



## **The international Music, Spirituality and Well-being network**

### **Music in Death and Dying in an Age of Global Crisis**

#### CALL FOR CHAPTERS

#### **Overview**

We are pleased to invite submissions for a new interdisciplinary publication exploring the profound role of music in contexts of death, dying, and bereavement. This call addresses the urgent need for inquiry into the interplay between music, spirituality, and well-being amid global crises, including pandemics, armed conflicts, and ecological disasters.

Music has long been a medium for processing grief and exploring existential questions, particularly in periods of disruption. The early 2020s have revealed a heightened collective awareness of mortality and vulnerability, calling for innovative and empathetic approaches in music research and practice. This publication aims to capture diverse scholarly perspectives and practitioner insights that illuminate the transformative power of music in the face of loss.

#### **Rationale**

##### Addressing Death in a Crisis-Driven World

Contemporary global crises, including COVID-19 and geopolitical conflicts, have intensified experiences of grief on an unprecedented scale (Roitman, 2022; Aziz, 2021). These challenges have reshaped cultural rituals and underscored the need for communal healing mechanisms. Music, through its capacity to mediate between personal and collective mourning, has emerged as a crucial resource for navigating loss.

##### Evolution of Music in Death Rituals

Over the past decades, sociocultural and theological shifts have diversified the ways music functions in contexts of death and dying. From livestreamed funerals to personalized playlists for hospice care, musical practices are evolving to meet the demands of an increasingly globalized and digitally connected society. This volume seeks to document and critically examine these innovations.

## Spirituality and Existential Inquiry

Music often fosters transcendent experiences, facilitating connections to existential and metaphysical dimensions of human life (Van der Merwe & Habron, 2015). By exploring its role in providing solace, creating sacred spaces, and enabling dialogue about mortality, this publication aims to deepen understanding of music as a medium for existential reflection and healing.

## Interdisciplinary Approaches

The multifaceted nature of music in death-related contexts invites diverse methodologies, from ethnomusicology and theology to psychology and medical humanities. Contributions that cross disciplinary boundaries will enrich our understanding of music's potential to address universal experiences of grief and remembrance.

## Inclusivity and Practice-Based Perspectives

Beyond academia, practitioners—such as music therapists, hospice workers, and spiritual leaders—are integral to shaping and implementing music's role in end-of-life care. This call emphasizes the inclusion of practice-based insights to ensure the volume's relevance to both theoretical inquiry and practical application.

## Possible Themes

Submissions may address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- Music's role in palliative care and hospice settings.
- Transformations in death rituals due to digital technologies.
- Cross-cultural comparisons of musical mourning practices.
- Music as a tool for processing grief and trauma.
- Theological perspectives on music and afterlife beliefs.
- Innovations in music therapy for bereavement.
- Case studies of music in war zones and disaster-stricken regions.
- Ethical considerations in using music during end-of-life care.

## Suggested Disciplines and Practitioners

We encourage contributions from scholars and practitioners in fields such as:

- Musicology and ethnomusicology
- Religious studies and theology
- Sociology and anthropology
- Psychology and psychiatry

- Medical and palliative care
- Music therapy and counselling
- Education and community engagement
- Digital humanities and technology studies

### **Submission Guidelines**

**We invite chapter proposals originating from diverse professional, disciplinary, cultural and spiritual spaces. In addition to standard chapters, we welcome creative contributions (e.g., poems, music compositions and improvisations). Word limit for standard chapters is 7000 words and for creative contributions is max 2000 words.**

**Chapter proposals should be submitted by 15th May 2025 via email to [amiraehrlich@gmail.com](mailto:amiraehrlich@gmail.com)**

**Submissions should include:**

- **Proposed chapter title**
- **Abstract (700–900 words, including references).**
- **Keywords (3-5keywords).**
- **Author(s)biography (maximum 75 words per biography).**

**Each submission will undergo a double anonymous peer review.**

**Key dates:**

**15th May 2025 Chapter proposal submission deadline**

**30th June 2025 Proposal review outcomes**

**30th December 2025 Full chapter submission**

**January – March 2026 Review and revisions**

**May 2026 – Publication**

We look forward to your contributions to this vital dialogue

## References

Van der Merwe, L., & Habron, J. (2015). A conceptual model of spirituality in music education. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 63 (1), 47–69.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429415575314>

Roitman, J. (2022). The ends of perpetual crisis. *Global Discourse*, 12 (3-4), 692–696.

<https://bristoluniversitypressdigital.com>

Aziz, M. H. (2021). Challenges for the 2020s. *Orbis*, 65(3), 385–390.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orbis.2021.06.003>