



Australian
String
Quartet

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Musician Stephen King set to play a different tune with the ASQ

The Australian String Quartet (ASQ) is thrilled to announce that in his 10th year as the Quartet's violist, and 25th year as a touring musician, Stephen King will transition to a new role at the ASQ as Director of Engagement and Learning from 2021. In this new role, Stephen will help develop exciting creative collaborations and educational initiatives, as the organisation evolves to broaden its reach and expand its engagement.

Since King joined the ASQ in 2012, he has helped the organisation to further establish its place as a celebrated Australian arts entity, globally. With his colleagues, he has toured nationally and internationally, performing in Australia's major festivals and the world's top music halls to critical acclaim. As well as his onstage appearances, King has been instrumental in championing new Australian commissions and recordings, projects with First Nations artists, and innovative collaborations including cross-artform, presentation and business partnerships.

As Director of Engagement and Learning, King will continue to work with the ASQ offstage in a new role that builds on these creative collaborations and educational initiatives. He is looking forward to continuing to inspire and nurture the next generation of musicians through leadership roles in performance and education.

"As the arts transition and flourish in new ways, how we create, collaborate, educate and maintain a vibrant community are of vital importance. I have loved my time performing with the Quartet and it's exciting to continue as part of the ASQ team. Having been a travelling performer for the last 25 years, I look forward to spending more time in my own community and with family, while still thinking nationally and globally. I will also be putting more energy into personal creative pursuits integrating passions for music, design and architecture." – Stephen King, ASQ Viola

"Steve has been a driving force in the ASQ for the past decade. He has devoted his life to this organisation and to the advocacy of chamber music throughout Australia. As I reflect on all of the incredible work that Steve has done for the ASQ over the years, both on and off stage, I am beyond grateful for his friendship, collegiality and love of music. I wish him the very best for his next chapter and look forward to working with him in charting a bright future for the ASQ."
– Dale Barltrop, ASQ Violin



"As a leading voice in our Australian music sector, we are delighted that Stephen will continue to play a vital part in the evolution of the ASQ." – Angelina Zucco, Chief Executive

Stephen will be performing across Australia with fellow quartet members Dale Barltrop (violin), Francesca Hiew (violin) and Michael Dahlenburg (cello) from May, before moving into his new role in the second half of the year. In the interim, the Quartet will be performing shows (including *Impermanence* with Sydney Dance Company and the ASQ Dunkeld Festival of Music) with guest violists to be announced shortly.

For all media enquiries contact Jeff Smith on +61 402 677 389

BIOGRAPHY – AUSTRALIAN STRING QUARTET

For 35 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.

BIOGRAPHY – STEPHEN KING

Stephen King joined the Australian String Quartet as the viola player in 2012. Stephen loves the role of the viola in the string quartet, being both the agitator and the peacemaker, the push and the drag, the consonance and the dissonance, and always the meat in the sandwich.

Music has taken Stephen to diverse venues and festivals around Australia and the world. With the ASQ, Stephen has been integral in championing new Australian commissions and recordings, projects with First Nations artists, and innovative cross-artform collaborations.

Before joining the ASQ, Stephen was a member of the Australian Chamber Orchestra for nine years. As the ACO's education representative from 2004-2011, he played a major role in founding and building the Orchestra's education and emerging artists programs, and ACO2.

Growing up in Canberra, Stephen learned the violin but fell for the darker tone of the viola after all but completing an architecture degree in Brisbane. Following the inspiring teaching of Elizabeth Morgan, he completed his studies in the USA with James Dunham (Cleveland Quartet), Kathy Murdock (Mendelssohn Quartet) and Michael Tree (Guarneri Quartet). From 1997 Stephen was violist of the Coolidge String Quartet based in Washington D.C. He holds a Doctorate in Chamber Music from the University of Maryland, having worked closely with the Emerson and Guarneri Quartets.

While living overseas, Stephen was also the Associate Principal Viola of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra and a member of the Boston Modern Orchestra Project. He was on the faculty of the New England Conservatory Prep Division in Boston and the American String Teachers Association Workshops. In Australia he has been invited to play guest principal of the Melbourne and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras. Stephen teaches viola and chamber music the University of Adelaide, Elder Conservatorium of Music and regularly tutors at National Music Camps for AYO.

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