


<b>Section A</b>		
<b>Institution:</b> University of St Andrews		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> UoA 31: Theology and Religious Studies		
<b>Title of case study:</b> TheoArtistry: Bringing Classical Music and Theology Back Together for Composers, Musicians, and the Listening Public		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2002 - 2019		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Jeremy Begbie	Professor	01 September 2000 – 30 June 2008
David Brown	Professor	01 February 2007 - 31 August 2015
Gavin Hopps	Senior Lecturer	01 July 2006 - present
George Corbett	Senior Lecturer	01 September 2015 - present
James MacMillan	Professor	01 September 2015 - present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014 - 31 December 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<b>Section B</b>		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>The post-war tendency to downplay music's relationship with theology impoverished the culture of classical music for composers, musicians, and the listening public alike. Research conducted between 2002 and 2019 at the Institute for Theology, Imagination and the Arts (ITIA) led the way in reuniting theology and music. It also demonstrated how theology generates new creative possibilities for composers, and benefits from them for its expression and development. ITIA's highly interdisciplinary research has <b>(1) put questions of faith and theology back into public discourse about classical music</b>, with coverage in church, specialist music, national, and international media outlets. This has inspired leading institutions, such as the BBC and the Royal Opera House, to newly foreground theological concerns in their presentations of classical music to the listening public. Most recently, BBC Radio 4 commissioned a series of programmes 'Faith in Music' on composers and their faith (broadcast December 2020). ITIA's research and theological mentorship has <b>(2) informed the creation and distribution of new material culture: 6 new choral works</b> (published open access, and viewed by over 5,000 people in 60 countries); <b>a theologically informed CD recording</b> (distributed internationally); <b>2 further works of sacred music</b>; and <b>a new volume of poetry</b>. ITIA has <b>(3) enriched the artistic practices and improved the career trajectories of the 12 composers and poets directly involved</b>, by enabling them to experience sustained theological mentorship with experts. <b>(4) External organisations in the UK and Europe</b>, including StAnza (Scotland's International Poetry Festival) and <i>Choir &amp; Organ</i> (the leading magazine internationally for choral and organ music), <b>have taken up ITIA's TheoArtistry collaborative model for artistic creation.</b></p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>In conservatories, university music departments, and wider culture, there has been a clear tendency to downplay music's relationship with faith and theology. Even leading proponents of the 'new' or 'critical' musicology (which rejected the claim for music's autonomy) typically excluded any possibility of transcendence or religious meaning in music, as is the case, for example, in Lawrence Kramer's monograph <i>Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History</i> (2002). Meanwhile, from the perspective of theology, Jeremy Begbie noted as late as 2005 a 'notable</p>		

silence' in academic reflection on the relationship between theology and music. Research conducted between 2002 and 2019 at the Institute for Theology, Imagination and the Arts (ITIA) in St Andrews has led the way in reuniting theology and music. Scholarship in the interdisciplinary field invariably refers to this ITIA-generated research as foundational, as is the case, for example, in Heaney's monograph *Music as Theology* (2012) and Broadhead's article 'An Overview of the Present Discussion Between Theology and Music' (2012/13).

In 2002 (**R1**), ITIA pioneered a theoretical framework for bringing theologians and artists together in creative collaboration. ITIA valorised *praxis* and the revelatory power of such collaborations, presented practical guidelines, and critically examined the issue of artistic integrity. In 2007 (**R2**) ITIA provided a historical survey of the interface between theology and music and proposed a Christian ecology for music. In doing so, ITIA's research constructively challenged the notion that music is 'a purely human enterprise', arguing instead for God's role in shaping the creation of music. ITIA further expanded and enriched this approach, in research conducted between 2010 and 2017 (published 2018 (**R3**)) presenting a more generous understanding of God's self-revelation through history and diverse forms of culture; affirming affective (as well as cognitive) experience; emphasising music as a way of doing theology (beyond instrumental, illustrational, or analogical aspects); validating a variety of musical forms; and underlining the listener's vital role in the co-constitution of music's significance.

In subsequent research conducted between 2016 and 2018 (published 2018 (**R4**)), ITIA established TheoArtistry as a more flexible approach to creative collaborations between theologians and composers, which is open to those with or without faith commitments. ITIA advocated for theologically informed programming and performance (TIPP) as a new paradigm for musicians and the listening public. ITIA also collated further research underpinning its *TheoArtistry Composers' Scheme* by 23 contributors (conducted between 2016 and 2018 and published 2019 (**R5**)). This included research on 6 biblical passages set by composers on the scheme; new theological perspectives from Biblical Studies and Church History; insights from James MacMillan and Paul Mealor (Britain's foremost Catholic and Anglican composers); and analysis of the future of sacred music in and outside church contexts by key stakeholders. ITIA's symbiosis of theology and music was also exemplified by James MacMillan's 5th Symphony 'Le grand Inconnu' [The Great Unknown] (published 2018 (**R6**)), a symphony for chamber choir, chorus, and orchestra that explores the Holy Spirit through its highly innovative musical language.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

**R1** to **R5** were peer reviewed for academic publishers and journals. **R3** has also been the subject of a panel at the AAR (American Academy of Religion), and a subsequent journal special issue. **R6** is published by Boosey & Hawkes, the leading classical music publisher.

**R1.** Jeremy Begbie (ed.), *Sounding the Depths: Theology through the Arts* (London: SCM, 2002), 238 pp, ISBN: [9780334028703](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/9780334028703).

**R2.** Jeremy Begbie, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music* (London: SPCK, 2007), 412 pp, ISBN: 978-0-8010-2695-9.

**R3.** David Brown and Gavin Hopps, *The Extravagance of Music* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018), 325 pp, DOI: [10.1007/978-3-319-91818-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91818-1).

**R4.** George Corbett, 'TheoArtistry, and a Contemporary Perspective on Composing Sacred Choral Music', *Religions* 2018, 9 (1), 7 (Special Issue: Music: Its Theologies and Spiritualities – A Global Perspective), 18 pp., DOI: [10.3390/rel9010007](https://doi.org/10.3390/rel9010007).

**R5.** George Corbett (ed.), *Annunciations: Sacred Music for the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2019), 376 pp, DOI: [10.11647/OBP.0172](https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0172).

**R6.** James MacMillan, 5th Symphony 'Le grand Inconnu' (The Great Unknown), for chamber choir, chorus, and orchestra, duration 50' (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2018), <https://www.boosey.com/cr/music/James-MacMillan-Symphony-No-5-Le-grand-Inconnu/102048>

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

ITIA's research on theology and music has (1) put questions of faith and theology back into public discourse about classical music, and (2) informed the creation and distribution of new material culture (6 choral works, a CD recording, 2 further works of sacred music, and a volume of poetry). Further to this, ITIA's [TheoArtistry](#) model for artistic creation has (3) exerted a deep and lasting influence on the artistic practices and career trajectories of the 12 composers and poets directly involved, and it has (4) been taken up by external organisations in the UK and Europe, leading to further collaborations of this kind.

### **1: ITIA's research has put questions of faith and theology back into public discourse about classical music.**

ITIA's research on the relationship between theology and music (**R1 to R5**) and MacMillan's theologically inspired 5th Symphony 'Le grand inconnu' (**R6**) have stimulated debate and further discussion in the press (especially from March 2018 to December 2020), in church (e.g. *The Church Times*, *The Catholic Herald*, *The Tablet*), specialist music (e.g. *Gramophone* and *Choir & Organ*), national publications (e.g. *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Spectator*, and *The Financial Times*), and international publications (e.g. *New York Times* and *The Epoch Times*) (**S1**). As a result, major institutions, such as the BBC and the Royal Opera House, have newly foregrounded theological concerns in their presentations of classical music to the listening public, something rare even a few years before. An audio producer for the BBC commented: "*James MacMillan's public interventions about the relationship between faith and music, as well as his many sacred compositions such as his latest Symphony 'Le grand inconnu', have been transformative in encouraging commentators to think more about, and discuss more, classical music's historical, and contemporary, relationships to faith, and in empowering people to find in music a spiritual resource*" (**S2**). Such public discourse includes the ground-breaking series of 4 radio programmes with MacMillan, 'Faith in Music', which explores the relationship between composers and their religious faith, first broadcast in December 2020 on BBC Radio 4 (weekly audience numbers of approximately 11,000,000 people (radio listeners), based on the equivalent quarter in 2019 (**S3**)).

To help disseminate its research further, ITIA relaunched *Transpositions* as its official online (and open access) blog in 2014, with a new web design in 2015. Through this blog, ITIA takes the conversation between theology and the arts to a large international audience, as seen in 2018, the year of ITIA's TheoArtistry festival, when 168,084 people (unique readers) visited the site 451,694 times. This reach instigated institutional change: For example, ITIA's journalistic article 'Classical music's divorce from God has been one of the great failures of our times' (February 2018, based on (**R4**)) prompted the Head of Interpretation, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, to request a programme note specifically on '*the relationship between a composer's faith and the spiritual in music*' (**S4**). ITIA curated a TheoArtistry Festival, 'Sacred Music for the Twenty-First Century' (March 2018), which similarly provoked discussion in the press. A journalist for *The Tablet* commented: "*So could music lead the world of artistic endeavor back to the wellspring of faith and spirituality? The festival at St Andrews underlines the importance of safeguarding the link.*" (**S5**) ITIA also put questions of faith and theology back into public discourse about classical music through interviews on BBC Radio, including on 'Desert Island Discs' (total audience of 2,970,000 listeners) and on the Easter Day (2018) edition of 'My Music' for BBC Radio Scotland (circulation: approximately 1,000,000 listeners).

### **2: ITIA's research has led to the creation and distribution of new material culture (6 choral works, a CD recording, 2 further works of sacred music, and a volume of poetry).**

ITIA's research (**R1 to R5**) has led, through the [TheoArtistry Composers' Scheme](#), to the creation of 6 new choral works (published open access by Open Book Publishers and viewed by over 5,000 people in 60 countries (**S6**)). ITIA collaborated with St Salvator's Chapel Choir to produce a new CD recording (which followed the theological theme of *Annunciations*). ITIA provided underpinning research (**R4**) on the programme of music and worked with the director of the choir and with the choir itself on implementing theologically informed programming and performance (TIPP). [Annunciations: Sacred Music for the 21st Century](#) (2018), which includes premiere recordings of the 6 new choral works, was released in 2018 by the Odradek Record company and was distributed in Europe, USA, Canada, and Japan; it is also available on Spotify, Soundcloud, and iTunes (there had been 30,000 total plays of works on Spotify alone as of 13

June 2020) (S7)). Through the take up of ITIA's collaborative model, ITIA's research (R4 and R5) has led to 2 further compositions, 'Asphyxiate' (2019), and 'Light in Darkness' (2019). Finally, through a follow-on [TheoArtistry Poets' Scheme](#), ITIA's research (R5) has led to a new volume of poetry: *The Song: Poems of Biblical Theophany* (published by Tapsalteerie in February 2020).

ITIA launched the *TheoArtistry Composers' Scheme* in July 2016, for which approximately 100 people (composers) applied. ITIA chose 6 exceptionally talented composers (from England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and Canada) to participate. ITIA introduced the composers to its underpinning research (R1 to R5) through handouts (summarising the research) and presentations (at three symposia in St Andrews), and through one-to-one conversations (in person and via Skype). Adopting the methodology set out in (R4), ITIA also linked up each composer with a PhD student in ITIA, who drew on ITIA's research (R1-5), as well as their own specific interests, to provide a contextual package of materials for their composer partner. For the follow-on *TheoArtistry Poets' Scheme*, ITIA adopted a similar method for collaboration, providing theological mentorship to the six poets selected for the scheme.

### **3: ITIA's research has exerted a deep and lasting influence on the artistic practices and career trajectories of twelve composers and poets.**

ITIA has enriched the artistic practices and improved the career trajectories of the 12 composers and poets directly involved by enabling them to experience sustained theological mentorship with experts. The artists particularly highlighted the novelty, and the unexpected creative fruitfulness, of engaging with the Bible and with theologians. One wrote: "*The TheoArtistry project was the first time I had the opportunity to collaborate with a theologian, and have access to the expertise of scholars in theology, Hebrew linguistics, and the intersection between faith and music. The success of this collaboration has greatly directed my career since, both in regards to my artistic expression, and the opportunities it has opened to me. I have subsequently worked again on further projects integrating theology and music, a choral piece with the same theologian, a piece for the Jewish choir Mosaic Voices (as a result of my use of Hebrew on the TheoArtistry project), and an extensive piece for solo viola based on the life of Scottish missionary John Paton (to be released with NMC Recordings in 2021). I am extremely grateful that I was able to take part at such a pivotal moment in my compositional development.*" (S8, p. 1); and another wrote: "*I have collaborated with choreographers, actors, lyricists, and poets, but never before with a theologian. As a teetering agnostic, there was something special about the collaboration from the start, and – going forward – it has made me more open to the creative and musical possibilities of working with the lyrical content of the Bible.*" (S8, p. 2)

### **4. ITIA's TheoArtistry collaborative model for artistic creation has been taken up by external organisations in the UK and Europe.**

Scotland's International Poetry Festival (StAnza) was keen to develop a similar scheme for poets. This led to the follow-on collaboration with ITIA, the *TheoArtistry Poets' Scheme* (between 2017 and 2019). In addition, church groups and leaders in sacred music have invited ITIA to give workshops about the TheoArtistry method of collaboration across Europe, including in Taizé, France, and in Dublin, Republic of Ireland. A Lecturer at Dublin City University wrote: "*This [ITIA's] research has encouraged them [the students on the MA in Choral Studies] to engage more creatively with texts and to seek out collaborations as part of their own compositional practice.*" (S9)

Due to the success of the *TheoArtistry Composers' Scheme*, *Choir & Organ* – the leading magazine internationally for choral and organ music – subsequently adopted the TheoArtistry model of theologian-composer collaboration (R4 and R5) for 2 further commissions of sacred music: 'Asphyxiate' (2019), which recounts the story of Christ's resurrection from the perspective of Mary Magdalene and is published by Cailíno Music Publishers, and the sacred work for organ 'Light in Darkness' (2019). The Editor of *Choir & Organ* wrote: "*Choir & Organ had already reviewed the CD that had been produced by the scheme and we were attracted by its open and unique approach to theology [...] The TheoArtistry Composers' Scheme represents a new departure in the contemporary world of sacred music [...] [it] also offers the complementary possibility to explore the nature of the Divine through music – a two-way process which is greatly*

*to be welcomed, not only in the Church today, but also in a wider society in which music can reach out and touch people who are 'switched off' by dogma." (S10)*

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of ten references)

**S1.** Bundle of articles and reviews in national, international, and specialist press, and interviews on BBC radio.

**S2.** Emailed statement from audio producer, Must Try Softer Publications.

**S3.** BBC report: 'Stable quarter for BBC radio according to latest Rajars' (5 February 2020). *From Q2, 2020, the RAJAR Survey has been suspended as a consequence of COVID19.*

**S4.** Email from the Head of Interpretation, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

**S5.** *The Tablet*, 3 March, 2018, pp. 6-7.

**S6.** Open Book Publishers (Cambridge) website, metrics report: <https://reports.openbookpublishers.com/public/report/10.11647/obp.0172>.

**S7.** Odradek Records, CD sales and distribution / Spotify data for *Annunciations: Sacred Music for the 21st Century* (UPC: 0850869006206)

**S8.** Emailed statements from composers.

**S9.** Emailed statement from lecturer in music at Dublin City University.

**S10.** Emailed statement from the Editor of *Choir & Organ*.