



MEDIA RELEASE  
23 September 2015

### Debut season for the new Australian String Quartet line-up

The Australian String Quartet (ASQ) launches its National Season 2016 in February with the much-anticipated debut of its new line-up featuring Dale Barltrop – first violin, Francesca Hiew – second violin, Stephen King – viola and Sharon Draper – cello. The ASQ's National Season 2016 program heralds an exciting new era for this significant Australian ensemble, which celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year.

Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Adelaide, Elder Conservatorium of Music, the ASQ has an enduring commitment to reach audiences across Australia. 2016 will see the Quartet performing in a variety of venues, from leading concert halls for its National Season, to a variety of smaller, more intimate settings for its brand new series *Close Quarters* and its flagship regional Festivals in Dunkeld and Margaret River.

True to its mission to champion great Australian music alongside the revered masters of the quartet repertoire, the ASQ's National Season 2016 will captivate audiences with the masterworks of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann and Mendelssohn alongside exciting contemporary Australian works by Matthew Hindson and Joe Chindamo and some of the 20th century's finest contributions to string quartet literature – Ravel, Webern, Bartók and Ligeti.

With three compelling programs, titled *Alleged Dances*, *Tempesta*, and *Metamorphoses*, the ASQ's National Season will tour to Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney in 2016. Its Canberra National Season tour – the first in ASQ history – is made possible through a growing partnership with the National Gallery of Australia (NGA) which will deliver ASQ ticket savings for NGA members across Australia.

The season kicks off at the Adelaide Town Hall on Monday 29 February as part of the iconic Adelaide Festival. In an all-Australian collaboration, the ASQ welcomes dynamic percussionist Claire Edwardes to the stage for the World Premiere of a percussion quintet by Matthew Hindson as part of its first tour, *Alleged Dances*. 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.

Mid-year, the ASQ's second program features works by Webern, Haydn and Mendelssohn, alongside the fresh and quick-fire new style in Australian composer/pianist Joe Chindamo's *Tempesta*. And for its final tour – *Metamorphoses*, the ASQ's season culminates with three equally stunning and diverse quartets by Mozart, Ligeti and Ravel in a captivating program that is both bold and beautiful.

*'There is a real sense of excitement building around the ASQ's National Season 2016,'* Angelina Zucco, ASQ Chief Executive, said. *'The culmination of passion, dedication and hard work for this National Season marks the start of a new and exciting era for the quartet and is strengthened by strong collaborations and new partnerships.'*

The ASQ's National Season 2016 sees the launch of an exciting new partnership with Harrolds – Australia's luxury department store who join the Quartet's growing network of national supporters as the ASQ's Luxury Menswear Sponsor.

Subscriptions for the National Season 2016 are now open.

For further information about the Australian String Quartet's National Season 2016 and its generous supporting partners visit the website at [asq.com.au](http://asq.com.au) or phone 1800 040 444 for details.

**ENDS**

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## TOUR DATES & DETAILS

Program 1 (February/March 2016)

### ALLEGED DANCES

**Beethoven** String Quartet in B flat major op 18 no 6

**Matthew Hindson** New work for string quartet and percussion (World premiere)

**John Adams** Excerpts from *John's Book of Alleged Dances* with hand percussion (arranged Edwardes)

**Schumann** String Quartet no 1 in A minor op 41 no 1

*With guest percussionist Claire Edwardes*

- **Adelaide**, Mon 29 February, 7pm, Adelaide Town Hall\*
- **Sydney**, Tue 1 March, 7pm, City Recital Hall
- **Brisbane**, Wed 2 March, 7pm, Conservatorium Theatre, South Bank
- **Melbourne**, Thu 3 March, 7pm, Melbourne Recital Centre
- **Canberra**, Sun 6 March, 2pm, Gandel Hall, National Gallery of Australia
- **Perth**, Mon 14 March, 7pm, Government House Ballroom

*\* Presented in association with the Adelaide Festival*

Program 2 (June/July 2016)

### TEMPESTA

**Webern** *Fünf Sätze* for String Quartet op 5

**Haydn** String Quartet in C Major op 20 no 2

**Joe Chindamo** String Quartet no 1, *Tempesta*

**Mendelssohn** String Quartet no 6 in F minor op 80

- **Sydney**, Thu 30 June, 7pm, City Recital Hall
- **Canberra**, Sun 3 July, 2pm, Gandel Hall, National Gallery of Australia
- **Melbourne**, Mon 4 July, 7pm, Melbourne Recital Centre
- **Brisbane**, Wed 6 July, 7pm, Conservatorium Theatre, South Bank
- **Adelaide**, Thu 7 July, 7pm, Adelaide Town Hall
- **Perth**, Mon 11 July, 7pm, Government House Ballroom

Program 3 (October 2016)

### METAMORPHOSES

**Mozart** String Quartet in F major K590

**Ligeti** String Quartet no 1, *Métamorphoses Nocturnes*

**Ravel** String Quartet in F major

- **Adelaide**, Thu 13 October, 7pm, Adelaide Town Hall
- **Canberra**, Sun 16 October, 2pm, Gandel Hall, National Gallery of Australia
- **Sydney**, Mon 17 October, 7pm, City Recital Hall
- **Brisbane**, Tue 18 October, 7pm, Conservatorium Theatre, South Bank
- **Perth**, Thu 20 October, 7pm, Government House Ballroom
- **Melbourne**, Mon 24 October, 7pm, Melbourne Recital Centre

## BACKGROUND

### Australian String Quartet Biography



*Pictured L-R: Dale Barltrop, Sharon Draper, Stephen King, Francesca Hiew (Photo: Jacqui Way)*

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, Tour 1



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, Tour 1**

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.