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Editorial

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BENJAMIN REDMAN

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This issue explores a range of performance contexts: theatre, guided tours, audience interaction and reaction, music performance, and composition. Themes of creativity, invention, feminism, inclusion, and advocacy for D/deaf and disabled rights permeate these different contexts.

On the subject of creativity, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley wrote:

Every thing must have a beginning ... and that beginning must be linked to something that went before ... Invention, it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos; the materials must, in the first place, be afforded: it can give form to dark, shapeless substances, but cannot bring into being the substance itself ... Invention consists in the capacity of seizing on the capabilities of a subject, and in the power of moulding and fashioning ideas suggested to it.

Shelley found fame as the author of *Frankenstein: or, the modern Prometheus*, first published in 1818; the quote above comes from the introduction to the 1831 edition. There have been a number of events marking the bi-centenary of the publication of her novel, including the University of Dundee's 'Frankenstein 200' programme, and public talks, symposia and film screenings at Edinburgh

Napier University. Shelley lived in Dundee for two years as a teenager, and later recounts, 'It was beneath the trees of the grounds belonging to our house, or on the bleak sides of the woodless mountains near, that my true compositions, the airy flights of my imagination, were born and fostered'.

Shelley was the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797), author of *A vindication of the rights of woman* (1792). Wollstonecraft was one of the founders of feminist philosophy and was highly influential on the suffrage movement. 2018 is the centenary of the Representation of the People Act, which granted some women (but not all) the right to vote. In recognition of Wollstonecraft's contribution to feminism and suffrage, there is an ongoing campaign 'Mary on the Green' to create a statue of her in Stoke Newington where she lived and worked. On the 'Mary on the Green' website, Mary Beard, Cambridge Professor of Classics, wrote in support, 'every woman who wants to make a difference to how this country is run, from the House of Commons to the pub quiz, has Mary Wollstonecraft to thank'.

Both Wollstonecraft and Shelley are mentioned by artist Sam Ainsley in Shauna McMullan's piece for this issue, *I Gladly Strained My Eyes to Follow You*: a guided tour of Pollok House. McMullan invited writers, academics, artists and Pollok House staff to respond to individual portraits of women on display in the house, producing a series of ecphrases—short pieces of writing made up of their reflections and thoughts in response to the (often anonymous) portraits. McMullan describes the project, and combines the individual author responses with feminist theory to argue for a more emancipated society.

Scottish virtuoso solo percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie was diagnosed as being profoundly deaf by the age of 12. Despite this apparent setback, she has become one of the

most successful and high-profile classical musicians in the world. In her 2003 TED talk, *How to truly listen*, Glennie advocates for the rights of D/deaf and disabled performers:

...as I grew older, I then auditioned for the Royal Academy of Music in London, and they said, “Well, no, we won’t accept you, because we haven’t a clue ... of the future of a so-called ‘deaf musician’”. And I just couldn’t quite accept that. And so, therefore, I said to them, “Well, look ... if you refuse me through those reasons, as opposed to the ability to perform and to understand and love the art of creating sound—then we have to think very, very hard about the people you do actually accept”. And, as a result ... they accepted me. And not only that ... it changed the whole role of the music institutions throughout the United Kingdom. Under no circumstances were they to refuse any application whatsoever on the basis of whether someone had no arms, no legs—they could still perhaps play a wind instrument if it was supported on a stand ... And every single entry had to be listened to, experienced, and then, based on the musical ability, then that person could either enter or not.

Glennie has recently collaborated with the critically acclaimed ensemble Trio HLK, performing a series of concerts (which are set to continue into 2019), and, along with saxophonist Steve Lehman, she features on the band’s debut album, *Standard time*. In my interview with Richard Harrold and Richard Kass of Trio HLK, they speak warmly of their collaboration with Glennie and Lehman and discuss a range of topics, including their development as an ensemble, their compositional process, and planning concert programmes from an audience perspective. Relating to the quote from Shelley on creativity and

invention that begins this editorial, the band have deconstructed existing jazz 'standard' tunes, and rearranged them to form new material.

Timothy Cooper reports on his interactive sound installation, *Mechanical*, that uses old and broken bicycle parts to create new sounds via computers and a speaker array. He describes the set-up of the installation, and goes on to explore and discuss the audience response to, and relationship with, the installation and the other players. He argues that the interaction elicits performative actions by the audience, and concludes that the interaction is characterised by the network between the audience members, their behaviours, and the bikes. He contextualises this through Simon Emmerson's notion of *meaningful response* and Sarah Rubidge's *Performing installations* (2009).

In *Deaf people and the theatrical public sphere*, Michael Richardson and David Thompson present their research into problems with accessibility for Deaf spectators in theatres. They argue that current initiatives designed to improve accessibility, including Sign Language Interpreted Performances, fail to give Deaf people an equivalent experience to their Hearing peers. They propose a 10-point 'best practice' checklist to assist theatre managers in improving the experience of Deaf theatregoers, and advocate for the development of a Deaf theatrical public sphere.

Ben Fletcher-Watson reviews *Reasons to be Graeae: a work in progress*, edited by Jenny Sealey. According to their website, 'Graeae is a force for change in world-class theatre, boldly placing D/deaf and disabled actors centre stage and challenging preconceptions'. The book combines a range of sources including interviews with actors and administrators, scripts and reviews, to chart the rise of

Graeae to become the UK's leading disabled-led theatre company. In common with the Richardson and Thompson article, the book makes suggestions for marketing to D/deaf and disabled audiences, and advocates for greater accessibility and inclusion.

Lucy Hollingworth reviews *Gender, subjectivity, and cultural work: the classical music profession*, by Christina Scharff. The book examines how gender, race and class affect female musicians working in the classical music profession in London and Berlin. Scharff combines research using quantitative and qualitative analysis of interview data with feminist theory to critique inequality and exclusion. As with Mary Wollstonecraft some two centuries previously, Scharff challenges individual and societal assumptions, and proposes a more inclusive society.

Continuing the theme of creativity, I review *Musicians in the making: pathways to creative performance*, the first in a five-volume series published by Oxford University Press. The series is an outcome of a major research project at the Research Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice, which examined the development of the 'creative voice' of musicians. *Musicians in the making* includes contributions from internationally renowned researchers, performers, and academics, and combines theory with personal testimonies from musicians and performance teachers, including the former Principal of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, John Wallace.

Kirsty Kay stood down as Co-editor of SJoP after the publication of the sixth edition, having been Co-editor since issue three. The SJoP team would like to thank Kirsty for all her hard work and professionalism, and we send her our very best wishes for the future. We would also like to thank the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland for their continued support, Anglia Ruskin University, the editorial team,

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advisory board, our peer reviewers, funders, and especially
our authors.

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