

This groundbreaking book argues that Boccaccio perfected a literary genre called “musical narrative,” which was copied by generations of authors from Bembo to Machiavelli, Tolkien to J.K. Rowling. Musical narrative consists of a work of prose with inserted poetical texts, in which the author indicates that the texts are to be sung. Beck traces the genre back to the biblical Exodus and forward to Zarlino, Monteverdi and early opera. In her interdisciplinary work, Beck explores the ways writers, musicians, and painters in the Italian Renaissance made use of musical insertions to enhance secular and sacred stories that recount journeys. This study provides a new and provocative way of experiencing inserted lyrics, suggesting that readers heard music in the words on the page, just as they appreciated music when viewing representations of music in narrative painting.

Eleonora M. Beck is the James W. Rogers Professor of Music at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. She has published widely on the subject of Italian medieval and Renaissance music and art, including her books *Singing in the Garden* and *Giotto's Harmony*. Also a writer of fiction, she has published the novel *Fiammetta*.

On the cover: Cosimo Rosselli, *The Crossing of the Red Sea*, Sistine Chapel, Rome.

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