The first quarter of the sixteenth century witnessed tightening connections between rhetoric, poetry, and music. In theoretical writings, composers of this period are evaluated according to their ability to reflect successfully the emotions and frequently employed gestures derived from classical rhetoric either to alert the listener to a specific textual point or to weave meaningful connections that project the larger argument of the text. The expanded texture functioned as a multi-

third-person address, to the sonorous quality of the verse and its projection through the expanded polyphonic fabric, and to the resonances of the text with other texts or musical settings. Especially in chansons in the courtly register, composers thus understood as the totality of musical gestures that aim to secure a successful delivery of musical speech. Musico-rhetorical analysis of the repertory demonstrates that composers of the time read more in the poetry they set than the rhyme

expressive approach. Especially Josquin's exposure to humanism must have been extensive during his long-lasting residence in Italy, before returning to Northern France, where he most likely composed his multi-voice chansons. The present

discussion of relevant contextual aspects and interesting musical features. Ranges and lengths are given for each work. The style is adapted to the professional musicologist as well as to the "music lover" and performer. Includes 45 figures and 90 musical examples.