

Kristen M. Turner
202 Silvergrove Drive
Cary, NC 27513

January 16, 2026

To Members of the Committee,

I write this letter in support of Erin Brooks's promotion to full professor of musicology at the Crane School of Music. In addition to her work on early media, the Metropolitan Opera's radio broadcasts, and Sarah Bernhardt's impact on French musical culture, Erin is an internationally recognized expert in the emerging field of music and trauma studies.

I first became aware of Erin's scholarship soon after she finished her dissertation when I met her at a Feminist Theory and Music Conference during the summer of 2015. Currently, Erin is contributing a brilliant essay on the reception of the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts among Black listeners in the mid-twentieth century for a collected edition I am co-editing with Naomi André and Elizabeth Keathley called *Black Identities on the Operatic Stage: A Global Perspective* under review at Oxford University Press.

Erin has published on a wide range of subjects, from the links between sound and trauma during times of war (specifically France's *l'année terrible*) to the work of Camille Saint-Saëns attempts to bring the movies to important classical music venues in the early twentieth century which, in her hands, reveals complex connections between place, cultural hierarchy, music, and new forms of media. What ties her scholarship together is an encyclopedic familiarity with the scholarship on the topic she is writing about and her equally thorough command of primary documents. It is very difficult to be equally conversant in both primary and secondary sources, but Erin takes the time to be familiar with both. Just a quick look at the bibliographies for her publications and dissertation shows that she draws on scholarship from many different fields to inform her work and deftly combines this expertise with a deep engagement with the archive.

Of special note is her leadership in the study of music and trauma. This is a relatively new field of inquiry and Erin is one of the first people to deeply engage with the possibilities of new ways to understand the interactions of music and trauma in the lives of historical figures and in the present. She was part of early conference panels introducing the subject to musicologists, co-founded the Music and Trauma study group in the American Musicological Society, published in a colloquy in the *Journal of the American Musicological Society* and a *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* special issue on the subject, helped organize a major conference on music and trauma in 2021, and is the co-editor of the two-volume *Oxford Handbook on Music, Sound, and Trauma Studies*. This interdisciplinary field requires Erin to be knowledgeable and conversant with psychological, historical, and musicological methodologies. It is especially difficult to research trauma in the nineteenth century because individuals during this period did not write

about or understand their emotional lives in the same way that people today do. It is challenging to ethically apply modern concepts retroactively onto historical figures without overreading primary documents or being unacceptably presentist. Erin navigates these difficulties ethically and thoughtfully producing scholarship that is convincing and groundbreaking.

She is equally adept in the essay I am currently helping to edit for the *Black Identities* collected edition. She is able to tease from primary documents an analysis of how Black audiences understood the Metropolitan Opera as an institution and opera as a genre while having very few sources that speak to the topic directly. The essay is methodologically adventuresome because it foregrounds listening over performance or composition in the study of opera, and she finds hitherto unexamined examples of Black engagement with opera. She demonstrates her characteristic command of a wide variety of secondary literature with significant research in the archive and in print media. Additionally, she has been a responsible and delightful collaborator, responding to editorial suggestions from our team and submitting everything to us in a timely manner.

Erin's demonstrated scholarly leadership and expertise make her an excellent candidate for full professor at the Crane School of Music.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristen M. Turner", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Kristen M. Turner, PhD