's most virtuosic works for the genre and has been hailed as one of the ultimate challenges for string quartets since its first performance in 1935.

ASQ violist Stephen King said the repertoire was "a well-balanced offering, covering classical, romantic and 20th Century pieces".

"The program celebrates the work of arguably some of the greatest European masters of string quartet writing and we are looking forward to performing these works across Australia" says Stephen King.

Boundless is the quartet's most extensive tour for 2014 and will grace ten stages across Australia starting in Hobart on August 9 before travelling to Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Geelong, Sydney, Orange and Dubbo in regional NSW and Canberra.

The quartet will also present the Margaret River Weekend of Music from October 3-5. The quartet is partnering with four of the region's most outstanding vineyards to deliver the exclusive and indulgent event with leading Australian guest artists.

About the Australian 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. 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, the instruments are on loan to the Australian String Quartet for their exclusive use through the generosity of Ulrike Klein, Maria Myers and a group of donors who have supported Ngeringa Arts to acquire the viola.

For further information, visit the website at www.asq.com.au or phone 1800 040 444.

Tour dates and venues

Hobart – Saturday, August 9, 8pm, Hobart Town Hall

Brisbane – Monday, August 11, 7pm, Conservatorium Theatre

Perth – Wednesday, August 13, 7pm, Perth Concert Hall

Adelaide – Friday, August 15, 7pm, Adelaide Town Hall

Melbourne – Monday, August 18, 7pm, Melbourne Recital Centre

Geelong – Tuesday August 19, 7.30pm, Geelong Grammar School

Sydney – Thursday, August 21, 7pm, City Recital Hall Angel Place

Orange – Thursday, August 28, 7.30pm, Orange Conservatorium

Dubbo – Friday, August 29, 7.30pm, Macquarie Conservatorium

Canberra – Sunday, August 31, 2pm, Gandel Hall, National Gallery of Australia

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