



Australian  
String  
Quartet

Quartet-in-Residence  
The University of Adelaide  
SA 5005 Australia

T +61 8 8313 3748  
E [asq@asq.com.au](mailto:asq@asq.com.au)  
W [asq.com.au](http://asq.com.au)

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ***Glass Dean Mendelssohn:*** **The Australian String Quartet plays music to revive the spirits**

Australian audiences can let their souls explore during the ASQ's exquisite first National Season 2018 concerts.

The Quartet's program begins with one of today's most influential composers, Philip Glass. Perhaps best known for his minimalist compositions, Glass considers the **String Quartet no 3 *Mishima*** his musical turning point. Written for Paul Schrader's **Cannes Film Festival** award-winning work *Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters*, Glass's score is considered lighter and more accessible than what came before it; brimming with imagery, it exquisitely portrays Mishima's intense passion, covering the extremities of the artist's turbulent life.

*"Philip Glass writes with such sensitivity. When hearing this music it's almost as though if you close your eyes you can see the film flickering in your mind – it's an incredibly moving piece to perform."*  
Francesca Hiew, violin.

**Brett Dean** brings the concert closer to home with his brilliant first string quartet, ***Eclipse***. A response to the world's gripping refugee crisis, with particular reference to 2001's Australian *Tampa* affair, Dean's astonishing work portrays the full spectrum of emotions. Elements of the unknown, confusion and rage scurry through the composition before settling on hopeful optimism, taking the audience to the edge of their seats and back.

Dean, one of the world's most sought-after modern composers, is the current *Artist in Residence* at the Sydney Symphony. He and the ASQ share a special history, having performed and toured together numerous times. In 2015, the ASQ also performed the world premiere of his newly commissioned work *And Once I Played Ophelia*, the precursor to his opera *Hamlet* (directed by Neil Armfield) – the centrepiece of this year's Adelaide Festival of Arts.

*"As a performer, it's a richly rewarding challenge to learn one of Brett Dean's works. There is not one note, marking, or effect that is there needlessly; he is a composer who thinks meticulously about every aspect of his writing. "Eclipse" is no exception. I love how this piece has such timelessness and rich sonority; it's visceral, and spine tingling to play."* Sharon Grigoryan, cello.

The concert closes with Felix Mendelssohn's jubilant **String Quartet in D major op 44 no 1**. The piece focuses on those lingering glimmers of optimism left by Dean's work, transforming them into full showers of light. Written in the happiest of times for Mendelssohn, his piece reminds us of music's immense power to revive the spirits.

*"I couldn't think of a better way to begin our National Season 2018 than with this incredible program. It's an explosive cocktail of contemporary vs classical, local vs international, and exultant vs heartrending; a profound night in the concert hall."* Stephen King, viola.

Subscriptions for the National Season 2018 are now open. For further information about the ASQ's National Season 2018 and its generous supporting partners visit the website at [asq.com.au](http://asq.com.au) or phone **1800 040 444** for details.

For further information contact Samuel Jozeps, Marketing and Communications Manager on 0429 645 435 or [sjozeps@asq.com.au](mailto:sjozeps@asq.com.au).

## TOUR DATES & DETAILS

### GLASS DEAN MENDELSSOHN

**Philip Glass**, String Quartet no 3 *Mishima*

**Brett Dean**, String Quartet no 1 *Eclipse*

**Mendelssohn**, String Quartet in D major op 44 no 1

- **Canberra**, Sun 11 February, 2pm, Gandel Hall, National Gallery of Australia
- **Sydney**, Mon 12 February, 7pm, City Recital Hall
- **Adelaide**, Thu 15 February, 7pm, Adelaide Town Hall
- **Melbourne**, Fri 16 February, 7pm, Melbourne Recital Centre
- **Perth**, Mon 19 February, 7pm, Government House Ballroom
- **Brisbane**, Thu 22 February, 7pm, Conservatorium Theatre

## BIOGRAPHY – AUSTRALIAN STRING QUARTET



*Pictured L-R: Dale Barltrop, Francesca Hiew, Stephen King, Sharon Grigoryan Photo: Jacqui Way, Illustration: Chris Edser*

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 Quartet'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 18<sup>th</sup> century Guadagnini instruments, handcrafted by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini 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 UKARIA.

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

### Official Partners



### National Season Partners



### Other Partners

