

For members of the Melbourne Guitar Quartet (MGQ), 'playing the guitar' means a lot more than just strumming a few simple chords. "Because the guitar has achieved universal popularity as a widely-played amateur instrument, its potential as a serious 'concert instrument' is often greatly understated."

MGQ endured its embryonic phase in 2005 as four graduating members of the Victorian College of the Arts School of Music co-founded the ensemble with a vision of broadening the public's 'status-quo' image of the guitar. Since then the ensemble have forged a reputation for their dynamic and passionate virtuosity.

MGQ's critically acclaimed debut recording *Four Elements* is a regular feature on the national broadcasts of ABC Classic FM and has received the highest praise from distinguished composers Robert Davidson and Francis Kleynjans, whose music features on the album.

The guitar enjoyed a rapid rise in popularity amongst the concert-going public in the 20th century thanks to a combination of advances in construction and the efforts of players such as Andres Segovia and Julian Bream. However now is not the time to be resting on the achievements of generations past according to the Quartet. "There is still so much unrealised musical potential with the guitar as a chamber music instrument."

Australian innovations in guitar construction over the past three decades have exponentially augmented the dynamic range and sustain of the plucked note. MGQ play exclusively on Australian-made instruments, which draw a closer comparison to the instruments of a string quartet than the standard guitar ensemble people are familiar with. "Of course we perform on standard guitars but we also utilise the gigantic acoustic bass (played like a cello with a spike stuck in the ground) the treble guitar (a smaller instrument tuned a fifth higher than the standard guitar), and the octave guitar (a tiny instrument tuned a whole octave higher than the standard guitar). This broadening of the possible range of the guitar cultivates a whole new gamut of tonal possibilities. For this reason, MGQ are committed to arranging music for the guitar ensemble which was previously unthinkable.

"We are so excited to be performing our world-premiere arrangements for the idiom of guitar quartet on this tour." The Quartet's arrangements are both dramatic and eclectic, ranging from Australian composer Nigel Westlake's *Omphalo Centric Lecture* (originally for percussion ensemble) to J.S. Bach's *Tocata and Fugue in D Minor* (originally for organ), to Argentinian composer Astor Piazzolla's *Tango Operita Maria de Buenas Aires*.

The Melbourne Guitar Quartet are performing on the following dates

Sunday 5th July 3pm
Bendigo- The Capital - Bendigo's Performing Arts Centre
50 View Street, Bendigo Phone VIC
Web: [The Capital Theatre](#)
Bookings: 03 5434 6100

Wednesday 8th July 8pm
Kyabram- Plaza Theatre
243 Allan Street, Kyabram VIC
Map: [Street View \(google maps\)](#)
Bookings: 03 5852 3151

Saturday 11th July 8pm
Sydney - The Independent Theatre (Sydney Classical Guitar Society)
269 Miller Street, North Sydney NSW
Web: [The Independent Theatre](#)
Bookings: [Reserve Seats Online](#)
Bookings: 02 9955 6455

Sunday 12th July (time TBC)
Canberra - Wesley Music Centre (in conjunction with the Canberra Guitar Society)
20-22 National Circuit, Forrest, ACT
Bookings: 02 6232 7248

Tuesday 14th July 7:30pm
Young- Southern Cross Hall
Main Street, Young NSW
Bookings: 02 6382 1000

Wednesday 15 July 7:30pm
Goulburn - Goulburn Regional Conservatorium
160 Bourke street Goulburn, NSW 2580
Web: [Goulburn Conservatorium](#)
Bookings: 02 4821 8833

Saturday 15th August (time TBC)
Melbourne - Chapel off Chapel
12 Little Chapel Street, Prahran, VIC
Web: [Chapel Off Chapel](#)
Bookings: 03 8290 7000

Friday 21 August 7.30pm
Perth - West Australian Academy of Performing Arts - Music Auditorium
Edith Cowen University Mount Lawley Campus
2 Bradford Street, Mount Lawley Perth, WA
Web: [WAAPA](#)