

Guest Editorial

The five articles in this special issue were presented as papers at the first Performance Studies Network International Conference, which the AHRC Research Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice hosted at the University of Cambridge from 14 to 17 July 2011. The conference was attended by some 140 delegates from around the world and featured the presentations of c. 100 speakers in the form of individual papers, research reports and special sessions. There was also a keynote paper by Keith Sawyer, along with a six-hour 'Total Performance Event' on Saturday 16 July. Perhaps the most memorable feature of the conference was the never-ending dialogue and discussion between the musicians and musicologists in attendance: indeed, any distinction between these groups would have been entirely false, as everyone seemed keen to work together in exploring the key research questions underlying CMPCP's own agenda as well as those at the heart of performance studies more generally.

After the conference, presenters were invited to contribute material to CMPCP's [Online Resource](#), on the understanding that it would also be considered for inclusion in this special issue. The five members of the CMPCP Directorate acted as peer reviewers, and the articles selected for publication reflect not only their own interests and the main focal points of their respective CMPCP projects but also the outstanding quality of the submissions in question. I am grateful to these colleagues for their input as Action Editors: Nicholas Cook worked with Mine Doğan-tan-Dack, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson with Alan Maddox, Tina K. Ramnarine with Sophie Grimmer, and Eric Clarke with Roger Heaton, while I had a similar role in respect of Michael Callahan's article, in addition to my work as Guest Editor. David Mawson – CMPCP's Coordinator – provided invaluable assistance in terms of formatting the articles and handling author queries. Warm thanks are due to Jane Ginsborg for the invitation to prepare this issue, and to Sara Wolfson for her considerable effort and support.

At the time of publication CMPCP finds itself at the halfway point of its five-year lifespan, and although the Centre cannot take direct credit for the research presented in these five articles it is gratifying to be able to feature it here. In assembling this special issue I have often thought about the overwhelming groundswell of interest in the field of performance studies over the last ten to twenty years, though it is my sense that, in many ways,

the best is yet to come. Nevertheless, the challenges that lie ahead are considerable if we hope to peel back the layers surrounding the act of musical performance, which remains as fascinating but also as frustratingly elusive as ever. One important way in which CMPCP is trying to help is through the [Performance Studies Network](#), which may still be in its infancy but which can claim an active and large membership along with the hosting of events such as the three [PSN international conferences](#) (the next of which will take place in Cambridge from 4 to 7 April 2013). This special issue therefore provides the opportunity to reflect not only on the questions posed by the five authors here as well as the answers they have given, but also on the further questions to be addressed by musicians and musicologists keen to work together in attempting to fathom what lies behind the act of performing music, how performances take shape over time, and how we can best understand and describe the creative practices that characterize it across a seemingly infinite range of global contexts, idioms and performance conditions.

John Rink (Guest Editor)