

Proposal for **Walker Percy Audio Project** *Radio Broadcast and Compact Disc*

The Walker Percy Project

Providing access, opportunity, and collaboration for students, scholars, and general readers of Percy...

OVERVIEW

The Walker Percy Project plans to collaborate with National Public Radio's Cultural Programming Division to produce a short radio broadcast about Walker Percy and the Percy Project as well as produce an audio CD with readings from Percy's works, excerpts from his public speeches, and interviews with those who knew him.

Alphonse Vinh, Research Librarian for National Public Radio (NPR) and a board member of The Walker Percy Project, proposed the idea in an April 29, 1998 email letter to Henry P. Mills, Executive Director of the Percy Project:

"I thought that I could ... tap into NPR's radio and sound expertise in the future as board member to see about developing Percy audios which could be sold by the Project or accessed directly on the Web.... we could also see about doing an audio Percy documentary which would include readings, dramatic performances by professional actors, original Walker interviews and talks, as well as interviews with Percy family, friends, associates, and scholars. Music would also be produced for this programme."

Interactive Architex, an education-oriented multimedia production company housed in the Austin Technology Incubator in Austin, Texas, and which is a major corporate sponsor of The Walker Percy Project, has agreed to provide production assistance for the audio project.

SPECIFICS

Radio Broadcast

The approximately ten-minute radio broadcast will highlight significant facts about Percy's life and work. The broadcast will also entice NPR listeners to join the Percy Project community by educating them on the numerous public opportunities available to them through the Project, such as the Percy-L email discussion forum for dialogue about Percy's work and the online library of essays on Percy. Furthermore, by emphasizing the Percy Project's focus on creating a learning community that breaks down traditional institutional barriers between professional and non-professional Percy readers, the broadcast will introduce NPR listeners to the study of his work by many different groups. Overall, the NPR broadcast will educate the public on Percy the man and writer while promoting the numerous Percy-related resources available through the Percy Project.

Compact Disc

The CD-ROM will be comprised of Percy-related audio interviews bound together with narration. A number of Percy audio materials not currently available to the public will be included on the CD-ROM: selected readings by dramatists from his fiction and non-fiction, interviews with Percy's relatives, friends, and associates, and (with legal permission) audio of Percy's NEH Jefferson Lecture in Washington, D.C., his *Today* show interview with Barbara Walters, the *Firing Line* interview with Eudora Welty and William Buckley, and Percy speaking on the 50th anniversary of the *Southern Review*. A book of previously unpublished photographs and postcards of Percy will be published to accompany the compact disc.

Marketing Plan

A university or commercial press associated with Percy materials and the Walker Percy Educational Project will serve as the primary outlets for publicizing the product. Sales will be handled through the press, the Walker Percy Project web site, and key retail bookstores. The Walker Percy Project will advertise and market the CD-ROM via its Internet and non-Internet relationships as well as feature it as a permanent offering in its online store. Potential purchasers of this CD-ROM include scholars, students, and fans interested in Walker Percy, university and public libraries, members of the Walker Percy Society, members of the Society for the Study of Southern Literature, and the more than five hundred monthly visitors to the Walker Percy Project web site.

Project Administration and Production

Henry P. Mills, Director of the Walker Percy Educational Project, will serve as executive producer of the CD-ROM. Mills, heading the project's regular staff, will handle content development, permissions, and general administration. Mills founded the Walker Percy Project in 1994 and holds advanced degrees from Louisiana State University.

Interactive Architex, an educational multimedia company in Austin, Texas, under the direction of CEO Dewey Winburne, will serve as technical producer of the CD-ROM, along with the assistance of NPR. Interactive Architex will handle all programming, media development, and post-production of the CD-ROM.

OUTCOMES

Those who listen to the proposed radio broadcast will learn about Percy's profound literary legacy and opportunities currently available for further discussion and study of his work. Listeners will be encouraged to join the Project's online learning community and engage in its regular public discussion and educational activities. The compact disc will extend the body of Percy scholarship by adding a previously absent audio dimension to the biographical and critical materials currently available on Percy and will provide the general public with a unique window into Percy the man and writer.

In forging a relationship with National Public Radio, the Percy Project will gain experience in reaching the public with educational materials. The collaborative relationship will also serve to authenticate the Walker Percy Project as a publicly-minded organization, placing the Project in an advantageous position to receive funding from public grant-making agencies.

Overall, the radio broadcast and compact disc will serve as key elements in the Percy Project's efforts to extend Percy's legacy into the 21st century for future generations of Percy readers.

The Walker Percy Educational Project
a 501(c)3 non-profit organization
<https://www.ibiblio.org/wpercy>

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