

SHERSTEN REGINA JOHNSON, Ph.D.

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Music Theory, 2004 – University of Wisconsin–Madison
Dissertation: “Hearing the Unvoiced: Writer’s Block in Benjamin Britten’s *Death in Venice*”
Advisor: Dr. Brian Hyer, Doctoral minor in music composition
- M.M. Composition, 1995 – California State University–Northridge
Graduated *with distinction*
Thesis: “Vertices for Orchestra” in one movement (fifteen minutes)
- B.A. Music, 1981 – Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Graduated *magna cum laude* – flute performance concentration

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- University of St. Thomas, Professor 2018—present, Associate Professor 2010–17,
Assistant Professor 2002–10
- University of Minnesota–Minneapolis, Visiting Instructor, Summer 2008
- University of Wisconsin–Madison, Visiting Lecturer in Music, 2001–02
- University of Kansas–Lawrence, Assistant Professor in Music, 2000–01
- University of Wisconsin–Madison, Teaching Assistant, 1996–2000
- California State University–Northridge, Teaching Assistant, 1995

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- University of St. Thomas, Music Department, Chair, 2018—present
- University of St. Thomas, Music Department, Assistant Chair, 2014–2017

NON-ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Worldwide Facilities, Insurance Brokerage, Los Angeles, CA, Underwriting Technician 1983-1996

Writers, Inc. Insurance Agency, Minneapolis, MN Customer Service Representative, 1981-1983

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Publications

“Music Analysis and Accessibility in the Music Theory Classroom,” in the *Routledge Companion to Music Theory Pedagogy*, ed. L. VanHandel (Routledge Press, 2019).

<https://www.routledge.com/The-Routledge-Companion-to-Music-Theory-Pedagogy-1st-Edition/VanHandel/p/book/9781138585010>

“Embodied Rhythm and Musical Impact of Ritualized Violence in 20th-century Opera,” in *Oxford Handbook on Music and the Body*, ed. S. Gilman and Y. Kim (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019) pp. 221-240.

https://clicsearch.stthomas.edu/permalink/f/1afvb1q/TN_ouporr10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190636234.001.0001

“Recitatives and Late Style in Britten’s *Death in Venice*” in *Essays on Benjamin Britten from a Century Symposium*, ed. Q. Ankrum, D. Forrest, S. Jocoy, and E. Yates (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), 207-224.

<https://www.cambridgescholars.com/essays-on-benjamin-britten-from-a-centenary-symposium>

“Coalescing Learning around a Coltrane Classic,” *Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy* 4 (2016) www.flipcamp.org/engagingstudents4/essays/johnson.html.

“Understanding is Seeing: Music Analysis and Blindness,” in *Oxford Handbook on Music and Disability Studies*, ed. B. Howe, S. Jensen-Moulton, N. Lerner, and J. Straus (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 131-154.

“Re-composition as Low-Stakes Analysis,” *Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy* 2 (2015) www.flipcamp.org/engagingstudents2/essays/johnson.html.

“The Intellectual and Inspiration: Sounds of Sense and Sensuality in Aschenbach’s Venice,” *The International Journal of the Arts in Society* 4/2 (2009): 291-302.

“Notational Systems and Conceptualizing Music: A Case Study of Print and Braille Notation,” *Music Theory Online* 15/4 (2009) www.mto.societymusictheory.org/issues/mto.09.15.3/toc.15.3.html.

“At a Loss for Words: Writer’s Block in *Death in Venice*,” *PsyArt: An online journal for the psychological study of the arts*, (2008) www.clas.ufl.edu/ipso/journal/index.shtml

“Strange, Strange Hallucination: Dozing and Dreaming in Benjamin Britten’s *Death in Venice*,”
Journal of Music and Meaning 5 (2007) www.musicandmeaning.net/index.php.

“Britten’s Musical Syllables,” *Music and Letters* 86/4 (2005): 592-622.

Reviews and Other Articles

Review of *Benjamin Britten Studies: Essays on an Inexplicit Art*. Edited by Vicki P. Stroehler and Justin Vickers. *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* (2019)

Review of *Making Musicians: A Personal History of the Britten-Pears School* by Moira Bennet, *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 70/3 (2014): 444-46

Review of *Extraordinary Measures: Disability in Music* by Joseph Straus, *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 68/3 (2012): 599-601.

“Braille Music Notation,” in *Encyclopedia of American Disability History*, ed. Susan Burch, Vol. I (New York: Facts on File, 2009), 140. www.factsonfile.infobasepublishing.com

Review of *Aspects of British Music of the 1990s* ed. Peter O’Hagan, *Music Educator’s Journal* 92/1 (2005): 25

Review of *Britten: Folk Song Arrangements, Opera Today* (2005)
www.operatoday.com/content/2005/07/britten_folk_so_1.php

Review of *L’Upupa oder Der Triumph der Sohnesliebe*, by Hans Werner Henze, *Opera Today* (2005).
www.operatoday.com/content/2005/06/henze_lupupa_od.php

Review of *Britten’s Musical Language* by Phillip Rupprecht, *Music Theory Spectrum* 27/1 (2005): 138-45.

Review of *Reading Opera Between the Lines* by Christopher Morris, *Opera Today* (2005).
www.operatoday.com/content/2005/06/morris_reading.php

Review of *Britten, Voice and Piano: Lectures on the vocal music of Benjamin Britten* by Graham Johnson, *Music Educator’s Journal* 91/3 (2005): 61.

Dissertation

“Hearing the Unvoiceable: Writer’s Block in Benjamin Britten’s *Death in Venice*,”
PhD dissertation, The University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2004, 325 pages,
Ann Arbor: UMI

GRANTS AND HONORS

Teaching Enhancement Grant, “Beyond chorale part-writing in music theory classes,” University of St. Thomas, Summer 2020.

Sabbatical, “Film Adaptation in 21st-Century Operas,” University of St. Thomas, Spring 2018

Partnership-in-Learning Grant, “Metropolitan Opera Research,” University of St. Thomas, Summer 2017

Research Grant, “Inter-storyline Connections in the Metropolitan Opera’s Live in HD Simulcasts,” University of St. Thomas, Fall 2016

Teaching Enhancement Grant, “Integrating Universal Design principles into a Music Theory I course,” University of St. Thomas, Summer 2016

Partnership-in-Learning Grant, “Conceptualizing Music Notation,” University of St. Thomas, Spring 2015

Faculty Partnership Grants, “The Blues: Musical Theory and Indigenous Practice,” University of St. Thomas, Summer 2014

Research Grant, “Understanding is Seeing: Music Analysis and Blindness” University of St. Thomas, Fall 2013

Faculty Partnership Grant, “Integrating Scholarly Knowledge with Personal Remembrance,” University of St. Thomas, Spring 2012

Undergraduate Collaborative Scholarship Grants, University of St. Thomas, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2012

Sabbatical, “The Musical Impact of HD Simulcasts on the Opera-going Experience,” University of St. Thomas, Fall 2010

Sudden Opportunity Grant, University of St. Thomas, Fall 2009

Teaching Enhancement Grant, University of St. Thomas, Summer 2009

Bush Foundation Program Grants, University of St. Thomas, Fall 2008, Fall & Spring 2005

Westrup Prize for Distinguished Article: “Britten’s Musical Syllables,” *Music & Letters*, January 2006

Distinguished Visitor Grant, University of St. Thomas, Spring 2004

Indiana University Press Award for outstanding student paper, “Dissolution and Disillusion: Britten’s ‘Musical Syllables,’” awarded by AMS–Midwest, 2001

First Prize, Wisconsin Alliance for Composers “Ear and Now” contest for new music, 2000

PAPERS, PRESENTATIONS, AND INVITED TALKS

- “Expanding the Sensorium of Understanding in the Music Theory Classroom,” College Music Society Great Lakes conference, Michigan, 2020 (cancelled due to COVID-19)
- “Setting Atwood’s Dystopian Sound World in *The Handmaid’s Tale*,” Opera and Popular Culture after 1900 conference, Fort Worth, 2020
- “Multimodal Figments and Phantom Characters in Live-streamed Opera,” American Musicological Society Midwest, Detroit, 2019, also accepted to the Multimodality: Illusion, Performance, Experience conference, Aarhus Institute, Aarhus, Denmark, October, 2019
- “Reconfigured Audiovisual Spaces in the Met’s HD Productions,” Opera and Musical Theater in the United States conference at Middle Tennessee State University, March 2018
- “Music Analysis and Accessibility in the Music Theory Classroom,” Pedagogy into Practice conference, Cleveland, TN, 2017
- “Music and Meaning,” Senior College of West Central Minnesota, Alexandria, MN, 2017, Selim Center, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN 2016
- “Performance Gestures and idealized Listening in the Met’s *Pasquale* Simulcast,” Porto International Conference on Musical Gesture as Creative Interface, Porto, Portugal, March 2016
- “Writer’s Burnout to Writer’s Block: The Britten-Piper Adaptation of Mann’s *Der Tod in Venedig*,” Modern Language Association, Austin, TX, January 2016
- “Expanding the Sensorium in the Music Theory Classroom,” Society for Disability Studies annual conference, Atlanta, 2015
- “Disability Style in Britten’s Venice Recitatives,” Music Theory Midwest annual conference, Appleton, WI, April 2014
- “Recitatives and Late Style in Britten’s *Death in Venice*,” Benjamin Britten: 100 Years of Inspiration conference, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX, October 2013
- “Understanding is Seeing: Music Analysis and Blindness,” Oxford Handbook on Music and Disability Studies Authors’ Conference, New York City, NY, May 2013
- “Extraordinary Bodies and Voices,” American Musicological Society, Midwest Chapter, Iowa City, IA, April 2013
- “Refiguring Disfigurement in Petitgirard’s *Joseph Merrick, the Elephant Man*,” Society for Disability Studies annual conference, Denver, CO, June 2012

- “Cruel Rhythms and Musical Blows” Music and the Body Conference, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong S.A.R., March, 2012
- “When Offstage Becomes Onscreen: Contested Spaces in the Met’s Simulcasts,” Music and the Moving Image Conference, NYU, New York, NY, May 2011
- “Sound Gags: Mozart, Mirth, and Metaphor,” College Music Society National Conference, Minneapolis, MN, September 2010
- “Notational Systems and Conceptualizing Music: a case study of print and braille notation,” Society for Music Theory National Conference, Nashville, TN November 2008; Society for Disability Studies, CUNY, New York City, NY, June 2008; Music Theory Midwest, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, April 2007
- “Songs and Proverbs of William Blake,” commentary on Britten’s song cycle performed by Dr. Alan Bryan and Dr. Andrew Hisey in two sessions with University of St. Thomas English students, March 2007
- “‘And then it hit me:’ Inspiration as Gesture” International Conference on Music and Gesture, Manchester, UK, July 2006
- “Blending Meaning and Music in *The Rape of Lucretia*” and “Britten’s ‘Musical Syllables’” Invited speaker, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, April 2006
- “*Songs of Experience: Sonic Codes and Settings*,” Symposium on Music and Poetry at DePauw University, Greencastle, IN, February 2006
- “Strange, Strange Hallucination: Hearing Altered States of Musical Consciousness” Music Theory Midwest, Oberlin, OH, May 2005
- “Comparing Notes” College Music Society, Pacific Southern Regional Chapter Meeting, March 2005
- “Sonic Transformations and Operatic Narrative in Britten’s *Death in Venice*” Symposium of the International Musicological Society, Melbourne, Australia, July 2004; Narrative: An International Conference, East Lansing, MI, April 2002
- “Breathing Life into Britten’s “Ah! Sun-flower” Music Theory Midwest, Kansas City, MO, 2004; West Coast Conference on Theory and Analysis, Santa Barbara, CA, 2004; International Conference on Music and Gesture, Norwich, UK, 2003
- “Creativity in *Death in Venice*: Hearing Writer's Block in Britten's Opera and Visconti's Film” University of St. Thomas Faculty Showcase, Saint Paul, MN, February 2004
- “At a Loss for Words: Writer’s Block in Benjamin Britten’s *Death in Venice*” American Musicological Society, Houston, TX, November 2003; Society for

Music Theory Annual Meeting, Madison, WI, November 2003; West Coast Conference on Music and Analysis, Victoria, BC, April 2002

“Dissolution and Disillusion: Britten’s ‘Musical Syllables’” Society for Music Theory Annual Meeting, Columbus, OH, November 2002; Music Theory Midwest, Cincinnati, OH, April 2001; American Musicological Society, Midwest Chapter, Kansas City, KS, March 2001

“Hearing the Unspoken in Britten’s *Death in Venice*” Society of Composers Inc. Region VI Conference, Lawrence, KS, March 2001; *Musical Intersections* (Society for Music Theory), Toronto, ON, November 2000; New Music and Art Festival, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH, October 2000

COURSES TAUGHT

University of St. Thomas

Graduate Thesis and Projects. Advised theses and projects for students in Graduate Programs in Music Education 2007 (1), 2009 (1), 2012 (3), 2013 (4), 2014 (1), 2015 (1). Served as readers on projects 2008 (2), 2009 (6), 2010 (2), 2011 (4), 2012 (3), 2013 (3), 2014 (4), 2015 (1), 2016 (4), 2017 (4), 2018 (8). Served on oral exams 2009 (5), 2010 (1), 2011 (3), 2012 (5), 2013 (3), 2014 (2), 2016 (7), 2017 (3), 2018 (10).

Music Theory I—IV for undergraduate majors and minors. Diatonic and chromatic harmony, counterpoint, style modeling, twentieth-century techniques, form and analysis, aural skills, and composition.

Perspectives in Music Theory for graduates. Review of traditional modes of analysis, plus a survey of recent theoretical writings and analytical techniques.

Orchestration for undergraduate majors and minors. Fundamentals of instrumentation and orchestration. Experience writing for small to medium ensembles.

Sonic Scripts: Musical Narrative and Film for undergraduate Aquinas Scholars Honors students. Enabled students who were neither composers nor filmmakers to create music-film narratives.

Music on the Web for undergraduate Aquinas Scholars Honors students. Survey of cultural changes in music making and consumption on the web, including legal and ethical issues surrounding content and digital rights.

Understanding Music and Culture Music appreciation course for undergraduate non-majors.

Musicianship for graduate students. Written and aural music fundamentals review for graduate students.

Music Major Convocation. A meeting for all music majors regardless of specialization, in which they perform, hear from peers and guest musicians, and discuss topics applicable to music studies and professions.

Music Theory Electives: A variety of course topics including advanced counterpoint, advanced analysis, and orchestration/arranging.

Individual Composition Lessons

University of Minnesota–Minneapolis

Intensive Theory and Analysis of 20th Century Music for undergraduate majors. Twentieth-century techniques, form and analysis, aural skills, and composition.

University of Wisconsin–Madison

Form and Analysis: Music and Drama in Britten's Operas. Topics analysis class for upper-division undergraduates and graduate students.

Counterpoint. Advanced modal and tonal counterpoint for graduate and upper-division undergraduate students.

Musica Practica for undergraduate majors. Four semesters. First- and second-year music theory discussion sections. Aural skills, CAI, harmony and counterpoint.

Elements of Music for non-majors. Four semesters.

University of Kansas–Lawrence

Theory III for undergraduate majors. Chromatic harmony including analytical and compositional techniques, keyboard harmony, aural skills, and computer-assisted instruction.

Theory IV for undergraduate majors. Twentieth-century theories including analytical and compositional techniques, keyboard harmony, digital music notation and aural skills.

Introduction to Music Theory for non-majors. Elements of music, analysis & style studies.

California State University–Northridge

Musicianship Sight singing and ear training for undergraduate music majors.

Tutored students preparing for the aural skills proficiency exam.

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Member, Society for Music Theory SMT-40 Dissertation Fellowship Committee 2019

Member, Society for Music Theory Disability Interest Group, 2007–present

Session, Chair, Porto International Conference on Musical Gesture as Creative Interface 2016

Member, Music Theory Midwest Program Committee, 2015

Session Chair, Music Theory Midwest, 2015

Member, Society for Music Theory Nominating Committee, 2014

Member, Society for Music Theory Networking Committee, 2011–14

Local Arrangements Chair, Society for Music Theory National Conference, 2011

Secretary, Music Theory Midwest, 2004–08

Session Chair, Music Theory Midwest annual meeting, 2006

Member, Komar Award Committee, Music Theory Midwest, 2003

Member, Program Committee, Music Theory Midwest, 2001–02

Session Chair, Music Theory Midwest annual meeting, 2002

Student Representative, Music Theory Midwest Executive Board, 2001–02

Committee on Graduate Studies in Music, University of Kansas, 2000–01

Co-leader, Graduate Student Music Forum, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1997–99

Co-chair, Midwest Graduate Music Consortium Symposium, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1998

Session Chair, 12th Annual National Feminist Graduate Student Conference, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1998

Director, New Directions Composers Group, California State University–Northridge, 1992–93

UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Chair, Music Department, 2018–present

Member, Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program committee, 2019–present

Member, Fine Arts Assessment Committee, 2019—present

Assistant Chair, Music Department, 2014–2017

Division Director, College of Arts and Sciences Arts and Letters Division, 2014–2017

Faculty Mentor, 2015–16

Area Head for Music Theory and Composition, 2004–present

Member, UST Multi-Year Evaluation Committee, 2013–15

Member, Music Business Clinical Faculty Search Committee, 2011–12

Member, UST Graduate Curriculum Committee, 2008–12

Chair, Music Department Strategic Long-range Planning Committee, 2009–12

Faculty Sponsor, Table-top Gaming Club (student group), 2007–present

Member, Discipline Committee, University of St. Thomas, 2005–09

Member, Undergraduate Planning Policy Committee, 2004–05

Member, Faculty Showcase Committee, 2004–05

Member, Music Department Curriculum Committee, 2002–04

Faculty Sponsor, Student Composer Club, University of St. Thomas, 2003–04

Member, Music History Search Committee, 2002–03

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Musicological Society

College Music Society

Music Theory Midwest

Society for Disability Studies

Society for Music Theory