

University Press, ed. Joe Davies, 2021) and the *Routledge Handbook of Women in Music* (ed. Rhiannon Mathias, 2022). She co-edited, with Mariateresa Storino, *Women Composers in New Perspectives, 1800–1950: Genres, Contexts and Repertoire* (2023) and, with Robin Darwall-Smith, *Music in Twentieth-Century Oxford* (2023).

Acknowledgements

We live in times when, if we switch on BBC Radio 3, we may find that we're hearing (for instance, in the popular mid-morning slot) Alice Mary Smith's beautifully scored *Andante for Clarinet and Orchestra* or, in the (also popular) breakfast slot, deftly and confidently written movements from symphonies by Emilie Mayer or Florence Price, all broadcast during May 2023. Or the 'Composers of the Week' may be Hildegard of Bingen and Isabella Leonarda (April 2023), or Pauline Viardot and Her Circle (June 2021). The widely read German encyclopaedia MGG Online announces the uploading of new articles as of April 2023 that include Florence Price and Margaret Bonds, while the also widely consulted Grove Dictionary (Oxford Music Online) features both Price and Bonds in articles published online in 2020.

These examples, among many others, reflect the 'sea change' in the representation of women composers within the Western cultural climate over the last few decades. Consideration of the journey that brought women composers of the past to this point in their history (and in the telling of that history) is accompanied in the present volume by the results of recent research shining new light on individual topics, drawn together in a series of chapters commissioned from leading scholars in the field.

We are enormously grateful to our contributors for their sterling efforts in producing their chapters during the time of pandemic, with all its pressures, and for their patience and diligence as our editorial work proceeded. We thank also most warmly the three contemporary composers who generously spared time to contribute their reflections to the epilogue: Nicola LeFanu, Roxanna Panufnik, and Shirley J. Thompson.

The present volume reflects not only the growth of scholarship on the subject, but also the questioning of received historical and systemic assumptions that process has generated. The Prologue outlines these developments, while some of the main themes arising from such questioning, and underpinning Parts II–IV, are explored in the chapters forming Part I. Although the chapters in Parts II–IV follow one another in chronological order, they are not designed to present any kind of continuous historical survey. Instead, the chapter authors share their