

HEARTFELT MISSY A WOMAN OF SONG



Melanie Walters, *The Advertiser*

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Subscriber only

UKARIA's 2019 Women of Song series began with a heartfelt concert from Missy Higgins.

For this performance, Higgins, was joined by violinist Francesca Hiew and violist Stephen King from the Australian String Quartet, as well as double bassist Samuel Pankhurst, and cellist/pianist Iain Grandage, who also arranged the program's songs.

This instrumentation was much better suited to this music than a traditional string quartet, with the double bass giving warmth and depth to the timbre. The concert had a rather shaky start with *Sweet Arms of a Tune*.

The bowed strings didn't mesh well with Higgins' vocals and guitar, and the singer mistimed her first entry.

But in the second number – a cover of The Angels' *No Secrets* – the ensemble was much tighter, and Higgins' switch to piano gave a more fluid texture to the song.

The set list was drawn from across Higgins' career, from *All for Believing*, which she wrote as a 15-year-old, to more recent songs such as *Torchlight* and *49 Candles*.

Higgins' distinctive vocal cadence gave great pathos to *The Sound of White* and *Arrow*, and *All in my Head* really showed off the singer's range and power.

Also on the program was an instrumental work by Grandage based on Lawson's *The Drover's Wife*.

This was an engaging piece with effective use of percussive effects and glissandi.

However, it didn't fit with the tone of the rest of the program.

The concept of including an instrumental item could have worked better with a more lyrical piece, and, given that this was part of the Women of Song series, perhaps even a piece composed by a woman.

Missy Higgins with Iain Grandage
UKARIA Cultural Centre
March 30