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EARLY MUSIC HISTORY 4

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This fourth volume of *Early Music History*, like its predecessors, embraces research into sources and their implications, archival and historical studies, and work on the patronage and social role of music, and covers a wide historical range from the early Middle Ages to the seventeenth century.

Two articles in this volume are concerned with Italian opera in the seventeenth century: one gives close scrutiny to the technical, financial and political problems faced by the medium as it made the difficult transition from court entertainment to commercial enterprise, whilst the other regards early opera in Rome in relation to the humanist rediscovery of classical tragedy. Other essays present a genetic study of the evolving relationship amongst various chant repertories in the sixth to the ninth centuries; a new approach to the vexed question of *musica ficta*, avoiding anachronistic bias and focusing on the performing realities encountered by the generations before and after 1500; and a wide-ranging consideration of the origins and conceptual basis of music-writing in Western culture.

The series of reports, by several hands, on recently discovered or newly identified fragments of early English polyphony is continued from *Early Music History* 2 and 3. The reviews section includes a close scrutiny of an important edition of medieval motets. Like the previous volumes, *Early Music History* 4 contains several illustrations and a number of music examples, including complete pieces.

MARGARET BENT *Diatonic ficta*

KENNETH LEVY *Toledo, Rome and the legacy of Gaul*

MARGARET MURATA *Classical tragedy in the history of early opera in Rome*

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