

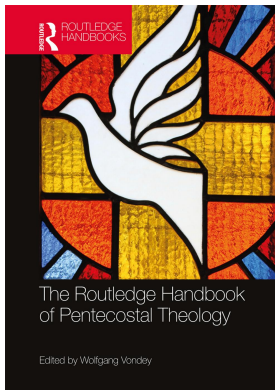
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ARTS AND AESTHETICS

The pursuit of beauty through the outpour
of the Spirit*Steven Félix-Jäger*

Pentecostals around the world have a paradoxical relationship with the arts and aesthetics. Pentecostal theology has made global contributions, albeit minimal, to the fields of art and aesthetics, especially how they pertain to religious use. Yet, while Pentecostal Christians are among the world's leaders in incorporating embodied expressions of the arts in their liturgy and worship, they have historically veered away from broader cultural engagements with other forms of art and have neglected to form sophisticated accounts of theological aesthetics. Instead, Pentecostals have developed a pragmatic approach to art that focuses on function rather than intrinsic appreciation or conceptual elucidation. The Pentecostal approach to the arts bears a purposeful religious motive that renders the arts in the service of the religious experience (see Chapter 8).

What follows is an account of the main issues surrounding the emergence of aesthetic formations in Pentecostal theology. The goal of this chapter is to highlight the embodied approach Pentecostals have adopted and to identify their contributions to arts and aesthetics. In order to provide a critical assessment of the Pentecostal engagement, I outline first a brief typology of the relationships that Pentecostalism has had with the arts in both public and religious settings. The focus is on the Pentecostal use of music, visual arts, and the embodied arts. The chapter then explores how Pentecostals have developed a distinctive theological aesthetics by emphasizing the practical and theological commitments found within Pentecostal spirituality. Adopting a pneumatological approach to aesthetics has allowed Pentecostals to make sense of their embodied and Spirit-oriented worship practices by drawing on the pneumatological connections within Pentecostal theology.

Pentecostal relationships with the arts

Theological aesthetics is the interdisciplinary study of theological issues in light of aesthetic, sensory, and affective formation (Thiessen 2004). The arts have an unrivalled ability to establish holistic formation in people through multisensory practices. While teaching the faith engages the heart of a person by traveling through cognition, the aesthetic realm engages the heart of a person directly through visceral, arational experiences. This formation does not separate neatly into non-aesthetic categories (preaching, Bible reading, prayer, etc.) and aesthetic categories (musical worship, visual art, dance, etc.), as language, both written and homiletic, often cuts through rationalization when it engages the imagination aesthetically

through storytelling or choreosonic practices. Rather, this process focuses on the aesthetic formation of all religious activity within the religious tradition. Theological aesthetics takes seriously the major role embodied practices take in a person's knowledge about God, the self, others, and the world. Every religious tradition, therefore, has an implicit theological aesthetics, since they all have their own set of religious practices that help form their constituent beliefs. The task of this section is to see what sort of religious practices form a distinctive Pentecostal theological aesthetics. Because Pentecostals emphasize the presence and work of the Holy Spirit and manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit, they tend to express themselves creatively and experientially primarily through worship (see Chapter 11).

The strong Protestant influence on Pentecostalism exerted through Pietism, the Holiness Movement, and the Keswick Movement aided and abetted a general disdain that classical Pentecostals often show toward the arts. These Protestant roots see the arts as so visceral and affective that they can lead people away from God and toward worldly affairs. Participation in the arts was typically permitted outside of the church so long as this was moral but only carefully utilized in the church as long as it did not detract from the gospel message. In order to focus on Scripture alone, Protestants adopted a simple aesthetic that spurned the ornate and grandiose visual aesthetic of Roman Catholicism. Most Pentecostals trace their roots theologically to those Protestant traditions that have distanced themselves from the arts. Classical Pentecostalism has born a distrust of secular culture, and the ensuing incredulity toward the arts has come as an unfortunate consequence. Utilizing art in a context of worship is the primary way that Pentecostals have effectively engaged the arts. Elsewhere, however, Pentecostalism has ignored art largely because of the spiritual corruption it might bring (Rybarczyk 2012). This resistance has caused many Pentecostals to be out-of-touch with the surrounding culture's artistic expressions. Yet Pentecostal theology also shows some epistemic commitments to a worldview that lends itself to artistic engagement: Pentecostals practice an affective, embodied, and pneumatocentric spirituality (Rybarczyk, 259). These epistemic commitments suggest that Pentecostals possess a unique way of engaging art and aesthetics theologically. The primary forms that Pentecostals have utilized are various elements of music, dance, drama, and visual arts.

Pentecostals and music

Music is central to Pentecostal worship and belies the general distrust in the arts. It is in music that Pentecostals are most innovative and influential as a religious aesthetic movement (Félix-Jäger 2017, 67–92). From its outset, the Pentecostal focus on experience opened up the possibility of Spirit-filled worship, and early Pentecostals innovated their worship settings and liturgies by applying popular styles to their hymnody, constantly adapting to traditions of popular music. For instance, the earliest Pentecostals sang folk-like hymns such as Lewis Jones's "Power in the Blood" and Albert Brumley's "I'll Fly Away," instead of older Protestant mainstays from earlier Renaissance, Baroque, or Classical eras. Pentecostal evangelist and founder of the Foursquare Church, Aimee Semple McPherson, wrote over 200 hymns that utilized brass bands and full horn sections. Her well-known hymns, "Preach the Word" and "Forward March, O Foursquare Host," sound more like sport anthems than the typically somber timbres of traditional Christian hymns (McPherson 1900). As contemporary worship arose in the West through the Jesus Movement of the late 1960s and 1970s, praise choruses, which act as a bridge from Protestant hymnody to contemporary worship, were composed and performed across North America and Europe. Some well-known examples of Pentecostal praise choruses are Jack Hayford's "Majesty," Phil Driscoll's "I Exalt Thee," and Tommy Walker's "He Knows My Name." Chuck Smith's Calvary Chapel was extremely influential

throughout the Jesus Movement and helped to spur on the rise of contemporary worship music. John Wimber separated from Calvary Chapel in favor of a more charismatic church in the early 1980s, which began the Vineyard Movement. Both Calvary Chapel's music label Maranatha! and Vineyard's label Vineyard Records played a pivotal role in the formation of Christian Contemporary Music (CCM), the spread of contemporary music, and the rise of internationally renowned neo-Pentecostal worship groups.

While Pentecostal music has generally stayed within the context of worship, many recording artists had Pentecostal upbringings including early rock and roll musicians (e.g. Elvis Presley, Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis), early R&B artists (e.g. Marvin Gaye, Al Green, Tina Turner), contemporary rock musicians (e.g. Kings of Leon, Needtobreathe, Anberlin), and contemporary pop and R&B musicians (e.g. Katy Perry, CeCe Winans, John Legend). Early rock and roll and R&B artists displayed the same embodied movements and soulful deliveries that were prevalent in Pentecostal worship. Perhaps these stylistic modes resonated well with the general public because they respect the embodied nature of a holistic person. Still, Pentecostals struggle to negotiate between "sacred" and "popular" forms of music (Kalu 2010). A likely cause of this struggle is the unabated ability of music to travel.

Pentecostal worship travels well, which accounts for the rapid global spread of Pentecostal worship music. Monique M. Ingalls suggests that

migration and mobility ensure that worshipping bodies remain a powerful medium of transport for music and worship practices: likewise, through a 'secondary orality' brought about by new electronic media technologies, audiovisual media networks increasingly comprise the main conduits along which Pentecostal music, songs, and worship practices travel.

(Ingalls and Yong 2015, 5)

While migration has allowed for Pentecostal music to become popular around the world, many countries are taking songs and making new versions of them or adapting the Western Pentecostal aesthetic to their own musical tastes and traditions. Conferences, public distribution, and radio play make contemporary Western worship accessible, but some countries have difficulties with distribution and instead play older songs. In many ways, worship music has been a main conduit for the spreading of popular Pentecostal ideology. Some of the more popular groups that have come up in recent decades are Hillsong United of Sydney, Australia's Hillsong Church, Jesus Culture, and Bethel Music. Both Jesus Culture and Bethel Music come out of Bethel Church, a non-denominational Pentecostal church in Redding, California. Like Hillsong United, Jesus Culture started as a youth outreach revivalist ministry before developing its own label and producing its own songs. Bethel Music is a label and coalition of worship leaders mostly around Redding and Bethel Church. Many of the most popular songs of the early twenty-first century have come from Hillsong (e.g. "From the Inside Out," "Lead Me to the Cross," "Oceans"), Jesus Culture ("Your Love Never Fails," "Break Every Chain," "One Thing Remains"), and Bethel Music ("You Make Me Brave," "Reckless Love," "No Longer Slaves"). As was the case throughout Pentecostalism's revivalist beginnings, Pentecostals continue to be at the cutting edge of contemporary worship.

Pentecostals and the visual arts

While Pentecostalism has influenced music most widely, Pentecostals have also approached visual art in the broader artworld in at least four distinct ways (Félix-Jäger 2017, 119–50).

Some artists view their Pentecostal upbringing as a formative source for art making. Artists create from their own contexts and convictions, and their art implicitly represents their Pentecostal worldview if they are or have been devoted practitioners. Artists like Nicholas Evans and Guy Kinnear fit in this category, as do de-converted artists, like Trenton Doyle Hancock, who still mine the Pentecostal contexts and upbringings for artistic inspiration.

Other artists make explicit reference to their theological commitments, using art as a witnessing tool or vehicle for teaching. Untrained folk artists such as Sister Gertrude Morgan and William Thomas Thompson fit in this category. Their works read like polemical tracts, and they view their art as prophetic signals warning and informing the world of God's action on earth.

Again, other artists reconstruct biblical and traditional symbolism in abstracted or non-representational ways. Pentecostals tend to grasp onto particular biblical images of the Holy Spirit, such as wind, fire, clouds, and the dove, that portray a Pentecostal's particular theological and pneumatological narrative (see Chapter 4). Kathy Self fits in this category as she paints abstract oil paintings mixed with wax, and often uses biblical images as a starting point.

Finally, some artists may not have come up in a Pentecostal tradition but still explore theologically rich biblical stories that are commonly associated with Pentecostalism. Tim Hawkinson's sculptural piece "Pentecost" is an example of this. Here twelve figures surround a massive tree, and a motion detector senses movement, which causes the figures to strike the tree creating a sound. Paul Benney's piece "Speaking in Tongues" is another example of a contemporary artist using a biblical image associated with Pentecostalism. "Speaking in Tongues" is a large 8' × 12' oil painting, which depicts twelve men posing with fire on their foreheads. About his work, Benney (2016) states, "I feel that the message embedded in the work, of spiritual inclusion across a multitude of cultural and religious practices can be seen as a key issue of our times." Thus, Benney uses the theological content of a biblical story that is commonly associated with Pentecostalism in order to express the issue of inclusion in a pluralistic world. Art extends the importance of narrative and story for Pentecostal theology.

While each of the above examples represents ways in which Pentecostalism is engaged in the broader artworld through visual art, Pentecostals also utilize visual art in the context of worship (Félix-Jäger 2015, 183–205). For instance, Pentecostal churches often illustrate biblical scenes or use pneumatological and soteriological symbols in order to emphasize their implicit theological commitments of Christ's life and ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit. Others symbolize pertinent theological commitments as expressed in the full gospel. One might find paintings of a dove, fire, or water adorning the church in order to represent the presence of the Holy Spirit in the people's midst. In less literate communities, these murals or paintings may serve as a form of visual theology where the people can come to a non-linguistic understanding of the faith.

Some churches have adopted the practice of spontaneous live painting, which consists of impromptu visual art making during a worship service (Félix-Jäger 2015, 204–5). Here the visual artist typically stands at the side of the stage in the sanctuary and either illustrates sermon points through visual art or paints intuited impressions inspired by musical worship. The artist follows the prompting of the Holy Spirit in the hope of adding a visual element to a holistic worship practice. Other churches host gallery openings designed to create an outreach opportunity and a general dialogue between a given topic, the church, and the broader culture (see Chapter 10). Churches here often create temporary pop-up walls or convert a room in order to host a curated exhibition.

A newer innovative way that Pentecostal churches utilize the visual arts are by commissioning artists to create installations in some area of the church. These are often interactive and create a sense of contemplative and sacred space within the walls of the church building. Church architecture is also aesthetically formative, and some Pentecostal churches have been cognizant about how the church building honors and respects the land that it occupies, and how it emphasizes what God has already done through nature. Architects can grasp onto a theological symbol, such as heat, coolness, breezes, shadows, light, etc., and build forms that accentuate or conceal these themes, according to the commitments of the worshipping community (Bergmann 2005). People are formed aesthetically through visual art and architecture, and many Pentecostal churches are beginning to understand this as an important aspect of their spiritual formation. While it may be better to opt for a Spirit-filled community over a beautifully affective environment, Pentecostals are beginning to aim for both, seeing these aesthetic options as a false dichotomy.

Pentecostals and the embodied arts

Protestantism's historical antipathy of the arts was aimed forcefully at dance and the embodied arts, since these can become overtly sensual practices. Christianity in its multifaceted global expressions does not possess a single traditional expression of ritual dance, often forcing global renewal movements to make a choice between the traditional Christian piety of the West and their own cultural practices that are visceral and embodied (Pype 2006). Following suit, classical Pentecostals have typically condemned secular dance as worldly but have welcomed religious dance and the embodied arts into worship services. The theological openness toward dance is another reason why Pentecostal worship is readily adaptable to cultures around the world (Hovi 2011). Dance, along with other bodily expressions such as hand raising, swaying, and jumping, offer embodied rather than purely cognitive communication with God and others that are decidedly pneumatological (Albrecht 1999, 150–76). Dance renders the body as communicator and has a communal function when observed, becoming a performative mode of communication for the dancer, and a visual mode of cognition for the viewer. Among Pentecostals, these rituals provide a universal and cross-cultural language that can lead to spiritual and physical renewal (Félix-Jäger 2017, 88).

Many Pentecostal churches incorporate flag twirling or impromptu spontaneous dance as a means of worshipping God during the service's musical worship (Kalu 2010). Other Pentecostal ministries enact prophetic dance as a legitimate form of ministry that produces spiritual, emotional, or even physical healing (Félix-Jäger 2017, 62). Many African American Pentecostal traditions utilize choreosonic modes of proclamation that marry orality with embodied expressiveness (Crawley 2017, 93). These practices join together movement and sound to homiletic encouragement and include “whooping,” “shouting,” and tongues-speech as integral aspects of sermonizing (Butler 2008, 83).

Again, Pentecostals are most fruitfully adept in utilizing these artforms in the contexts of worship. Still, to be realistic, Christianity as a whole has struggled pressing into the broader artworld in contemporary times. While cultures around the world value artistic expression through the body, Christianity does not have unique perspectives or innovations to offer broader cultures because of its predominant disdain and avoidance of the embodied arts. Still, Pentecostal use of embodied practices suggest that the way forward is to move beyond dualistic understandings of the Spirit and body, spiritual and secular, and to begin valuing embodied expression as a means for human holistic formation. As Christians spend time and resources engaging the embodied arts, they will eventually be able to offer intriguing

new styles and techniques to the broader culture. Because of its emphasis on experience and embodiment, Pentecostals are well-suited to form powerful inroads for expressing its spirituality to the general public through the arts.

Pentecostal contributions to theological aesthetics

The brief typology above reveals that Pentecostals are becoming gradually aware and more dialogical with the broader conversations in arts and aesthetics. But because of Pentecostalism's historical suspicion of the arts, not much has been written about theological aesthetics from the perspective of the Pentecostal tradition, and only few comprehensive studies have been written about Pentecostal theological aesthetics offering constructive systems (Félix-Jäger 2015, 2017; Crawley 2017). Some Pentecostal scholars have approached aesthetics in an introductory manner claiming that Pentecostals should thoughtfully engage the arts and that Pentecostals have epistemic commitments that should make for a fruitful dialogue between Pentecostal theology and aesthetics. These assertions claim that Pentecostals practice a felt, visceral spirituality that opens up to aesthetic matters. They incorporate the arts in their worship environments but do not typically reflect critically on how the aesthetic dimensions of those practices form them spiritually or phenomenologically. Pentecostals intuit their ways through life emotionally rather than intellectually. That is not to say Pentecostals do not think, but rather that they rely on an intuitive sense of the Spirit's leading along with the biblical witness when discerning both spiritual and pragmatic matters. As such, there is a prevenient openness toward the aesthetic dimension built into Pentecostal spirituality (Smith 2010), but Pentecostal scholarship has only rarely offered theological models for which to understand their theo-praxical commitments. Nevertheless, some in-roads have been laid with a pneumatological approach to theological aesthetics.

A pneumatological aesthetics

Pentecostals have a pneumatological imagination, as Amos Yong suggests, that allows them to see their own relatedness to God as a being-in-the-world in a way particularly inspired by their own Pentecostal experience of the Spirit (see Chapter 14). In other words, the Pentecostal experience of the Spirit drives every aspect of their inhabited self-understanding. A Pentecostal approach to aesthetics follows suit by delineating how the Spirit affects the aesthetic experience. Understanding the aesthetic is important insofar as experiences are known through the senses before being cognized or framed into organizing social, linguistic, and cultural constructs. The aesthetic experience is intimately linked to the imagination that situates it. The Pentecostal experience is one such organizing construct that immediately situates an experience into a theological framework (a pneumatological imagination). A Pentecostal aesthetics may therefore be described as the comprehension of sensation through a pneumatological imagination.

Because Pentecostals express their Spirit-filled spirituality through embodied gestures in communal contexts, I have argued elsewhere that the universal motif of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit found in Acts 2 frames the social identity of Pentecostals around the world (Félix-Jäger 2017, 22). In Acts 2:16–17 Peter says,

this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.'

This assertion was Peter's proclamation that Joel's words were being fulfilled at Pentecost with the outpouring of God's Spirit upon all flesh. The passage implies a global universality where the radiance of the outpour of the Spirit can be known in all places and in all people: the Spirit now beckons us back to God, and anyone can understand these experiences through a pneumatological imagination. The passage further suggests the prominence (not the denigration) of the body in spirituality since the Spirit is poured out on *flesh*. These implications correlate with Pentecostal spirituality's emphasis on both communal and embodied practices in their worship (see Chapter 11) and spirituality (see Chapter 3). As such, the universal outpour motif speaks to the manner in which Pentecostal spirituality is already experienced and gives a framework from which to understand sensed experience theologically (see Félix-Jäger 2017, 13–38).

The arts as practiced in and around the context of Pentecostal spirituality (both liturgically and in the greater artworld) render evident the elements of embodiment and community through the universal outpour motif. As perceiving bodies, we are beings-in-the-world who perceive the world and are perceived by the world. Furthermore, the body is the location in which we are brought into the world, and from which we perceive also the realm of the Spirit. Dance begins at this point of movement, communicating a spiritual sense of the world through beautiful movement (Sheets-Johnstone 1981, 400; Mount Shoop 2010, 12). Music is tied to dance and is performed as an embodied pursuit of communal intimacy with God (Begbie 2011, 344), and orality, through choreosonic practices found in preaching and worship connect the body to Pentecostal proclamation (Crawley 2017, 93). Hence, Pentecostal experience confirms that we become aware of the things of the Spirit that relate to us, and of our place and presence in context to these things, as vision renders the world visible to us, and us visible to the world (Merleau-Ponty 1993, 147). Visual art can serve as a visionary boundary-breaker, brushing up against what is visible and invisible, enhancing the possibilities of what can be perceived. Visual art can help transcend laterally beyond our own (de)limited perception. This aesthetic formation also penetrates the community, which is evident, as we perceive our relatedness to all that surrounds and shapes us. The communities Pentecostals populate shape the linguistic parameters that mark the extent of understanding and the lenses through which Pentecostals come to understand their experiences of the Spirit. Like visual art, film can help transcend our own experiences to recognize other vantage points of being-in-the-world (Johnston 2006, 33–34). Architecture shapes our sense of the world by literally structuring our space and movement in and out of communal settings (Bachelard 1994, 4–7). The aesthetics of the built environment profoundly affects us visually and kinetically. The arts in a Pentecostal context powerfully contribute to the Pentecostal pneumatological imaginations and helps determine their sense of being-in-the-world in pre-cognitive ways. Because of Pentecostalism's visceral experientialist spirituality, the aesthetic dimension is therefore an apt starting point for understanding Pentecostal worship, spirituality, and theology in general.

Aesthetics in conversation with Pentecostal theology

While many volumes could be written about the theological aesthetics of any Christian tradition, a brief survey of Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Reformed Protestant theological aesthetics allows us to compare them to the Pentecostal approach indicated above. This comparison chooses only one prevalent theologian from each tradition to stand as exemplar of the tradition's aesthetic thinking, and although no tradition is monolithic, the chosen theologians have proven influential in and beyond their respective traditions. The aim

of this comparison is to offer a programmatic framework for the further development of Pentecostal aesthetics by highlighting how these prevalent theologies speak to Pentecostal theology, in general, and its pneumatological aesthetics, in particular.

One of the best-known theologians of the twentieth century crafted an entire systematic theology beginning with aesthetic considerations. The Swiss Roman Catholic Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–88) revisioned Catholic theology as a response to Western modernity primarily through his multi-volume trilogy *The Glory of the Lord*, *Theo-Drama*, and *Theo-Logic*. As a method, von Balthasar (1982, 44–45) pronounced the oft-ignored aesthetic dimension of glory seen through the eyes of, and as a reversal of the norm, his system begins with aesthetics, moves to ethics, and culminates with epistemology. Von Balthasar's aesthetics are articulated through a Christological lens as the glory of God is revealed in Christ, which is attested in Scripture. God's form (*Gestalt*) of beauty is ultimately manifested through Christ in the Incarnation, and Christ rests as the center of the Christian faith and the standard from which all other forms can be measured (von Balthasar 1982, 451). Von Balthasar is interested in seeing how the revelation of God's grace is perceived by the world. Aiden Nichols comments (2011, 13): "von Balthasar sets himself the task of trying to perceive the objective form of revelation, in creation and in Jesus Christ, in all its splendid, harmonious and symphonic fullness." (As the fullness of God's revelation, the glory of the Lord emanates from Christ, since he is the very object of beauty, and this illumination enlightens the viewer as grace in order to truly see God. In this way Christ—the object of faith—draws the subject to faith by his form of beauty. It is the self-emptying of God's divine love, perceived as God's own beauty, which is made evident in God's direct revelation of God's self to humanity in Christ through the Incarnation. "Christian contemplation can marvel," von Balthasar (1989, 113) writes,

in the self-emptying of divine love, at the exceeding wisdom, truth and beauty inherent there. But it is only in this self-emptying that they can be contemplated, for it is the source whence the glory contemplated by the angels and the saints radiates into eternal life.

God's self-emptying love is especially evident on the cross as God's concealed glory shines more brilliantly when it is juxtaposed against his abasement (von Balthasar 1989, 114). God's beauty is also evident in things deemed beautiful. Beauty, however, is not a mere aesthetic property, but the "radiance from the depths of Being" (von Balthasar 1982, 389). Hence Nichols (2011, 42) concludes, "beauty thus speaks of the meaning of that which transcends and yet inheres in all existents." Beauty is a transcendental that can be known through the eyes of faith. Beauty is ultimately revealed in Christ, and God's glory radiates out and can be experienced as a grace. Thus, von Balthasar offers a deeply Christological aesthetics, which focuses on a person's experience of God's self-emptying love.

Because beauty in its ultimacy is known in Christ, von Balthasar's approach can help Pentecostals understand the telos of the universal outpour motif. The aspiration is the glory of the beautiful Lord, and the pneumatological imagination is the aesthetic pursuit of beauty. This is an active pursuit as the pneumatological imagination energizes the Christian's progressive desire of personal and cosmological transformation. The culmination of this transformation is known definitively in Christ, and the pneumatological imagination allows people to be fully cognizant of, and participate in, these transformations. Viewed aesthetically, the pneumatological imagination extends von Balthasar's ideas by energizing the beautification of the individual and the cosmos in pursuit of the beautiful Christ. The Spirit relates God's self-emptying aesthetically to the world.

David Bentley Hart is a contemporary Eastern Orthodox theologian whose theological aesthetics takes cue from John Milbank, von Balthasar, and Gregory of Nyssa. Following Milbank, Hart (2003) begins his book, *The Beauty of the Infinite*, as a response to the postmodern critique of metanarratives. While he agrees that metanarratives are hoisted up as arbiters of power, he does not believe that one should simply do away with all rhetoric. The postmodern critique states that rhetoric triumphs over the dialectic, and Christianity should take solace in the fact that it, too, is a rhetoric with its own logic (3). Hart then follows von Balthasar and Gregory of Nyssa by defining the Christian rhetoric that can and ought to be presented in a postmodern milieu. He follows von Balthasar's model by beginning with the aesthetic but draws from Gregory when he defines beauty through the notion of *perichoresis*. Christian rhetoric is one that sees God as infinite, and as such, all differences find their harmony in God's co-indwelling relationality between the persons of the Trinity (183). Beauty is not a transcendent form apart from God; rather God is infinite beauty because God is triune in divine harmonic relationality. Following von Balthasar, Hart (441) sees God's infinite beauty as taking definitive form in Christ. And while God's very nature of triune relationality is infinite beauty, creation is "the radiance of divine glory"—an icon of the triune God (240). So, for Hart, God's beauty radiates as an *excessus* of God's triune nature and finds its ultimate form in Christ. Whereas von Balthasar's theological aesthetics is predominately teleological focusing on Christ's glory, Hart's theological aesthetics is predominately gregiological viewing beauty first as radiating from God's triune nature.

Hart helps Pentecostals nuance their pneumatological approach to aesthetics by situating beauty first in God's relational co-indwelling. God's relationality radiates beauty and invites humans into the divine dance through Christ's sacrifice. The witnesses of God's beauty as *excessus* and ultimately in Christ are gracious gifts from God and cannot be disregarded: the pneumatological imagination properly understood is a trinitarian imagination. The focus on the Spirit is paramount, however, because the Spirit is the energizing force who is active in the present as the relational presence of God. Unlike von Balthasar or Hart, the pneumatological imagination does not begin from either a teleological or gregiological position but starts with the present experiences of beauty in the relationships made possible in creation.

Jeremy Begbie is a contemporary Anglican theologian who is also a classically trained pianist and conductor. Begbie's theological aesthetics also takes a trinitarian format and begins with God creating *ex nihilo*. As such, his approach could be called a creational aesthetics: God's creation is an act of grace that opens up the possibility of God's own suffering (made evident in the Incarnation and crucifixion). God then creates a covenant with creation—a promise that God will allow the world the ability to move and be free as its own entity (Begbie 2000, 171). Creation comes into being through spontaneous, unpredictable acts, and Christ is the supreme order-er of the cosmos (175). Christ is also creation's redeemer as everything is set right ultimately through Christ's death and resurrection. As Christ redeems the world, he transforms the disorder brought about by sin. Finally, Christ is the *telos* of humanity who embodies the consequence of a redeemed created reality. In this way, Christ is not only God over creation but also the mediator of creation. Begbie (176) comments: "The one who has put all things under his feet is none other than the one who has borne the full weight of the world's evil as man." It is humanity's task to share in God's creative purposes of drawing all things back to Christ. A person's creativity will function within God's creation as human beings respect, develop, and steward God's creation, reconciling it with each other and the triune God. So, for Begbie, a theological aesthetics begins with the Creator God who through Christ invites creation to enter into the processes of creation and redemption.

Like von Balthasar and Hart, Begbie makes limited mention of the Spirit, only discussing the Spirit's work in a trinitarian context. Begbie's approach is valuable for Pentecostals in that it explicates how human beings enter into the processes of creation and redemption, and what creative roles they can take as stewards. Begbie is helpful, therefore, by focusing on the present role of the person in a theological aesthetics. However, his view is less consistent with a pneumatological aesthetics because it focuses on creativity as it emulates the Creator God and not the Spirit or the pursuit of beauty. A functional approach focusing on the person's calling neglects the pursuit of beauty as foundational for relating to God and the world through the Spirit. While von Balthasar, Hart, and Begbie offer significant takes on the Christian life through theological aesthetics, indicating what the present pursuit of beauty might practically look like, a pneumatological aesthetics speaks more directly to the traditions from the sensitivities of Christian spirituality, embodiment, and worship. From here, Pentecostals are in a strong position to develop their own pneumatological aesthetics.

Conclusion

Conscripting a pneumatological approach to aesthetics has allowed Pentecostals to make sense of their embodied pneumatocentric worship practices by making theological connections to their typically pneumatocentric theology. Just as von Balthasar sees glory radiating from God as a kenotic gesture, Pentecostals see the event of Pentecost as that definitive moment of Spirit outpour, consequently enabling the pneumatological imagination's pursuit of beauty through which experiences can now be interpreted. Because Pentecostal theology is praxis-oriented, its spirituality, known concretely through Spirit-filled practices, must inform its theological musings. The aesthetic dimension of these practices can reorient how Pentecostalism is understood theologically. While only few Pentecostal scholars have begun utilizing theological methods that begin with the aesthetic, what has been written serves as important inroads for further development. As Pentecostal aesthetic sensibilities continue to develop, so will our understanding of the holistic spirituality that is part and parcel of Pentecostalism.

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