



# Performance, Poetry and Politics on the Queen's Day (Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama)

*Virginia Scott and Sara Sturm-Maddox*

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This collaborative, interdisciplinary study explores a variety of issues in theatrical and literary history that converge in two performances given at the palace of Fontainebleau on 13 February 1564. Part of the fabled "Fetes de Fontainebleau", this carnival Sunday entertainment was produced at the behest of Catherine de Medicis and created by courtiers and artists including Pierre de Ronsard, the greatest lyric poet of the French sixteenth century. While focused on the text and production of Ronsard's *Bergerie* and the choice and production of the tale of Ginevra from Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*, the study examines as well the urgent circumstances of the festival - the moment, shortly after the end of the First War of Religion, was critical and highly charged - its political program, and the rhetorical strategies employed by Catherine and Ronsard to promote harmony among the opposing factions of nobles. The authors' exploration of the Queen's Day also leads them to consider a range of questions pertaining to Renaissance and early modern court performance practices and literary-cultural traditions. The book is distinctive in that it crosses disciplinary and national boundaries, and in that a number of the issues it addresses have received little or no previous scholarly attention.

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