Thanks especially to Tao Lin. You have always been there for me—any place, any hour of the night, recording, whatever. I owe you so much just for your calmness as well as your fantastic ability on the keyboard. Thanks for your collaboration tonight.

Thanks to those who helped to support my instrument. It certainly is a part of me. I have made huge strides with the acquisition of my J.B. Vuillaume violin. My old friend J.B. is my partner on the stage tonight. I continue to work hard to keep it. See me personally if there are any sympathetic supporters in the audience tonight! Thanks to mom and dad, Aunt Rene, Dr. and Mrs. Pierce, Mr. Bruce Bent and the Palm Beach supporters who I could not possibly name all.

Thanks to Sergiu Schwartz who recruited me and who not only taught me many of the wonderful skills incorporated in my violin playing, but who also taught me that there were people in the world who could be compassionate and understanding to the problems and survival of the artist in today’s society. I will never forget his confidence, friendship, and kindness in helping me through many situations in my young years here at Lynn. Mr. Schwarz was both my teacher and my friend.

Most of all, thanks to my present teacher and mentor Elmar Oliveira who has taught me immeasurable technique and musicianship, kept my feet on the ground; and who continues to give me support in guiding me toward my future plans as a professional violinist. It is only through some divine power that I was given the opportunity to study from such an amazing violinist! I must say that I have tried my best to learn all that I could from this personally unique opportunity in my life. Thanks Mr. O!!!
To my wonderful family, supporters, audiences, I would like to express my gratitude for the unforgettable formative years that I have spent here at Lynn University. There have been many experiences for me along the way. I have had opportunities that I never dreamed of in my tenure here at Lynn University—the opportunity to play with major orchestras throughout the United States and other parts of the world. I have played in many of the great halls including the world famous Carnegie! What a blessing it has been. Some of my greatest memories were that I have had the opportunity to speak, teach, encourage, as well as perform for young people across the nation and in many parts of Asia, South America, and Central America. I have encouraged them to think about making music a part of their lives—about developing and maintaining an open mind in their lives. I communicate to them not to let anyone deter their dreams; that with hard work and diligence, they can do anything. Of utmost importance, however, is that they find their passion. When one has found their passion, then there is joy. Music is my passion and I am not ashamed to admit it. As a graduate student, I have committed myself to working harder than ever. I look for no accolades. I exist on the enjoyment of doing what I love most—that is playing the violin.

I have met musicians and have had the opportunity to make friends all over the world. The past summer I spent in Asia—learning literature, performing and recording. Since then I have been to San Salvador playing the Beethoven Concerto and just last month I joined one of my greatest mentors Dr. Robertson (our dean) in California. To have the opportunity to work with “the superior officer” of one’s conservatory was such a tribute. Thanks Dr. Robertson for your trust in my ability and my debut in California—the reviews were great and I think the audience loved us!

I continue to move toward greater dreams and more performances in the future. Please feel free to follow me on my website: Gareth Johnson.org. Also I leave to my Lynn Conservatory audience my CD entitled “Storytelling.” This CD was made possible by the sponsorship of a woman who has always had belief in me. Thank you Madelyn Savarick. I will never forget your benevolence.

Thanks to the entire faculty. I feel I have learned so much here. Thanks to the orchestra leaders, players, coaches, string professors, pianists and all others. I seriously tried to listen to most all that you said. Listening is important to me and I too try to stress that listening should be important to all individuals.

My colleagues, I will miss the most. From observing you, fraternizing, and because of your outstanding talents, I have learned the most. There are numerous excellent players all over the world.

Thanks to the staff. What patience you have had with me!