

## Introduction

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**William Thomas Trotter**

### **New Directions in Algorithms, Combinatorics and Optimization**

This Special Issue of CPC is devoted to papers from the conference honouring the 65th birthday of Tom Trotter, held at the Georgia Institute of Technology, May 5–9 2008. The organizing committee consisted of Graham Brightwell, Dwight Duffus, Stefan Felsner, Hal Kierstead, Prasad Tetali, Robin Thomas, Peter Winkler and Xingxing Yu.

The conference featured thirty-one invited lectures by experts in the field, including many who have been closely associated with Tom Trotter over his career. The number of people who enthusiastically agreed to speak, and the quality and diversity of their talks, form a testament to the high regard in which Tom is held, and the widespread influence he has had on combinatorial mathematics. Many of the invited lecturers have contributed papers to this issue of CPC.

Over the course of his career so far, Tom Trotter has made far-reaching contributions to many aspects of combinatorics. He has championed and pioneered the development of the theory of partially ordered sets, and he has also proved fundamental results in graph theory, discrete geometry, and on-line algorithms, among others.

Tom has also been influential in building strong departments and research groups wherever he has gone: as Chair at the University of South Carolina, as Chair and Vice-Provost at Arizona State University, as director of a research group at Bellcore, and most recently as Chair of the School of Mathematics at Georgia Tech. He served as the founding Managing Editor of the *SIAM Journal on Discrete Mathematics*, and as the Managing Editor of *Order* at a pivotal point in the journal's history. He is also noted for his ability to fascinate young people with his clear expositions and intriguing problems, and to inspire them with his dedication to mathematics.

We are delighted to be publishing this collection of papers in his honour.

Graham Brightwell  
on behalf of the Organizing Committee