



AUSTRALIAN
STRING
QUARTET

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New Line-Up Announced for Australian String Quartet

The Australian String Quartet (ASQ) is delighted to announce the appointment of Dale Barltrop as first violin and Francesca Hiew as second violin. In the New Year they will be joining current quartet members, violist Stephen King and cellist Sharon Draper.

The high profile appointments are announced for the ASQ's 2016 National Season launch and mark an exciting new era for this significant Australian ensemble.

ASQ Chair, Nicholas Callinan, welcoming the two musicians said, "We are so pleased that Dale and Francesca have agreed to join us. Our four musicians have started working together on next year's program and the enthusiasm within the new quartet is already producing innovative ideas. We are all excited by the early signs of the quartet's future direction."

Brisbane-born Barltrop will continue his current position as Concertmaster for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and live in Australia year-round for the first time in 18 years. Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Managing Director, André Gremillet, said "Many of our MSO musicians love playing chamber music, and no one is more accomplished or passionate about it than our Concertmaster Dale Barltrop. We are thrilled to be able to make it possible for Dale to take this position, and support the artistic fulfilment of a great Australian musician as well as partner with the Australian String Quartet, a true national cultural treasure."

"I am deeply honoured to be joining the ASQ and to have the opportunity to return to my homeland to embark on this exciting new chapter," Barltrop said.

Hiew, also from Brisbane, is a current member of the MSO and was formerly a violinist with the Auric Quartet. Respected for her technical clarity and passion for chamber music, Hiew brings experience and energy to the pivotal role of second violin.

"I feel incredibly humbled to be part of the future of the ASQ, a quartet that so many remarkable musicians have shaped over the past 30 years," Hiew said.

In this, the 30th Anniversary year of the ASQ, current ASQ members King and Draper expressed their enthusiasm as the quartet starts its next decade with this strong and dynamic new line-up.

King, who has known Barltrop for many years said "My musical journey with Dale goes back to our studies in Brisbane and the USA with members of the Guarneri and Cleveland quartets. I've long admired his passion, drive and desire to communicate through his rich sound. It exemplifies his joy for life."

Draper said "Francesca and I have worked together often in the past and I have always respected her attitude towards music-making. She is a wonderful person with a sunny and down to earth nature and as an artist she demonstrates maturity and flair in her work."

While the appointments are effective immediately, the new quartet will make their full debut in February 2016 in their first national concert season. The full 2016 season will be launched this September at www.asq.com.au

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