

Call for Proposals – Routledge Handbook in *Posthuman Perspectives on Music and Spirituality*

We are seeking proposals for the final round of contributions to a Handbook in *Posthuman Perspectives on Music and Spirituality*, currently under consideration by Routledge.

Summary

The volume brings together composers and scholars to explore the relationship between music and spirituality through the lens of posthumanism (Braidotti 2013, 2016, 2017; Sampanikou 2017; and Wolfe 2010). As Braidotti (2013) and Wolfe (2010) have argued, technological advances, globalisation, and humanity’s increasingly apparent connection to and impact on nature has led to a “decentering of the human” that demands new theoretical paradigms. Challenging humanism’s belief in the power of reason and progress, this shift has also led to a crisis of secularism in our contemporary society (Braidotti 2013; Harding 2000; Mahmood 2005; Wolfe 2010). Spirituality, too, has evolved, encompassing religious traditions, embodied practices, ecological awareness, and the transcendent potential of musical experience. What does it mean to compose music in this context? And how might we reconsider music’s longstanding relation with spirituality?

From its inception, musical creation has maintained a close connection with spirituality (Begbie 2000; Godwin 1987). Cobussen (2008) has argued that music and spirituality are each “thresholds,” spaces between the human and the ineffable, inviting us to rethink both concepts. The publication of multiple studies on the relationship between music and spirituality in the past decade (Arnold 2014; Begbie 2013; Brown and Hopps 2018; Foley 2015; Moody 2014; Sholl and Van Maas 2019) reveals a renewed interest in the subject and its importance today. Nevertheless, none of these publications examine music and spirituality through a posthumanist lens, and most of them focus on Christian spirituality, leaving multiple spiritual and cultural perspectives unexplored.

Posthumanism invites a turn away from the humanist ideal of a universal (meaning white, male, able-bodied, and heterosexual) “Man” as agent, as well as an alternative to the positioning of humanity as superior to and separate from other living organisms. It calls for a new way to view our relationship to nature, to each other, and to technology, leading us to consider the many dimensions (transversal, affective, embodied) and ecosystems in which and with which we create.

If, as Tomlinson suggests (2020), our challenge moving forward is to conceive of a place beyond the human, music and spirituality—two deeply “human” notions—must be rethought. By embracing new perspectives and incorporating diverse disciplinary and cultural viewpoints, this handbook will illuminate new dimensions of the profound connection between music and spirituality, which remains a crucial aspect of musical creation today, offering insights that resonate with the complexities of our posthuman world.

We encourage proposals on any subject that engages with the theme of the volume. Our purpose is to include a wide array of perspectives on the topic – we invite contributions by music scholars (musicology, music theory, ethnomusicology), composers, as well as interdisciplinary scholars.

Submission guidelines

Please submit an abstract of around 300-350 words in English, accompanied with five keywords, and a 150-word bio, by email to the editors: zoey.cochran@umontreal.ca and ariane.couture2@usherbrooke.ca.

Chapter draft: maximum 7000 words including footnotes and references

Important deadlines

- **Abstract submission:** December 15, 2025
- **Notification of acceptance:** January 15, 2026
- **Chapter submission:** May 1, 2026
- **Editors' revision:** June 1, 2026

Book editors

- Zoey Cochran, visiting professor, Université de Montréal, zoey.cochran@umontreal.ca
- Ariane Couture, assistant professor, Université de Sherbrooke, ariane.couture2@usherbrooke.ca