



Listening as Spiritual Practice in Early Modern Italy

Andrew Dell'Antonio

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The early seventeenth century, when the first operas were written and technical advances with far-reaching consequences—such as tonal music—began to develop, is also notable for another shift: the displacement of aristocratic music-makers by a new professional class of performers. In this book, Andrew Dell'Antonio looks at a related phenomenon: the rise of a cultivated audience whose skill involved listening rather than playing or singing. Drawing from contemporaneous discourses and other commentaries on music, the visual arts, and Church doctrine, Dell'Antonio links the new ideas about cultivated listening with other intellectual trends of the period: humanistic learning, contemplative listening (or watching) as an active spiritual practice, and musical mysticism as an ideal promoted by the Church as part of the Catholic Reformation.



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