



Music and Gender in English Renaissance Drama (Routledge Advances in Theatre & Performance Studies)

Katrine K. Wong

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This book offers a survey of how female and male characters in English Renaissance theatre participated and interacted in musical activities, both inside and outside the contemporary societal decorum. Wong's analysis broadens our understanding of the general theatrical representation of music, or musical dramaturgy, and complicates the current discussion of musical portrayal and construction of gender during this period.

Wong discusses dramaturgical meanings of music and its association with gender, love, and erotomania in Renaissance plays. The negotiation between the dichotomous qualities of the heavenly and the demonic finds extensive application in recent studies of music in early modern English plays. However, while ideological dualities identified in music in traditional Renaissance thinking may seem unequivocal, various musical representations of characters and situations in early modern drama would prove otherwise. Wong, building upon the conventional model of binarism, explores how playwrights created their musical characters and scenarios according to the received cultural use and perception of music, and, at the same time, experimented with the multivalent meanings and significance embodied in theatrical music.

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