

TITLE:

**In Quest for GLORY-SOUND: exploring Spirit-Inspired composition among music makers
in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church**

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Written work submitted for the fulfillment of the MA Degree

Date: 30:12:2025

Abstract

Abstract

This study investigates Spirit-inspired musical composition within the Cherubim and Seraphim Church (C&S) in Nigeria, conceptualized in this research as *Glory-Sound*. In an era where music production is increasingly shaped by technology, commercial aesthetics, and entertainment-driven paradigms, this research re-centers spiritual inspiration as a vital and enduring source of musical creativity. Grounded in ethnomusicology, theology, and artistic research, the study explores how composers and worship leaders within the C&S tradition experience, interpret, and articulate musical inspiration as a Spirit-led phenomenon.

Drawing from biblical theology, particularly pneumatological understandings of inspiration as *theopneustos* (God-breathed), the research situates Spirit-inspired creativity within a broader scriptural and historical trajectory that traces inspiration from Moses through prophetic traditions to African Indigenous Christianity. The study engages existing scholarship on inspiration, prophecy, and African Indigenous Churches while identifying a significant gap concerning the lived compositional processes of Spirit-inspired music makers.

Methodologically, the study employs a pneumatological–hermeneutical phenomenological framework to examine musical inspiration as a lived, embodied, and interpretive experience shaped by faith, scripture, communal worship, and prophetic practice. Through the voices and experiences of practitioners, *Glory-Sound* is understood not merely as spontaneous worship or inherited repertoire, but as a conscious, Spirit-mediated compositional process in which sound functions as revelation, divine presence, and prophetic expression.

By documenting and theorizing *Glory-Sound* as a culturally embedded and theologically grounded musical practice, this study contributes to broader discourses in artistic research, ethnomusicology, and theology. It further offers insights for contemporary composers seeking to

reclaim sacred dimensions of sound beyond entertainment-oriented musical production, while preserving an endangered tradition of Spirit-inspired musical creativity within African Indigenous Christianity.

Keywords

Spirit-inspired composition; Cherubim and Seraphim Church; African Indigenous Christianity; pneumatology; ethnomusicology; prophetic music; hermeneutical phenomenology.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I give all glory and honor to God, the source of wisdom, inspiration, and guidance. It is by His grace that this research was conceived, pursued, and completed. Every insight, every moment of clarity, and every Spirit-led connection throughout this journey has been sustained by His presence.

I am deeply grateful to the Global Music Department at Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki, for their invaluable teachings, guidance, and support. The knowledge, mentorship, and academic environment provided by the department have been instrumental in shaping my research, artistic practice, and understanding of music as both scholarship and lived experience.

I owe profound gratitude to my mother, whose prayers, care, and encouragement have been a constant source of strength. Her unwavering belief in my purpose and dedication to my growth has sustained me throughout this academic journey.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all the participants who generously shared their knowledge, experiences, and insights during the fieldwork. I am especially grateful to Pastor Seye Adeyemi, Prophet Abraham Adebayo (for also providing me with a very needed published history book on the church free of charge), Pastor Segun Michael, Mr Joseph Abayomi (CMJ), and Minister Eniola Olusoga. Your openness, wisdom, and lived experiences were central to the depth and authenticity of this research.

Special thanks to Prophet Emmanuel, who facilitated access to many of the elder and respected participants, and to Joshua Olaomo, who traveled with me to Erinle and supported all accommodations and logistics in Kwara and Ibadan. Your practical assistance and companionship made the fieldwork smooth and enriching.

I also extend my sincere gratitude to my Daddy Baba Olumuyiwa Adeyemi, whose dedication made it possible to include the history of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church in the centenary anniversary program this year. I am especially grateful for access to his library and the second published book, *“Coming of the Second Moses and the Earthly Cherubs”*, which provided critical historical perspectives for this study.

Finally, I thank my friends Michael Iwuajoku and Joel Billy for their invaluable help with structuring and typesetting the project. Your support ensured the clarity and presentation of this work.

To all who contributed in small and large ways, whether through guidance, support, prayer, encouragement, or participation, I dedicate this work.

NOTE On AI USAGE: The texts in these research works have been developed and carefully crafted by me through studies, interview enquiries and references to other scholarly works. Although the core idea is mine, I did collaborate with OpenAI’s ChatGPT to polish sentence structure for coherence and clarity without losing the focus of the study.

Contents

TITLE:	0
Abstract	1
Keywords	2
1. INTRODUCTION	6
1.2 Research Aim and Research Questions	10
2. Literature review	11
3. Theoretical/conceptual framework	20
4. Research design	21
5. Results/Findings	24
6. Discussion	30
References	42
Glossary of Terms	46

1. INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

We stand as our fathers stood,

Before your throne we worship You

We come for our heart still longs

For the ancient touch of your presence

We pray for GLORY-SOUND that Heaven sends to the waiting

And from the well we draw as we sing the songs of the prophets -Seye Maj

Assuredly, this song itself came by the inspiration of the Spirit, because since I have encountered it in my undergraduate years in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria through its spread like pandemic in the whole student Christian community, I am still yet to recover from the effect and the influence. Over the years, it has never ceased to resonate with my core by re-affirming what Spirit- inspired creativity model. Therefore, the best way for me to draw inspiration in addressing composition is from this songspiration that aligns with sound doctrine

Inquire, please, of past generations, And consider and apply yourself to the things searched out by their fathers. “For we are only of yesterday and know nothing, Because our days on earth are [like] a shadow [just a breath or a vapor]. “Will they (the fathers) not teach you and tell you, And utter words from their hearts [the deepest part of their nature]? Job. 8:8-10 AMP

1.1 Introduction (Context of Study)

Musical composition continues to evolve and develop due to technological advancements, cultural influences, aesthetically diverse expressions, and spiritual inspirations. Music has been used across the world and throughout history to express both creative and spiritual expression and to convey identity and transcendental experiences. The last several decades have seen

increased emphasis on how artificial intelligence and technology are being employed in creating music. However, this study seeks to turn the spotlight back onto an earlier and still viable source of musical creativity namely, spiritual inspiration.

Many religions and spiritual traditions view music as a vehicle for experiencing divine presence and interaction, and/or receiving revelations and worshipping God. Therefore, music composition can be viewed as a spiritually inspired process, facilitated by prayers, internal inspirations and divine inspirations. The context for such spiritually inspired composition is particularly evident in the fellowship and worship practices of the African Indigenous Churches (AICs). Specifically, the Cherubim and Seraphim Church (C&S) in Nigeria was the first indigenous church, and therefore presents a unique opportunity for examining Spirit-inspired musical creativity.

Though difficult to define and subject to debate among scholars, spirituality is commonly equated with transcendence. According to Atkins and Schubert (2014), while the definition of spirituality may remain a topic of debate, it may be explored through its transcendent experience. In other words, experiences that occur outside of the normal physical or rational limitations can be considered as part of one's experience of transcendence. Transcendence is defined as an experience or way of existing that is beyond the normal or material world. As such, the spiritual experiences examined in this study relate to the C&S songs which state:

*“Èmí mímọ́ ló ndarí wa,
Tẹ̀nikan kò lẹ̀ mọ̀
À fàwọ̀n t'a fíran ná hàn
Ló mọ̀ ìjìnlẹ̀ rẹ!”*

It essentially says, we have the Holy Spirit as our guide since no one understands Him. The mystery of Him is something that only the few that know Him, can truly understand.

Music composers and leaders within the Cherubim & Seraphim (C&S) musical culture often refer to their process of creating music with terms such as "Received," "Downloaded," or "Given By The Spirit." These types of statements indicate that the epistemology of creation of music, in the eyes of the C&S musicians and music leaders, is not about developing a musical piece utilizing methods of composition or theories of music, nor is it based upon conscious design. Rather, music is developed through means of prayer, visions, trances, spontaneous singing, prophetic utterance, and elevated levels of worship. In this context, music acts as a form of sacred media, providing an environment for divine presence to exist and for individuals to participate in the experience of the spiritual.

“Glory Sound” is a term used in this study to represent music that is experienced by members of the C&S community as originating from divine inspiration and acting as a tangible representation of the presence of God during worship. Barry Joshlin stated emphatically in the introduction of *Raising The Standard Of Worship* that "The God of the Bible enjoys musical worship. It is our pleasure to praise Him as His redeemed people." He also stated at the end of the same book that "The God of the Bible enjoys musical worship." Therefore, "Glory Sound" is not just a stylistic classification, but rather a religious and experiential construction that exists in the daily practices of the church, particularly evident in the worship of the Cherubim and Seraphim. This emphasis places an emphasis on the role of sound as revelation, sound as presence, and sound as a spiritual agent for transcendence.

While music plays a central role in the worship lives of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, very little scholarly work has been done to examine the compositional processes of the music. Most scholarly work that has been conducted on the Cherubim and Seraphim Church has centered around the historical roots of the church, the structure of the church, the liturgical practices of the church, and the social influences of the church. Ajose (2018), made reference to the idea that to fully understand the politics and poetry of prayers in Christian worship is to

understand their music. I continually express that to fully understand the doctrine and in-between ideas of a particular denomination, you have to thoroughly investigate their music. However, there is much less attention given to the music of the Cherubim and Seraphim, the experiences of the composers themselves, specifically how Spirit-inspired music is created, communicated and passed down within the prophetic streams of African Indigenous Christianity while referencing scripture.

Biblical theology provides a significant foundation for understanding inspiration as a divine action. Scripture affirms that "all Scripture is God-breathed" (2 Tim. 3:16), thus establishing inspiration as an act of divine agency. Within this theological framework, creativity is viewed not simply as human ingenuity, but rather as part of a divine initiative. The figure of Moses exemplifies this paradigm: typically recognized as prophet, writer, lawgiver, and composer, Moses' creative works -- including sacred texts, songs, and designs -- are consistently attributed to divine inspiration. Although this study does not focus on Moses as its subject, Moses' role serves as an example of the long-standing theological justification for Spirit-inspired creativity.

However, in modern times, the increased emphasis on music production as an entertainment vehicle, as well as its commercial viability and "vibes", may eventually lead to the decline of sacred sound traditions such as Glory-Sound. Consequently, an ancient milestone of Spirit-inspired musical practice is slowly disappearing. Thus, there is a pressing need to document, theorize, and critically evaluate Spirit-inspired music-making practices from the viewpoints of the practitioners who interact with creativity as communication of spiritual essences and realities from the Spirit.

This study aims to make contributions to ethnomusicological, theological, and artistic research through the examination of Spirit-inspired musical composition within the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, giving prominence to the voices and experiences of the practitioners and portraying Glory-Sound as a musical and spiritual phenomenon.

1.2 Research Aim and Research Questions

Research Aim

This study's purpose will be to explore Spirit-led musical composition from the Cherubim and Seraphim Church in Nigeria, as well as to understand the experiential, theological, and aesthetic dimensions that create these compositions, and to apply those understandings to the researcher's own composition and art-making practices in both Finland and a global music environment.

Through exploring how Spirit-led compositions are lived, perceived, and implemented by composers/practitioners, this study can add to artistic research, ethnomusicology and theology, as well as provide insight for modern composers who would like to move away from paradigms focused on music as entertainment and towards a renewed sense of reverence for the sacred dimension of sound.

Research Questions

1. How do composers within the Cherubim and Seraphim Church experience and articulate Spirit-inspired musical composition?
2. What theological, spiritual, and communal frameworks shape the understanding and function of Spirit-inspired music landscape within Cherubim and Seraphim worship and prophecy?
3. How can insights from Spirit-inspired composition in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church inform researches and artistic practice that contribute to broader discourses in artistic research, ethnomusicology, and theology?

2 Literature review

Glory-Sound: Spirit-Inspired composition among the Cherubim and Seraphim

Beginning With Moses

*“Then beginning with Moses and [throughout] all the Prophets, He went on explaining and interpreting to them in **all the Scriptures** the things concerning and referring to Himself.”* Luke

24:27 AMPC

The idea of "inspiration" as an idea has a long history with the Latin word "inspirare," ("to breathe into") and is connected to the symbolic relationships that have existed historically between life, breath and creative force (afflatus concept, Online Etymology). Researchers studying psychology have argued that even though researchers continue to try and define inspiration, its definition continues to remain ambiguous and problematic to operationalize within a scientific framework. Despite the ambiguity in defining inspiration, it is a significant motivational state that is different from insight or effort (Oleynick, Thrash, LeFew, Moldovan & Kieffaber, 2014). In the field of music composition and music performance, researchers have found that musicians subjectively experience inspiration, and lack adequate language to describe the inspiration they feel (McGregor, 2012). Research has shown that there exist certain musical experiences that can produce inspirational states, and therefore connect aesthetic experience to the motivational components of creativity (Ji et al., 2019). Together, these strands of research provide evidence that although inspiration is something that artists recognize and experience, the ability of artists to articulate inspiration in simple terms is just as difficult as it is for researchers to do.

When we speak of Spirit-Inspired Creativity, the most common case study from which we draw when looking to our biblical literature references is that of Bezalel and consequently, we tend to

reduce creativity to art and in particular visual art and thereby include all other forms of creativity including music, as part of the umbrella of art. However, the trajectory of inspiration through the lens of the Spirit-influenced inspiration can be traced back to Moses, but how?

In addition to the many scholarly works related to the theology of inspiration and the common ground among many scholarly branches of the traditional claim of the Bible as "God breathed",

When we discuss Spirit-Inspired Creativity from a scriptural perspective, much of the scholarly discussion regarding Spirit-Inspired Creativity begins with Bezalel as the model of creativity (Exod. 31:1-5), Bezalel is explicitly stated to have been filled with the Spirit of God with wisdom, understanding and ability to make things through craftsmanship. Many have noted that this passage is the first clear reference to Spirit-Filled in the Bible, and more importantly, the first time Spirit-filled is referenced in conjunction with creation/constructive activity rather than prophetic speech (Walton, 2006; Hamilton, 2011). The fact that Bezalel is the most commonly cited example of Spirit-Inspired Creativity has resulted in the narrowness of the theological imagination and as a result Spirit-Inspired Creativity is primarily limited to visual art and craftsmanship and music is included without question under a general rubric of 'Art'.

Begbie articulated a similar concern and stated that the reason why so little Christian intellectual energy has been spent on music in recent years are two-fold: one, the extreme difficulty in describing music. While it may be cliché to say that the experience of music cannot be captured in words, it is no less true because of that. (Begbie 2007, 14) Begbie continued, and added that additional sharp complexities arise when attempting to determine how music accomplishes the tasks that it does. It is undeniable that music is one of the most effective means of communication available to humanity and the mechanisms by which music accomplishes this function, and what is accomplished by those functions are extremely difficult to comprehend or explain.

Consequently, a broader biblical trajectory suggests that Spirit-influenced inspiration precedes Bezalel and can be traced more fundamentally to Moses. Moses holds a unique place within biblical theology as both the receiver and the mediator of divine revelation and as such, Moses exists at the nexus of revelation, inspiration, and human agency. According to the narrative of the Pentateuch, Moses is not only inspired to receive divine instruction, but is also enabled to communicate, act upon, and creatively shape Israel's covenantal existence, including liturgy, poetry and song (Exod. 15; Deut. 31-32). Scholars, such as Brueggemann (1997) and Childs (1979), argue that Mosaic inspiration is not simply declarative, but is performed, as such, Mosaic inspiration shapes the communal memory, worship and identity of Israel.

This development is consistent with the larger theological context of biblical inspiration, specifically the definition of Scripture as theopneustos (God-breathed) presented in 2 Timothy 3:16. As described by Warfield (1948), classical evangelical theology views inspiration as the superintending influence of the Holy Spirit to ensure that Scripture comes directly from God yet is genuinely written through human writers. Importantly, for Warfield, inspiration is defined as primarily originating from God, not based on the experiences of humans — a distinction that later theologians would modify.

Later theological study has built upon this definition to emphasize the dynamic and relational aspects of inspiration. Vanhoozer (2005) suggests that inspiration can best be viewed within a framework of communication, and thus the Spirit's role in inspiring Scripture is not limited to producing the text, but includes both the reception and performance of that text. This provides an opportunity to see inspiration as a continuous divine-human relationship, as opposed to a single, fixed moment of inspiration that was limited to the writing of the biblical canon. Like Vanhoozer, Pinnock (1996) views the Spirit's role in inspiring Scripture as part of a greater pneumatological reality in which God continually enlivens human imagination, creativity and expression.

From this perspective, the relationship between inspiration and music makes sense theologically. The song of Moses (Exodus 15:1-21) serves as one of the earliest examples of Spirit-inspired musical expression and is used as theological proclamation, as a model for spontaneous inspired community art, and as an example of embodied worship. Biblical theologians and worship scholars agree that such songs are not peripheral to revelation but serve as a form of inspired discourse through which truth is communicated via poetic and musical expression (Longman, 1991; Goldingay, 2003). Therefore, musical creativity is not merely a secondary artistic expression, but is instead a primary means of expressing Spirit-influenced ideas.

Theologically, this expanded view resonates with various traditions of theological aesthetics, particularly in the work of von Balthasar (1982) who places beauty and artistic expression at the center of God's self-revelation. From this viewpoint, Spirit-inspired creativity, including music, participates analogously in God's own creative and communicative action. Participation in this manner does not reduce human creativity to divine revelation, but rather acknowledges it as a Spirit-enabled response to God's presence and actions throughout history.

The idea that history repeats itself is widely supported in historiography and religious studies in which scholars repeatedly find recurring patterns of charismatic leadership and Spirit-inspired movements throughout time and across cultures. Historians and theologians of African Christianity have made explicit connections between biblical prophets -- particularly Moses -- and African prophets -- particularly those associated with the emergence of African Indigenous Churches (AICs) during the 20th century (Daneel, 1971; Ayegboyin & Ogunewu, 2017).

Although many scholars consider Moses to be a pivotal charismatic leader in Biblical history who had a profoundly pneumatological role in the way he led people, we cannot forget that Moses acted as a mediator between God and humanity as he received revelation from God and transformed it into law, ritual, poetry, and song (Exodus 15; Deuteronomy 31–32). In addition, many Old Testament scholars feel that Moses' leadership established a model for a prophetic

leadership style that blended revelation, creativity, and the formation of communities; the prophetic style would be formally established in Israel's prophetic tradition under Samuel (Childs, 1979; Brueggemann, 1997).

In line with the previous comments made about Moses being a mediator of the Old Covenant and thus laying the groundwork for the prophetic institution that bridges the natural and supernatural worlds, Awojobi (2021) directly claims that Moses as a mediator of the Old Covenant established the groundwork for the prophetic institution, which acts as a bridge between the supernatural and natural world orders. Moreover, the previous comments made about Moses acting as a mediator of the Old Covenant is supported by broader prophetic scholarship that defines prophecy as a form of mediation, whether creative or otherwise, which involves symbolic action, speech, rituals, and artistic expressions (Wilson, 1980). Such a definition establishes a theological framework for the recognition of creativity in general, and music in particular, as integral components of prophetic ministry.

The emergence of African Indigenous Churches represented a definitive moment in the historic development of Spirit-inspired Christianity in Nigeria. The majority of the African Indigenous Churches were formed in the early part of the twentieth-century as indigenous responses to Western missionary Christianity, focusing on prayer, prophecy, healing, visions, and culturally relevant worship practices (Peel, 1968; Kalu, 2008).

Academic literature describes the African Indigenous Churches in several ways. Some authors refer to them as African Independent Churches, others as African Initiated Churches, while some authors prefer the designation African Instituted Churches, and still others simply designate them as African Indigenous Churches (Adegoke, as cited in Ayegboyin & Ogunewu, 2017). Both Daneel (1971) and Robert (2000), authors of academic works regarding the African Indigenous Churches, report that the World Council of Churches has officially accepted the term "African Initiated Churches," which emphasizes indigenous agency in church formation. Nevertheless,

Ayegboyin (2004) reports that the debate over nomenclature is not only semantically based but also theologically based, indicating different perspectives regarding divine vs. human initiative.

Within Yoruba charismatic communities, churches are typically called *Ijọ Èmí*, which translates to "Church of the Spirit" (Ayegboyin, 2004). According to Ayegboyin, the term indicates congregations whose worship practices invoke or demonstrate the presence of the Holy Spirit. Additionally, this designation may be interpreted more broadly as signifying that the congregation believes they are owned and governed by the Holy Spirit as opposed to being initiated by humans. Therefore, the theological basis for designating the group as an African Indigenous Church, which recognizes both cultural connectedness and divine agency, is supported (Ayegboyin & Ogunewu, 2017).

Moses Orimolade Tunolase is recognized as a key individual within the AIC movement. Most scholars agree that Orimolade is the founder of African Indigenous Churches in Nigeria and one of the first individuals to introduce faith healing into Nigerian Christianity (Peel, 1968; Awojobi, 2021). Later in his life, Orimolade was referred to as a prophet-evangelist, which situates him within the biblical prophetic tradition, where proclamation, signs, and creative expression are common elements of prophetic ministry.

Ajose's research on *ori-oke* (mountaintop) Pentecostal music identifies evangelists as creative agents that generate new worship forms, musical expressions, and liturgical practices in response to their perceived movements of the Spirit through receiving "the sound of the spirit" (Ajose, 2012). The same perspective applies to Orimolade's prophetic-evangelistic ministry, which required Spirit-inspired creativity, specifically in terms of worship and music.

In addition to supporting Ajose's research findings, Awojobi (2021) defines prophecy as the art of bridging the natural and supernatural realms, a viewpoint commonly found in prophetic studies (Wilson, 1980). Thus, the previous discussion of prophetic figures as cultural innovators

who creatively reorient religious expression through Spirit-led creativity as opposed to institutional authority alone is supported by Awojobi's (2021) research.

The theological connection between prophecy and music has a long-standing historical precedent. Luther's statement that "Beautiful Music Is the Art of the Prophets" illustrates a well-established theological premise that music serves as a means of spiritual solace, transformation, and proclamation (Luther, 1965). Similarly, modern theology aesthetics recognize music as a participant form of divine creation (Begbie, 2000).

Additionally, Pentecostal historian Moses Oludele Idowu further underscores Orimolade's prophetic stature by referring to him as "More Than a Prophet", establishing a continuum between Orimolade's prophetic ministry and those of biblical prophetic figures (Idowu, 2023). Studies comparing Orimolade with Old Testament prophets, such as Ezekiel and Jeremiah, have focused on ecstatic experiences, symbolic actions, and vocation (Awojobi, 2021).

The parallels between Moses and Orimolade are most apparent in Orimolade's liturgical and musical innovations. Ejigbo (2023) documents that Orimolade introduced local drums, indigenous musical instruments, indigenous worship songs, dance, and contextualized prayers into Christian worship. These practices allowed African Christians to experience worship as both spiritually authentic and culturally meaningful. Scholars have argued that the Spirit-inspired musical contextualization of Orimolade significantly contributed to the rapid expansion of Christianity in Nigeria and later became a standard practice within Pentecostal and even Orthodox churches throughout Africa (Kalu, 2008; Ayegboyin & Ogunewu, 2017).

Brennan (2013) ethnography, *Up Above The River Jordan*, provides some useful information about the role of hymnody and historical awareness in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church and how they relate to Moses Orimolade's musical practice. She explains the song "L'ókè Odò Jordani, lámpe mi, lámpe mi" as both a hymn attributed to Orimolade and as a song that

developed a strong connection to his identity and his spiritual status over time; the song eventually served as an appellation to identify and remember Orimolade. Music in the Cherubim and Seraphim tradition, therefore, can act as markers of individual spiritual authority and/or vocational callings rather than simply as liturgical repertoire.

In addition to the appellation aspect of "L'ókè Odò Jordani...", Brennan also describes Orimolade's unique method of performing the Psalms as being performed in songs not composed by him, but derived from other Christian traditions (especially Anglican hymnody) in the form of inherited and recontextualized songs. An example of one of these songs is "Let us with a Glad and Happy Heart", which Orimolade utilized as a functioning and operational song across various spiritual circumstances; this hymn, with its repetition of "For He is Good and His Mercy Endures Forever," illustrates the manner in which Orimolade used inherited liturgical materials with his own Spirit-led applications. Such utilization illustrates the fluidity between tradition, improvisation, and inspiration in early Cherubim and Seraphim worship.

Spirit-inspired musical expression in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church has been studied slightly by Oje in his study of Aya-Fifa, a type of liturgical music characterized by Spirit-inspired glossolalia ("Singing in the Spirit"). Oje's analysis demonstrates that musical sound in C&S worship can arise through spontaneous, non-lexical vocalizations that practitioners perceive as a direct manifestation of the Holy Spirit's involvement. Therefore, this demonstrates even further the Spirit's central role in the church's musical activities.

Despite these significant contributions, however, existing scholarship on Moses Orimolade and the Cherubim and Seraphim Church has generally focused on their historical origins, organizational structure, doctrinal development, and liturgical identity. Much less attention has been paid to Spirit-inspired music making as a compositional and experiential process, specifically from the viewpoints of music makers themselves. While hymns, glossolalic singing, and inherited musical styles have been documented, the phenomenology of how songs are received, discerned, and understood as Spirit-inspired compositions has remained relatively

unexamined. This lack of attention to this area of inquiry represents a need for focused research into Spirit-inspired musical creativity as conceptualized as Glory-Sound in the Cherubim and Seraphim tradition.

Together, the reviewed literature demonstrates that, while Spirit activity, prophecy, hymnody, and musical expression have been widely recognized in the Cherubim and Seraphim tradition, these aspects have never been studied through a unified analytical lens that emphasizes composition as a Spirit-mediated process. Studies have tended to consider music either as inherited repertoire (Brennan, 2013); as liturgical function; or as spontaneous vocal expression (Oje); with minimal attention to how musicians receive, discern, and intentionally shape musical ideas as those musicians understand themselves to be creating music in response to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Glory-Sound is introduced in this research as a term describing a type of musical creativity that occurs when the creation of music is perceived not primarily as autonomous artistic invention nor as unconscious improvisation, but as responsive, Spirit-led music-making. Glory-Sound refers to the intersection of revelation, inspiration, and musical formation within a particular pneumatological context, where sound functions as a carrier of divine presence, communal memory, and prophetic expression. In contrast to more general terms like hymnody and glossolalia, Glory-Sound attends to the compositional consciousness of music creators themselves, highlighting how inspiration is understood as IN-SPIRIT(ion) being "in the Spirit" as a prerequisite for creative emergence.

By locating Glory-Sound within the historical, theological, and musical context of the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, this research fills a major gap in current scholarship and presents a framework for understanding Spirit-inspired composition as a lived, embodied, and culturally embedded experience.

3.Theoretical/conceptual framework

...And the presence and fellowship (the communion and sharing together, and participation) in the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen (so be it). 2 Cor. 13:14 AMPC

The study will be guided by a pneumatological – hermeneutical phenomenological framework, combining theological reflection on the Holy Spirit with an interpretative understanding of experience. Hermeneutical phenomenology provides the theoretical underpinning to understand how composers and worship leaders in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church experience and interpret their musical inspiration as a significant spiritual event (Gadamer, 1989; Heidegger, 1962; van Manen, 1990) the manner in which their experiences of inspiration are always situated within tradition, language, embodied experiences, and community practices.

Within the pneumatological framework, the study affirms that musical inspiration is an ongoing work of the Holy Spirit that enables human beings to participate in divine communication through the sounds of song (Vanhoozer, 2005; Pinnock, 1996). Therefore, rather than simply considering musical creativity from the perspective of aesthetic expression alone, musical creativity is considered to be a Spirit-enabled response that is interpreted by the practitioner as happening "in the Spirit." The study examines Glory-Sound as a lived, interpretative, relational process through which music functions as a medium for divine presence, community memory, and prophetic expression within the Cherubim and Seraphim tradition.

The study utilizes a pneumatological framework combined with hermeneutic phenomenology because it provides a robust theoretical lens for exploring Spirit-enabled composition without reducing spiritual experience to psychological states, nor dissolving musical practice to abstractions of theology. In addition, the framework has provided a meaningful category of understanding for the ontological claims, experiential realities, and interpretive traditions of music-making within the Cherubim and Seraphim Church. As such, the framework has allowed

for the study to engage the full range of previous research and remain mindful of the lived musical inspirations of the practitioners themselves.

4 Research design

4.1 Methodology

To examine the nature of spirit-inspired composition within the experience of music artists in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, this study employed a qualitative method of collecting data for an artistic/artistic based research study to provide a context that can't be quantified through number, but through the experience of embodied and lived experiences.

Qualitative research methods have value in providing detailed descriptions of complex phenomena; tracking singular, unusual or unexpected events; providing insight into the experience/interpretation of events by people with very different states and roles; providing voice to people whose views are seldom heard; providing initial exploration to develop theories; generating hypotheses and progressing toward explanation (S. Sofaer, 1101).

Sofaer provided the context for what a qualitative methodology is and answered the "why" for the usage of qualitative methodology in this study. This is the best choice regarding methodology for this study since it allows for the description of complex phenomena such as inspiration during composition, and the role(s) of the Holy Spirit in the arts and actions.

4.2 Data generation (Interviews/ Document Analysis)

Using a hermeneutic-phenomenological research paradigm this project draws on phenomenology to understand how music makers in C & S churches live out their musical compositions and how those lived experiences are interpreted by them in terms of theology and music. It is stated that Hermeneutics is the science or art of understanding and the theory of interpretation.

Phenomenology explores the human experience as experienced. Phenomenology highlights the details and seemingly trivial aspects of an experience that are taken for granted; its goal is to produce meaning and gain insight into the experience (Kafle, 2013). The experience of music makers in C & S church studied here is best understood using this concept as a methodology to define what has been a lived experience in this musical compositional tradition.

Data was gathered through one-on-one interviews with music makers in C & S Church, participant observation of modes of worship in C&S, interpretive listening to teachings from key practitioners of Spirit-inspired prophetic music composition traditions, and personal reflection with meaning-making.

The study employed a purposive sampling strategy to select participants that have experiential knowledge of Spirit-inspired composition in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church. Participants were selected based on their recognition as custodians of the history of the church, inspired composers, prophets (that also flow in prophetic singing), worship leaders, choir directors and musicologists in the church. The emphasis was on selecting participants based on their depth of experience, spiritual authority and involvement in musical practices rather than their numbers. This strategy provided sufficient representation and therefore produced data that is rich in detail, contextualized and consistent with the phenomenological and hermeneutic orientations of the study.

In addition, the audio and video recordings of music makers, as well as other related material to the C&S music topography were utilized as secondary sources for this study. All interviews were transcribed for musical, thematic, and content analysis.

4.3 Data analysis

The interview recordings were transcribed and processed to codes of recurring themes as phenomena to highlight and express as key-factors in the experience of music makers in this search tradition.

As a researcher and as a case-study of what is being researched, I assume a double stance of outsider in quest for inquiry and also as one who need to reflect on discovering why certain concepts makes sense from the perspective of others to what I have personally been doing but is just a norm because of being naturally integrated in the tradition

4.4 Researcher position

My position to this research is that of personal discovery and exploration, I have mentioned somewhere that all my tributaries meet in this stream (Cherubim and Seraphim Church), so as one really interested in exploring my resonance and what make the framework of my artistry, I dare to delve into the research study of my root.

I am grateful to have access to older generations of key- practitioners and mandate bearer of this tradition and I am so privileged to have direct and indirect relationship with the participants, as student, as follower, as son in faith, as member of the clan and the commonwealth of the church, as friends and as listeners.

The position of power play in this research is that of mutual respect and love provided by the scriptures and in the ethical moral of the inherent culture. There is a relationship between the older and inquisitive younger generation that facilitates the relationship of a teacher (one saddled with knowledge) and a student (one interested in knowledge) with mutual love and respect scriptural and fittingly cultural.

4.5 Ethics

At minimum this study tries to adhere to the research ethics by

TENKShttps://tenk.fi/sites/default/files/2023-11/RI_Guidelines_2023.pdf

The interview was conducted with moral consideration of integrity and honesty that frowns at falsification and fabrications.

Verbal and informal written consent was asked from all my participants to use their words, process them, and share their contributions in the research study. First letter of notification was sent for one-on-one interview which includes audio recording. After that I got their verbal consent recorded in audio recordings of the interview.

All the participants had no objection in mentioning their name in this study, none asked to be anonymous because they were willing to share their backgrounds and connection to the church, whose music is the discussion of the research.

Participants express their willingness to have a published copy of the study, which means they are very willing to make this research a public accessible study which can inform knowledge frontiers in the fold.

5 Results/Findings

Spirit-influenced Composition as an Act of the Spirit's Reveal and Not an Emotional/ Ecstatic Response

In the study it was found that participants in the Cherubim and Seraphim tradition understand spirit-inspired composition to be directly a revelatory act of the Holy Spirit and not based on a composer's emotional response to their own ecstatic movements. Music-makers consistently referred to their musical compositions as being "ready-made" (by the Spirit) and that they are created through the music-maker as a channel for expression (as opposed to the product of human authorship). Therefore, creativity is not initiated by the composer; instead, the composer becomes a mediator through whom the Spirit inspires the creative process.

Abraham Adebayo noted that spiritual songs are inspired by the Holy Ghost (the Holy Ghost) who provides the texts and the sounds of the music itself. Inspiration is understood as a

revelatory experience where sound is provided/given to the composer rather than constructed; further, this process can occur through many different spiritual experiences.

“When you hear the word spiritual songs or spiritual sound, it’s not just about being carried by the Spirit. It’s about the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. When that inspiration comes, it gives you the words. It gives you the sound, and it quickens you into the tune of the song.”

(Prophet Abraham Adebayo, interview)

He further expressed a clear conviction that he does not occupy the role of author in this process but rather participates in the ongoing work of the Spirit:

“I tell you the truth: I cannot impose that I composed them. Both the words, the lyrics of the song and the tune of the song were received. This inspiration by the Holy Spirit that leads into sound production is what I know.”

(Prophet Abraham Adebayo, interview)

Another participant, Mr Joseph Abayomi who is a music producer, singer-Spirit inspired songwriter and a music director whose background is from C&S, narrates his experience of Spirit creativity in one of his song making;

“That melody just sprang up from within. The way it came, it came as a melody and it came as lyrics together.”

(Joseph Abayomi, interview)

Together, these accounts reveal that Spirit-inspired composition within the Cherubim and Seraphim tradition is perceived as a revelatory process in which musical content is received through embodied spiritual experiences.

MULTI-MEDIA of Perception and Reception

Findings have made it obvious that Inspiration is not limited to one spiritual state but unfolds across prayer, Scripture, dreams, and altered states of consciousness. This reinforces the conceptualization of Glory-Sound as music that originates from Spirit-led avenues, where sound, word, and melody also arrive ready-made in different mode and occasion

This multi-modal understanding of inspiration was corroborated by Joseph Abayomi, who described the reception of melody and lyrics as an internal, spontaneous emergence rather than a deliberate compositional effort.

“Sometimes you get some of these sounds from your dream, from your sleep. A lot of people may not believe that, but it is true. Some sounds, you don’t get them from your environment. You don’t pick them from external experiences. It’s more of an internal experience—an internal vocabulary—more unique than what you even hear.” and so this would not sound as if Mr Joseph is ‘a dreamer boy’ like Joseph just saying fallacies, the same experience was reinstated from the prophetic angel by prophet Abraham Adebayo sharing his experience saying; *And I had got a series of experiences like that. Sometimes this sound comes to me in the dream. Some of them, they come to me as a form of a trance experience. And some of them, I get them revelation. Some of them are inspiration that came while I was praying. Some of them came also as I studied the Word of God. As I studied the Word of God, I get inspired. And then the sound comes.*

Spirit-inspired musical composition can be spontaneous but not most times instantaneous act; it is a journey, a complex process of spiritual formation, intellectual engagement, and experiential accumulation. As Joseph Abayomi explains:

“You don't just wake up in... in a day and, just say you want to... you want to, like, compose music that is... spiritually inspired, and to the people who listen to it, like, yeah, awakens them, you know, he revives them in a way.”

For Abayomi, composing spiritually-infused music is “a compilation of experiences,” going beyond lyrics and melody. He emphasizes:

“It's deeper than just the lyrics, it's deeper than the melody, it's deeper than the structure. There is... there is a force behind it. There's a force behind it.”

He argues that entering this space of spiritual expression requires a **conditioned mindset** rooted in faith in God and belief in Christ, reflecting the workings of the Holy Spirit as internalized experiences that shape a composer’s unique musical vocabulary.

Eniola Olusoga corroborates this perspective, emphasizing intentional preparation and discipline. She notes that spiritual receptivity is accessible only to believers:

“For me, I'm a very... intentional person. As believers, there are preparations we need to put in place as believers, first of all. A believer should have... an active devotion with God, active quiet time with God... You need to have a prayer life. You need to have a study life. You need to have a worship altar.”

Olusoga further explains that for those in music ministry, spiritual discipline must be intensified:

“If an average believer is spending maybe four hours, you should spend eight, because you are now... not just a believer. You are now a vessel. So whatever flows out of your stream can affect generations.”

She describes her personal practices that facilitate connection with God:

“I also have... systems that God has helped me to put in place, like my retreats, where I need to just sort out and say, you know what, I'm not out there going for meetings, I'm not ministering anywhere this week or this day, I'm not on the phone...”

I just want to spend time so I can receive... download, or just hear what God is saying, because it can be really noisy out there.”

Olusoga also highlights fasting, prayer, study, and worship as tools for positioning oneself to receive divine inspiration:

“I believe in fasting, not because we fast to get results, but we fast to position our hearts. So when I do that, it helps me... connect and understand what God is saying or doing in this year.”

Participants stated that receiving and translating divine inspiration in to music involves both an instant downloading of the Holy Spirit as well as the believer's intentional thinking. Although believers' thinking is not the originator of their compositions, it is crucial for organizing, evaluating and expressing what has been received. Therefore, spirit-inspired composition is a holistic experience, connecting the believer with the work of the Holy Spirit through their personal experience and scripture-based interpretation, resulting in music that teaches, commands, worship and conveys God's Truth.

Sound Doctrine, the Doctrine of Sound

A long-held Western church view since its inception was that the AIC's (C&S) are non-bible believing church. Findings have also demonstrated, through participant quotes, the key role the word of God plays in the inspiration of good sound. Spiritual sound can only be acceptable if it is doctrinally correct; the message must come within the parameters of the Word of God and in alignment with the message given. Therefore, it cannot contradict sound doctrine.

One of the participants emphasised the priority laced on the word as the determinant of the accuracy of sound, he said;

Men could sing this song. And when they sing this song, it edifies them. Because the Bible says, speak to yourself in Ephesians 5:19 in psalms and spiritual song, singing to the Lord and making melodies in your spirit. Now, you see, with that, this inspiration when it comes, then I begin to sing. And when I begin to sing, I see it. I'm inspired. Not just inspired. I'm touched. I'm moved. I'm shifted. Sometimes when it comes that way, it will open my eyes and I begin to see the creation. Sometimes I'm brought into fellowship and I see deeper things of God. Sometimes it will open my understanding to deeper sense of the scriptures by this sound. So this is what spiritual sound is. And this is what it should bring. It should bring edification. It should bring a man into joining with God in the things of God. I mean, bringing you to a place of clear understanding of the counsels of God. Bringing you to understand the revelation of things in the past, in the present, and things to come. You see, bringing you to the true house of the prophetic dimension. The fore-telling and the forth-telling. Now, it brings you to the seers' dimension, it can bring trance experience and all these things by which a man is being aided by the Holy Ghost to be connected to his creator. You see, this is what spiritual song really is. (Prophet Abraham Adebayo, Interview)

Abayomi Joseph announced, 'I draw inspiration also from the word'. He said further; 'I mean, this one, I may not be... I may not be able to, like, fully explain it, but sometimes when I read the Word and then, I mean, that's the Bible. Some passages, I begin to, like, think about the passages and all of that. it... it becomes melody, you know, in my heart. You know, yeah, it becomes... it just... it becomes melody. I'm... it's not something that I heard from somewhere, or... it just becomes a melody from my heart, and then, you know, it springs up to something even much more bigger.'

The same way the Spirit-inspired music composer, minister and musicologist Eniola Olusoga mentioned, calling attention to the same need to be grounded in interacting with the word of God as “studying” or special time with the word of God and meditation period known as ‘quiet time’.

She said, *“For me, I’m very intentional with my quiet time, my study time. I...I studied to show myself approved as a child of God.”* (Minister Eniola Ohusoga, Interview).

This findings shows that sound doctrine is the doctrine of sound for Spirit-inspired composition.

6. Discussion

Interpreting Glory-Sound in Dialogue with Theology, Literature, and Artistic Practice

In this section, we use the results of the study to connect the results to our conceptual model, our review of literature, and the larger conversations in ethnomusicology, theology and fine arts. In doing so, the study explores convergences and divergences between the lived experience of Spirit-inspired composition in the Cherubim and Seraphim tradition and existing research on creative processes and the role of the spirit in creative process.

6.1 Sound as Revelation: Inspiration as Reception Rather Than Construction

One major theme of this research was that Spirit-inspired composition is seen as a form of revelatory reception, not creation. Each participant in this research stated that they did not create their compositions. Instead they said the compositions were received from the Holy Spirit. The way participants talked about receiving music from the Holy Spirit is very similar to the pneumatological theory that was developed by Vanhoozer (2005) and Pinnock (1996) which describes inspiration as a communicative event initiated by God, but shared by human beings. The descriptions used by the participants to describe the process of composing music are also similar to the ways that scholars have described inspiration in the Bible. For example, both Moses in Exodus 15 and Deuteronomy 31-32, and the participants in this study saw themselves as conduits for the transmission of divine revelation into song. Therefore, these studies support

Brueggemann's (1997) and Childs' (1979) argument that inspiration in the scriptures is not simply declarative but is embodied and performed.

However, what is unique about this study is that the participants demonstrated that this revelatory paradigm is active in contemporary African indigenous Christian music making. In other words, the findings indicate that Glory-Sound is an active paradigm in how music is composed today and that it has nothing to do with the Western compositional paradigms that emphasize technical skill, intentionality and originality. What is significant about this study is that the participants saw sound as revelation not just as a means of carrying a message. This extends the conversation around theology of beauty and art (Begbie, 2000; Von Balthasar, 1982) to include sound as presence and action, not just as representation.

6.2 Multi-Modal Inspiration and the Phenomenology of Reception

The findings reveal that Spirit-inspired composition occurs through **multiple perceptual and experiential modes**, including prayer, Scripture reading, dreams, visions, trances, worship, and internal impressions. This multi-modal reception supports phenomenological perspectives (van Manen, 1990; Gadamer, 1989) that understand meaning as arising from lived, embodied experience rather than abstract cognition.

Joseph Abayomi's description of inspiration as an "internal vocabulary" aligns with McGregor's (2012) observation that musicians experience inspiration subjectively yet struggle to articulate it in technical language. However, unlike psychological studies that frame inspiration as a motivational or affective state (Oleynick et al., 2014), participants in this study explicitly locate inspiration within **a pneumatological ontology**, attributing agency to the Holy Spirit rather than to the subconscious or imagination.

The study also builds upon Oje's work on Aya-Fifa by showing that Spirit-inspired sound is not limited to glossolalic vocalization but includes structured melodies, lyrics, and tunes received

intact. This challenges tendencies in ethnomusicology to categorize African Indigenous Church music primarily as spontaneous or ecstatic, but revealing wide possibilities of also capable of **compositional consciousness** shaped by spiritual discernment.

A surprising finding is that inspiration is not always instantaneous. While some songs arrive fully formed, others emerge through time, discipline, and spiritual maturation. This complicates romanticized notions of sudden divine inspiration and supports Abayomi's assertion that Spirit-inspired composition is a **journey of formation**, echoing Warfield's emphasis on divine initiation while affirming human participation.

6.3 Participation, Preparation, and the Discipline of Receptivity

The findings strongly affirm the study's theoretical claim that Spirit-inspired composition involves **participation rather than passivity**. While inspiration is initiated by the Spirit, participants emphasise rigorous spiritual preparation—prayer, fasting, Scripture study, retreats, and worship as necessary conditions for receptivity.

This finding resonates with Vanhoozer's (2005) communicative model of inspiration, where reception and performance are inseparable. It also reflects Pinnock's (1996) emphasis on the Spirit's ongoing role in enlivening human creativity. However, the depth of intentional discipline described by participants, especially Eniola Olusoga's articulation of heightened responsibility for music ministers adds an important corrective to assumptions that Spirit-led creativity is **effortless or unstructured**.

From an artistic research perspective, this challenges dominant paradigms that separate creative practice from spiritual formation. Glory-Sound reveals creativity as a **moral, devotional, and communal vocation**, not merely an aesthetic activity. This insight directly contributes to artistic

research by proposing an alternative model of creativity grounded in reverence, obedience, and spiritual accountability.

6.4 Sound Doctrine and the Doctrine of Sound

One of the most significant contributions of this study is the articulation of “**sound doctrine as the doctrine of sound.**” Contrary to historical accusations that African Indigenous Churches lack biblical grounding, participants consistently emphasized Scripture as the primary measure for discerning authentic Spirit-inspired sound.

This finding aligns with biblical theology (2 Tim. 3:16) and supports Warfield’s insistence that inspiration originates from God while being mediated through human faculties informed by Scripture. However, the study extends this theological discourse by demonstrating how Scripture does not merely validate sound after its emergence, but actively **generates sound** as passages of Scripture become melody, tune, and song in the hearts of composers.

What is particularly surprising is the participants’ claim that Spirit-inspired sound functions as a **hermeneutical agent**, opening deeper understanding of Scripture, prophecy, and divine counsel. This positions music not as a secondary interpretive tool but as an active mode of theological knowing, reinforcing Begbie’s (2007) claim that music performs theological work that language alone cannot.

6.5 Glory-Sound as a Distinct Contribution to Scholarship

In dialogue with the reviewed literature, Glory-Sound emerges as a concept that fills a critical gap in existing scholarship. While prior studies have addressed hymnody, glossolalia, and

liturgical function, this study foregrounds **the lived compositional experience of Spirit-inspired music makers**.

Glory-Sound differs from general categories of sacred music by emphasizing:

- Revelation over invention
- Participation over authorship
- Sound as presence rather than accompaniment
- Doctrine as source, yardstick not just content

By situating Glory-Sound within the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, this research affirms African Indigenous Christianity as a site of sophisticated theological, musical, and artistic knowledge production. It also offers a timely corrective to contemporary music cultures dominated by entertainment, commodification, and aesthetic excess.

6.6 Implications for Artistic Practice and Contemporary Composition

These results propose a shift in how the composer's (researcher's) own artistic work and the world-wide music environment understand composition as an activity that happens by listening before creating, by receiving before producing, and by discerning before executing. The findings challenge the composers to rethink their creative source(s), to rethink the ethical aspects of the production of sound, and to rethink their spiritual responsibility for musical leadership.

In doing so, the research supports both the continued relevance of composition from spirit inspired creation and demonstrates its potential to provide new depth, humility and reverence to the ongoing development of the contemporary artistic research, ethnomusicology and theology.

7. Conclusions

Summary of Findings, Contributions, and Implications

The main focus of the research was to discover what Spirit-led musical composition means for members of the Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) Church in Nigeria. This research identified Spirit-led musical composition as Glory-Sound. In doing so, this research looked at the actual lived experiences of musicians and their understanding of their own theologies of music in order to see how Spirit-inspired music was perceived, identified, and embodied as a divine message. The research used a pneumatological-hermeneutical phenomenological framework, which added new knowledge to ethnomusicology, theology, and artistic research.

The results indicated that C&S composers experience Spirit-inspired composition as receiving compositions from the Holy Spirit, rather than creating them. Members of the C&S church also mentioned experiencing songs as "receiving," "giving," or "downloading" songs directly from the Holy Spirit, usually while they are praying, worshipping, meditating on scripture, dreaming, seeing visions, or having internal impressions. C&S composers also believe that composing music is not solely the product of individual artistic imagination, but a collaborative endeavor between the composer and the Holy Spirit. Composing music is seen as requiring the ability to be spiritually sensitive, obedient to the Spirit's direction, and able to discern the Spirit's will. Most importantly, C&S composers agree that inspiration does not replace the use of the intellect or one's musical skills, but rather the Spirit enables and guides these abilities as part of an internal experience described as relating to each other.

The research demonstrated that Spirit-inspired music within the C&S Church exists in a rich theological environment built on biblical pneumatology, prophetic tradition, and disciplinary discernment. Faith in Jesus Christ, reliance on the Holy Spirit, and a high level of engagement with scripture are all considered fundamental doctrines for Glory-Sound. The C&S community considers Glory-Sound as a way of revealing God's Word, worshipping God, encouraging

believers, and conveying prophetic messages. Preparing oneself through prayer, fasting, studying scripture, and retreating before composing is thought to be essential for creating Glory-Sound. Therefore, C&S members view Glory-Sound as a combination of both theological actions and spiritual presences, and not simply as musical accompaniments.

Based on the research, Glory-Sound provides an alternative model of creative musical expression that contests prevailing models based on entertainment, commercial production, and artistic autonomy. By conceiving of composition as Spirit-enabled, ethically conscious, and relational, the research provides possible avenues for contemporary composers, worship leaders, and artistic researchers looking to reconnect with the sacred dimensions of sound. The Glory-Sound model emphasizes attention, respect, spiritual accountability, and communal responsibility. These aspects provide transferable principles for practicing art outside of the C&S tradition.

This research has provided new knowledge in several major areas. First, the research identifies Glory-Sound as a concept for describing Spirit-inspired musical composition as a lived, experiential, and theologically grounded process. Secondly, the research brings the voices of composers to the forefront, filling a significant gap in extant research that has predominantly addressed liturgy, history, or musical forms, rather than compositional consciousness. Thirdly, the study expands biblical and theological discussions of inspiration by showing how sound is both a revelation of God and a manifestation of His presence, and not just a conduit for conveying scriptural truths. Fourthly, the research demonstrates that African Indigenous Church music is a locus of sophisticated theological and artistic knowledge production, counter to narratives that diminish its significance.

This research is important since it preserves and theorizes a sacred musical tradition that is rapidly disappearing due to the commercialization of worship and the predominance of entertainment-driven musical values. Ethnomusicologists can utilize this research to develop a nuanced model for researching music as lived theology. Theologians can utilize this research to expand their understanding of pneumatology to include creative processes as modes of

divine-human communication. Artists and composers can utilize this research to present a disciplined, Spirit-directed approach to creativity that integrates devotion, ethics, and practice. Finally, this research affirms that Glory-Sound is not merely a historical or cultural relic, but a living tradition that continues to have relevance today. Documenting and interpreting Spirit-inspired composition within the Cherubim and Seraphim Church adds to the larger conversations about creativity, spirituality, and the role of sound as a transcendent medium in contemporary artistic and religious lives.

Limitations of the Study and Directions for Future Research

Limitations of the Study

Although the findings of this study contribute to our knowledge of Spirit-inspired musical composition in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, there are many limitations to the study. Firstly, the study experienced problems with both methodology and technology during the data collection process. After the interview phase of the study, one of the researchers' phones broke down; therefore, some of the interview materials (including audio recordings) were lost.

Although enough material existed to carry out an analysis and provide thematic interpretation, the loss of those audio recordings resulted in less opportunity for comparative examination between participants and reduced the richness of the descriptions provided to represent specific aspects of the participants' experiences.

Secondly, the study had an overwhelming amount of materials available for review including the interviews, theological writings, historical documents, liturgical practices and musical artifacts. While the large number of materials available represents the richness of Spirit-inspired musical tradition in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, it also presents an obstacle for maintaining a well-defined structure. At times it was difficult to develop a comprehensive plan for organizing the research because of the sheer volume of materials, which required careful selection and the omission of potential useful materials.

Thirdly, while every effort was made to document all elements of the study, greater attention to developing more formalized documentation processes would have strengthened the study. In future studies, using more formalized methods of managing data, such as maintaining multiple backup copies of recordings, developing clear documentation procedures and limiting the number of primary and secondary sources used would enable researchers to engage with the materials on a deeper level without losing analytical clarity. Developing a smaller body of materials would also enable researchers to become engaged at a deeper level.

The limitations identified above do not weaken the results of this study, they simply highlight the nature of studying Spirit-orientated practices that are inherently fluid and resistant to strict methodological definitions.

Directions for Future Research

This study opens multiple pathways for further investigation into Spirit-inspired musical creativity within African Indigenous Christianity.

One promising area for future research is **“Singing Metaphors among Prophetic Singers: The Cherubim and Seraphim Church as a Case Study.”** Such a study could examine how metaphor, symbolism, and poetic imagery function within Spirit-inspired songs to communicate theological meaning, prophetic insight, and communal memory.

Another significant avenue for exploration is **“Davidic Generations: The Continuum and Evolution of Moses’ Spirit-Inspired Creativity.”** This research could trace a theological and musical lineage from Mosaic inspiration through Davidic psalmody to contemporary prophetic music-making, illuminating continuities and transformations across biblical and African Indigenous Christian traditions.

Additionally, a focused study titled **“Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: A Portrait of Spirit-Influenced Composition among Music Makers in the Cherubim and Seraphim**

Church” would provide an in-depth examination of how these three biblical categories (cf. Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) are lived, interpreted, and enacted within the C&S musical ecosystem. Such research could explore compositional processes, theological discernment, and the practical distinctions between psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs as understood by practitioners themselves.

Together, these future research directions highlight the breadth of unexplored scholarly terrain surrounding Glory-Sound and confirm that Spirit-inspired composition within the Cherubim and Seraphim Church remains a fertile ground for interdisciplinary inquiry.

Concluding Statement

The role of the Holy Spirit in leading people to the whole truth is what is most important in the process of the Holy Spirit influencing a person's thoughts on the creative process and the resulting works from the creative process as well. Once a person is led to the truth of the Holy Spirit, and that leads them to create, then the works they produce have the ability to affect both the one who created the works and the ones who receive those works. The final difference between Spirit-inspired music and other forms of music is that the result of Spirit-inspired music can be traced back to its source - the unchanged word of God. The word of God as stated by Jesus is Spirit and Life (John 6:63)

The confidence behind the continued advice given to younger ministers by elder ministers of the Cherubim and Seraphim church is based upon the belief that the spirit is that which provides life while the flesh provides no lasting benefit. In essence, this principle does not exclude the idea of artistic perfection, technical skill, or even the need for disciplined practice; rather, it defines the manner in which these elements are properly used.

Regardless of how fine or pleasing to the ear a musical work may be, unless that work was produced through inspiration of the Spirit, that work has little to no lasting spiritual value.

This study concludes with the affirmation that Glory-Sound is much more than a musical style or

liturgical classification; it is a Spirit-enabled way of knowing, of creating, and of participating in the communications of the divine. Through the documentation and interpretation of Spirit-inspired composition within the Cherubim and Seraphim church, this research will preserve an endangered art form, provide new theory and understanding, and invite composers, scholars, and worship leaders to consider anew the source, purpose, and power of sound in both sacred and contemporary musical expressions.

My voice in this study as a Seraph and a Scholar

Spirit-inspired composition is a common phenomenon among the music-makers in C&S, of which I am also part. It is a reality that is made possible by interactions with activities that improves spirituality and drawing from that wealth of experience, it is relatable to be instructed and inspired from the spiritual knowledge that one has familiarised with. So, receiving songs is experienced as receiving inspiration for revelation supernaturally either through dreams, vision, trance, spiritual encounter or during spiritual activities like praying, praising, studying, meditations or even life circumstances.

It is a popular belief that the Spirit gives songs. That the Spirit inspires creativity and can also be responsible for momentary artistic expression spontaneously giving divine abilities to do things musically. Although, the Spirit sometimes overrules the natural abilities of music-makers to express musically but most times one thing I have studied is that the spirits of the prophets (medium/vessel) are subject to the prophets (1 Cor. 14:32) The level of music abilities (natural or learnt), the knowledge of the word of God and experience in composition influences the outlook of the received song. Most times that songs are received, they come in the outlook of the relatables. However, one can identify that the music is from a source that is not originating from us but through us and within us by the interior promptings.

This study informs research as a tradition of composition with the extra-musicals and the musicals juxtapositioning at the same time. One of the participants, who is a producer, mentioned, *“To be able to give tangible expressions to those intangible feelings that you have, you know, those intangible emotions that you have. Because from there, other people can be able to take it off from that raw idea, and then build it up. But if you are bankrupt of musical, you know, knowledge, it tampers a lot with that expression, you know, overall. So, if you know that you have, like, a very, you know, strong call to actually do that, ...to give expressions to sounds, to give expressions and all of those things. You need to sharpen your musical skill...I cannot over-emphasize that you need to sharpen your musical skill.”* (Abayomi Joseph, Interview).

Also, Minister Eniola Olusoga, who is a musicologist and Spirit-inspired composer said; *“So, I make sure that the intent and motive while I'm putting out this song is not lost. Of course, the musical side of me, I have producers, I have musicians that understand my heart that God has given me. So, our motives are...We are in alignment. We all want God to be glorified. So, why do we do that? Because of the kind of motive we have. We want to also be excellent, because if it's about Jesus, you have to put in your best.”* She further mentioned; *“ So, we put our best in making sure we don't lose the main focus, which is **glorifying God, the spirituality**, but we also want even God Himself to be pleased, and we want to make Him proud. So yeah, **we put our best to make it as excellent as possible.**”*(Eniola Olusoga, Interview).

This is also my perspective. Someone once said that the talent or the special abilities we have is a gift from God, but the way we tend to it, and use it, is our gift to Him (God). This is the same way for the Spirit- inspired music makers, it is not an option for laziness in music making. It is a terrain of two-factor authentication of composition that carries altogether the extra-musical and the musical. So, composition in this case is by the Spirit, but the whole being (Spirit, soul and body) also participates in contribution to the overall outlook of things.

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Glossary of Terms

AIC (African Indigenous Churches)

Christian movements founded in Africa by Africans, emphasizing indigenous leadership, spirituality, prophecy, healing, and contextualized worship practices. Also referred to as African Initiated or African Independent Churches.

Aladura

A Yoruba term meaning “people of prayer.” Although some articles refer to it as “owners of prayer” but nobody owns prayer. Therefore It refers to prayer-focused African Indigenous Christian movements in Nigeria that emphasize prophecy, healing, visions, and Spirit-led worship, including the Cherubim and Seraphim Church.

AMPC (Amplified Bible, Classic Edition)

A Bible translation that expands the original Hebrew and Greek meanings through amplification in brackets and parentheses. Frequently used in this study for its theological and interpretive richness.

Aya-Fifa

A liturgical musical form in the Cherubim and Seraphim Church characterized by Spirit-inspired singing, often involving glossolalia or spontaneous vocalization perceived as directed by the Holy Spirit. The term is associated with “singing in the Spirit.”

C&S (Cherubim and Seraphim Church)

The first African Indigenous Church in Nigeria, founded in the early 20th century by Moses Orimolade Tunolase. The church is known for prophetic worship, Spirit-led music, visions, and indigenous liturgical expressions.

DACB (Dictionary of African Christian Biography)

An online scholarly resource documenting the lives and contributions of African Christian leaders, theologians, and church founders, including figures within the African Indigenous Church movement.

Downloaded (Spiritual Usage)

A colloquial term used by participants to describe the reception of musical ideas; melody, lyrics, or sound perceived as given directly by the Holy Spirit rather than consciously composed.

Glory-Sound

A conceptual term developed in this study to describe Spirit-inspired musical composition within the Cherubim and Seraphim tradition. Glory-Sound refers to music experienced as originating from divine inspiration and functioning as revelation, divine presence, and prophetic expression.

Glossolalia

Speech-like vocalizations not based on known languages, often understood in Pentecostal and African Indigenous Christian traditions as “speaking” or “singing in the Spirit.”

Hermeneutical Phenomenology

A qualitative research approach that focuses on interpreting lived experience within its cultural, linguistic, and historical contexts. In this study, it is used to interpret how music makers understand Spirit-inspired composition.

IN-SPIRIT(ion)

A conceptual reframing of “inspiration” used in this study to emphasize being “in the Spirit” as a prerequisite for Spirit-inspired musical creativity.

Ijọ Èmí

A Yoruba phrase meaning “Church of the Spirit.” or “Spiritual oriented church”. It refers to congregations whose worship practices emphasize the manifest presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Ori-oke

A Yoruba term meaning “mountain top.” In Nigerian Christian spirituality, it refers to designated prayer mountains used for fasting, prayer, and spiritual retreat.

Pneumatology

The branch of Christian theology concerned with the person and work of the Holy Spirit. In this study, pneumatology frames musical inspiration as a Spirit-enabled process.

Prophetic Singing

A form of musical expression believed to convey revelation, exhortation, or divine insight through Spirit-inspired sound and lyrics.

Prophetic Sound

Sound perceived as a medium of divine communication, often associated with visions, trances, or heightened spiritual awareness.

Quiet Time

An intentional devotional practice involving prayer, Scripture reading, meditation, and worship, regarded by participants as essential preparation for receiving spiritual inspiration.

Received (Compositional Usage)

A term used by participants to describe music that is perceived as given by the Holy Spirit rather than constructed through deliberate compositional technique.

Songspiration

A term used in this study to describe songs believed to originate from divine inspiration rather than human creativity alone. Songspiration refers to music that emerges through spiritual encounter and functions as both worship and revelation. The term plays on “song” and “inspiration,” emphasizing music as a Spirit-breathed medium.

Sound Doctrine

Biblical teaching regarded as theologically accurate and faithful to Scripture. In this study, sound doctrine functions as the evaluative framework for discerning the authenticity of Spirit-inspired music.

Theopneustos

A Greek term meaning “God-breathed,” used in 2 Timothy 3:16 to describe Scripture. In this study, it is extended analogically to Spirit-inspired musical creativity.

Trance Experience

An altered state of consciousness in which individuals report heightened spiritual awareness, visions, or reception of music and revelation.

Vessel (Spiritual Usage)

A metaphor describing a person who yields to the Holy Spirit as an instrument through which divine inspiration flows.

White Garment Churches

A colloquial term for African Indigenous Churches, including the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, whose members traditionally wear white garments symbolizing purity and consecration.

Bible Version Abbreviations Used in This Study

AMP: Amplified Bible

A modern translation that expands key words for clarity using brackets.

AMPC: Amplified Bible, Classic Edition

An expanded translation preserving earlier English style with extensive amplification of Hebrew and Greek terms.

NIV: New International Version

A widely used contemporary English Bible translation balancing accuracy and readability.

KJV: King James Version

A classic English Bible translation frequently used in African Indigenous and Pentecostal traditions for liturgical and devotional purposes.

Appendices

