Why is it that Renaissance musicians (in Spain in this case) could identify as the same work compositions that today might be seen as different? Wherein was the commonality? Current ontologies of music, deeply rooted in modern theories and aesthetics revolve around the notion of musical masterpieces that exist as static monuments of musical art. Not only inadequate from a historical point of view, such a conceptualisation impacts heavily on the way we perform music, how we study it and how we think about it today. Scholars such as Teitler and Strohm have proposed substituting composition over practice to highlight the act of performance over prior creation as a way of shifting the focus in the development of contemporary historiography. In parallel with recent studies on contrapuntal improvisation they have stressed the need to incorporate oral traditions within music history and to stimulate reconsideration conceptualisation of “making musical works” in the Renaissance, and the very nature of the works themselves.

Starting with the notion of the Renaissance “musical work” as a group of fluid, dynamic multiplicities, this book explores varied approaches to the “musical work.” It includes lexicological analyses of Renaissance musical terminology, source studies that identify the changing practices and identities of specific works, and broader questions such as interrelationships between music, architecture and rhetoric, or between space and work. The book is further enriched by a study of the 15,000 musical works that resided in the library of Ferdinand Columbus, that survive as indices, never studied or published.

Soterraña Aguirre (University of Valladolid) and John Griffiths (University of Melbourne and Monash University) are recognised scholars of early Spanish vocal and instrumental music, respectively. They head the research team ‘Contrapunto’ working on diverse aspects of Spanish music of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The contributions here are from their senior colleagues Pilar Ramos, Giuseppe Fiorentino, Cristina Diego, Amaya García, and early-career scholars Carlos Gutierrez, Pablo Ballester and Ana López.

1.- CARLOS GUTIÉRREZ CAJARAVILLE. “Fluid Multiplicities. Thinking the Ontology of Musical Works Though Renaissance Philosophy”

2.- GIUSEPPE FIORENTINO. “The Concept of Musical Work in Spanish Renaissance: A Lexical inquiry” (13.400 words)

3.- PILAR RAMOS. “Defraudar la compostura’: on musical glosses and musical works” (5,000 words)

4.- JOHN GRIFFITHS. “The architecture of Renaissance Musical Narrative”

5.- SOTERRAÑA AGUIRRE RINCÓN. “Making a Cover in the Quattrocento. Chants and Songs which became Musical Standards” (7600 words)

6.- ANA LÓPEZ SUERO. “Los braços traygo cansados’. The Origins and Transformation of a Sixteenth-Century Romance” (11.500 words)

7.- MANUEL GÓMEZ DEL SOL. “Beyond the Renaissance Musical Work: Johannes de Urrede’s Pange Lingua in Early Modern Spain” (8500 words)

8.- AMAYA GARCÍA PÉREZ. “The controversial meaning of ‘diatonic’, ‘chromatic’, and ‘enharmonic’ in the Renaissance music theory” (11.600 words)

9.- DAVID ANDRÉS FERNÁNDEZ. “Decir en tono’: A Terminological Issue about Performing Chant in the Sixteenth-and Seventeenth-Century Spanish Domains” (8.800 words)

10.- JAVIER CRUZ RODRÍGUEZ. “Sound Spaces and Musical Practices in the Renaissance: the Special case of Salamanca” (8.500 words)

11.- IRENE RUIZ ALBI. “Musica per totum est: Musical Works in the Library of Hernando” (10.700 words)