This edited collection presents fresh and original work on Vittoria Colonna, perhaps the outstanding female figure of the Italian Renaissance, a leading Petrarchist poet, and an important figure in the Italian Reform movement. Until recently best known for her close spiritual friendship with Michelangelo, she is increasingly recognized as a powerful and distinctive poetic voice, a cultural and religious icon, and an important literary model for both men and women. This volume comprises compelling new research by established and emerging scholars in the fields of literature, book history, religious history, and art history, including several studies of Colonna’s influence during the Counter-Reformation, a period long neglected by Italian cultural historiography. The Colonna who emerges from this new reading is one who challenges traditional constructions of women’s place in Italian literature: no mere imitator or follower, but an innovator and founder of schools in her own right.

BIOGRAPHY

Shannon McHugh is Assistant Professor of Italian and French at the University of Massachusetts Boston. She is co-translator of Diodata Malvasia’s *Writings on the Sisters of San Luca and Their Miraculous Madonna* (2015), coeditor of *Innovation in the Italian Counter-Reformation* (2020), and author of *Petrarch and the Making of Gender in Renaissance Italy* (2022, forthcoming with AUP).
TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations
Acknowledgements

Introduction: The Twenty-First Century Vittoria Colonna - Virginia Cox

Part 1 Literary and Spiritual Sociability
2. Late Love: Vittoria Colonna and Reginald Pole - Ramie Targoff

Part 2 Widowhood
3. Magistra apostolorum: The Virgin Mary in Birgitta of Sweden and Vittoria Colonna - Unn Falkeid
4. Outdoing Colonna: Widowhood Poetry in the Late Cinquecento - Anna Wainwright

Part 3 Poetry
5. The Epistolary Vittoria - Maria Serena Sapegno
6. ‘Ex illo mea, mi Daniel, Victoria pendet’: A Forgotten Spiritual Epigram by Vittoria Colonna - Veronica Copello

Part 4 Art
8. ‘Inscribed Upon Their Hearts’: Copying and the Dissemination of Devotion - Jessica Maratsos
9. Titian, Colonna, and the Gender of Pictorial Devotion - Christopher J. Nygren
10. ‘A More Loving and Constant Heart’: Vittoria Colonna, Alfonso d’Avalos, Michelangelo and the Complicated History of Pontormo’s Noli me tangere - Dennis Geronimus

Part 5 Readership
11. ‘Leading Others on the Road to Salvation’: Vittoria Colonna and Her Readers - Abigail Brundin
12. ‘In Competition with and Perhaps More Felicitously Than Petrarch’: The Canonization of Vittoria Colonna in Rinaldo Corso’s Tutte le rime (1558) - Humberto Gonzalez Chavez

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Part 6 Impact

13. Colonna and Petrarch in the Rime of Lucia Colao - Andrea Torre
14. ‘I Take Thee’: Vittoria Colonna, Conjugal Verse and Male poeti colonnesi - Shannon McHugh
15. ‘She Showed the World a Beacon of Female Worth’: Vittoria Colonna in Arcadia - Tatiana Crivelli

Volume Bibliography
Index of Citations of Colonna’s Letters and Verse
Thematic Index