



Australian
String
Quartet

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Beethoven Widmann Beethoven: **The Australian String Quartet offers an extraordinary musical experience**

In a time-travelling concert crossing artistic disciplines, the **Australian String Quartet (ASQ)** tours an immersive musical experience with direction by Australian theatre-maker **Andy Packer**.

The ASQ bookends its program with two of **Beethoven's** great quartets. The majestic beauty of his final quartet Opus 135 will entice tingles, before his very first quartet, Opus 18 no. 3 will have audiences reeling at the mastery of Beethoven the young wunderkind.

Placed between these two transformative pieces is the work of living contemporary compatriot, **Jörg Widmann**, whose String Quartet no 3 *Hunt Quartet* channels the spirit of Beethoven the innovator. Widmann's is a work of mischievous iconoclasm; a visceral piece that is sure to keep ASQ audiences on the edge of their seats.

"Beethoven's quartets are marvellous and will delight lovers of everything classical and romantic. What I'm most excited about though, is watching the audiences' reactions to Widmann's work. The piece dictates that our instruments (and bodies) be used in ways quite unexpected!" Francesca Hiew, violin.

An ensemble that continues to push the limits and make live music experiences more accessible, memorable and monumental, the ASQ has engaged award-winning theatre director Andy Packer (best known for his work as director of internationally renowned **Slingsby**), to bring the stage to life using visual and programmatic direction.

"Beethoven was supremely aware of the event of a live performance. He explored ever more sophisticated ways to draw his audience into the music worlds he was constructing. Likewise, Widmann presents us with a provocatively dramatic composition. Through our presentation of this program we aim to honour these composers' instincts for inviting the listener, the audience to be drawn into the world of the music, with a light touch, to illuminate the music, not to stand in its way." Andy Packer, Director.

"In a world in which everything is more and more integrated, it's imperative that we, as artistic and cultural practitioners, continue to experiment and explore ways of presenting music in different contexts. It's been a privilege and a pleasure collaborating with Andy to create something quite special." Stephen King, viola.

The Australian String Quartet is excited to be touring this concert with guest cellist Michael Dahlenburg, who will be standing in for ASQ cellist Sharon Grigoryan, currently on maternity leave.

For further information about the ASQ's National Season 2018 and its generous supporting partners visit the website at asq.com.au or phone **1800 040 444**.

For further information contact Samuel Jozeps, Marketing and Communications Manager on 0429 645 436 or sjozeps@asq.com.au.

TOUR DATES & DETAILS

BEETHOVEN WIDMANN BEETHOVEN

Beethoven String Quartet in F major op 135

Jörg Widmann String Quartet no 3 *Hunt Quartet*

Beethoven String Quartet in D major op 18 no 3

- **Brisbane** Tue 26 June, 7pm, Conservatorium Theatre, South Bank
- **Sydney** Fri 29 June, 7pm, City Recital Hall
- **Canberra** Sun 1 July, 2pm, James O Fairfax Theatre, National Gallery of Australia
- **Melbourne** Tue 3 July, 7pm, Melbourne Recital Centre
- **Adelaide** Thu 5 July, 7pm, Adelaide Town Hall
- **Perth** Mon 9 July, 7pm, Government House Ballroom

BIOGRAPHY – 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 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 18th 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'

Michael Dahlenburg is the principal cellist of the Melbourne Chamber Orchestra. He has played as soloist with the Melbourne Chamber Orchestra and Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra and as a conductor he has led the Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, orchestras for ANAM, and numerous state music camps.

BIOGRAPHY – ANDY PACKER

Since completing a BA of Theatre Studies at Adelaide University in 1992, Andy's arts career has encompassed many roles including Creative Producer, ensemble Actor/Creator and Festival Director. In 2007 Andy co-founded Adelaide based theatre company Slingsby as Artistic Director. In eleven years Slingsby has toured its original productions to 83 venues in 54 cities around the world, winning 14 industry awards along the way. Alongside Slingsby, Andy has built a freelance career as a Director of opera, musical theatre, cabaret, events and concerts. Andy is respected nationally and internationally for creating moments of human intimacy and emotional truth in both intimate one hander productions and in large operatic and orchestral scale works, for child, family and adult audiences.

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