

Preface

The idea to write a book about embodied music cognition was inspired by traveling. Visits to the postgraduate school of the Music Technology Group of Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona (June 2003), the Kulturwissenschaftliches Forschungskolleg Media und Kulturelle Kommunikation (December 2003) of the University of Cologne, and the Max Planck Institute for Cognitive Neuroscience in Leipzig (May 2005) introduced me to research groups that specialized in different methodologies. These groups were all working on music, but their diversity in approaching the matter was quite striking and was largely determined by the research discipline. Attending the Conference on Interdisciplinary Musicology (CIM 2004), the Computer Music Modeling and Retrieval Conference (CMMR 2004), the Rhythm Perception and Production Workshop (RPPW 2005), the International Conference on Music Information Retrieval (ISMIR 2004), and participating in national and international research projects (e.g., MAMI, MEGA, ConGAS, S2S²) convinced me that there was a need for an approach that would unify music research, thereby focusing on what music is about and what it does to people.

I thought that such a unifying approach could be of value to a broad range of scholars and students with backgrounds in musicology, philosophy, engineering, physics, psychology, and neuroscience. However, I realize that my ambition is a very tall order and that this book is just the starting point of that idea. In that sense, this book is more a philosophical essay about the foundations of music research and a journey into possibilities rather than a survey of all empirical research results that would support my viewpoint. I hope that the viewpoints presented here can be elaborated and expanded in the near future.

My viewpoints were discussed with colleagues with whom I was involved in several scientific and educational activities. In particular, I

thank my colleagues and friends A. Camurri (Genoa), R. I. Godøy (Oslo), J. Louhivuori and P. Toiviainen (Jyväskylä), A. Schneider (Hamburg), and U. Seifert (Cologne), who have been very close to me for many years, and with whom I organized three summer schools in systematic musicology (1999, 2001, 2006). It was in 2001, on a terrace in Jyväskylä, that the need for such a book was first expressed, and I am pleased to offer here my part of the work.

Basic ideas of this book have been explored at my institute (IPEM, Department of Musicology) at Ghent University, and I thank my students, collaborators, and colleagues O. Cornelis, L. De Bruyn, F. Desmet, L. De Voogdt, J. Dierickx, A. Ganzevoort, E. Heylen, M. Lesaffre, H. Li, G. Martens, J.-P. Martens, D. Moelants, I. Schepers, F. Styns, K. Tanghe, L. van Noorden, and V. Vermeulen for their contributions, which include their participation in the lively IPEM think tank meetings. Thanks also to the many colleagues abroad who contributed to my viewpoint in discussions and during project meetings, workshops, lectures, collaborations, and summer schools. I thank F. Carreras (Pisa) and H. Sabbe (Bruges) for critical comments on the first draft of this book. They supported me to continue and clarify my topic. I owe much to the late J. L. Broeckx (Ghent), great musicologist and humanist, for his friendship. Finally, this book could never have been written without the help of my family. My last words of thanks go to my wife, Magda, and son, Batist, for their patience with a husband and father who was too often mentally absent, even if corporeally present.