GUEST EDITOR’S NOTE

I am very pleased to introduce this special issue of Critical Voices. The book reviews published here were written by a selection of students at the upper undergraduate and graduate levels, who participated in my seminar entitled “Glenn Gould and the performer/composer in the studio” (MUHL571/671) offered by the Department of Music at the University of Calgary. At the beginning of the semester, students were asked to choose between a term paper and a peer review project for their major semester assignment. Seven of the fourteen students chose the peer project and of those, five reviews were chosen for publication in this special issue. The peer review project is part of The University of Guelph Book Review Project, initiated last year by Dr. Kimberly Francis. At the outset of the semester Dr. Francis introduced the project to my students in a video lecture. Those students who chose to participate then engaged in five rounds of internal peer-review with students at the University of Guelph attending the “Twentieth-Century Music Course” (MUCS*3630) given by Dr. Francis. In this process, students evaluated each other’s drafts blindly using a web-based management system operated by the University of Guelph. At the end of the semester participating students met in a video session during which they gave oral presentations of their work.

Through this remarkably innovative project, the participating students learned what a peer-review process is and how it works. The five-stage process enabled all students to engage critically with the challenge of producing a high quality academic text with a firm authorial voice. Along the way, they also learned a great deal about scholarship and musicology. I am very proud of all of the students who participated and very grateful to Dr. Francis and her team of assistants for allowing us to participate. I would also like to thank Dave Wood of the University of Calgary’s Distance Learning Centre and the staff of the University of Guelph’s Teaching Support Services for facilitating

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contact between the two campuses. Without their active support this project might not have gotten off the ground.

The participating students from the University of Calgary were:
Robert Bailey
Katie Gavelin
Brett Gunther
Jonathan Gresl
Timothy Korthius
Roberta Romero Lopez
Damaris Weston

In the following pages the reader will find reviews of recently published books on a wide variety of topics related to Glenn Gould and his legacy: Gould’s search for the perfect piano; his purported mental disorder (Asperger’s Syndrome); the English translation of a philosophical inquiry into the nature of genius, initially published in French; a posthumous collection of essays of music criticism written by Edward Said; and a collection of essays by different authors that deal with recorded music. The scope of the books under review reflects the breadth of Gould’s continuing impact thirty years after his death and the ramifications of his legacy.

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