



Australian
String
Quartet

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MEDIA RELEASE

Nigel Westlake's emotionally charged work to be premiered and toured by the Australian String Quartet

Celebrated Australian composer Nigel Westlake's new work *Sacred Sky* will be premiered by the Australian String Quartet (ASQ) in an evocative program alongside works by Charles Ives and Claude Debussy.

Commissioned by the ASQ* and written as an homage to the spirit of his late sister Kate, who passed away in early 2018, Westlake's piece renders emotions related to life and loss in the special way that only music can truly accomplish.

"I have endeavoured to invoke Kate's spirit, in the hope of imbuing the music with themes of beauty, energy, soulfulness, and transcendence. Inevitably the fingerprints of grief and sadness permeate the musical narrative at times." **Nigel Westlake**

This will be Westlake's third string quartet, and the first written for the ASQ. Among a myriad of concert hall compositions across his four-decade career, the highly praised and award-winning composer is also known for his film scores which include *Ali's Wedding*, *Paper Planes*, *Miss Potter*, *Babe*, *Babe II* and IMAX films *Antarctica*, *Imagine*, *Solarmax* and *The Edge*.

"We are honoured that Nigel has written this work for us. Themes of life, love and loss, though experienced personally, are shared universally. Through our playing, we hope to bring justice to Nigel's work, and to provide solace and musical companionship to all listeners, who may be on their own journey" **Sharon Grigoryan, ASQ**

Complementing Westlake's work is Charles Ives' vivid and ground-breaking String Quartet No 1 *From the Salvation Army*, and Claude Debussy's monumental String Quartet op 10.

The Australian String Quartet performs ***Ives Westlake Debussy*** around Australia in September 2019.

Ives String Quartet no 1 *From the Salvation Army*
Nigel Westlake String Quartet no 3 *Sacred Sky**
Debussy String Quartet op 10

Sydney Wed 4 September, City Recital Hall
Canberra Sun 8 September, Gandel Hall, National Gallery of Australia
Adelaide Mon 9 September, Adelaide Town Hall
Brisbane Tue 17 September, Conservatorium Theatre, South Bank
Perth Wed 18 September, Government House Ballroom
Melbourne Fri 20 September, Melbourne Recital Centre

**Commissioned by the Australian String Quartet with generous support from Carl Wood, and Don and Veronica Aldridge*

More Information:

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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 Bartrop 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'





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