

# Introduction to Volume One of *Music Research Annual*

HARRIS M. BERGER AND JOCELYNE GUILBAULT  
GENERAL EDITORS

In the contemporary academic scene, research on music is spread across a wide range of disciplines. While many scholars work at the intersection of several established fields, and while some journals concentrate on selected interdisciplinary junctures, there currently exists no single publication that is dedicated to offering review essays across the broad range of research on music today. Many years in the making, *Music Research Annual* seeks to fill this gap. In developing the journal, our aim has not been to erase the distinctions among existing fields and create a single, unified discipline of music studies. Rather, we hope to encourage scholars to make connections across disciplinary boundaries, improve the quality of work done within existing disciplines by raising awareness of research from other areas, and create a forum for interdisciplinary exchange. In so doing, we seek not only to feature research on individual topics within those disciplines that study music but also to draw increased attention to music research from scholars across the humanities, social sciences, and beyond.

Published by the Research Centre for the Study of Music, Media, and Place (MMaP) at Memorial University of Newfoundland, *Music Research Annual* presents critical perspectives on the scholarly literatures alive today. Each article in the journal identifies a key topic or issue in the study of music, maps out the intellectual history of work in this area, pulls together its most significant findings, offers fresh insights and perspectives, and charts ways forward for new research. Often polemical or provocative in nature, essays in the “Emerging Issues” section of the journal highlight concerns that are on the horizon of contemporary music research but have yet to develop into fully formed scholarly literatures. This section, included periodically, will be featured in the second volume of the journal.

The articles in this first volume focus on topics that are of vital interest, not just to music scholars or even to academic research in general, but to social life in the early twenty-first century. The article by ethnomusicologist Martin Stokes provides a fascinating intellectual history of scholarship on music and migration, highlights the latest insights from this body of work, and shows the contributions that both music and music scholarship can make to understanding and responding to the current migrant crisis. The article by philosopher and popular music scholar Robin James examines key trends in contemporary feminist theory, shows how they have been carried forward by music scholars from a broad range of humanities disciplines, and offers a powerful set of ideas that will be as important for activists and musicians as they will be for music researchers. Musicologist Blake Howe discusses the vast literature on music and disability, highlighting the fundamental challenges that disability studies offer to both traditional modes of music scholarship and ableist practices of music making and research in the academy. Equally exhaustive are the articles by philosopher Stephen Davies and by violinist/composer, zoömusicologist, and ornithologist Hollis Taylor. Davies provides a sophisticated reading of the ontology of music from analytic philosophy, presenting powerful perspectives on the nature of music and of musical works. Taylor’s article draws on writings from the arts, humanities, and natural sciences to review the history of zoömusicology (the study of animal music making), explore its most recent developments, and challenge anthropocentric understandings of music. In their own way, each of these authors encourages us to seek new perspectives on music and music research.

In this journal, our aim is to foreground the many insights that scholarship on music generates and also to examine critically the assumptions and traditions on which that scholarship is based. This volume is a first

step in this direction. We hope that the themes these articles address, the questions they raise, and the future research they envision will enrich contemporary research projects and interdisciplinary conversations.

Work on upcoming volumes of the journal is well underway. As they are completed, articles will be published on our website, so have a look regularly!