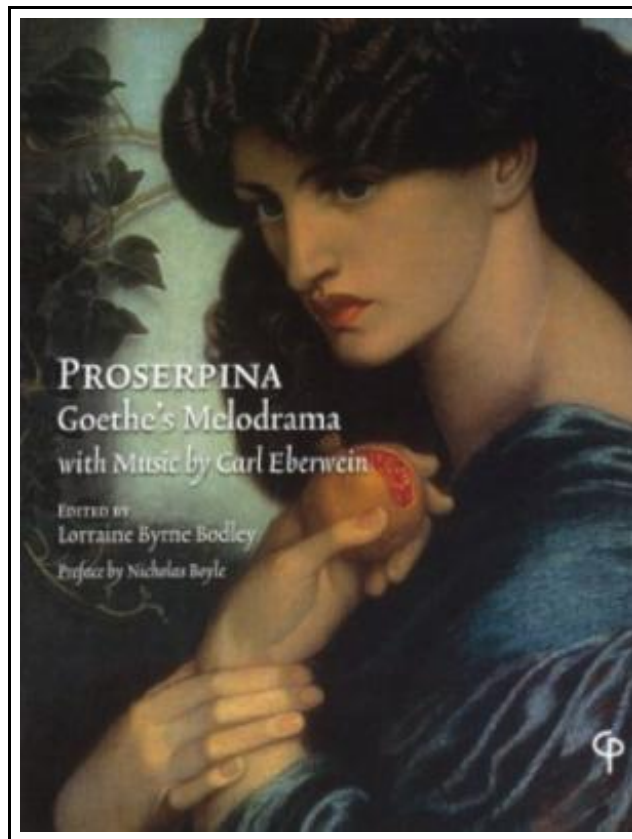


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Carysfort Press, Ireland, 2008. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 236 x 187 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. In his early twenties Goethe wrote Proserpina for the Weimar court singer Corona Schroter to perform. His interest in presenting Weimar s first professional singer-in-residence in a favourable light was not the only reason why this monologue with music (now lost) by Seckendorff is important. Goethe s memories of his sister Cornelia, who had recently died in childbirth, were in fact the real catalyst: through this work Goethe could level accusations against his parents about Cornelia s marriage, of which he had not approved. Goethe used the melodramatic form to transform private and cultural issues for women of the time into public discourses and so to manipulate public opinion. His work reveals an astute understanding of musical melodrama and the important impact it had on the cultural dynamics of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Whatever the source of inspiration, it is clear that Goethe was very preoccupied with Proserpina. When he returned to this melodrama forty years later he collaborated closely with Carl Eberwein, the court, theatre, and church music director, who composed a new setting which accords with Goethe s clear understanding of musical declamation in 19th century melodrama. In the intensive collaboration which took place while the production was being prepared in January 1815, Goethe was already anticipating the idea of a Gesamtkunstwerk. He paid close attention to every aspect of the production, especially to its music and its staging. When discussing contemporary settings of the poet s works, scholars often lapse into regret that Goethe did not have someone of comparable rank at his side for musical collaborations. Yet Eberwein s willingness to go along with Goethe s wishes was an advantage here: the selfless striving of...



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