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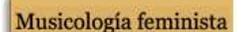
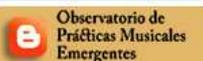
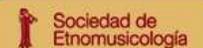
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Why Music and Performance Studies? Why Now?: An Introduction to the Special Issue

Alejandro L. Madrid

Abstract

Besides introducing the articles from the special issue in music and performance studies, this article surveys how the notion of performance has been dealt with in traditional music scholarship. After looking critically at the inability of musicology to transcend music studies, the author suggests that addressing the question of performativity (as understood in performance studies) beyond the locus of performance might allow musicologists and music scholars a way to contribute to the growingly interdisciplinary intellectual projects in the social sciences and the humanities.

Key words: Performative, performatic, performance practice, performance complex, musicology, performance studies, ethnomusicology, music theory

Resumen

Además de presentar los ensayos del dossier especial en música y estudios de performance, este artículo señala la forma en que la noción de performance ha sido abordada en los estudios musicales tradicionales. Después de observar críticamente la incapacidad de la musicología para trascender más allá de las discusiones musicales, el autor sugiere que el articular la cuestión de la performatividad (como se entiende en los estudios de performance) más allá del locus del performance podría permitir a los musicólogos y estudiosos de la música contribuir en los proyectos intelectuales cada vez más interdisciplinarios que ocupan a las ciencias sociales y las humanidades.

Palabras clave: Performativo, performático, práctica del performance, complejo de performance, musicología, estudios de performance, etnomusicología, teoría de la música

Some years ago I tried to publish the revised English version of an article I had published earlier in the Chilean music journal *Resonancias*.^[1] This article had been my first approximation to an idea I would have later called “performative composition,” a theoretical concept that suggests the act of composition might allow a liminal composer to intentionally or unintentionally resolve the contradicting discourses s/he experiences as an individual living at cultural borders or contact zones, while performing his/her self in relation to these discourses as part of the compositional process. (Madrid 2003b: 11, 45, 95, 109, and 163) I presumed musicologists might find this notion engaging and conducive to an intellectual dialogue, and tried to find a place for the article in a musicology journal. The article was rejected from a few journals over a period of a couple of years, until I eventually lost interest in its publication in English as I moved to other projects. Obviously, an article could be turned down from publication for many reasons; from having a poorly argued case to having been sent to the wrong reviewers, to being irrelevant to the readership of the journal in question. My article could have been turned down for any of these reasons as far as I am concerned. However, the outside reviewers’ comments were also quite telling; although I received valuable suggestions and observations from most of them, what to this day sticks in my mind is their decided opposition to the use of the notion of “performativity” in conjunction with the act of composition. One of the reviewers was quite explicit about it and explained that the fact that the term “performativity” had a long history in music studies “used in reference to the act of musical performance, music-making, or musical interpretation” made my use of it in a different context quite problematic. Now I think that what made it particularly problematic was that using it in relation to the notion of composition it seemed to disrupt the composition/performance dyad, and within that the dominating presence of an author’s text favored by some of the most orthodox scholars of Western art music.

Mentioning this incident is not fortuitous. I believe that those reactions are significant because they indicate the large gap that still separates music scholarship “particularly musicology but also, to a lesser extent, ethnomusicology and music theory” from the growing field of performance studies. Clearly, when most musicians talk about “performativity,” they have in mind something quite different

realized I was wrong when said person evoked the old discussion between composition, performance, and at best, improvisatory performance as composition, as the locus where one could find the "meaning" of music.

Indeed, in traditional music scholarship, the study of performance has meant the study of a wide variety of music-making paradigms, from orthodox views that separate composition and performance to the questioning of such dichotomy, to the practical and philosophical speculations brought about by the performance practice movement of the 1970s and 1980s in both Western and Non-Western traditions.^[2] Thus, the type of performance questions entertained by these scholars remained within the realm of the rendition of a musical text, the "how" to make such texts accessible to listeners, musical performances as texts, or at best, how the notions of performance and composition might collapse in improvisation. In such a context, the term "performativity" refers to the means by which music is created or re-created in performance.

The discipline of performance studies on the other hand is founded on a different understanding of the notion of "performativity," an idea that is central in understanding the intellectual agenda of the field. In 1962, philosopher J. L. Austin explained that some grammatically correct utterances in language fail to qualify as statements as they do not describe anything and are not true or false; furthermore, the utterance of these sentences makes them part of "the doing of an action." He calls these utterances "performative sentences" as they do or perform what they say.^[3] (Austin 1962: 5-6) Thus, by taking Austin's notion of "the performative" to the core of its intellectual inquiry, performance studies as a field asks not what actions, events, or cultural manifestations are but rather what they do. Performance studies does not seek to describe actions so they could be faithfully reproduced later; instead, it attempts to understand what these actions do in the cultural field where they happen and what do they allow people to do in their everyday life. The fact that performance studies is founded on the notion of "performativity" as a quality of discourse allows performance scholars to not only focus on a wide variety of phenomena, from activities that explicitly involve performance "such as music, dance, theater, and ritual" to the construction of identities, the enunciative use of language, political activism, or the use of the body in everyday life" as performance.

The different understanding of the notion of performativity among music and performance scholars indicates a different intellectual project altogether. While music scholarship (including performance practice) asks what music is and seeks to understand musical texts and musical performances in their own terms according to a social and cultural context, a performance studies approach to the study of music asks what music does or allows people to do; such an approach understands musics as processes within larger social and cultural practices and asks how these musics can help us understand these processes as opposed to how do these processes help us understand music.

Although musicology is by nature a multidisciplinary field, it is only recently, more than 20 years after its cultural turn of the 1980s that musicologists begin to ask themselves some of the questions that have encouraged scholars in other disciplines to become interested in music. Finally, the field seems to be moving away from its founding concern, the understanding of music or its meaning, to the understanding of why is music or its meaning so important to people and society. Recently, Gary Tomlinson, one of the key figures of the New Musicology "as musicology's cultural turn was called", published *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact* (2007), a virtuosic and arrogant intellectual display that takes ancient ritual as a point of departure to ask precisely what chant did for pre-Columbian societies. The issue at stake in Tomlinson's book is that of performativity; his quest is the quest of performance studies. However, instead of using this term he prefers the neologism "supraperformative," which he defines as a musical force that is "synonymous neither with performance itself nor with the broadest views of music-making [but rather] linked to societal and expressive particulars and yet audible even in the absence of specific recuperable sounds." (5) Tomlinson's case seems to show that although some musicologists are ready to tackle the questions that performance studies has been asking for over 30 years, they still hesitate to embrace the discipline and its intellectual tradition.

The decision to prepare a special edition on music and performance studies for *Trans. Revista Transcultural de Música* came as both a response to this shift as well as an attempt to further promote it. The answer to our call for papers was quite impressive, more than 40 abstracts were submitted for consideration, which in itself tells us of the increasing relevance that the idea of performance has in music studies. Nevertheless, the fact that ca. 75 % of those abstracts were concerned with the old performance practice paradigm also tells us that much more still needs to be done to broaden the understanding of what performance can mean in music. At the end of 2007, as we were selecting articles for the special issue, Rubén López Cano promoted the creation of a performance studies workshop within the Sociedad de Etnomusicología (SIBE) [Spain's Society for Ethnomusicology], the institutional house of this journal. The group, called "Cuerpo, Discurso y Performance" [Body, Discourse, and Performance], included Sandra Anitúa Jorge, Jaime del Val, Liliana González Moreno, Vika Kleiman, Janine Krueger, María Mercedes Liska, Rubén López Cano, Ramón Rivera-Servera, Gustavo Rodríguez Espada, Iñigo Sánchez Fuarros, and me. It was a multidisciplinary cyber-gathering of music therapists, performance artists, psychologists, as well as scholars (from anthropology, music, dance, and performance studies) interested in, as López Cano put it, "learning about the most recent developments in performance studies in an attempt to establish links between this field and music theory, ethno/musicologies, social sciences, cognition, and the humanities."^[4] A very fruitful Internet dialogue was established in the months prior to the 2008 SIBE conference in Salamanca, Spain, where a group of us (del Val, Liska, López Cano, Rivera-Servera, Sánchez Fuarros, and me) presented a session encouraging a conversation with the audience.^[5] The group did not set itself to produce any conclusions at the end of the session but the fact that the question of the meaning and use of "performativity" re-appeared throughout both the pre-conference electronic conversation and the in situ session, made us at least try to set a convention as of how to use it in performance studies of music.

Although this still troubles music academia, it is a question that scholars in other performing arts (theater, visual arts, and dance) have already asked themselves and have found answers for. Diana

the term “performative” as an adjective or quality of discourse, and “performatic” when referring to the traditional dominion of performance, its theatricality.

Mapping out Performance Studies

Performance studies was born out of three main disciplinary fields: linguistics, anthropology, and theater –although many related fields or subfields have been fundamental in its solidification as an area of intellectual inquiry–; nevertheless, most performance studies scholars seem to track down the genealogy of the discipline to the late 1950s and early 1960s seminal work of Erving Goffman on performing in everyday life and J. L. Austin’s performativity. (see Goffman 1959 and Austin) By the mid 1960s and early 1970s, theater scholar Richard Schechner proposed first an area of study focused on actions and activities (games, sports, theater, ritual) and later a field for the intersection of performance theory and the social sciences, before a fruitful collaboration with Victor Turner, an anthropologist interested in exploring social drama and ritual as processes. (see Schechner 1988/1977; Schechner & Schuman 1976; Turner 1968; and Turner 1987) In the meantime, as the collaboration between Schechner and Turner established an area to explore the intersections between theater and anthropology, the work of Richard Bauman on speech, semiotics, and folklore established the connections between linguistics and anthropology via performance. (see Bauman 1984[1977])

Performance studies at New York University (NYU) and Northwestern University (NU), the two main branches of the discipline in the U.S., correspond to these trajectories. In the 1980s, Richard Schechner and folklorist Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, were fundamental in transforming NYU’s Drama Department into a Performance Studies Department with a strong presence of theater, the social sciences, feminist and queer studies, and postcolonial studies. (Schechner 2002: 5) On the other hand, performance studies at NU is housed by the School of Communication and came out of a long standing tradition and scholarship on speech studies, oral interpretation, rhetoric, and ethnography that took performance and performativity as a focus of study. Nevertheless, it was under the leadership of ethnographer Dwight Conquergood that NU’s Department of Performance Studies was finally shaped in to its current form in the 1990s as a program devoted to the creative practice of performance as a way of knowing, the critical analysis of culture from the perspective of performance, and activism as performance. (Conquergood quoted in Schechner 2002: 24) The consolidation of these two programs was accompanied by the morphing of the former *The Drama Review* into *The Journal of Performance Studies* (under Schechner’s editorship), and the establishment of performance studies centers outside the U.S. –such as Richard Gough’s pioneering Centre for Performance Research in Wales in 1988, which would later launch its own journal, *Performance Research*–.

It was at this critical time that the work of Judith Butler, arguably the most celebrated performance studies scholar, was first published. In *Gender Trouble* (1990), based on the notion of “naming” and Austin’s performativity, Butler elaborated a theory of gender, sex, and sexuality as socially and culturally performed via the repetition of speech acts. Butler’s post-structuralist approach to the construction of knowledge opened the door for the use the notion of performativity not only to analyze speech or bodily actions but also to approach other cultural discourses and manifestations in terms of processes. Butler’s work stresses the relations between performance studies and the work of European scholars and theorists (Jean Baudrillard, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault) also interested in deconstructing these kinds of discursive constructions, and emphasizes not so much the study of performance as cultural events but rather the study of a wide variety of cultural events, artifacts, and abstractions as performances.

Since the 1990s, the field of performance studies has grown exponentially as its questions and perspectives were embraced by scholars from history, geography, and sociology to cultural studies, literature, and the visual arts, and from area fields such as American, African American, Latin American, Latino, and Asian American studies to feminism, urbanism, and race studies. The work done at the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics (HEMI) is a good example of the wide variety of concerns and topics currently approached, studied and discussed under the rubric of performance studies. Created in 1999 by Diana Taylor, HEMI is a consortium of over 25 education and research institutions as well as centers for the arts and political and social activism from the U.S., Mexico, Peru, Chile, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, and Canada; it focuses on embodied culture as an instrument for the creation and transmission of knowledge, and an instrument for political manifestation and protest in the Americas. The hemispheric character of the consortium and its concern not only with scholarship and the arts but also with activism informs of the relevance and importance that the performance studies lens has acquired beyond U.S. academia.

Music and Performance Studies or, What Happens When Music Happens?

Conventionally, as I have mentioned earlier, the study of performance in music had a very narrow meaning. In traditional musicology’s dedication to the music score as a text, the study of performance was understood as the examination of how such music text could be realized into sound and eventually came to ponder questions of correctness in interpretation, historical authenticity, and the role of oral transmission in reproducing the “true” spirit of said music text, making it a project with evidently strong links to Western logocentrism and the preeminence of literacy over oral culture. In traditional ethnomusicology, performance practice focused on the actions and practices surrounding music performance within specific cultural contexts. Ethnomusicology’s performance practice was clearly rooted in a different epistemological paradigm than musicology’s logocentric performance practice; it

suggested earlier, both musicology and ethnomusicology's early interest in performance stemmed from an attempt to understand sound, its production, organization, and meaning, within specific historical or cultural circumstances.

It does not come as a surprise that it had to be an interest in the study of popular music – music considered unworthy of academic attention by both musicology and ethnomusicology in the 1980s – by sociologists, psychologists, communication, and literary and performance studies scholars in the 1980s and 1990s, which would bring a shift away from asking about the meaning of sound in culture and society into asking about the social and cultural uses of that sound. Such a shift re-evaluated the relationship between performance studies and music by de-emphasizing the “staged musical text” and focusing on the everyday practices related to musical performances. Thus, sociologist Simon Frith revisited Erving Goffman to argue not that “in listening to popular music we are listening to a performance, but, further, that ‘listening’ is a performance.” (Frith 1996: 203) This emphasis on listening eventually influenced the musicological discussion about performance, as witnessed in Christopher Small's *Musicking* (1998), where he suggests that “performance does not exist in order to present musical works, but rather, musical works exist in order to give performers something to perform.” (52) Such an idea, within the context of a discipline that still tends to privilege the written music text, was radical, and led to a fruitful dialogue between musicology, music theory, and performance studies in the works of Small, Nicholas Cook, and Philip Auslander.

In 2001, music theorist Nicholas Cook published an article titled “Between Process and Product: Music and/as Performance,” in which he takes Small's idea as a point of departure to a seemingly more radical suggestion. Cook argues that Small's favoring of performance over music text only reverses the text/performance dichotomy, and states that the concepts of musical text (score) and interpretation are insufficient to grant authority to the score over the performance and to describe the relationship of the musician to said musical text. Instead, Cook proposes to understand music as a continuum between product and process, and musical works as scripts that provide an outline for the live interaction of players. (see Cook 2001) Regardless of Cook's intentions, performance studies scholar Philip Auslander suggests that in fact, the renaming of the musical text as musical script does nothing to stop privileging the text in the dichotomy performance/work-to-be-performed. As an alternative, Auslander goes back to Small's idea of the performing musician as the center of study but departs from his musicological focus by asking not so much about the performer in relation to his/her music-making but rather about how that music-making allows the performer to enact an identity, a musical personae. (see Auslander 2006) Auslander's approach takes the individual experiencing music beyond the locus of performance to ponder the relationship between that music experience and the word that surround the individual experiencing it. Such an approach relocates the question of performativity from the act of music-making to a different space, thus establishing a link between music and performance studies that both engages the intellectual preoccupations of scholars in other areas of the humanities and social sciences, while keeping music and musical experience at the core of the inquiry.

As these dialogues were transforming the field of performance practice and performance studies in music in the late 1990s, the work of a few scholars began to engage, deliberately or intuitively, the notion of performativity beyond the locus of musical performance. In *Samba* (1996), Barbara Browning takes African and Afro-Brazilian music and its embodiment as points of departure to explore the cultural implications of the African diaspora. Browning's main theoretical concern, the relationship between body and processes of intellectualization, is tackled via a rich personal ethnography that takes performance studies as the basis to understand the meaning of speaking with the body in the racialized context of Brazilian expressive culture. One year later, ethnomusicologist Robin Moore published *Nationalizing Blackness* (1997), where he offers a fascinating blend of historical musicology, ethnomusicology, and cultural studies to explore how music became a site for the negotiation of racial relations and ideas about the nation-State in 20th century Cuba. Without being a performance studies work, Moore's book ultimately addresses the question of performance studies, what does music do in a given social context; this concerns arguably made it one of the first books written by an ethnomusicologist to become a cultural studies classic (at least in the fields of Latina/o and Latin American cultural studies). A similar thing happens with *Listening to Salsa* (1998) by Frances Aparicio, a book that investigates the role of popular music in processes of national and gender construction in Puerto Rico and the Puerto Rican diaspora. Although coming from literary studies Aparicio's work is particularly significant because it avoids the discipline's most usual shortcomings when dealing with popular music (focusing on lyrics) and instead analyzes a large variety of cultural manifestations (from musical imaginaries in Puerto Rican novels to the dancing body, from concert venues to commercial recording covers) as performances which articulate a series of moments in Puerto Rican cultural memory. In their concern with the cultural performances that happen when music happens, the books by Browning, Moore, and Aparicio show that performance studies and its central questions can be tackled from a variety of methodological angles, from historical archival research to ethnography, autobiographical testimony, literary theory, and even music analysis.

At the beginning of the 21st century, following on the steps of these authors and their foundational research on music, embodied culture, and the performance of gender, race and difference, the work of a younger generation of interdisciplinary scholars not only engages the music experience in sites beyond the performance locus but in fact argues for new understandings of what a musical performance could be. Performance studies scholar Jill Lane's exploration of *danzón* in the process of racialization of the Cuban national imaginary, and American studies scholar Micol Seigel's interest on the maxixe and jazz appropriations in Brazil to discuss transnational constructions of Otherness between the U.S. and Brazil are both studies that tackle the local performance of race and nationality through music as part of larger performance complexes. (see Lane 2005 and Seigel 2009) The perspective of these two books puts in evidence that performance complexes operate within historical processes, making us understand that music acquires meaning and significance as it articulates a variety of practices (from dance to reception to social discourse to listening) and processes that go well beyond the sounds and the texts that represent them. Ethnic studies scholar Josh Kun's cross-disciplinary, multiethnic study of racial and national construction in the United States takes music and the performance of identity as a starting point for a study that explores the relationship between

music beyond the text-based musicological paradigm or even ethnomusicology's focus on cultural events and suggests that music could be understood as a new type of processual geography that is created anew as individuals come to inhabit and experience these sonic spaces.^[7] The work of historian David Suisman on the commercial development of popular music in the United States, which grows out of his concern with the writing of sensorial experiences and their relation to social constructions, offers yet another example of how the questions of performance studies in relation to music and its experience can shed light on a variety of intellectual projects. (see Suisman 2009) Most recently, performance scholar Deborah Paredez's work on Selena, performance, and memory among Latino communities in the U.S. takes a look at how music as part of a larger performance complex (including concerts, media commercialization of older footage, memorials, recording industry, performing bodies, etc.) could be made into cultural citations that mobilize powerful emotions and structures of feeling that in turn could be used as sites for the development of cultural memberships. (see Paredez, 2009). My own work on the Nortec Collective offers a similar take on music and its performance complex (technology, virtual communities, cyberbodies, activism, and nostalgia and memory) as ways to recognize new categories about space, time, and the creation of a deterritorialized sense of belonging. (See Madrid, 2008).

As I have shown in this quick appraisal of research on music and performance studies, the intersection of these fields does not always present the same coordinates. There is no unified object of study because music is not it but rather an excuse to ask a variety of questions; there is no unique methodology in music and performance studies precisely because the object of study is as varied as the questions asked by the researchers that embrace it. Performance studies scholars benefit from deconstruction to dance theory to ethnography to archival research to traditional music theory as long these methodologies are relevant to their questions and to the cultural, social, and historical circumstances that inform the event they study. Furthermore, one could argue that the results of looking at music from a performative angle are also as different and as interesting as the issues the scholar wants to tackle. I would argue that what defines performance studies in relation to music is not its object of study, methodology or results but rather its concern with a simple and basic question, what music does as opposed to what music is. In other words, a performance studies look at music would worry about what music is only as it is relevant to understanding what it does, but never as an end in itself. To put it briefly, as Jnan Blau states in his article in this special issue, the quintessential issue of performance studies in music is what happens when music happens.

Why Performance Studies? Why Now?

A few years ago, almost without realizing, I joined a growing group of musicologists who felt somehow disillusioned with musicology as a discipline. I believe that regardless of the continuous talk about the cultural turn, and New Musicology's impact on the discipline, most scholars continue talking about the same old issues. I feel that the presence of a handful of scholars trying to ask new questions is overwhelmed by the discipline's infatuation with the musical work, and musical literacy (or at best performance and music-making) as sites of musical meaning. In a way, I feel that the very tools and vocabulary developed by the New Musicology to question the discipline's positivist traits back in the 1980s have become nothing but empty buzzwords used to embellish papers that fundamentally keep asking the same old questions and seem awfully concerned with interpreting musical works and showing us the aesthetic reasons why they were "meaningful" and "worthy of our attention." But that should not come as a surprise; the most innovative ideas are often co-opted and resignified by the mainstream and end up as tools for the system's self-validation.

I have mentioned elsewhere that my main concern lies with musicology's ostensible inability to engage and contribute to the intellectual dialogues and concerns of the rest of the humanities and social sciences. (Corona & Madrid 2007: 5-8) The intersection of music and the contemporary field of performance studies could be the site that would allow musicologists to ask questions that might be relevant to and would enter into larger intellectual dialogues. By allowing music scholars to think about the performativity of music beyond the realm of performance and its performatic aspects, performance studies might offer ways for musicologists to contribute their expertise on sound to answer questions relevant to a larger intellectual community. I am not suggesting we should disregard the performatic or the performance locus; instead, I argue that we should incorporate the performative lens into the study of this and other loci of the music process. But not only that, I propose that we reevaluate what that music process is in relation to new understandings of music production or composition, consumption or reception, and distribution or regulation, as well as in relation to the bodies and senses of those who experience music, the geographies and virtualities that allow for these experiences to take place, the technologies that allow for the magnification of these experiences, etc. However, I do not want to take a utopian vision of performance studies or to imply that musicology could be cured from its inability to truly contribute to larger intellectual projects by studying the performative as opposed to the performatic. I am aware that a new relationship between performance studies and music would present a whole host of new challenges. Nevertheless, I do believe that the perspective of performance studies offers a way for musicology to contribute to these dialogues. I would suggest that looking at music as a performance complex where performance and its performatic aspects offer just one of the countless sites in which we can engage the performativity of music in order to better understand the world around us.

The articles in this special issue offer very interesting ways to re-evaluate the relation between music and performance studies, both as reassessments of the traditional focus on the performatic as well as new applications of the performative lens. Some authors revisit and problematize the locus of performance and music making; some explore the individual experience of music and its embodiment in relation to the performance of larger issues of modernity, gender, and race; some bring the perspective of performance studies to establish a rich dialogue between archive and repertoire; while some engage on philosophical discussions about what the naming of music does discursively. All in all, this collection

in/and Performance.” Jnan Blau reevaluates Pelias and VanOosting’s performative topoi in relation to Philip Auslander’s concern with the relationship between the performatic and performative aspect of performance in order to offer the reader a perspective of what the dialogue between music studies and performance studies could mean for both fields of study. Arved Ashby’s “Tonality as Law, Contravention, Performativity” is a provocative essay that explores the naming and definition of tonality in relation to the idea of musical law. Ashby’s work brings together music theory, its history, and legal theory in order to analyze the power discourses behind the idea of tonality in Western music. Written with the paranoid attack against interpretation in law ignited by the nomination of Judge Sonia Sotomayor to the U.S. Supreme Court as background, Ashby’s timely essay shows the complex ways in which law, convention, regulation, hierarchy-validation, naming, pleasure, creativity, and music intersect and inform the social discourses that surround music, musicians, and listeners.

The articles by Mercedes Liska and Sofia Cecconi focus on embodied culture and identities. Liska’s “El tango como disciplinador de cuerpos ilegítimos-legitimados” [Tango as Disciplinarian of Illegitimate-Legitimized Bodies] and Cecconi’s “Tango Queer: territorio y performance de una apropiación divergente” [Queer Tango: Territory and Performance of a Diverging Appropriation] offer in-depth studies of contemporary re-articulations of tango and tango dancing through the exploration of the electronic tango and queer tango scenes in Buenos Aires. Although their topics of study sometimes overlap, the different disciplinary fields that gave origin to their projects (ethnomusicology for Liska and sociology for Cecconi) offer an ideal situation to witness how performance studies can enrich different perspectives of looking into similar case of studies. In the end, the dialogue between Liska’s ethnographic approach and Cecconi’s theoretical concerns gives the reader a thorough understanding of the role of tango in the performance of gender in contemporary Buenos Aires. Liska’s and Cecconi’s work establish a solid foundation for the development of more research projects about queer tango and cultural embodiment.

In “Synthesizing Race: Towards an Analysis of the Performativity of Vocal Timbre,” Nina Sun Eidsheim seizes the development and marketing of Vocaloid, a voice synthesizing software that tries to imitate the vocal timbre of a soul singer, to critique the essentializing ideas by which consumers tie together musical style, vocal timbre, and embodied identities such as gender or race. Eidsheim’s stimulating essay seeks to denaturalize these notions by exposing the discursive mechanisms that inform what she labels “performative listenings.” Michael Berry’s “Enhancing musical performance” takes as point of departure the relations between seemingly disparate types of performances, and surveys a variety of possibilities to enhance musical performances, from technology to alter sound to medication to affect the performing body to musical training as a type of enhancer, to explore new types of relationships between the creation and perception of music. Berry suggests that enhancing different moments of the musical process creates a type of hyper-real juncture that necessarily challenges our assumptions of what is possible in performance and what performers and listeners expect from each other in a musical experience.

Michael Eisenberg and Pieter Mannaerts articles show different ways in which the focus on performance might illuminate medieval musical repertory. In “Observations on the Performance of Plainchant in the Low Countries,” Mannaerts goes back to the performance practice tradition to embark on a project that seeks to show that one cannot talk about a single, “authentic,” traditional way of performing chant between the tenth and eighteenth centuries in the Low Countries. Mannaerts suggests that although continuities are important and persistent throughout the centuries, scholars should pay attention to chronological and geographical variations in order to understand chant performance in its historical context. Eisenberg’s “Performing the Passion: Music, Ritual, and the Eastertide Labyrinth” takes the puzzling *pilota* ritual at the Auxerre monastery in today’s Southern France to examine the conflation of religious and secular cosmogonies in the embodied ludic practices of the ecclesiastical community in the late Middle Ages. However, Eisenberg does not seek to describe the performatic aspects of the *pilota* celebration; instead, by looking at the seemingly ideological contradictions within it, he asks about its performative qualities, and explores what it did for Auxerre’s ecclesiastical community. Eisenberg’s rich article brings together the rigor of traditional musicological training with the critical inquisitiveness of cultural studies to put in dialogue the archive and the repertoire and assemble a fascinating account of the complex ideologies that informed ecclesiastical cultural life in the late Middle Ages.

Pepa Anastasio’s “Pisa con garbo. El performance del cuplé en la modernidad del mundo hispanohablante” [Step on with Grace. *Cuplé* Performance in the Modernity of the Spanish-Speaking World] explores the performance of *cuplé* as a practice that rendered women and their sexuality visible in early 20th-century Ibero America. Anastasio sees *cuplé* as a performatic event that is also performative since it enacts on the stage behaviors that reinforce everyday life gender constructions and hierarchies. However, she also proposes that performance might offer a space for the introduction of behaviors that subvert ontological assumptions about naturalized gender structures; and furthermore, that such performatic behaviors might filter into everyday life behaviors, thus becoming performative utterances. Anastasio examines such performatic/performative situations and the changing role of women in building a sense of Ibero American modernity in the early 20th century. In “Musical Trans(actions): Intersections in *Reggaetón*,” Ramón Rivera-Servera offers a thought-provoking analysis of current debates about authenticity and commercialization among reggaeton practitioners. From the outset, Rivera-Servera critiques the ideas of authenticity and commercialization for their exclusionary character, which neglects performance transactions that define the local within transnational commercial flows and beyond the very discourse of authenticity. Instead, he proposes to use the notion of sincerity to understand performance for its affective power and to address how individuals can make public their sense of self through their relation to performance complexes.

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Notes

- [1] I am referring to Madrid 2003a.
- [2] See among others Béhague 1984; Butt 2008; Cone 1968; Donington 1982; Dunsby 1995; Kivy 1995; Lawson 1999; Nettl and Russell 1995; Rink 2003; and Solís 2004.
- [3] The typical example of a performative utterance is the sentence "I pronounce you man and wife," which when pronounced by a judge of peace in the context of a wedding ceremony actually does what it says.
- [4] From the workshop abstract published in the booklet of the X Congreso de la SIBE-Sociedad de Etnomusicología.
- [5] An archive of this conversation can be found in the following link: <http://www.sibetrans.com/foros.php?a=temas&id_foro=22> (accessed on 28 June 2009).
- [6] For a more comprehensive genealogy of the words performance and performativity and their usage in performance studies as well as other interdisciplinary studies see Jackson 2004.
- [7] Josh Kun defines an audiotopia as a sonic space "of effective utopian longing where several sites normally deemed incompatible are brought together, not only in the space of a particular piece of music itself, but in the production of social space and mapping of geographical space that music makes possible as well." See Kun 2005: 23.

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Download Now. saveSave Why Music and Performance Studies? For Later. 4 views.Â Some authors revisit and problematize the locus of performance and music making some explore the individual experience of music and its embodiment in relation to the performance of larger issues of modernity, gender, and race some bring the perspective of performance studies to establish a rich dialogue between archive and repertoire while some engage on philosophical discussions about what the naming of music. does discursively. All in all, this collection of articles gives us a glimpse into how performance studies can contribute to broaden the scope of musical studies and how studying music