

**On Playing Beethoven  
in Times of Sorrow**  
by Junius Johnson

*Editor's Note: To conclude a year of celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of Ludwig von Beethoven, I have invited a musician-theologian and a musician-audiophile to reflect on playing and listening to the music and the impact of this great composer. I hope you enjoy these more personal reflections on how this music lives in and with us...*

It is somewhat customary at the beginning of an essay to make apologies. In that vein, let me offer the following: these reflections are hopelessly and shamelessly grounded in specificity. The specificity in question is my own experience as a performer of Beethoven. I do not speak of Beethoven's music in an abstract sense, or of broader performance practice, or of the general experience of performing his music. I am speaking as a player of the french horn, and I am focused specifically on my set of experiences performing the second movement of the *Eroica* symphony while playing principal horn. This is not, I hope, something to apologize for, but it is necessary context. It also means that what follows comes in a confessional mode, in the Augustinian sense.

For me, Beethoven symphonies are complicated. With the exception of the interruptive beginning of the fifth symphony (which always feels to me as if we are beginning *in medias res*), they don't satisfy as immediately as a Mahler or Tchaikovsky, who from the first notes of their symphonies rapture me into a world of wonders and inspire in me the sense that I am off on a strange and wonderful journey. Beethoven requires more patience: his tale begins not in a dark wood far away, but at my very own doorstep, and it is by degrees almost imperceptible that he leads me to the fairy forest.

This is, I think, integral to the power of the movement in question. The sharp, repeated chords of the opening of the first movement give way to travelling music, a hero's theme. And by the time we arrive at the repeated chords that close the first movement, the twists and turns and transformations that have brought the hero to this point have left us far from home indeed. I arrive at the pickup to the second movement as one who has already seen and done great things, one who has logged miles on his soul.

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## Beethoven's lasting influence: from Debussy to "Hamilton"

by Scott Faulkner

Dec. 16, 2020 would have been Ludwig van Beethoven's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday. COVID put a damper on countless performances of his works that were planned, but it's hard to feel sorry for a guy whose music has been at the top of the charts for a quarter of a millennium. Around his birthday, a couple of dear friends challenged me to address Beethoven's indelible presence by choosing 10 favorite recordings of his works and, for each, a corresponding recording that was "influenced" by it. The influence simply had to be a connection that I made, and a description of why. Here are the results:

**Beethoven, String Trio in E-flat, Op. 3: Trio Italiano d'archi /** Joshua Bell, Sam Bush, Mike Marshall, Edgar Meyer: "Death by Triple Fiddle" (from the album "Short Trip Home")

Virtuosic string playing and exquisite chamber music-making in both cases lead me to connect these two recordings.

**Beethoven, Symphony No. 3 "Eroica": Concertgebouw Orchestra (Erich Kleiber, conductor) /** Hamilton (Original Broadway Cast Recording)

Originally dedicated to Napoleon, the third symphony was revolutionary in its construction, duration, and aspiration. Beethoven's eventual disenchantment with Napoleon, when the latter declared himself "Emperor," prompted the composer to tear the title page of the composition while violently scratching out Bonaparte's name as he changed the dedication to the generic "Eroica" subtitle.

The mega-hit musical Hamilton not only deals with the topic of actual revolution at about that same time in the U.S. but is a revolutionary work in and of itself with the wonderful use of hip-hop and BIPOC performers.

**Bonus Track:** Richard Strauss's masterpiece for 24 solo strings, "Metamorphosen," ends with a bass playing a quotation from the funeral march of the "Eroica." A direct inspiration.

**Beethoven, Violin Concerto: NBC Orchestra (Arturo Toscanini, conductor; Jascha Heifetz, violin) /** Johann Brahms, "Violin Concerto": Chicago Symphony (Fritz Reiner, conductor / Jascha Heifetz, violin)

Beethoven's only violin concerto is one of the great works for violin and orchestra. The Brahms is clearly a direct descendant. This is probably the most obvious connection of two pieces on my list. The Beethoven recording by Heifetz is a special one in my collection, as I discovered it while listening to an obituary tribute on NPR Dec. 10, 1987. A freshman at Pacific Lutheran University, I went to buy this CD and it was the first recording I ever special ordered. After that, I would discover that PLU violin professor, Ann Tremaine (Chelle's violin teacher), was one of Heifetz's students at USC, making this even more special.

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*On Playing Beethoven continued...*

And so this opening note, which is unassuming and understated without being apologetic, comes as an interruption to the exuberance that came before. It has a simple insistence that will not be ignored, and with it comes all the tragedy that ever entered the world. It is itself only a prelude, but by the downbeat I already know that my heart is breaking: I am already asking myself if I will ever be whole again, if the world will ever be bright again.

It is in this vein that I reach for the funeral march of the *Eroica* when I am in deep grief, sorrow, or despair: it provides an appropriately sombre space for me to lose myself in, to wallow in my pain. The strings have just the right mournful sound, and the flowing, meandering melody seems to promenade through my tragedy and lay out every single aspect of the grief for examination. The horizontal extension through time of the melodic line, underscored and prosecuted by almost nervous strings, creates the perfect instance in me of what the Germans call *spannung*, that tension that is so charged that it is electric. In measure 27, when the celli and basses begin their brief but total descent into the abyss, it seems that they plumb the very depth of my darkness, attaining the total accomplishment of a descent into Hell.

There is nothing in all the world so satisfying, from the standpoint of wallowing, than what comes next: a sforzando C in the 1st horn: raw, raucous, unbounded. I will confess that I think there is no scale for my conception of this note. It comes out of the dying away of the piano melody the lowest strings have just played, and it is followed by a piano that is the commencement of the next statement of the melody. But it itself belongs neither to the line that precedes it, nor to the melody that follows: it is an interjection. And the relation of sforzando to any dynamic is undefined: it means "more," but not in a measurable way. The relation of forte to piano is calculable, in some intuitive sense; at the very least, one can name the degrees that lie between these two moods. But sforzando stands apart from and against all such calculations: is it one dynamic louder, or four?

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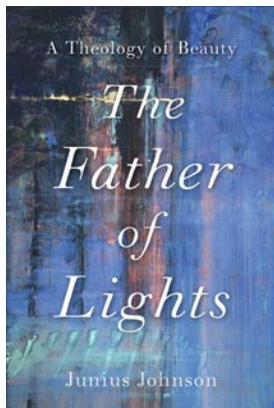
## “Beauty is a summons”

by Mark Peters

Review of Junius Johnson, *The Father of Lights: A Theology of Beauty* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020).

Richard Rohr writes, “We cannot not live in the presence of God,” linking this statement to the beautifully poetic prayer attributed to St. Patrick that Rohr paraphrases in this way:

God with me, God before me,  
God behind me, God within me,  
God beneath me, God above me,  
God at my right, God at my left.<sup>1</sup>



In *The Father of Lights*, Junius Johnson carefully and beautifully argues that one of the ever-present ways we live in the presence of God is through encounter with beauty, experienced both in God’s creations and in human creations. He states that “the divine intent is that every single creature we encounter in the world be a site where God is met and grace conferred” (186).

While drawing inspiration from authors such as Bonaventure, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Roland Barthes, Johnson intentionally does not make many explicit connections with other scholarly sources (see 13). He rather constructs a complex and careful theological and philosophical argument that unfolds over the book’s eight chapters. The volume is structured in two parts, the first of which is titled “The Encounter with Beauty” and addresses such foundational issues as memory, beauty, divinity, contuition, spiritual vision, and analogy. Johnson proceeds in Part II, “The Meaning of Beauty,” to explore five concepts from the framework he establishes in Part I: language, metaphor, signs, sacraments, and icons.

Reading *The Father of Lights* was slow work for me. Johnson’s writing is clear and logical, yet requires careful attention. Each sentence is laden with meaning. Since he is constructing an argument throughout, the reader must understand each passage not just on its own but also for its part in the larger whole. Furthermore, Johnson at times deviates from his main argument to preemptively address possible objections to a particular point.

Due to the complexity of the writing, *The Father of Lights* would be difficult for students at the undergraduate level unless they already had significant background in philosophy or theology. It could be assigned at the graduate level, in courses on aesthetics, Christian perspectives on the arts, or philosophical theology, for example. In such a context, I would recommend reading the entire book with students over a period of weeks, allowing sufficient time for processing and applying the richness of each chapter.

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## 2021 Graduate Student Paper Prize Winner: Hannah Snavely

by Cathy Ann Elias

Hannah Snavely (*Doctoral student at University of California, Riverside*), “The Global Encounter as *Communitas*: Inter-Pilgrim Musicking Along the Contemporary Camino de Santiago”

Snavely’s paper on musical experiences on the Camino de Santiago was particularly impressive in its fine judgment of the balance between presenting a very specific example and discussing larger conceptual and theoretical ideas. The paper was thoughtfully constructed with a clear line of argument. Ethnographic evidence was well used and helpfully situated in relation to some appropriate theoretical frameworks; knowledge of these was clear, and quotations from relevant secondary literature were used with precision. Though the focus was narrow, there was a conscious and convincing attempt to explain its broader significance, but also a keen awareness of the methodological limits and the need for further research.



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Many thanks go to the 2021 Prize  
Committee Members:

*Cathy Ann Elias, chair*  
*Committee members:*

*Pedro Aponte and Martin Clarke*

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**Beethoven, Piano Sonata #32, Op. 111: Vladimir Ashkenazy, piano / Thelonious Monk: "I Mean You" (from the album "Big Band and Quartet")**

At about the 6:00 mark of the 2nd movement of the sonata, one can hear the stunning moment where Beethoven invents swing – 100 years before it was invented! His swing feel is notated through a subdivision of triplets in a 1 beat vs. 2 beat feel. While swing feel in the jazz era is just a performance practice that assumes a lopsided subdivision of straight eighth notes, the effect is virtually the same, and still shocks me when I hear this distinct rhythmic propulsion.

To my ear, the opening of Monk's "I Mean You" shares the same swing feel and a nearly identical descending melodic contour to the Op. 111.

**Beethoven, Symphony No. 5: Vienna Philharmonic (Carlos Kleiber, conductor) / Sonny Rollins: "St. Thomas" (from the album "Saxophone Colossus")**

Beethoven was not a melodist with an endless stream of tunes in his head. Instead, he made the most of small melodic building blocks. Nowhere does he do this better (or more famously) than the first movement of his 5th Symphony. The four-note motif is repeated almost exclusively throughout that movement. That the movement actually starts with silence (the first eighth note is a rest), makes it even more inventive.

In his classic saxophone solo on the tune "St. Thomas," tenor-man Rollins builds a masterpiece using a similar two-note motif that to me has always been reminiscent of Beethoven's famous four notes.

**Beethoven, Piano Concerto No. 4; Budapest Festival Orchestra (Ivan Fischer, conductor; Richard Goode, piano) / Louis Armstrong: "West End Blues" recorded by Armstrong and his Hot Five, June 28, 1928**

Until Beethoven's 4th piano concerto, works for solo instrument and orchestra always started with an exposition of the material by the ensemble and then the soloist entered with the material that the orchestra had introduced and took it from there. The 4th concerto, shockingly, begins with a short cadenza by the soloist followed by the orchestra's entrance. Armstrong's American treasure "West End Blues" (for which he received something like \$20 to record) similarly opens with his solo trumpet cadenza before his band joins in. This virtuosic and near perfect solo revolutionized what a jazz soloist could and would do and be.

**Beethoven, Piano Concerto No. 5, movement 3: Concertgebouw Orchestra (Bernard Haitink, conductor; Murray Perahia, piano) / Claude Debussy, "Clair de Lune," Pascal Rogé, piano**

This one is a personal connection. When I was in high school, I attended a summer pops concert by the Spokane Symphony in which they performed the "Emperor" Concerto. Under the stars, on a perfect north Idaho August evening, the second movement of this piece embodied that feeling – temperature, air quality, youth, everything. It was the first time a piece of music was ever ...

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Because of the way Johnson unfolds his arguments over the course of the book, most of the chapters could not be easily extracted for reading on their own without significant framing of the book's larger scope and particular terminology.

The Introduction and Chapter 1, "Eternity in Our Hearts: Memory, Beauty, and Divinity," are an exception. These sections can be read on their own as a pair, while they are also foundational to everything that comes later in the book. Depending on your course topic and the students in it, it could be a good risk to read and process these together. In light of this recommendation and of the way these sections are foundational for the book as a whole, I will provide here a brief summary of some of the key ideas in them.

Johnson begins the Introduction by defining three senses of the word "beautiful": 1) beauty itself, as a property of God; 2) some creature or created state of affairs that have been established in their beauty by God and participate in the original beauty; and 3) the human experience of beauty. He clarifies the scope of his work as focused in the third sense, but also notes that a proper encounter with beauty must always be the experience of creaturely beauty (the second sense), which always has the potential to point the viewer back to the beauty of God (the first sense).

In the Introduction, Johnson also addresses the ugly, which he links with the problem of evil (8-12). This brief section presents crucial frameworks for the consideration of beauty in our broken world. It recalled for me these lines from Czesław Miłosz's "One More Day":

*The same could be said of beauty. It should not exist.*

*There is not only no reason for it, but an argument against.*

*Yet undoubtedly it is, and is different from ugliness.<sup>2</sup>*

Johnson further unpacks the relationships between beauty/goodness and...

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*Beethoven's lasting influence continued...*

transcendent like this for me. For the rest of my life the slow movement of this piece IS the sound of a perfect summer evening.

Debussy's ode to moonlight is my connection for obvious reasons. The recording by Pascal Rogé is special because it is definitive for one thing, and I have gotten to play with Pascal on several occasions and we are friends.

**Beethoven, Symphony No. 6; Cleveland Orchestra (George Szell, conductor) / Hector Berlioz, "Symphonie Fantastique": Concertgebouw Orchestra (Sir Colin Davis, conductor)**

Part of Beethoven's greatness is that he cornered the market on both streams flowing into and out of the Romantic era. He took the classical forms of sonata, string quartet, and symphony that Haydn and Mozart mastered and he further perfected these structures. But he also blew them up in a way that set the stage for the revolutionary romantics and modernists to come. Beethoven's 6th depicts nature in a vivid, extra-musical, and programmatic way. Berlioz takes that programmatic, wordless storytelling to a more extreme level in his opium induced masterwork.

**Beethoven, String Quartet No. 15, Op. 132: Emerson String Quartet / Eric Whitacre, "The Sacred Veil": Los Angeles Master Chorale**

The 3rd movement of Beethoven's string quartet Op. 132 the "Heiliger Dankesang" is as close to sublime as anything in western music. In a piece that is at once past, present and future, early movements evoke the counterpoint of Bach, the contemporary sound of Beethoven's writing, and this Thank You conversation to and with God. I chose the Emerson Quartet recording because A) it's awesome and B) they played this piece at a fundraiser two years ago for a non-profit of which I'm a board member – Project: Music Heals Us (<https://www.pmhu.org/>). It was an incredible experience to hear them play this transcendent work live.

Nevada native Whitacre's latest piece is a stunning composition that addresses the cancer death of the wife of his dear friend (also the piece's librettist). The text of the piece's opening movement reminds me of the same kind of rare transcendence Beethoven achieves in the Op. 132. It reads:

*Whenever there is birth or death, The sacred veil between the worlds Grows thin and opens slightly up, Just long enough for Love to slip, Silent, either in or out Of this fragile, fleeting world, Whence or whither a new home waits, And our beloved ones draw near, In rapt anticipation, or In weary gratitude, they stand; Our loved ones stand so close, right here, Just on the other side Of Eternity.*

—Charles Anthony Silvestri

**Beethoven, Symphony No. 9: NDR Sinfonieorchester (Günther Wand, conductor) / USA for Africa, "We Are the World"**

Despite the compositional warts this piece has, any list of Beethoven has to include the 9th symphony. With its final movement employing a chorus singing an "Ode to Joy" that seeks nothing short of the universal brotherhood of man, I was reminded of the star-studded '80s fundraising anthem with a similar kind of world-changing aspiration.

**Scott Faulkner** is principal bassist of the Reno Philharmonic and Reno Chamber Orchestra (RCO). For 14 years he served as executive director of the RCO. He is the associate director of the League of American Orchestras' Essentials of Orchestra Management seminar, and consults with orchestras around the country. He



writes a monthly column for the *Reno Gazette-Journal*, has shared the stage with Luciano Pavarotti, Itzhak Perlman, Leonard Nimoy (as narrator to Ullmann's "The Lay of Love and Death of Cornet Christoph von Rilke," Beethoven's "Egmont," and Garrison Keillor's "The Young Lurheran's Guide to the Orchestra"), and the band Yes, and is a founding member of the Single Malt Scotch Tasters of Reno.

**If you have news, publications, conferences, announcements, new degrees, performances, opportunities, pictures, etc. to share with your fellow SCSM members, please email: [scsm.news@gmail.com](mailto:scsm.news@gmail.com)**

### *On Playing Beethoven continued ...*

The question can only be answered by the performers, and thus in relation to a specific performance.

To me this is everything, for it means that on this one C, the reins are slackened and the horse is given its head. If I am not stopped by the conductor (and I was once conducted by a wonderful friend who stood aside and let this happen), I will pour all of my rage, all of my despair, all of my *longing*, into this note. It is a primal cry of outrage against pain, directed at an uncaring cosmos and seeking by its very savagery to get someone, anyone, to notice this pain. Thus unfettered, it rings out more like Mahler than Beethoven, an interruption not just to the melodic line around it, but even to the very neat divisions of musical style that we so pride ourselves on making. And I will not allow it even a hint of decrescendo: in my hands, this C becomes a wall of sound that presses unrelentingly to the downbeat, where it instantly collapses into a piano so *subito* that the echo of the angry C perhaps outlasts the embers of this piano C, which, by contrast, is infinitely *resigned*. And so the piano C is no less crucial, for it is the relinquishing of all I might have thought I could do with the anger of one beat before, the confession that I am powerless, even in my rage, to change for one second the chain of events set in motion by the pickup to the movement.

Do you see what I am after here? This humanistic descent into Hell is not for the sake of revealing, at the depths of the darkness, the unexpected light of resurrection. I don't go down in order to rise, I go down because it seems that only there can my grief truly find proper space for expression. The world above is too small, but more, too *beautiful* for my grief: my grief needs darkness, craves despair, and maximum distance from salvific light.

What follows is a march through the wasteland of utter despair, and the winds, but especially the oboe, understand this completely. I am always a little in love with the principal oboe player through this section, for he or she seems to be the spokesperson for my soul. The mournful melody the winds set in motion is ideal, because what I long for next is a tour of my pain, the parading before me of every instance of hurt and loss, so that the poignancy of each may be felt. This is what it is to give yourself over to despair: to tell out one's griefs *singillatim*, one by one, and thus, by magnifying each atom, to maximize the pain. The bassoon in measure 56 treads a journey like the one the celli and basses had before, and it is exquisite. It leads again to a boundless C, but this one is not free to be only angry, because it has to go somewhere: Beethoven forces a decrescendo on me in measure 61, and then I must walk right into a D to C that feels like a sigh. Twice I do this, and then we gasp our last, dying away in measure 68. Here I could rest: here I could say that my complaint has been heard, and that all is, if not well, at least well spoken.

But it is precisely here that I encounter the scandal of this movement, which claims to be suited to funereal garb: the low strings march us inexorably and by the most banal progression to *major*. Each note is a blow to my soul: the G because this should be a space of silence; the A because, inexplicably, we are headed towards major. But there is yet hope: perhaps this is just a harmonic minor scale; but this hope is crushed by the B that follows. It may yet be a melodic minor, but I can't

make myself believe it. This is no thaw, this is *spring*, and sure enough, as if the proof of my ears on the downbeat were not enough, Beethoven has the nerve to scrawl "Maggiore" all over my part.

This major section is so offensive in part because it is so *right*. The offense is not that I feel that it should be minor, but that I know that it cannot be other than major. I am reminded of Bernstein's words about Beethoven, which I had quite forgotten when I called them to mind reference precisely this movement:

*Beethoven had this gift [the inexplicable ability to know what the next note has to be] in a degree that leaves them all panting in the rear guard. When he really did it—as in the Funeral March of the Eroica—he produces an entity that always seems to me to have been previously written in Heaven, and then merely dictated to him. [...] When you get the feeling that whatever note succeeds the last is the only possible note that can really happen at that instant, in that context, then chances are you're listening to Beethoven.<sup>1</sup>*

These tonalities are discordant with grief, and they grate on my self-pity. Indeed, the major triad I am forced to outline in measure 90, played at this point in my grieving, is nothing short of an expression of faith: deep and resonant. But I also feel it as premature. It comes, not before it should, but before I want it to, and so it chides me for not being who I should be, for arriving at that triad as the wrong person. It reminds me that Christ descended in order to ascend, that his entrance into Hell was not about wallowing, but about harrowing.

1. Leonard Bernstein, *The Joy of Music* (Pompton Plains, NJ: Amadeus Press, 2004), pp. 28-9.



**Junius Johnson** is an independent scholar, teacher, and amateur french hornist. He is the author of four books, including *The Father of Lights:*

*A Theology of Beauty*, and numerous journal articles and translations. Through Junius Johnson Academics, he provides direct theological and language study to adults and children via online platforms.

## From the President

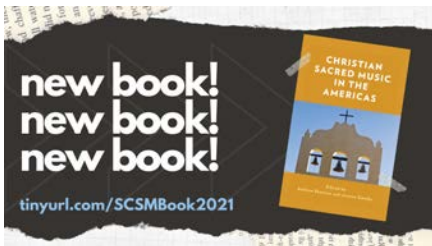
COVID-19. Cancelled classes and events. Reduced budgets. More and more things going online. The 2020/2021 academic year has been one of the most difficult ones in recent experience.

But, in the midst of all these challenges, a source of collegial encouragement and scholarly collaboration continues: The Society for Christian Scholarship in Music.

As I take on the responsibilities of president here in 2021, I am so grateful for the ways that SCSM keeps us coming together, including:

(1) **Our Blog:** In January, Chelle Stearns (now SCSM Vice President) posted several articles and resources on composer Arvo Pärt, all generously provided by SCSM member and Publications Committee chair Andrew Shenton. These short posts provide starting points for others to explore the fascinating creator of tintinnabuli technique, including links and lists of scholarship and resources. You can explore all this and more at the SCSM Blog.

(2) **Our Annual Meeting:** In February our online conference enabled three wonderful days of interactions amongst over 100 professors, graduate students, and church music practitioners. Instead of another Zoom meeting with seemingly senseless screen sharing and impersonal monologues, many of us found ourselves riveted to the presentations and engaged in stimulating dialogue, with conversations and email exchanges continuing after the conference concluded. Thanks so much to SCSM past-president Mark Peters and SCSM webmaster Adam Perez for their tireless work to pull this off.



(3) **Our Publications:** Also in February, Rowman & Littlefield released our second volume of essays, entitled *Christian Sacred Music in the Americas*, edited by Andrew Shenton and Joanna Smolko. This collection brings together articles on liturgical music, hymnody, contemporary worship, paraliturgical music, diasporic music, and indigenous and African American music, showcasing the breadth of expertise that has become typical of SCSM activities. Meanwhile, it expands our view beyond traditional Euro-American topics to musical developments (historical and contemporary) in both North and South America. Thanks to all the contributors to this volume. We are excited about

more SCSM publications already in the works. (4) **Our Facebook Page:** The [SCSM Facebook page](#) is an ongoing “gathering” of SCSM members and interested friends. Recent posts celebrate new publications and other accomplishments of SCSM members, inviting others into the conversation and helping to keep us connected in between our annual meetings.

Looking ahead, I want to encourage each of you to help us *keep good things going with SCSM*. You can do so by:

- (1) Reading, sharing, and considering how you can contribute to our SCSM Blog, Newsletter, and Facebook page
- (2) Saving the date for next year's Annual Meeting, scheduled for March 3–5, 2022 at Mercer University in Macon, GA



- (3) Keeping an eye out for the next Call for Papers for a SCSM publication.

Grace and Peace,

Joshua A. Waggener, Ph.D.  
SCSM President, 2021-2023



*Joshua A. Waggener is Associate Professor of Music and Christian Worship at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, NC.*

# Conference Report: SCSM Annual Meeting Online: February 25-27, 2021

by Breck McGough, Baylor University and  
Hannah Porter Denecke, Florida State University

This year's annual meeting marked the first fully virtual SCSM, and we were left feeling grateful and inspired that we could gather to think and learn even in such strange times as the COVID-19 pandemic. There were several new members in attendance, among many longtime members and supporters of the work of SCSM. It was poignant to see the faces of so many, though we were not able to meet in person this year. The breadth of topics, discussions, and music covered in this conference made for a meaningful and insightful experience, in spite of our physical separation.

The conference opened with a thought-provoking plenary session about "Music and Racial Identity in the U.S. Church." From the Reconstruction Era to the present, the scholarship in this session demonstrated a variety of ways for SCSM to engage with crucial discussions surrounding race and music in the church today. The concurrent sessions throughout the conference ranged in their methodological approaches, theological and denominational backgrounds, and swept across many different musical genre boundaries. There were musical examples, live and recorded, sung and played, in a variety of languages. Friday morning featured two concurrent lecture recitals. Panayotis League's fabulous "Paraliturgical Songs of the Greek Islands," and Delvyn Case's novel "Interactive Introduction to *Deus Ex Musica*." These two recitals were a welcome treat as so many of us have missed live music in the last year. Friday afternoon included a plenary panel discussion, "Liturgies for Change." This hour-long conversation was bursting with passion and ideas about finding a way forward for the church in the days to come. Directly following the discussion was another plenary session where several presenters shared their posters and discussion. Saturday of the conference included more stimulating papers and presentations, and concluded with a moving and significant keynote address from Mellonee Burnim, "Aretha's Amazing Grace: Symbol of African American Religious and Cultural Identity." In the closing announcements of the conference, we learned that Hannah Snavely was awarded the student paper prize for her fascinating paper, "The Global Encounter as *Communitas*: Inter-Pilgrim Musicking along the Contemporary Camino de Santiago."

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*"Beauty is a summons" continued...*

ugliness/evil in the second half of Chapter 1. He names each creature as "a site where the glory of God is revealed" (35) and affirms that God "is not just suppressing the ugly but restoring the beautiful" (39). That is, God is restoring the imaging of God by God's creatures.

Johnson begins Chapter 1 by briefly defining the ways he characterizes beauty as pre-argumentative ("No arguments or reasons have to be given to enable the experience of beauty"), imperative ("Beauty greets us with an over-mastering force"), subjective ("different individuals always have non-identical senses of beauty"), and expansive ("we celebrate the ability to see beauty where others cannot") (18-21).

Johnson then comes to the central claim of his book, the link between beauty and memory, that "beauty in the third sense, as the experience of the beautiful, is a moment when we are being reminded of God" (21). Clearly such a position requires that each human innately has a memory of God, which Johnson affirms on the basis of natural theology (Psalm 19; Romans 1:20) and that each of us are grasped by the knowledge of God ("he gave the whole to their hearts," Ecclesiastes 3:11). He concludes: "Our worldly experience of beauty is keyed to this, and we call beautiful that which excites this memory [of God] in us" (24). Johnson goes on to state six key corollaries, things about beauty that must be true if we accept his central claim.

This brief overview has only brought us to the starting point of Johnson's argument: that the beauty of creatures (all creatures, including the creations of human persons, including art works) always has the potential to ignite in humans the memory of beauty itself, that is, of God. Taking seriously this claim can help us to see in ever new ways that "We cannot *not* live in the presence of God," that every encounter with a creature has the potential to point us to the beauty that is God.

"So in the end, beauty is a summons . . . [as] we find ourselves romanced by a desire we can never seem to shake" (194).

*Mark Peters is professor of music and director of the Center for Teaching and the Good Life at Trinity Christian College.*





### *Conference Report continued...*

Altogether, the SCSM 2021 Annual Meeting was evidence that even in an unfamiliar format, this society is made up of thoughtful, passionate, caring scholars, musicians, and teachers. The depth and breadth of topics covered and perspectives shared give us hope and anticipation for the future of the society. We look to 2022 with great excitement!



**Breck McGough** is currently a doctoral student at Baylor University, conducting research in church music and studying composition with Dr. Scott McAllister. When not making music, he is most likely to be found in a library or in his kitchen baking too much bread with his wife, Laurelin.

**Hannah Porter Denecke** is currently a doctoral student in Musicology at Florida State University. Hannah is intrigued by popular music in the United States, and her dissertation research explores concept albums which responded to and critiqued American politics during the Trump presidency. In her free time, Hannah likes to over-extend metaphors and go outside with her beloved husband, Eli.



### **Discography For Beethoven's lasting influence: from Debussy to "Hamilton," in discussion order:**

Trio Italiano d'archi. "Beethoven: String Trio, Op. 3." Beethoven: String Trio, Op. 3, Serenade, Op. 8. Brilliant Classics 95819, 1999, compact disc.

Meyer, Edgar, and Joshua Bell. "Death By Triple Fiddle." Short Trip Home. Sony Classical Records 2011623, 1998, compact disc.

Kleiber, Erich (conductor), and The Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam. Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 "Eroica." Decca LXT 2547, 1950, vinyl LP album.

Original Broadway Cast. Hamilton. Import B07YQF33ZM, 2019, compact disc.

Heifetz, Jascha (violin); Toscanini, Arturo (conductor); and The NBC Symphony Orchestra. Beethoven: Concerto in D major, Op. 61. RCA Victor LCT-1010, 1953, vinyl LP album.

Heifetz, Jascha (violin); Reiner, Karl (conductor); and The Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Brahms: Concerto In D, Op. 77. RCA LM 1903, 1955, vinyl LP album.

### **Discography continued...**

Ashkenazy, Vladimir. "Beethoven: Piano Sonata #32, Op. 111." Beethoven: Piano Sonatas Nos. 31 & 32. Decca SXL 6630, 1974, vinyl LP album.

Monk, Thelonious. "I Mean You." Monk: Big Band and Quartet in Concert. CBS 85814, 1964, vinyl LP album.

Kleiber, Carlos, and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Beethoven: Symphony NR. 5. Deutsche Grammophon 2530 516, 1975, vinyl LP album.

Rollins, Sonny. "St. Thomas." Saxophone Colossus. PRLP 7079 A, 1957, vinyl LP album.

Fischer, Iván (conductor), Goode, Richard (piano), and The Budapest Festival Orchestras. "Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 4, in G Major, Op. 58." Beethoven: The Complete Piano Concertos. Nonesuch 7559-79928-3, 2009, compact disc.

Armstrong, Louis, and his Hot Five. "West End Blues." West End Blues 1928. Joker SM 3746. 1975 (re-release), vinyl LP album.

Haitink, Bernard; Perahia, Murray; and The Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam. "Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 5." Beethoven: The Five Piano Concertos. CBS M3X 44575, 1988, vinyl LP album.

Rogé, Pascal. "Claire de lune." Debussy: Clair De Lune And Other Piano Works. Decca 0289 478 5405 0 CD ADD DB, 2013, compact disc.

Szell, George (conductor), and The Cleveland Orchestra. "Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F Major, Op. 68 "Pastoral." Beethoven: The Pastoral Symphony. Epic LC 3849, 1962, vinyl LP album.

Davis, Sir Colin (conductor), and The Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam. Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique. Phillips 6500 774, 1974, vinyl LP album.

Emerson String Quartet. "Beethoven: String Quartet No. 15, Op. 132." Beethoven: The String Quartets. Deutsche Grammophon 477 8649, 1996, compact disc.

Whitacre, Eric, and The Los Angeles Master Chorale. The Sacred Veil. Signum Classics SIGCD630, 2020, compact disc.

Wand, Günter (conductor), and NDR Sinfonieorchester. Beethoven: Symphony No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125. RCA Victor Red Seal 60095-2-RC, 1987, compact disc.

USA for Africa. "We are the World." We Are the World. Columbia – USA 40043. 1985, vinyl LP album.

## SCSM Member News, Spring 2021

**There are a number of our graduate student members who have graduated and are now PhDs. Congrats to them all!**



**Rebekah Franklin** has graduated with a PhD in Musicology from Florida State University. She is still an active cellist in the Gulf Coast area and is now the Marketing and Engagement Coordinator for the Tallahassee Bach Parley. Her dissertation research explores how singing J.S.

Bach's Passions in twenty-first century American festival contexts creates spaces of community.

**Dissertation title:** "J. S. Bach's Passions in Twenty-First-Century America: Festivalization, Theology, and Community Beyond the Liturgy."

**Megan Francisco** has graduated with a PhD in Musicology from University of Washington. She just published her first article, which is a piece of her dissertation. "Battlestar Galactica and Space Opera: Transforming a Subgenre," *Journal of the Society for American Music*, Volume 15: Issue 1 (February 2021), pp. 99–123.

She has accepted a position as Visiting Assistant Professor of Musicology at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC for next school year. Congrats, Megan!

**Dissertation Title:** "The Shape of Things to Come: Identity and Destiny in the Music of Battlestar Galactica."

**Adam Perez** has graduated with a ThD from Duke University Divinity School. He has also accepted a two-year postdoctoral fellowship position at Duke Divinity school where he'll be working on developing and expanding the worship curriculum alongside another SCSM member, Lester Ruth.

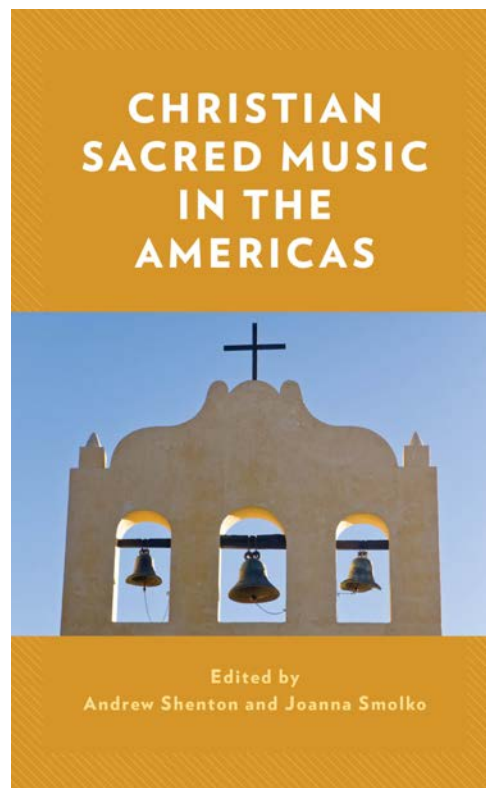
**Dissertation title:** "'All Hail King Jesus': The International Worship Symposium and the Making of Praise and Worship History, 1977-1989."



**Bo kyung Blenda Im** has been awarded the 2021-22 Global Korean Diasporas Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Korea Institute, Harvard University. From the Korea Institute's [website](#):

"During the 2021-22 academic year Blenda will work on her book project, *Transpacific Belonging: Race, Music, and Faith in Seoul*, which reconceives transpacific musical modernity through a restorative chronopolitical framework. Based on extensive fieldwork in Seoul, the monograph examines the co-production of ethnoracial and religious subjectivity in Korean Christian engagements with black gospel and contemporary worship music."

And congrats go to all who were involved with the new SCSM publication, *Christian Sacred Music in the Americas* with Lexington Books, edited by **Andrew Shenton and Joanna Smolko**, which is a follow-up to SCSM's *Exploring Christian Song* (Lexington Books, 2017).



## From the Editor

Over the last few months, I have meditated on Junius Johnson's claim about "Our worldly experience of beauty" and that "we call beautiful that which excites this memory [of God] in us" (24). Memory here is not simply a reminder but an embedded knowing found deep in our bones, a recognition of the presence of the divine in and with the world. I have observed this awakening of memory in my students in my current class on Beauty and Atonement. Theological metaphors informed by experiences in nature seem to resonate more fully, especially with my students who are unsure about theology and their own church experiences. For them, beauty in the natural world feels more inviting, clarifying, and evocative. This has caused me to think about the distinctions between Augustine's concept of the *vestigia trinitatis* and Gerard Manley Hopkins' view of *inscape*.



Figure 1 Western White Trillium

One possible example of the *vestigia trinitatis*, a sign or a remnant of the Trinity, is found in the forest of the Pacific Northwest, the Western White Trillium (*trillium ovatum*) with its three large leaves, three smaller leaves, and three petalled white flower (which turns to purple as it matures). The three threes of the trillium (much like Bach's *E minor Fugue, BWV 548*) brings to mind the one and three and three in one being of God as Father, Son, and Spirit, but is this a sign of the Trinity or something of a *sacramental* revelation of God? As

I came across a "choir" of trillium on one hike, I thought more about Hopkins' view of *inscape*, that the world is "charged with the grandeur of God." For Hopkins, the revelation of God is not reliant upon threes or analogy but instead upon the love and grace of God disclosed through the experience of natural beauty. There is revealed an extravagance and an overflow in the world that cannot be explained. As Hopkins journaled one day, "I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of our Lord by it. Its inscape is mixed of strength and grace, like an ash tree." Replace bluebell with trillium and this matches my own experience of springtime hikes deep in the forest. In my mind, the sacramentality of the trillium, rather than its analogy of the Trinity, evokes a memory of God that reverberates within me, an intimacy with the divine filled with awe and wonder, as Gerard Manley Hopkins expresses so well...



Figure 2 A "choir" of trillium

Glory be to God for dappled things –  
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;  
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;  
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;  
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;  
And áll trádes, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;  
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows  
how?)  
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;  
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:  
Praise him.



Peace, Chelle Stearns

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