
Brieley Cutting - Biography and Media

Biography

Raised on a farm in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales, Brieley Cutting is now based in Sydney. She has had a long and varied onstage career as soloist and chamber music collaborator, appearing in many major and regional venues throughout Australia, and for organisations such as ABC Classic FM, 4MBS and Musica Viva. Festival performances include for The Piano Mill at Stanthorpe; Festival of Voices at Mona in Tasmania; at the Queensland Music Festival, Crossbows, Restrung, and Australian Piano Duo Festivals in Brisbane; and in the Newcastle Fringe, Sydney Fringe, Tyalgum and Bangalow Festivals in New South Wales. Her performance career has also seen her as soloist and chamber music collaborator in European venues, which included being selected for festival gala concerts in Salzburg and Brussels, and performing in recitals facilitated by the Royal College of Music and Australian Music Foundation. Brieley has performed with many leading Australian ensembles including Ensemble Trivium, Fragments Ensemble, Australia Piano Quartet, Collusion, Topology and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra Chamber Players. As concerto soloist, Brieley has performed with orchestras including the Adelaide Symphony, Queensland Symphony, Melbourne Symphony, Queensland Conservatorium Chamber Orchestra, Melbourne Youth Orchestra and the Nizchny-Novgorod Philharmonic.

Piano competition successes include Brieley becoming the National Keyboard Winner of the 2006 ABC Young Performers Awards, receiving second placing in the 2010 Kerikeri National Piano Competition in New Zealand, and being a finalist in the 2002 Kawai Australasian Youth Piano Concerto Competition in Melbourne.

Her recording projects have included Mahler: Symphony No. 2 "Resurrection" for 2 pianos, 8 hands with fellow pianists for Melba Recordings to critical acclaim from sources such as The Guardian (Aus) ("...shines brilliant new light on this masterpiece") and The Australian Weekend Review ("...a must-have for every Mahler buff"), and joining Collusion Music to record the albums Flashpoint (quartets by Hindemith and Messiaen) and I read the old dream slowly (all Australian chamber music) as an Ensemble in Residence at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music. Most recently, Brieley completed a recording project in 2022 at the Queensland Conservatorium for Hungarian soprano Judit Molnár and with violinist Graeme Jennings, this project capping several years of exploring music by the Hungarian composers Béla Bartók and György Kurtág.

Brieley initially graduated at age 18 with her Bachelor degree (First Class Honours) studying with Oleg Stepanov at the Queensland Conservatorium in Brisbane. She then studied for several years in Melbourne as part of the Performance Program at the Australian National Academy of Music with Frank Wibaut, Timothy Young and Rita Reichman. Following this, Brieley returned to Brisbane to complete a Masters of Music in Performance with Natasha Vlassenko at the Queensland Conservatorium. With support from a David Paul Landa Memorial Scholarship for Pianists, the Australian Music Foundation and Tait Memorial Trust, Brieley was subsequently awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Performance (Distinction) from the Royal College of Music in London studying with Ruth Nye. To extend her research and knowledge in the realms of pianism and artistic directorship, in 2013 Brieley was made a Fellow of the Winston Churchill Trust which supported her continued educational journey to London, the Netherlands and New York where she

spent time learning from a diverse array of leading pianists and arts workers. In 2016 Brieley completed doctoral studies at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University which were supervised primarily by Stephen Emmerson and supported by a Griffith Scholarship and Australian Postgraduate Award. Brieley has also studied with pianists Pamela Page and Max Olding.

Whilst based in Brisbane, Brieley founded DeClassified Music, a chamber music concert series. Starting initially as the Commercial Road Chamber Music Series in 2011, Declassified Music emerged in 2013 with the support of the Steinway & Sons piano distributors in Brisbane. Known for its bold imaging and free programming, Brieley's DeClassified Music events featured in two Queensland Music Festivals, were awarded a Creative Sparks Award from the Brisbane City Council, had support from Arts Queensland and the Australia Council of the Arts, and attracted high praise from reviewers, from the *The Jazz Mann* (“...one of the best and most exciting ‘jazz with strings’ recordings that I’ve heard”) to *RealTime Arts Magazine* (“...a great addition to the Brisbane Scene”). Brieley was a regular performer in this series, whilst also promoting and supporting many other Australian performers, composers and ensembles.

Other community-focused work has included Brieley touring for *Musica Viva in Schools* to Queensland, Canberra and regional Tasmania; with *Topology* to regional and rural centres across Queensland; and for seven years with *Artico Ensemble* to non-mainstream venues throughout Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. Continuing this trend, Brieley is currently the accompanist for the *Sydney Male Choir* who give over twenty performances a year in Sydney and NSW regional areas, including at the *Sydney Town Hall*.

Brieley is an experienced piano teacher and since 2020 has been Lecturer in Classical Piano at the Australian Institute of Music. Previous teaching roles include being Head of Piano at the New England Conservatorium (Armidale NSW), Piano Teacher at St Joseph’s College in Brisbane, and teaching private students in Melbourne, London, Brisbane, Armidale, and now in Sydney. Brieley has also lectured for the University of New England (Armidale NSW), been accompanist and examiner for the University of Queensland School of Music, and has been invited to be an adjudicator for the Queensland Conservatorium on several occasions. Brieley’s students have graduated with Bachelor and Masters degrees, been awarded prizes in music competitions and eisteddfods, and have gained their Associate of Music Diploma from the AMEB. Brieley has been invited to give Masterclasses in Sydney, the Gold Coast, and for regional Conservatories in New South Wales, and she has been an adjudicator for piano sections in the Sydney Eisteddfod.

In the Media

Australian Institute of Music: Music in the Sky Concerts and the new ‘Neoclassical’ (2022)

“Australian Institute of Music classical lecturer, accomplished pianist and academic Dr Brieley Cutting reflects on her experiences performing with the Radu Cello Ensemble for the Music in the Sky series of concerts at the Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability in North Sydney...”

Music Teacher, Sheet Music Reviews: Lyrical Flute Legends (2021)

“Lyrical Flute Legends is the latest title from enterprising flautist and educator Karen North ... All the pieces have been recorded – both in their entirety and as piano backing tracks – and are freely available via YouTube. Flautist Jessica Lee and pianist Brieley Cutting’s performances are both excellent and will inspire rather than intimidate...”

Dubbo Photo News, Entertainment: Concert Series a hit at Mac Con (2020)

"Macquarie Conservatorium annual concert series presented Brieley Cutting (piano) and Kristian Winther (violin) last weekend. Two sold out, smaller audiences due to our current "normal", thoroughly enjoyed the performances from this talented duo..."

Courier Mail: Two high-calibre performances (2019)

"Captivating performances will be held at Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery ... Soprano Peta Blyth and local flautist Nick Negerevich will be joined by pianist Dr Brieley Cutting in a program that celebrates French composers..."

ClassikOn, Review: French Revelations with Ensemble Trivium (2019)

"...the perfect way to unwind on a Friday evening. Heritage-listed Old Government House, Brisbane, with its oak-panelled doors, high ceilings and chandeliers, was an intimate setting for chamber music ... The performers clearly enjoyed playing together as an ensemble and showcased virtuosic skill for the challenging repertoire..."

Limelight Magazine, Feature: The power behind the throne (2018)

"In a duo situation, the pianist is invariably considered subservient, an accompanist supporting a soloist. Brieley Cutting begs to differ, suggesting that it could just be the other way around..."

Cut Common, Events: Fragments presents Knots and Fields – The Voice of Kurtág (2018)

"... These song cycles by Kurtág were written inside Hungary between 1969-1986 ... Fragments (soprano Judit Molnar, violinist Graeme Jennings, visual artist Stephen Danzig, pianist Brieley Cutting) will perform at the Ian Hanger Recital Hall ..."

Armidale Express: Dr Brieley Cutting joins New England Conservatorium of Music (2018)

"New England Conservatorium of Music (NECOM) students are tickling the ivories for the first time in its 15-year history..."

Harrigan's Lane Collective: Easter at the Piano Mill (2016)

"The launch of The Piano Mill, a new collaboration of architect Bruce Wolfe and composer Erik Griswold ... The Piano Mill project came to life when sixteen pianists took to the purpose built structure to make the "instrument" play Erik Griswold's 'All's grist that comes to the mill'; a piece of music specifically composed for the mill and its sixteen unique pianos. ... Featuring pianists Brieley Cutting..."

The Village News, Cover: Cutting edge music (2015)

"I think hearing music like this is great for a large concert hall, but being close to it in FireWorks Gallery makes it much more exciting..."

Audiophilia (Canada): Mahler Symphony No.2 "Resurrection" (2014)

"... this new disc from Australia's Melba label absolutely takes the cake!"

The Guardian (Aus), Hidden Gems: Mahler Symphony No.2 "Resurrection" (2014)

"This recording startles the ears: instead of an enormous orchestra, it has been arranged for two pianos and eight hands. The result is not merely "Resurrection" ... but revelation too ... It shines brilliant new light on this masterpiece."

The Australian Weekend Review: Mahler Symphony No.2 "Resurrection" (2014)

"In these piano transcriptions Mahler is also released from the ego of conductors: here the composer's own tempi and dynamics are obeyed assiduously. Familiar passages take on new identities ... That eminent and much loved musical polymath Stephen Emmerson is joined by three young Brisbane stars – Brieley Cutting, Angela Turner and Stewart Kelly – playing on matching Steinway D grand pianos. David Spearritt, Brisbane's renowned sound engineer, has captured the crisp clarity of the Concert Hall of the Queensland Conservatorium. He has produced an evenness

of spread and definition, such that each piano part is both differentiated and integrated. This new CD is a must-have for every Mahler-buff and should be required listening for any maestro-wannabe who dares pick up a baton.”

The Factory Diaries: Looooong Weekender (2014)

“These days it’s pretty easy to head down to the Valley and West End to find some live rock/pop/punk/grunge/folk music in our various venues, but it’s a little harder to stumble upon a classical or jazz concert Plenty of people would love to enjoy a nice, big cup of Beethoven green tea with a hint of Mozart. Haven’t heard of DeClassified? Well, it started way back in 2011. As DeClassified’s Artistic Director, Brieley Cutting, told me on the phone, “...One of the reason DeClassified Music was starting was that when I came back to Brisbane I struggled to find inspiring places to play. So in a way, I made the changes I wanted to see in the world. ... According to Brieley, The Long Weekender will include, “...About 17 musicians from Adelaide, Melbourne and Brisbane for three concerts.”... Who knew classical music could be so fun, am I right?”

Dr Liam Viney Review: DeClassified Music ‘The Long Weekender’ (2014)

“...DeClassified Music’s ‘The Long Weekender’ is a perfect example of what can happen in the cultural interstices of such a dynamic and maturing urban ecology. Eschewing the familiar artistic hangouts of established operators, DCM collaborates with the smaller end of town, including the punchy independent art-world represented by Fireworks Art Gallery. It exploits a critical mass of grass-roots interest in genuinely innovative music and art that is not confined to predictable and formal presentational settings. Concerts such as this ... can only encourage local musicians, audiences (and businesses) to continue their own pioneering cultural efforts.”

RealTime Arts: In the flow (2014)

“ ... DeClassifiedMusic, a fairly new organisation promoting concerts into Brisbane’s Newstead (place of bars/restaurants/things to do and buy). Music as one part of the flow of the day’s events rather than as the full stop at the end of the day. That’s a great addition to the Brisbane scene.”

Griffith News: Fellowships further lifelong love of music (2013)

“Two Queensland Conservatorium alumni will soon travel across the globe to further their passion for research ... Brieley has had an already stellar career, starting with the completion of her Associate Diploma in Music at the age of 11. She went on to complete her undergraduate degree at the Con with first class honours at 18. She is currently undertaking a Doctorate of Musical Arts and continues to teach and perform as a soloist and in chamber music ensembles...”

Australian Music Centre: Collusion 10 years in 2012 (2012)

“Today, with pianist Brieley Cutting and clarinettist-saxophonist Diana Tolmie, Collusion is a powerhouse of experienced and educated chamber musicians with virtuosic technical skills and expansive repertoire...”

Stage Diary, Brisbane theatre review: Transient Beauty (2012)

“The intimate space of the Byron Theatre puts the dancers and the musicians up close and personal with the audience. In your face, it is. In your mind, it gets. ... It is exciting to see the creation of new dance and music. ...Cultural life would atrophy without such fearless explorations of the boundaries of loneliness, family life and affection.”

Courier Mail, Arts: Here to play it again (2011)

“A boutique local venue’s support for performance is helping stem the southern flow of talented young musicians ... Cutting says she’s thrilled to be supporting such an important cause and hopes that other Brisbane venues will follow...”

The Scoop, Culture: Kerikeri National Piano Competition winner (2010)

“More successful was Brisbane pianist Brieley Cutting, probably the most secure and experienced of the four, having played numerous concerts in Europe and throughout Australia. While the rubato

used in Ravel's Jeux d'eau verged on sentimentality, the limpid tones and finally graded nuance certainly conveyed the essence of the music. Here is a pianist who has at her disposal a myriad of different colours and who knows how to take the time to let the music speak. Her style was well suited to the preludes by Scriabin and Vine, perhaps less so to the Appassionata sonata where her tempo variations interfered with the rhythmic tension inherent in the music of Beethoven. However it was a performance of authority which won her second placing in the competition..."

Courier Mail, Review: Beethoven's Symphony No.1 (2008)

"Beethoven's Symphonies No.1 and 4 ... for four hands with two pianists...introduced excellent orchestral colour and texture into their playing, with exciting juxtaposition of two separate "orchestral" stands working against each other and then magically arriving in harmony at the end of the movements. They were a joy to watch and hear...Cutting followed this with a youthful and stylish performance of Beethoven's Piano Sonata No.23 Appassionata ...it was technically assured with excellent control of the keyboard...expressive in the darker passages...she threw herself feverishly into the Allegro movement almost to exhaustion. It was an impressive rendition..."
