

MEDIA RELEASE

15 May 2017

Acclaimed guitarist, Slava Grigoryan, touring nationally with the Australian String Quartet

Following successful performance engagements in Venice and London, the Australian String Quartet (ASQ) returns home for its first National Season tour, *Migration*.

Touring nationally from **23 May to 5 June**, the **ASQ is joined by renowned Australian guitarist Slava Grigoryan**. One of Australia's favourite musicians, Slava brings his guitar's lyrical warmth to the textures of the string quartet in two singular pieces of contemporary sensibility by **Ralph Towner** and **Iain Grandage**.

Ralph Towner is famed as an improviser, his albums both in his own name and with the band Oregon forming a cornerstone of the iconic genre-bending recording label, ECM. As a composer, Towner explores a territory encompassing jazz and classical domains, the rhythms and harmonies of jazz style fusing with a classical sense of construction and development.

"Towner's guitar quintet, *Migration*, draws from his roots in the US Pacific Northwest and a lifetime of experience in the jazz world to create a fluid and rhythmically intricate journey that explores the expressive and virtuosic capabilities of the guitar and string quartet.", said ASQ violinist, Dale Barltrop.

Iain Grandage is one of the most powerful communicators in Australian music – combining rich technique with theatrical flair and a direct expressive voice to reach his audience.

Comparing the two diverse contemporary quintets in the program, Barltrop says, "Australian composer, Grandage, uses the same instrumental combination to create a darker, more contemplative world in *Black Dogs*, a rumination on the nature of the human mind and its fragility."

The program concludes with the epic, final string quartet of Franz Schubert. It is a towering achievement in quartet writing – on one hand, utterly symphonic in scope – on the other, a vivid glimpse into the tortured soul of a young man who was soon to depart this world at the tender age of 31.

The ASQ has enjoyed a long-standing and successful performance history with Slava Grigoryan – sharing numerous performance collaborations in Australia and in China over the past decade. In recent months, this collaboration has seen the development of a new album titled *Migration* for release through ABC Classics. Available from 19 May, the *Migration* album release features the Towner and Grandage quintets, together with a work by Austrian guitarist Wolfgang Muthspiel. Recorded at UKARIA Cultural Centre in December 2016, *Migration* was produced with the generous support of UKARIA.

In December 2016, the ASQ was delighted to celebrate the marriage of its cellist, Sharon Draper to guitarist Slava Grigoryan. This happy union will see Sharon adopt the surname Grigoryan from May 2017.

For further information on the ASQ and the *Migration* tour visit the website at asq.com.au or phone 1800 040 444 for details.

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Background

Australian String Quartet

For over 30 years, the Australian String Quartet (ASQ) has created unforgettable string quartet performances for national and international audiences. Dedicated to musical excellence with a distinctly Australian character, the ASQ's purpose is to create chemistry and amplify intimacy through experiences that connect people with string quartet music. From its home base at the University of Adelaide, Elder Conservatorium of Music, the ASQ reaches out across Australia and the world to engage people with an outstanding program of performances, workshops, commissions and education projects. The Quartet's distinct sound is enhanced by a matched set of 18th century Guarneri instruments, handcrafted by Giovanni Battista Guarneri between c.1743 and 1784 in Turin and Piacenza, Italy. These precious instruments are on loan for the ASQ's exclusive use through the generosity of Ulrike Klein and UKARIA.

Slava Grigoryan, Guitar

Regarded as a 'wizard' of the guitar with a talent for bewitching his audiences, Slava Grigoryan has forged a global reputation as a classical guitar virtuoso. Grigoryan was born in Kazakhstan and immigrated with his family to Australia in 1981. At seventeen, he was signed to the Sony Classical label and his first tour – at just eighteen – was with guitar legends Paco Peña and Leo Kottke. Since then he has travelled the world as a soloist and with orchestras in Australia, Europe, Asia and North America, and performed at dozens of national and international arts, music and guitar festivals. Creative collaborations have included his famed guitar duo with brother Leonard Grigoryan, as well as with string quartets, chamber ensembles, composers, Saffire – The Australian Guitar Quartet, guitar trio MGT with Wolfgang Muthspiel (Austria) and Ralph Towner (USA), Australian baritone José Carbó and the Tawadros Brothers. Slava has won ARIA awards for Best Classical Album and released over 20 solo and collaborative albums.

TOUR DATES & TICKET PRICES

Perth

Tuesday 23 May 7pm, Government House Ballroom
Standard \$85, Concession \$62, Under 30 \$30
To book: Ticketek 1300 795 012, ticketek.com.au

Canberra

Sun 28 May 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

Brisbane

Mon 29 May 7pm, Conservatorium Theatre, South Bank
Standard \$79, Concession \$56, Under 30 \$30
To book: QTIX 136 246, qtix.com.au

Adelaide

Tue 30 May 7pm, Adelaide Town Hall
Standard \$79, Concession \$56, Under 30 \$30
To book: Bass 131 246, www.bass.net.au

Sydney

Wed 31 May 7pm, City Recital Hall Angel Place
Standard \$85, Concession \$62, Under 30 \$30
To book: City Recital Hall Angel Place 1300 797 118, cityrecitalhall.com

Melbourne

Mon 5 June 7pm, Melbourne Recital Centre
Standard \$85, Concession \$62, Under 30 \$30
To book: Melbourne Recital Centre 03 9699 3333, melbournerecital.com.au

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

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