



Introduction

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Earlier this year, *Constructive Approximation* published Part I of a special issue (*Volume 47, Number 1, 2018*) devoted to the theme of links between approximation theory and statistical physics. This was motivated by a number of recent advances showing the advantage of building such bridges and followed the theme of the conference “From Statistical Physics to Approximation Theory” held at the Institut Henri Poincaré in Paris at the end of June 2016.

The present collection of articles represents Part II of the same special issue. As in Part I, contributors have been requested to give a thorough review of the chosen topic, or to contribute some new research, and all papers have been subjected to the same refereeing process as for regular articles. In closing the introduction to Part I, the opinion was offered that the subject matter is interesting from a number of viewpoints and offers fertile questions for future research. No doubt the appearance of Part II, with papers devoted to topics on energy optimization, large deviations for point processes, Coulomb gases, and random matrices, adds further weight to this claim.

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