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**PERCY BRIER – CASE STUDY OF A COMPLETE MUSICIAN  
IN THE PRE-DIGITAL AGE**

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*Percy Brier (1885-1970) was certainly a 'complete musician in the pre-digital age'. As one of Queensland's most successful and productive musicians, he excelled in the diverse roles of solo pianist, chamber music collaborator, composer, teacher, conductor, adjudicator, examiner and organisational leader. This paper highlights various aspects of his long career spanning more than 60 years, and critiques his contributions with the assistance of recordings and excerpts from his writings. His legacy as a pioneering role model, which is now benefitting in part from the recent advances in digital technologies, will also be discussed.*

### **Introduction**

In presenting a case study of the Queensland musician Percy Brier (1885-1970), within a 21<sup>st</sup> century conference whose theme incorporates both the timeless notion of the 'complete musician' and also the contemporary reality of the 'digital age', the question of relevance naturally arises. The aim of this study is to promote interest in the work of previous generations of Australian musicians, whose passion and energy can still provide us with inspiration today. As one of our pioneering pianist-composer-teachers who was active in just about every realm of musical endeavour that was available to him, Percy Brier demonstrates clearly that we have always had 'complete' musicians. Their efforts are worthy of celebration, even though their careers predate the 'digital age'.

Rather than attempt a comprehensive 'life and works' study (see Pirlo 2010), this paper will selectively discuss some of Brier's major achievements and more influential contributions. His work as pianist, collaborative musician, teacher, composer, conductor, adjudicator and examiner, institutional organiser and community advocate will be examined in turn. The first four categories will be treated in greater detail, and the others in more general terms. It is hoped that some deeper insights and appreciation of his work will be gained, and further, that an acknowledgement of the contribution that many of his generation collectively made to Australian music, during the first half of the twentieth century, will be made.

This paper endeavours to address the following questions:

- a) What characterises Percy Brier's career and legacy as being that of a 'complete' musician?
- b) How much of his work is currently or potentially accessible through digital means?
- c) What can be learned from the career of a longstanding musician of the 'pre-digital age'?

Before proceeding, some general observations about the dynamics and value of local cultural research are offered. In today's increasingly interconnected world, it can easily be taken for granted that investigation of any topic of interest can be undertaken completely 'on-line'. From the experience of having spent much time during recent years researching aspects of local musical history, this is clearly not the case. Much of the work of our enterprising musical pioneers is preserved only in hard copy, either published text, typescript or manuscript, and in some cases also in audio recordings, interview transcripts or photographs.

Another obvious aspect of this field is that the legacy of those who lived before the digital age relies upon the subsequent work of others. But this in itself is a self-selecting process, as various researchers choose their topics of investigation. Depending on interest and availability of resources, it is certainly possible to document, preserve and critique the contributions of our local musicians and organisations, and also importantly use digital technology to disseminate one's findings in scholarly forums and other media.

This type of investigation naturally commences in the distant past, but some broader issues also arise which transcend the basic question of 'how do you do it?':

In terms of our current context, does the mere ease of access to an ever-increasing range of technologies and media significantly enhance scholarship or creativity, and indeed musicianship itself, or is this merely an 'old wine in new bottles' phenomenon?

Are the achievements of our cultural pioneers any less worthy because their working context was one of primarily manual effort, with limited assistance of sophisticated technology?

In an ever more crowded world, with great diversity of choice and an encroaching quasi-egalitarianism of taste and aesthetics in the postmodern era, how might contemporary classical musicians learn something from their forbears' achievements, whether it is digitally accessible or not?

### **The case study in overview**

Percy Brier is a relatively easy case study to examine, since he was one of Queensland's most assiduous chroniclers of both his own career, and importantly, the work of many of his precursors and contemporaries. His three major typescripts are repeatedly referred to by local music historians, while his personal papers held in the Fryer Library, the special collections section of the University of Queensland, comprise a substantial repository of primary source material. His habit for diarising and collecting newspaper

cuttings, concert programs, meeting minutes and much other ephemera, provides a good basis for any study of music in Queensland up to ca. 1950.

His own memoirs, written in the early 1960s as he approached his 80<sup>th</sup> year, should be cross-referenced to other sources for verification, even though most of the factual data he presents is impressively accurate. Brier's main accounts, 'The Pioneers of Music in Queensland' (1962), and which was expanded into 'One Hundred Years and More of Music in Queensland' and published posthumously in 1971, are both an incomparable treasure trove of important information. His 'Autobiography of a Musician' was completed in 1965, and published in 1973 by his son Eric Brier, in a limited typescript edition. Copies of these works are available in the major Brisbane libraries.

Before focussing on selected vignettes of Brier's extensive and multi-faceted career, some general observations about him should be made. Percy Brier was clearly a 'local boy made good' story, where the early evidence of his musical talent was enhanced by personal determination and some fortuitous circumstances. He was an enthusiastic self-starter, but in several of the organisations and artistic endeavours he supported, he is not accorded formal 'founder' status through the holding of inaugural leadership positions. Brier was just as willing to act as an initial executive office-bearer or as a subsequent president of numerous musical bodies, and clearly had a desire to work with colleagues for mutual benefit of their membership and/or audiences. Similarly, though he was a successful solo pianist, and recognised as such by well-respected authorities, he was just as comfortable in collaborative music making, and a strong advocate of chamber music across more than half a century of concertising.

As a composer, Percy Brier was proud to see his works performed, and in a few cases achieved publication, but was equally keen to support the creative outputs of his contemporaries, be they locally based or from further afield. Brier was also active at a time when he could legitimately claim to have given the local première of several European composers' works which are regarded as standard repertoire today. As a mentor and critic of others, mostly in his role as teacher, Brier revelled in his students' success, irrespective of whether these occurred during their formal relationship or subsequently. His views on what constitutes well-rounded or 'complete' musicianship, which informed his own extensive adjudicating and examining work throughout Queensland and beyond, further exemplify his outlook. Overall, there is a clear recurring theme of Percy Brier having maintained a fine balance between the individual and the collective aspects of music-making, which makes his 60-year career a worthy and interesting case study.

To set the context, some key aspects of Percy Brier's career are worth listing:

<b>Year(s)</b>	<b>Event / Activity</b>
1885	Percy Brier born in North Pine (Petrie) near Caboolture
1890-1900	Attends Yeronga State School and evening classes at Brisbane Technical College
1893	Musical education commences under various Brisbane studio piano teachers
1901	Wins inaugural Trinity College of Music scholarship for 3 years' study in London
1902-1905	Fulltime studies at Trinity College, completion of several advanced qualifications
1906	Returns to Brisbane, establishes private teaching studio in city premises
1906-1909	Involvement with Musicians' Association of Queensland as office-bearer, presenter
1907-1915	Solo performances, chamber music collaborations with Jefferies sisters and others
1908-1962	Presentation of 37 public recitals by his students, annual events from 1927
1912-1919	Organist at City Baptist Tabernacle church
1913	First publications of original compositions
1912-1938	Brisbane Liedertafel / Apollo Club, firstly as accompanist, then conductor 1937-38
1912-1922	Local secretary for Trinity College London examinations
1915	Married Eva Baynes
1915-1954	Adjudication for eisteddfodau throughout Queensland and interstate
1921	Founding Vice-President of Music Teachers' Association of Queensland (MTAQ)
1921-1925	Organiser, performer for Brisbane Chamber Music Society, four concerts annually
1923-1963	Examiner for Australian Music Examinations Board, Music Advisory Board member
1924-1963	Teaching studio in King House – register totalled 912 students prior to retiring
1926	Acting organist for St James' Anglican Church Sydney, also AMEB work in NSW
1928-1951	Twelve terms as MTAQ president (aka Musical Association of Queensland 1930-62)
1929-1947	Organiser and performer for MTAQ chamber music and sonata series
1931-1934	Participant in first local complete series of Beethoven piano sonatas and concertos
1932-1935	Deputy conductor for Queensland State and Municipal Choir
1935-1942	Organiser of MTAQ concerts for ABC broadcasts
1937-1941	Founding conductor of Indooroopilly Choral Society
1940-1963	Organiser and several times President of Composers Guild of Australia, Qld branch
1955	Nominated Life Member of MTAQ
1956	50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary recital program – reprise of professional debut concert of 1906
1959-1963	Appointed to Advisory Council of Queensland Conservatorium of Music, est. 1957
1962-1965	Authorship of two historical essays on music in Queensland and autobiography
by 1965	Retirement from all forms of musical and public activity
1970	Percy Brier dies in Brisbane
1975-	Memorial Percy Brier Prize for Composition offered at the University of Queensland

### **Percy Brier as solo and collaborative pianist**

Brier claimed to have performed in more than fifty recitals, which includes numerous solo works alongside concertos, duo-piano compositions, and often accompaniments to shorter vocal works which featured in mixed programs. The stamina and persistence which characterise his work is evidenced by the fact that in 1956 he presented, for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his professional debut, an almost exact reprise of one of the two recitals he performed within months of returning from overseas. This program provides an interesting insight into early 20<sup>th</sup> century tastes. Perennial standards such as Chopin's *A-flat Ballade*, Schumann's *Phantasy Pieces* Opus 12, and Mendelssohn's *Songs without words* appeared alongside Brahms' arrangement of a *Gavotte* by Gluck. Also performed were works by composers who have vanished from the concert stage, such as Ludvig Schytte (1848-1909) and Heinrich Götze (1836-1906).

Another reminiscence of earlier trends in concert structure was the inclusion of short vocal and instrumental solos, often accompanied by the same solo artist. In this case, Brier performed alongside a cellist who had studied with the Jefferies sisters, with whom he had previously maintained a longstanding musical partnership, commencing with his debut recital in 1906. Brier's only regret was that at the age of 71 he did not feel capable of performing Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody* No.12, so substituted No.5 instead! (Brier 1973, p. 56) The predictions made at the time of his debut were clearly well-founded: the inaugural recital was described as a 'musical treat' by a 'capable young pianist ...a feast at which one assists at but rarely'. (*Brisbane Courier* 10 July 1906, p. 5)

Percy Brier championed a wide range of standard composers and works, but often presented these within a broader context, such as in thematic recital series which traversed various stylistic periods. This format was used at least three times before World War I, including one series when an entire program was devoted to each of Beethoven, Chopin and Brahms, possibly something of a local rarity at the time. Brier could also claim a number of Queensland 'firsts', with works such as Debussy's *Ballade* in 1911, Franck's *Prelude Chorale and Fugue* in 1917, and Ravel's *Sonatine* in 1924. With two of these composers being still alive at the time of Brier's own early performances, and notably examples of the relatively unfamiliar modern French school, he was well aware of the need to cultivate an appreciation in his audience, even if this required multiple hearings.

In the case of the Debussy, Brier recounts (1973, p. 47) that a repeated private hearing within only a few weeks by a friend of his prompted a positive response, whereas initially the comment offered was 'I never want to hear that again'. In the case of the Ravel, Brier warned his public audience they might not like it at first, as it was a work that took him some time to fully absorb, but he was pleasantly surprised when an encore was

demanded. A barometer of the critical reception such composers were then accorded in Brisbane is the published report, which balanced observations of the Ravel *Sonatine's* 'harsh discords, strange chords ... [and] passages of ethereal loveliness' with the comment that this 'most modern of the moderns' caused the audience to be 'unaffectedly delighted'. (*Brisbane Courier* 2 June 1924, p. 8)

Consideration of such comments, by both the artist and the critic, reminds one that all musical works were once contemporary, and in need of their advocates. Brier also showed his willingness to expand everyone's horizons with lesser known works such as Eduard Macdowell's *Sonata Tragica* and Richard Strauss' *Piano Sonata* Opus 5. In certain cases he felt a very close affinity the composer, such as when in 1921 he gave a memorial tribute to the recently deceased Coleridge-Taylor, whom Brier had met while in England. (Brier 1973, p. 49) As mentioned earlier, Brier's definition of piano recitals extends to his frequent presentation of concertos with second piano as accompaniment, including works by Mozart, Grieg, Schumann, Saint-Saens, and for its time, the less obvious case of CPE Bach. Within the genre of works composed specifically for duo piano, he frequently partnered with Archie Day. Here the romantics predominated, particularly Russians such as Cui, Arensky and Rachmaninoff, and also Saint-Saens, Moscheles, Chopin and Reinecke alongside Mozart.

While not being self-aggrandising, the occasional affirming gesture from colleagues was sincerely welcomed by Brier. For example, when invited by George Sampson 'as the best pianist in Brisbane' (Brier 1973, p. 67) to inaugurate the Bechstein grand piano in the newly opened City Hall in 1930, Brier regretfully declined the engagement, owing to his unavailability in being interstate at the time. A delayed opportunity came the following year, when he performed Rubinstein's *Concerto in D minor*.

Another indication of his standing in the musical community was his bravura and bravery in taking on Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* within a series devoted to the first local performances of the complete sonatas during 1931-32. This was presented by 25 pianists under the co-ordination of E.R.B. Jordan. As Brier himself admits, the extraordinary challenges of this work nearly defeated him, but his loyalty to the cause ensured he fulfilled the commitment to both the repertoire and his colleagues. As noted earlier with reference to contemporary works, Brier often shared personal reflections with his audience through prefatory remarks. On this this occasion, he freely admitted that 'after six months' wrestling with it, he was only beginning to realise the beauties in it'. (*Brisbane Courier* 27 July 1932, p. 15) This honest comment which included warnings about the *Hammerklavier* sonata's great length, and coupled with the history-making sense of occasion with the local première of a daunting work, it was ultimately

ensured that the experience 'pleased his audience'. (*Brisbane Courier* 27 July 1932, p. 15)

Although other aspects of Brier's work took him throughout Queensland, his concertising was mainly based in Brisbane. He only occasionally performed elsewhere, such as in Toowoomba, Kingaroy and Wondai during 1911-12, which in a few cases included the educational format of the lecture-recital. His Toowoomba Town Hall concert was described as 'an excellent one' for which 'lovers of music assembled in considerable numbers'. (*Toowoomba Chronicle* 26 Oct. 1911, p. 5)

As a chamber musician, Percy Brier was involved in collaborative music-making almost immediately upon commencing his professional career. The fortuitous co-location of several prominent music teachers' studios in a central city building helped to forge working relationships that blossomed into successful public enterprises. For more nearly forty years, interrupted only by war or other circumstances, Brier constantly fostered a serious chamber music tradition in Brisbane, either as pianist, co-ordinator, or on a few occasions even as a second violist. His regular collaborators were the Jefferies family of string players, chiefly violinist Vada and cellist Mary, but he also appeared in duo recitals on numerous occasions with violinist Eric Hayne.

As also evident in his solo playing, Brier maintained a balance between standard and lesser known or recent repertoire, and also an overriding determination to present quality performances. Securing an organisational basis for these ventures was also a concern of Brier's, and he had a central role in inaugurating a Chamber Music Society during 1910-11, and a later more extensive iteration during 1921-25. Brier was not only a featured soloist and chamber music partner, but also heavily involved with administrative aspects as well as program planning. He sometimes spoke out publicly on the lack of significant patronage, which prevented the more regular presentation of guest artists from interstate. (*Brisbane Courier* 21 Aug. 1925, p. 14)

As in the case of 'solo' recitals of this era, mixed programs were still common, whereby larger works such as trios, quartets or quintets were juxtaposed with a duo sonata and brackets of solo songs. The unapologetically specialist nature of serious chamber music recitals was welcomed by many as an aesthetic refinement in the local cultural calendar. Even before Brier's concerts had accrued a semblance of stability with a 'named' series and structure, programs which included works such as Beethoven's *Ghost* and the Arensky piano trios were greeted 'with popular approbation from the large audience'. (*Brisbane Courier* 14 May 1907, p. 6)

Repertoire trends are also interesting to observe, in that repertoire such as Rheinberger's *Piano Quartet in E-flat* Opus 38 and Neils Gade's *Novelletten* Opus 29 were very popular until the early 1920s but then disappeared, whereas Brahms was rather slow to be adopted. Admittedly, most composers from the standard canon were then also being only selectively represented. Beethoven was mainly featured through only the most popular violin sonatas, string quartets and a couple of his piano trios, while the Schumann *Piano Quintet* Opus 44 was that composer's only chamber work to be performed featured locally before World War II.

Together with various likeminded colleagues, Brier sought to expand the public's appreciation of some 'household name' composers through his involvement with a series of chamber music-focussed anniversary concerts around 1930, commencing with the centenaries of the deaths of Beethoven and Schubert in 1927-28, and the births of Haydn and Brahms in 1932-33. Another barometer of local musical taste and knowledge can be discerned in the comment that for the Brahms Centenary concert of May 1933, Brier and the Jefferies sisters did 'full justice ... to the memory of a great exponent of chamber music'. (*BC* 5 May 1933, p. 15) On this occasion the work performed was the *Piano Quartet in G minor* Opus 25, which had been the composer's most frequently performed chamber work to date, though Brier had previously presented at least one of the violin sonatas and the *Piano Trio in C Minor* Opus 101, with similar success.

While Brier alternated with several other Brisbane-based pianists in the larger works, he also formed a steady duo partnership for several years with violinist Eric Hayne. Upon returning from seven years studying and performing overseas in 1915, Hayne was very prominent in local performances for several decades. Initially Brier and Hayne played various sonatas and trios by Beethoven and Mendelssohn at concerts of the Apollo Club (Liedertafel – see below), and in the early 1920s several recently composed works by Holbrooke, Coleridge-Taylor and Brier himself.

In the absence of recordings, evidence of Brier's preferred pianistic idioms can be seen in those works written for himself to play. Being unconstrained by his perceptions of another's technical limitations or preferences, when he composed a substantial violin-piano duo sonata, Brier had free rein. He was inspired, by the occasion of the (re)-establishment of a Brisbane Chamber Music Society in 1921, to compose a *Sonata in G Minor for Violin and Piano*, which featured in its first concert that year. Knowing the extent of his solo repertoire, which included some very challenging works, one can see here Brier's penchant for thick chordal textures, broad sweeping accompaniment patterns, and also at times quirky changes of harmony and hand position. A brief

excerpt from this work is now offered to illustrate Brier as pianist, through this work he composed and himself performed on several occasions.

[Recorded excerpt from Percy Brier, *Sonata in G minor for Violin and Piano*, performed by Peter Roennfeldt and Margaret Connolly]

Further evidence of the impact of this composition and the skill of its performers is provided by contemporary critiques:

'Mr. Brier's 2 is a remarkable achievement. It is scholarly without being pedantic or diffuse, and melodious without being commonplace. The composer has avoided the fault of many modern writers of striving after 'programme' effects, and thereby becoming unintelligible. ... Mr. Brier revelled in the intricacies of his own composition and proved that his abilities as executant are in no wise inferior to those of creator. The work is a notable addition to music of its class, and it will, it is hoped, be published, so that its merits may be appreciated beyond the confines of this small circle'. (*Daily Mail* 24 May 1921, p. 8) The hoped-for publication only came to fruition in 2011! (see below)

### **Percy Brier as teacher**

There was never any doubt in Brier's mind that the majority of his professional focus would be as a teacher. While he fostered numerous other musical activities, some of which would have earned him very little if any income, maintenance of a teaching studio was central to his career. His autobiography (1973, p. 42) is very revealing in terms of his attitude to teaching as a vocation, with statements such as this:

'Teaching is a responsibility as well as a privilege and should be undertaken as seriously. It gives great opportunity for character building. One of the finest compliments I have had came from one of these special twelve [former male students]. He said publicly that I had taught him how to think and later privately – Uncle, [Brier's nickname used by this particular group] don't be surprised if because you have taught me to think I should think differently from you'.

Further, Brier stated (p. 41) that 'teaching is a rewarding experience. Satisfaction comes from success gained, but the greater thing is the fact that one has been instrumental in helping someone along the road of life'.

Brier's own account of the development of his teaching practice is replete with numerous names of students and their achievements, in advanced diploma and other examinations, and also in other fields which might include non-pianistic endeavours. His detailed self-review reveals an abiding desire to instil and enhance a love for music in all his students, but which is not limited to the instrument or repertoire at hand. His

concern for the broader parameters of musical structure and form are also clearly articulated, and towards the end of his career he was proud to report that numerous teachers had also sought him out for assistance with theoretical work, including several who did so by correspondence. Had the phrases then been in more common usage, 'professional development' or 'mentoring' could have been used to describe this aspect of Brier's work.

In order to further illuminate the relatively private world of the studio teacher, the identification of a few prominent musicians who received some of their training under Percy Brier's guidance would be appropriate. An inveterate chronicler and list-maker himself, Brier actually knew how many students he had mentored over his 60-year teaching career – the number 912 is mentioned, though he admitted a secret desire to reach 1,000 before retiring! He recognised how the needs of the school-age boy differed from that of an adult female student, as well as the fact that some were destined for professional success and others for a lifetime of amateur music-making, in the best sense of the word. Among his more gifted pre-professional students were Mary Childe, whose later career was mostly based here in Toowoomba, and Robert Boughen who had a diverse profile which included that of Brisbane city and cathedral organist.

Brier also had contact with a number of future music educators whose tertiary lecturing work in turn influenced future generations of teachers, including Ian McKinley, Keith Smith and Fred Erickson, who each worked at various Queensland teachers' colleges. At the international level, James Mursill was highly influential due to his work at Columbia University in New York, and various publications in the field of music education. Mursill later paid tribute to Brier's early work in teaching him in the years before WWI, prior to his leaving for study in the USA. Another former student of Brier who later forged an international reputation was Ronald Grainer. His piano studies before WWII were followed by a tertiary course at Sydney Conservatorium. Grainer's major career phase was as a composer for television and film in the United Kingdom, notably as the creator of the original 'Dr Who' theme music. (Brier 1973, pp. 23-42)

Clearly it is not possible to attribute every aspect of a former student's success to their piano or theory teacher's influence, and neither did Brier wish to offer such an impression in his autobiography. He was genuinely proud of all his former students' career achievements, and by personal communication or published commentary, many of them freely offered their gratitude for his earlier input. Neither was Brier the only prominent music teacher in Queensland prior to WWII – as will be seen later, he was heavily involved with professional networks, and supportive of others' efforts. However, in an age when the reputation of one's studio was a vital component of a musician's

sustainability in the freelance market, just as it is today, the occasional successes of alumni reaped ongoing benefits for Brier.

Brier also freely admitted the positive marketing potential of his annual student recitals, which he presented annually from 1927 onwards, and which over more than half a century totalled 37. At one of these events in 1929, it was reported (*Brisbane Courier* 6 Dec. 1929, p. 23) that 'the two players who made the greatest impression were Miss Mary Childe ... and Mr. Ernest Watson. In particular, Childe's playing of Schumann's *Papillons* was 'charming' while Watson's performance of Mendelssohn's *Rondo Brillante* was 'decidedly brilliant'. This program was shared with two other students, while Childe and Watson also contributed a Mozart concerto movement and Dohnanyi's *Rhapsody in C* respectively, where other aspects of their musicianship were on display.

This brief survey of the more public outcomes of private studio work show that Brier had very broad repertoire interests within his teaching practice. He was keen to expand students' exposure to the concerto repertoire, albeit mostly with second piano accompaniment, and he promoted the practice of collaborative programming, with performers contributing variously according to their ability.

### **Percy Brier as composer**

Just as Percy Brier would have viewed his performing and teaching activities in a complementary light, with neither aspect necessarily holding greater prestige, so too were his original compositions a natural outgrowth of his musical persona. There is no evidence of Brier setting out to become a major composer, and his training in harmony and counterpoint at Trinity College could not have been anything but a traditional curriculum regime, particularly with Drs. C.W. Pearce and Gordon Saunders as his tutors.

Brier however found frequent opportunities in his concert work to present various original solo piano, vocal or chamber works, and a small number of extended works scored for choral and/or orchestral forces. While much of this creative output could be classed as being of its time, in that the post-Victorian tastes which dominated early twentieth century music in Australia were considered the norm, (Boughen 1979) Brier evinced a craftsmanship which enabled quite inspired writing to emerge at times.

Fortunately, the digital age has caught up with Brier as a composer, if only to a very limited extent. About ten years ago, the State Library of Queensland embarked on an initial phase of digitising the works of numerous local composers. The repertoire focus was mostly in the area of popular song and piano sheet music, which were the primary means of gaining exposure through publication in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The 'Music

Queensland' project involved creation of digital copies of various works for which copyright limits had expired, and supported in select cases by audio recordings.

For the latter phase, the current author had a co-ordinating and curatorial role in collaboration with the State Library. All of the recordings were produced in formats that could be uploaded for website access. After reviewing the works by Brier held in the Library's collection, a single representative choice was made. *Love's Reverie*, published most probably in 1913, exemplifies the genre of the more 'serious' art song. Based on the words of Emily Coungeau, a well-known local poet, it shows deft handling of both vocal line, piano part and text setting. Its suitability for inclusion was confirmed by the performers who were selected to record the song, namely the well-known Brisbane musicians Jason Barry-Smith and Lynne Jordan, who each commented on the finer details of Brier's writing and sensitivity to textual aspects and mood.

[Recorded example – Percy Brier, *Love's Reverie*, composed and published in Brisbane ca. 1913, s.n., performed by Jason Barry-Smith and Lynne Jordan]

A small number of Brier's other works are also accessible through the Music Queensland collection, including his song *Bowling* with words by N. Sapsford, which was premiered in the same concert as *Love's Reverie*, in December 1913. (*Brisbane Courier* 10 Dec. 1913, p. 6) In the view of the Music Queensland project participants, this was considered to be less usable as a recording project, but nevertheless was quite a successful example of the genre of leisure-time parlour songs. Another work, Brier's *Intermezzo giocoso*, which was published by Paling in Sydney in 1950, is likewise typical of the short intermediate level piano piece, suitable to student performance but unlikely to be heard on the professional concert stage.

The catalogue of Brier's original works extends to many unpublished keyboard solos and songs. The majority of those which can be accurately dated were completed in the 1940s and 50s, possibly due to the advent of the Composers' Guild which will be discussed later. The violin sonata previously mentioned appears to have been composed at a time of great optimism following the 1918 Armistice and the re-establishment or foundation of various musical organisations.

In the domain of concerted genres, Brier continued the longstanding tradition of composer-performer in his creation of two works for solo piano and orchestra, one of which is *Lochinvar* for male chorus and strings, composed for the Apollo Club in 1917. Brier evidently thought highly of this work, as it was also later selected for a very prestigious concert within the 1927 Brisbane Music Week. This week-long festival was presented soon after the formation of the greater Brisbane City Council. It was hoped

that the event 'would serve to encourage and develop the wealth of musical talent in their midst, which he [Lord Mayor William Jolly] felt sure, had not been altogether fully appreciated in the past'. (*Brisbane Courier* 12 Oct. 1927, p. 6)

Numerous local ensembles and soloists were featured, and given that Brier's original work was selected, he was being strongly acknowledged by his peers to be worthy of sharing the limelight alongside works by Schubert, Mendelssohn, Parry and Elgar. Similarly, Brier's *Fantasy* for solo piano and voices, choir and orchestra, redolent of Beethoven's similarly scored work, was acclaimed as a 'delightful conception' when featured within the enterprising programs of the Austral Choir during the interwar decades. These 'recital concerts' continued during the 1920s and 30s under E.R.B. Jordan, and in this early instance in 1924, Brier was proudly presented alongside a composition by a former Brisbanite who was then gaining international stardom, Arthur Benjamin. (*Brisbane Courier* 13 Aug. 1924, p. 9)

It is unlikely that great interest in Brier's compositional output will emerge in the future, but these few recorded and published examples will hopefully enhance his reputation as a highly competent and hard-working composer. In any event, composition students of the University of Queensland have the opportunity to be associated with his creative legacy, through the annual Percy Brier Memorial Prize which has been offered since the mid-1970s.

### **Percy Brier as conductor, adjudicator and examiner**

While the roles of performer, teacher and composer clearly have a public aspect, the majority of time spent on each endeavour is restricted to the comparatively private domain of the studio or rehearsal room. In comparison, the roles of conductor, adjudicator and examiner are primarily public, in the sense that one is required to interface either with large groups of people, or the expectations of major organisations, with all their administrative complexities. For this reason, they are discussed here as a combined category.

Brier seems to have coped well with these external expectations, but he noted the extra amounts of energy and perseverance required, particularly when extensive travelling was involved. Occasionally a tinge of disappointment is detectable when he comments on politically difficult situations when decision-making devolved to committees or some other higher authority resulted in a situation which adversely affected his own work opportunities.

Conducting requires astute aural perception and decision-making skills that must function well under the pressure of the moment. It also requires the conductor to

communicate his views and criticisms in a constructive light, particularly as one is often working with non-professionals. In this context, Brier's stature as a 'complete' musician is again evident. He had personally experienced the benefits of choral ensemble participation during his Trinity College years, and soon after returning to Brisbane he instigated a singing class at the Grammar School. While not destined to specialise only in conducting, Brier worked for nearly thirty years with several ensembles. Initially Brier joined as a singing member the Brisbane Musical Union, the forerunner of the Queensland State and Municipal Choir. He was later invited in 1932 by its conductor George Sampson to become his deputy, a role he held for four years.

During this same period it was Brier's good fortune to also work alongside another of Queensland's pre-eminent choral musicians, Leonard Francis. In 1912 he was engaged as accompanist to the Brisbane Liedertafel, then a very prominent musical organisation with a large public following. It had long extended beyond its cultural origins in the local German community, but was not immune from wartime fear-mongering, and so from 1916 became known henceforth as the Apollo Club. Up to that time the organisation also sponsored an orchestra, but when that ensemble disbanded, likewise due to wartime problems, Brier introduced instrumental chamber music into their concerts, as mentioned earlier.

After a quarter century of loyal service, the normally accommodating Brier suggested to Leonard Francis that he could not continue as a secondary player, but rather than having his resignation accepted as he expected, he was given fulltime access to the conductor's podium, where he contributed two final years of service before finishing at the end of 1938. (Brier 1973, p. 105) Brier's final concert after 27 years with the male-voice ensemble, which was also the choir's 208<sup>th</sup> since its formation in 1884, featured himself as conductor as well as composer. It was reported that 'one of the most effective works' on the program was his own arrangement of *Killarney* as an unaccompanied partsong, while another item showed the choir's 'unexceptionable tone quality'. (*The Courier-Mail* 16 Nov. 1938, p. 14) Brier subsequently devoted his choral efforts to the Indooroopilly Choral Society which he formed in the late 1930s, but which like some other community organisations was forced to disband in the early 1940s as WWII progressed.

Brier saw adjudicating as an extension of the teaching role. He considered it to be an 'indirect method of teaching, namely selecting the best performer in a competition and *giving the reason for doing so* [italics original]'. (Brier 1973, p. 75) Across forty years of this involvement, which Brier commenced in 1915, he maintained a positive attitude to its rigorous demands, which took him as far afield as Cairns, Melbourne and Adelaide.

Only rarely did Brier admit to the unintentionally humorous side of this activity. He related how on one occasion, several singers whose age indicated their likely 'experience' would not have resulted in the desired effect, due to their mispronunciation of 'Come into the garden, mud'. In contrast, someone who was 'hardly old enough to issue an invitation ... infused so much feeling ... and delivered his words so clearly' was awarded the prize. (*Brisbane Courier* 1973, p. 76) After citing numerous other amusing and also many serious accounts of his varied schedule, Brier concludes that adjudicating had been 'a wonderful aspect of my professional life and I hope I sowed seeds of musical truths that have borne fruit in the years that followed'. (*Brisbane Courier* 1973, p. 88)

Reflecting on my own early start with adjudicating, at a similarly young age as what Brier was in 1915, I recall having had no real induction or mentoring. While not necessarily promoted Brier's writings as a thorough handbook, a brief study of it might have helped me, and possibly others, in the early stages of being called upon to provide a professional service which is still much in demand today.

The influence of public examinations systems within Australia music is immense. Not only do they award graded non-degree qualifications, but also through prizes and scholarships have supported many emerging musicians in their further studies. While some commentators have criticised the seeming obsession with examination success and the aspiration towards diplomas by many teachers, students and their parents, the provision of a framework through graded repertoire and associated technical guidelines continues to have its merits.

In Brier's case, it was his outstanding success with the Trinity College of London (TCL) system as a teenager which enabled him to travel overseas for advanced studies. Similarly the careers of many other Queenslanders have been supported by the awards such as the 'University AMEB Scholarship' which enabled tertiary study at an interstate institution, prior to the foundation of a conservatorium in this state in the late 1950s. As with other aspects of his career, it is likely that Brier did not set out to become an examiner himself, but in retrospect he seemed quite well suited for this role. Again he offers insights into the qualities required for success by a potential examiner: 'He/she should be a fully trained musician, he/she must have an agreeable personality and he/she must be capable of dealing effectively with any unusual situation'. (Brier n.d.)

As a product of the TCL system, it was natural that Brier should continue the involvement upon establishing himself professionally in Brisbane. Commencing in 1912 he acted as local secretary, which involved much administrative work, and during the sessions of the visiting examiners, co-ordination and liaison duties. However, he soon became involved with the fledgling Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB),

established in 1918, and provided in retrospect some interesting insights about its early development in this state.

Evidently, most local musicians were initially unsupportive of the AMEB due to its reliance on interstate examiners. The minimal local involvement was through its organisation being managed by the University of Queensland. Whereas Adelaide and Melbourne universities had pre-existing music faculties, Queensland did not, being founded only a few years previously in 1910. Apart from George Sampson's appointment as nominal 'Music Advisor' which involved delivery of occasional public lectures, the University of Queensland could not claim to have the necessary musical expertise to support a public examination system without external assistance.

Brier was initially quite reluctant to relinquish the TCL connection from which he had benefitted greatly, but having done so, he can claim primacy in being the first AMEB examiner to be appointed in Queensland. After an approach was made in late 1922 by an AMEB representative, Brier sought counsel from Frank Hutchens who was then also visiting Brisbane, and was persuaded to start by undertaking some examination tours, firstly only in New South Wales from 1923. Two years later he commenced working primarily within the Queensland circuits. Brier claims that his appointment and public support of the AMEB persuaded others to participate, as did the formation of a Music Advisory Board, which ensured the leading musicians had input into the University's administration of this program.

The involvement as an examiner continued for 40 years until Brier's retirement in 1963, though some five years previously he had ceased the arduous regional touring. Along with a small but growing team of hardworking examiners, Brier travelled the length and breadth of Queensland, making him one of the best informed observers on regional musical life during the middle decades of the century. As noted earlier, his good humour appears to have stayed with him throughout, as did his respect for his AMEB colleagues. His personal diaries list comments on all those known to him, including those whose AMEB work first commenced in another state. (Brier 1973, pp. 124-153)

### **Percy Brier as institutional organiser and community advocate**

A study of Percy Brier's career would not be complete without mention of the many musical organisations in which he held a leading role. As mentioned earlier, even with those bodies in which he was an instigator, he was not desirous of always taking the limelight. However when public recognition did come, in characteristic style he accepted this with humility. Even a mere listing of these organisations is a veritable roadmap of the development of Queensland's music during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, alongside those already

mentioned, the AMEB, the eisteddfod movement and various choral-orchestral ensembles.

Upon returning to Brisbane in early 1906, Brier discovered that an active Musicians' Association of Queensland had been in operation for several months. This body was formed out of a collective desire to create a forum for the professional pursuit of music within a collegial setting. Monthly meetings featured lecture-demonstrations by various prominent musicians, or a mixed program comprising a talk and a short performance. Although still a relatively junior professional, Brier was featured on several occasions, presenting lectures on topics such as 'Technique of the Pianoforte', excerpts of which were later printed in the *Brisbane Courier* newspaper. (*Brisbane Courier* 20 Oct. 1906, p. 10) He also spoke on 'Mendelssohn and Dvorak', 'The Art of Teaching as Applied to Music', and at the organisation's final event in mid-1909, 'How to Play Accompaniments'. (*Brisbane Courier* 15 June 1909, p. 5)

Already in 1907 Brier became an active committee member, later also taking on the role of Secretary, and also appeared as piano soloist, chamber player and even composer on several occasions. While remaining committed to this pioneering organisation, Brier spoke out at the meeting which took the decision to disband the Association: 'the difficulty apparently was finding workers'. (*Brisbane Courier* 29 July 1909, p. 6) Despite its premature demise, over four years the Musicians' Association of Queensland had for the first time established a forum for professional development amongst local musicians, and at its height had a healthy membership of between 100 and 150, including numerous students.

Meanwhile, a professional chamber music performance organisation was also being formed, likewise with Brier in a key role. Encouraged by some of their private and semi-public performances, he presented with Vada and Mary Jefferies a number of chamber music recitals between 1907 and 1915, including a short period when the formal title of 'Chamber Music Society' was used. Some of this work has already been discussed, but like many ventures the Great War interrupted the momentum.

Following WWI, and alongside the early years of the AMEB in Queensland, it seems the musical community was determined to regroup itself. This was symbolised by the formation of two organisations in 1921, again with Brier as a leading participant in both. One was the Brisbane Chamber Music Society, referred to earlier, and of more longlasting significance, the Music Teachers' Association of Queensland (MTAQ).

Following preliminary discussions held in late 1920, the MTAQ was established with George Sampson as inaugural president, with the aim of promoting the general welfare

of the musical profession, as outlined by Vice-President Percy Brier at the first official meeting in April 1921. (*Brisbane Courier* 11 April 1921, p. 6) The objectives which this entailed ranged from the MTAQ acting as collegial forum for professional development of studio music teachers, to encourage high teaching standards, to establish a lending library for members, and to provide support for any movements towards the foundation of a state conservatorium and symphony orchestra. (Brier 1946)

Percy Brier's contribution to the MTAQ over the next four decades was unstinting. In addition to being the elected President for twelve terms at various times commencing in 1928, he instigated annual conferences which first occurred in 1929 and continued after WWII as a biennial event. These conferences were notable for their inclusion of a number of prominent guest artists, including Percy Grainger in 1935, French organist Marcel Dupré in 1939, and Miriam Hyde in 1942.

Brier's vision of the MTAQ as also providing a public performance avenue was first seen in his organisation of children's concerts, and also the instigation of Chamber Music and Sonata recitals in the 1920s. This activity also extended to curatorship of regular ABC broadcasts between 1935-42, including a series devoted to the complete piano sonatas of Mozart. (Brier 1973, p. 160) Brier also fostered the organisation's networking through representation on the federal body the various state-based music teacher organisations during the 1930s and 40s, and in providing local administrative support for the Melba Scholarship competitions. He also hosted numerous visiting artists, some of whom were in Queensland appearing for the ABC concerts.

At the local level, the topics discussed at regular MTAQ meetings indicate that Brier fostered an awareness of broader issues, such as the need for a conservatorium in Queensland, which was vigorously debated in the late 1940s and early 1950s. His formidable contribution was recognised in the award of Life Membership by the MTAQ in 1955. By virtue of his longstanding high profile, Brier was also invited at the age of 74 to serve as a member of the Conservatorium's Advisory Council. He served diligently in this role for four years until 1963, the year when most of his public activities ceased.

A final but rather significant organisational contribution was the formation in 1940 of a Queensland branch of the Composers' Guild of Australia. Brier's longstanding support of local composers, and active involvement himself through presenting his own original works in concert, dates back to before WWI. Already in 1913 he presented a 'Brisbane Composers' Concert', and continued this strategy through various other events already mentioned. He also instigated through the MTAQ an annual local composer's concert, which was presented annually for 21 years between 1936-57. (Brier 1973, p. 176)

Through meetings of the National Council of Musical (Music Teachers') Associations, Brier came into contact with Louis Lavater of Melbourne, who encouraged the formation of a Composers' Guild chapter. In typical style, Brier did not seek the honorific title of founding president, but acted as inaugural secretary, working on behalf of what was initially a small membership of about a dozen. Both the members-only meetings and the annual public recitals subsequently became a major forum for local creativity, which was further supported by the award of occasional prizes, sometimes using internal resources, and sometimes with sponsorship by the Australian Performing Rights Association.

The public Composers' Guild concerts were sometimes planned on the same scale as other major choral or chamber music programs which were now customary, but over time, solo and smaller chamber works predominated. Later, an expanding membership suggested that biannual concerts could be supported, and on a few occasions works by composers from other state chapters of the Guild were also heard.

Public activities also extended to occasional radio broadcasts, presentation of a program at the City Hall under the auspices of the City Council's Music Advisory Council, an organ recital in one of the city churches, and collaborative events with the Brisbane Music Club. In the early 1960s it also presented some events at the newly established Queensland Conservatorium. The program presented in late 1962 featured works by Conservatorium lecturers Larry Sitsky, Lloyd Vick and Alan Lane, alongside Percy Brier, Miriam Hyde, and recent graduate Anna Mahoney who had the previous year taken out the institution's first Master Diploma in composition. The mention of various female composers is noteworthy, in that for almost its entire 23-year existence, half of those featured on each Composers' Guild program were women, even in those instances where the number represented exceeded ten.

Brier obviously felt quite curatorial about the Guild's work, but as he noted later, Queensland was possibly the last state chapter to experience a decline, a trend already seen elsewhere around the country during the 1950s. However, at its height, this organisation fulfilled an important role during a period when the plight of a composer was possibly even more solitary than it is today.

An example of Brier's commitment to the Guild's work was seen at the 1951 concert, attended by a 'capacity audience'. He stepped in at short notice to perform his own *Sonata Ballade*, due to the indisposition of its dedicatee, his former piano student Christine Whyte (Boughen). The critic commented that the sonata was the 'most extended work' on the diverse program comprising 11 local composers, and that despite the late change of plans, it was given a 'virile reading' by Brier. (Briggs 1951, p. 5)

This final snapshot of Percy Brier in many ways sums him up – at the age of 65 he was still composing extended works, promoting the careers of his students, assisting in the organisation of public events that benefitted numerous colleagues, and when required, stepped into the soloist's spotlight, even when this involved some personal inconvenience.

## **Conclusion**

In retrospect, how might one evaluate Percy Brier's contribution, particularly in terms of his status as a 'complete musician'? I now return to my initial questions posed at the opening of this paper.

a) What characterises Percy Brier's career and legacy as being that of a 'complete' musician?

As a performer, even in the absence of audio recordings, it is possible to form an opinion of his artistry by collating circumstantial evidence such as published critiques, peer comments and his own instrumental writing style. Consistently, Brier is praised for his formidable technique, keyboard fluency, and artistic sensitivity to the needs of his ensemble partners. If George Sampson, the leading local musician of the interwar years, singled him out for special recognition within a major civic event for the newly opened Brisbane City Hall, one can certainly surmise that Percy Brier was universally recognised within the musical community of his day.

Through his original compositions, there is sufficient evidence that he was able to cope with most of the demands one is likely to ever meet as a professional performer. His versatility in being both a concert pianist and competent church organist is also worthy of note, as is his catholic taste when it came to programming. His contribution to repertoire expansion, including both local premieres of some of the rarely heard pinnacles of the canon, and also many less well-known composers, is significant.

The legacy of Brier's teaching is undeniable, in that a long list of former students went on to achieve much in the musical world, often in areas well beyond the repertoire they might have studied with him. Inevitably though, any teacher's impact is likely to be but one component of a diverse patchwork of experiences that guide a student towards their own personal maturity, and Brier would be the last to claim his entire alumni lists' later careers as his personal achievements. Nevertheless, to have played a part in the development of an internationally renowned music educator, a 'household name' composer by association with 'Dr Who', one of Australia's major cathedral organists, several tertiary lecturers and countless community-based educators and performers, is still a remarkable achievement.

Brier's interest in the work of others played out in his extensive adjudication and examining work, just as much as his tireless efforts in support of numerous major musical organisations. Being bestowed with great longevity that saw him professionally active well into his 70s, and also a 'bower bird' tendency to collect and chronicle virtually everything he observed or participated in, Brier's tangible legacy will long remain a major resource for later generations.

However, in terms of the digital age, while it is not possible to assert that Brier would have embraced all things new had he lived another few decades, there are indications that he was open to some innovation. As Robert Boughen (1979) states, 'he was gentleman enough not to become publicly ruffled by musical innovations'.

Already in the 1930s Brier saw the potential of using the new medium of radio broadcasting, and significantly took advantage of this medium to promote the work of two organisations close to his heart, the Music Teachers' Association and the Composers' Guild. By the same token, he decried the passive listening that radio and television sometimes engendered, stating that 'we are fast developing into a race of hearers instead of doers'. (Brier 1973, p. 219) He also offers a cautionary comment 'there is a tendency with some, fortunately not all, to break with the past and try to be better by aiming to be futuristic'. (Brier 1973, p. 218)

b) How much of his work is currently or potentially accessible through digital means?

The posthumous legacy of Percy Brier has been at least partly enhanced by the arrival of the digital age. His vast collection of personal papers has been catalogued and the table of contents of those 30 boxes can be viewed online at the University of Queensland's library website (<https://www.library.uq.edu.au/fryer/>). The Music section of the UQ library also holds 17 works by Brier, of which 12 were published during in his lifetime, plus three self-published texts on theory and harmony.

The State Library of Queensland holds five works, three of which are available online, and one of which also includes an audio recording ([www.slq.qld.gov.au/search](http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/search)). The critical edition of his Violin Sonata, which I produced last year for publication by Wirripang (<http://www.australiancomposers.com.au/authors/percy-brier>), was created entirely with the aid of music notation software, while the accompanying recording was produced and edited digitally. All of the writing process for this conference paper, and much of the preliminary research, has also used digital technology as a routine aspect of daily life and work. Specifically, the newspaper articles which have been cited are available online through the Trove resource sponsored by the National Library of Australia. ([www.trove.nla.org.au](http://www.trove.nla.org.au)) This vast resource means that for study of historical

topics up to the mid-1950s, we are now better serviced in this regard than for recent decades. To a large extent it is possible to examine in detail the musical culture and contributions of past generations through the online newspaper repository, which is much more user-friendly than any other alternatives such as microfilm.

- c) What can be learned from the career of a longstanding musician of the 'pre-digital age'?

There are many commonalities between the life and times of a pre-digital age musician, Percy Brier, and the contemporary context in which we all now work. Musical skill and artistry may be redefined in each generation, but as long as we require the use of acoustic instruments, has much really changed since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century or even much earlier? When composers set about creating an original work, their means of converting ideas to a publishable format might be digital, but surely the ideas themselves have to come in large part from the mind of their originator.

Musical organisations may now function rather differently to how they did even twenty years ago, with teleconferencing, skype, email and web-sharing of information, but it seems that the in-person meeting of minds will never lose its value. When it comes to public advocacy for music in all its forms, again the mode of communication might now be more immediate and technology-based, but the ultimate aim of convincing sponsors, policy makers and the general public of the value of what musicians do, is much the same as before.

This paper has traversed the diverse but interconnected aspects of a well-rounded or 'complete' musician whose contribution predates the last third of the twentieth century. Percy Brier vividly recalled the Brisbane River floods of 1893 and the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, which gives us a fascinating eye-witness link to experiences of up to 120 years ago. While he does not comment in detail on world events towards the end of life, he would have been aware of the changes effected by the Cold War, the space race, and the various social campaigns and international conflicts of the 1960s. His own life was affected fundamentally by the experience of two world wars and the Great Depression, but Brier's musical career shows he was nothing if not resilient and adaptable. He provides us with an example of how to cope with 'interesting times' and still retain one's good humour and artistic integrity.

This conference has as one of its main goals the fostering of enlightened pedagogy, particularly now as we move well into the second decade of the new millennium. Perhaps then it would be appropriate to quote Percy Brier once again, this time on the

conference theme of 'the complete musician' as it applies to the role of the teacher or mentor:

'After all, what is education? ... It is certainly something more than mere knowledge. That may be erudition, and worthy as it is, education is the better as it tends to develop the whole man. In music then we should learn as much as we can about *all* aspects of the Art so that we can better appraise any one of them. This is particularly applicable to teachers and lecturers and one might also add those who essay the presentation of music.

... I do not expect or desire uniformity; that is contrary to nature human or otherwise, for with uniformity in all aspects of life what a world would this one be! But with unity of purpose and diversity of manner in achieving it there is something worth working for. And I would like to feel that I have done a little towards this end, particularly in my chosen profession. I have previously said that the teaching profession is a rewarding one; indeed so is my profession whose aim is the betterment of mankind'. (Brier 1973, pp. 218-221)

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## Appendix I - Percy Brier – Piano works for which scores are available online:

[www.slq.qld.gov.au](http://www.slq.qld.gov.au) then use the 'onsearch' catalogue function

- a) *Intermezzo giocoso* (c.1950)- published Paling, Sydney

Dedication – To John Ellis, also inscribed 'To Clem on his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday with my best wishes for success'

Description – 4 pages of piano score, suitable for more advanced students, also possible as concert repertoire; rather active arpeggiated figurations in left hand against melodic motives using harmonised or broken octaves, effective use of keyboard textures

- b) *Prelude and March: From a classical suite in F major* (c.1953) - manuscript

Inscription – 'To Clem with fond Christmas greetings from the composer (Uncle Percy) 25/12/53'

Description – 3 pages of piano score, suitable for more advanced students, requiring control of thick textures (octaves, large chords and occasional inner voices), possibly some minor difficulties in reading the manuscript notation

Other accessible works including keyboard:

There are numerous other keyboard and chamber works held in the Fryer Library, University of Queensland, in manuscript form. In addition to the *Sonata for Violin and Piano in G minor* edited by Peter Roennfeldt and published by Wirripang, the *Reverie for Organ* is of interest as either church service or concert repertoire, and is currently under consideration for publication in the near future.

In addition to the items listed above, two of Percy Brier's solo songs are also available online via the State Library of Queensland website:

*Bowling Song*, published in Brisbane by Sapsford & Co. (n.d.) – probably intended for social settings rather than concert performance

*Love's Reverie* (c.1913), published in Brisbane (s.n.) – a finely wrought art song worthy of inclusion in concert programs

### **About the Author:**

**Professor Peter Roennfeldt** is a well-known performer, lecturer, researcher and adjudicator. Since completing a seven-year term as Director of Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University in 2009, he has published several journal articles on local history topics, and the monograph 'Northern Lyrebird: The Contribution to Queensland's Music by its Conservatorium 1957-2007'. His performing interests currently focus on standard and lesser known repertoire with 19th century period instruments, including a duo sonata composed by Queenslander Percy Brier, which has he recorded and edited for publication. Since 1995 Roennfeldt has presented seven papers for APPC, on various topics dealing primarily with repertoire and performance practice.