What is the role of the desire of/for God in art and aesthetic experience from a phenomenological perspective? The phenomenological tradition is arguably marked by two distinct turns: to the aesthetic and, more recently, to the theological, both of which seek to negotiate the relationship between the subject and its correlate, whether objective or not. Desire for both turns is instrumental in the reconciliation of these two poles. The shape that desire takes determines the manner by which God or the Absolute figures into the analysis.

The recent debates concerning the significance of the preservation and restoration of Notre Dame de Paris after its having partially burned down on 16 April 2019 uniquely exhibit the intersection of desire, art, and God. The discourses surrounding the event largely focus on whether the meaning of the cathedral should be accounted for in religious or secular humanistic terms. This brings to light the multiple identities the cathedral possesses: as a cultural and historical symbol in the secular French Republic, a religious monument for both European and global Christians, and a work of art and human genius displaying the rich depths of humanity itself. What light would a phenomenological analysis of these elements of human experience shed on the political dimension of the relation between religion and secular culture?

This conference seeks presentations of original research examining the relationships between art, desire, and God that lie at the heart of these questions. Especially encouraged to submit papers for consideration are early career faculty, post-doctoral researchers, and advanced research students. Papers may explore, but are not limited to, the thought of figures such as Michel Henry, Jean-Luc Marion, Richard Kearney, Jean-Louis Chrétien, Emmanuel Falque, and David Tracy, as well as Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jean-Françoise Lyotard, and Jacques Derrida. Papers that utilize the thought and artwork of underrepresented populations are encouraged, as are papers that actively engage the collection of the Snite Museum of Art (sniteartmuseum.nd.edu).

Submissions must be in English and emailed to artdesiregod@gmail.com by June 1, 2020. Authors will receive notification of receipt. Proposals will be peer-reviewed. A completed proposal includes:

1. An email including the author's name, institutional affiliation (if applicable), and paper title;
2. A single Word or .PDF file without identifying marks that includes the following: a.) the paper title, b.) a 200-word abstract, and c.) a 1,000-word précis of the argument, including sources;
3. 2-page abbreviated curriculum vitae.

Notification of accepted proposals will be sent no later than July 15, 2020. Completed versions of accepted papers (for a 30 minute conference presentation, or approximately 3,500 words) will be due in advance of the conference (September 15). All papers will be presented remotely and observed online. Authors whose proposals are accepted will receive more details upon notification.

Following the conference, accepted submissions will be revised and prepared for publication in an edited volume.

For more information, please visit www.artdesiregod.com and www.facebook.com/groups/artdesireGod.