

Joshua Groffman, “Summer Wind (Why so slow?)” (2019)

“Summer Wind (Why so slow?)” is a musical reflection of the poem “Summer Wind” by William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878). Much of my recent work has grappled with place and how music and sound might be made “local.” Bryant, who lived and worked in New England and New York City, but who also was closely associated with the Hudson River School, wrote extensively on themes of nature and place. “Summer Wind” describes a sense experience that feels profoundly familiar: the sound of wind rising in the trees on a hot day, the way it moves across the landscape in a quick wave, activating stillness. The poem is in two sections: the first recreates the languor of the summer day, and the second describes the first moments of hearing, and then feeling, the rising breeze.

Joshua Groffman is a composer and scholar focusing on the intersection of sound, place, and the natural world. A native of New York’s Hudson Valley, current work includes the opera, *Unfinished*; written in collaboration with poet Sarah Heady and commissioned by Vital Opera, it centers around the now-defunct Bennett College in Millbrook, NY. His writings on sound and nature appear in *Music & Politics*, *Hudson River Valley Review*, and *Musica Est Donum*. He is currently assistant professor of music at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford. Read more at joshuagroffman.com.