

QMTA 100th year concert review

Friday night's QMTA birthday celebration at the Ian Hanger recital hall, Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Griffith University, was a wonderful mix of ceremony, history, recollections, tributes, collegiality and most of all, music. The evening, which was held on the actual 100 year anniversary of the formation of the QMTA was emceed by our current president, Yolanda Frylink, fittingly leading the proceedings from the QMTA's own Victoria Blakely lectern. Special guests included dignitaries, patrons, past presidents and life members.

Associate Professor Peter Morris, acting director of the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University, welcomed us and highlighted how our association underpinned many of the musical achievements and institutions that now exist in Queensland including the Conservatorium itself. Acknowledgement of Country was given in the Jandai Language of the Quandamooka people by VIP guest The Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP, Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and most relevantly, the Minister for the Arts. Minister Enoch also emphasised the importance and long lasting impact that we as music teachers have on our students, an effect that carries through to adulthood and completes a person.

The musical items chosen for this evening had much meaning and significance to the celebrations. The first item, masterfully performed by Dr Suzanna Hlinka, was a timely reawakening of the piece known to most QMTA members mainly as a graphic on the *Bravura* journal cover, Percy Brier's *Intermezzo giocoso* (1950). Brier was one of the QMTA's founders as well as serving as a QMTA president. His *Intermezzo giocoso* is playful and spirited, with contrasting dramatic moments, evident Brahmsian qualities, and a lyrical folk-tune section reminiscent of Grainger.

The second performance, Professor Liam Viney and Angela Turner's comedic interpretation of Hadyn's *Il maestro e la scolare* Hob.XVIIa:1 (1778) featured teaching moments we could all empathise with. The *maestro*/teacher role was given to Professor Viney whilst Ms Turner played a contemporary version of the *scolare*/student, complete with school shirt, hat on backwards, backpack and mobile phone in hand. Viney's teacher put Turner's student through her paces, sometimes with success, sometimes less so and once was even interrupted by mum ringing on the mobile. Musical banter between teacher and student was both hilarious and entertaining whilst the finale was thrilling, demonstrating the true musical skill and flair both pianists possess.

We were also treated to an energetic recorded performance by Piers Lane AO of Alan Lane's *Toccata* (1957), an exciting work that really uses the entire span of the piano combined with a wide harmonic language and piano techniques to create energy and colour. The outer sections were exhilarating, contrasting with moments of tenderness and solemnity. The Lane family have great significance to the QMTA: Piers Lane AO as patron and his father Alan Lane who served as vice-president and whose legacy lives on through the QMTA's Alan Lane Memorial Workshops.

The final musical item was a newly commissioned song by Jason Barry-Smith, written for QMTA's 100 year celebration. Titled *The language of my heart*, the song is a moving duet between student and teacher, each singing of their shared journey with music and each other. Vocalists Lisa Lockland-Bell and Theo Aitcheson, expertly accompanied by Sarah Pointing on piano, beautifully expressed the sentiment held within the song, both in their own solo verses and then as the melodies intertwined. *The language of my heart* really captures the special connection between teachers and students and the QMTA hopes that this will be widely performed during the centenary year.

The speeches given throughout the night continued to demonstrate just how much has been achieved by the QMTA to date. Professor Emeritus Peter Roenndfeldt's impressive historical account, accompanied by photos of past programmes, members and events, chartered the development of the QMTA from its formation to today. Some notable points included that the association was established during a time of crisis such as World War 1 and the Spanish flu, and the 100 year celebration is during a similar crisis because of COVID. The QMTA founding committee was made up of a good mix of men and women, different instruments, different

regional centres and pre-dated many other Queensland music ensembles. As a peak body, the QMTA held annual conferences, masterclasses, performances, competitions and hosted notable internationals such as Percy Grainger and Yehudi Menuhin. Interestingly, teacher registration was intended from the association's beginnings but it is an achievement yet to be gained. Professor Emeritus Roennfeldt is releasing a book on the QMTA's history later this year which will be a fascinating read for all of us.

QMTA patrons Max Olding AM, Lisa Garrett AO and Piers Lane AO each gave a message of congratulations via video and letter. Max Olding AM eloquently summarised all the elements that make the QMTA special including collaboration between colleagues, sharing mutual interest and love of music, always learning and adapting teaching, the special connections between regions and cities, and how the QMTA has earned a reputation of stature and commitment to music. Lisa Gasteen AO wrote of the important formal link the QMTA provides between studio teachers and schools. Piers Lane AO enthusiastically spoke of his admiration of the association and personal connection with the QMTA through his father Alan Lane's work. The evening ended with acknowledgements of the wonderful service carried out by past presidents, life members, regional branches, the QMTA centenary committee, the current council, and our stellar secretary Kerry Thomson.

Thank you to those who organised this evening. It was such a fantastic way to start off the 100th year, to see live music and catch up with colleagues after facing challenges such as lockdown, as well as to relive and be reminded just how special the QMTA and the people within it are.