



Dr Erin Johnson-Williams (she / her)

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Reference for Dr Erin Brooks

To the Promotions Panel, Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam:

It is a genuine pleasure to provide a letter of recommendation for **Dr Erin M Brooks** for her application for Professor at SUNY Potsdam. Dr Brooks is an outstanding musicologist, a leading academic voice in the fields of opera, film music, nineteenth and twentieth-century music. Her work is celebrated internationally, including in the UK, where I work. It is my honour to have collaborated with her over the last decade in a variety of academic contexts.

I am Associate Professor of Music Education and Social Justice at the University of Southampton (UK). My background, like that of Dr Brooks, is in nineteenth-century historical musicology; I now work on trauma, colonial history and social justice approaches to music education. My PhD (2015) was from the USA (Yale University), so I can speak to the resonance of Dr Brooks' work in both British and American academia.

Dr Brooks and I first met while collaborating on a panel for the 'Trauma Studies in the Medical Humanities' conference at Durham University (UK) in 2018. This panel led to the eventual publication of the 2022 special issue of *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 'Music, War and Trauma in the Long Nineteenth Century', co-edited by Jillian C. Rogers and Michelle Meinhart, within which both Dr Brooks and I had articles. While this special issue was developed, we remained in regular contact, particularly through zoom calls during the Covid-19 pandemic to continue to develop our work on a) developing historical approaches on the impact of trauma theory on understanding nineteenth-century music history; b) pioneering innovations in music pedagogy around trauma-informed care and teaching practices in our own contexts; and c) building and fostering international networks of scholars working on interdisciplinary topics in music, sound and trauma studies.

As we worked together during this time, I was so impressed by Dr Brooks' work on mapping trauma in nineteenth-century France that I immediately put her in touch with a collaborator in the UK – Dr Jonathan Hicks (then at Newcastle University; now at the University of Aberdeen), who then, through this introduction, invited Dr Brooks to be part of his Arts and Humanities Research Council 'Mapping Music History' Award. I was pleased to see her participate in symposia related to that funded grant project.

Over the next few years, as a result of these ongoing interrelated strands of work, Dr Brooks and I collaborated on several panels across music pedagogy, trauma studies, and historical musicology studies conferences respectively. These included: setting up the AMS Music, Sound and Trauma Study Group; presenting virtually for the 'Music, Sound, and Trauma: Interdisciplinary Perspectives' conference (2021); co-presenting in a panel for the Teaching Music History Conference (2022); and co-organising panels on music and trauma in association with the Study Group for the American Musicological Society Conferences in San Antonio (2018); New Orleans (2022) and Minneapolis (2025). I am also contributing a chapter to the *Oxford Handbook of Music, Sound and Trauma* that Dr Brooks is co-editing.

In every professional and personal interaction Dr Brooks has been one of the most rewarding and impressive collaborators that I have ever worked with. Through the academic networks that she has built and sustained over the last decade, Dr Brooks has shown care, intellectual rigor and has also taken the time to read and mentor the academic work of others. I have used her *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* article, 'Sonic Scars in Urban Space: Trauma and the Parisian Soundscape During *l'année terrible*' as a recommended reading for my students at the University of Southampton when introducing an exemplar text on how to approach trauma studies through music history.

I look forward to not only collaborating with Dr Brooks but also to reading and learning from her cutting-edge publications for years to come. I am in full support of her application to Professor and wish her all of the best for a successful outcome.

Sincerely,



Dr Erin Johnson-Williams

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