

GRIGORYAN BROTHERS

# THIS IS US - A MUSICAL REFLECTION OF AUSTRALIA

Saturday 1 March

7.30pm

90 minutes, no interval



## FRANKSTON ARTS CENTRE

Box Office: 03 9784 1060  
[thefac.com.au](http://thefac.com.au)

Connect with us:  
@the\_fac | #thefac



### Looking for sponsorship opportunities?

Contact Lucinda Bertram,  
Coordinator Business Development and  
Marketing on 03 9768 1362 to discuss.

### Become a Member today!

- Member discounts
- Priority bar service
- Invitation to Season Launch
- Exclusive offers
- Pre-sale booking
- Deferred payments

Principal Theatre Partner



Frankston Arts Centre  
is a business unit of  
Frankston City Council



# Supporting the local community.

[EastLink.com.au](http://EastLink.com.au)





## About the Grigoryan Brothers

Guitarists Slava and Leonard Grigoryan are among the finest musicians of their generation, renowned for captivating performances and a repertoire spanning classical, jazz, and contemporary music.

Between them, they have received four ARIA awards and 25 nominations. As a duo, they have recorded 13 albums and toured internationally since 2003, performing across Europe, Asia, Australia, and the USA. Their diverse repertoire allows for performances in traditional and unconventional settings, from orchestras to iconic venues like London's Wigmore Hall, Royal Albert Hall, and Vienna's Konzerthaus.

Their versatility has led to invitations from arts, jazz, and folk festivals, Womad, and intimate venues like clubs and salons. They have also toured the USA, UK, and Australia, supporting KD Lang on her *Ingénue Redux* tour.

Slava and Leonard perform so seamlessly they seem to 'breathe' as one. Their deep respect and admiration for each other foster a rare musical connection that resonates with audiences. Their broad appreciation of musical styles, combined with classical training, creates a distinctive sound blending written and improvised elements.

# This is Us - Slava and Leonard Grigoryan

We are thrilled to welcome you to this performance of *This is Us: A Musical Reflection of Australia*. It is a departure from our earlier work, and it's the first recording that consists entirely of our original compositions. Over the years we have occasionally included pieces of our own in concert programs and on recordings, but this is the first time we have collaborated as a duo to create a composition.

In 2019 we were commissioned by the National Museum in Canberra to compose a suite of music to celebrate its 20th anniversary. We were given 'free rein' as to what the composition was to be about. After spending a few exploratory days at the National Museum and its warehouse in Mitchell, we were completely in awe of the objects and the stories that they represent, as well as of the scale and the vastness of the facilities and collection. Along the way, we were gently guided by the curatorial staff, who we found just as inspiring as the objects themselves. We were stunned by the passion they have for their workplace and for the objects they know so much about.

After much deliberation, we settled on 18 objects. These objects, in our eyes, are a wonderful representation of what it means to be Australian. We chose artefacts that represent our First Nations' history as well as colonisation, migration and innovation, along with stories of love and loss.

In the end, this project turned into our main focus throughout the pandemic. Being cut off from each other for the first time ever - Slava in Adelaide and Leonard in Sydney - we had to create a new approach that would work without us actually being together. Having split the list in half, we individually developed a concept for each piece and then shared our ideas remotely. After going back and forth like this, the pieces took shape. The recording finally took place on 11 December 2020 at the ABC studios in Adelaide.

We hope you enjoy tonight's concert. Its aim is to provide a musical narrative, a soundtrack to the stories behind these powerful objects. We are excited to be performing our compositions for you tonight, and we look forward to sharing our love for these objects with listeners for many years to come.

This project couldn't have happened without the incredible staff of the National Museum, led by its Director, Dr Mathew Trinca AM.



## Convict Love Token

The National Museum holds 314 convict love tokens in its collection. Also known as 'leadern hearts', these small tokens were made by convicts facing transportation to Australia, usually at the time of sentencing, and were given to family members and the friends they left behind. Smoothing and then engraving a coin with a message of affection was one of the few ways a convict could leave a memento with a loved one in England.

The tokens record personal and emotional responses from convicts whose lives are more often represented by official government records. This one, inscribed 1819, bears the words, 'Dear brother, when this you see remember me when I am far away'.



Convict love token,  
1819 National Museum of Australia

### LOVE TOKEN

Slava and Leonard chose this particular token because the words engraved on it had a particular resonance for them.

It is reflective of the geographical distance between Slava and Leonard during the Covid-19 global pandemic and their deep and enduring personal connection as brothers.

The composition is a timeline, invoking a sense of longing and distance as it builds towards a final reunion.

Scan this code to access the original  
concert programme with descriptions  
of all objects and compositions



*You may also like...*

### AN EVENING WITH THE MSO: MOZART AND THE MENDELSSOHN

Friday 4 July 7.30pm

An evening of pure musical bliss, featuring music by Mozart and the Mendelssohn siblings, conducted by Jaime Martín.



# NO

## credit card surcharges with us.

EastLink.com.au

 **EastLink**  
Time better spent.