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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Illustrations -- Preface and Acknowledgments -- Introduction: Fictions of Female Ascendance -- 1. Europe's Living Muses: Women, Music, and Modernity in Burney's History and Tours -- 2. "If the pretty little hand won't stretch": Music for the Fair Sex -- 3. Charlotte ("Minna") Brandes and the Beautiful Dead -- 4. An Evening in Tiefert: Corona Schröter's Die Fischerin and Vegetable Genius -- 5. Sophie Westenholz and the Eclipse of the Female Sign -- 6. Beethoven Heroine: A Female Allegory of Music and Authorship in Egmont -- Conclusion -- Appendix: Johann Friedrich Reichardt, Two Prefaces to the Fair Sex -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	In the German states in the late eighteenth century, women flourished as musical performers and composers, their achievements measuring the progress of culture and society from barbarism to civilization. Female excellence, and related feminocentric values, were celebrated by forward-looking critics who argued for music as a fine art, a component of modern, polite, and commercial culture, rather than a symbol of institutional power. In the eyes of such critics, femininity-a newly emerging and primarily bourgeois ideal-linked women and music under the valorized signs of refinement, sensibility, virtue, patriotism, luxury, and, above all, beauty. This moment in musical history was eclipsed in the first decades of the nineteenth century, and ultimately erased from the music-historical record, by now familiar developments:

the formation of musical canons, a musical history based on technical progress, the idea of masterworks, authorial autonomy, the musical sublime, and aggressively essentializing ideas about the relationship between sex, gender and art. In *Sovereign Feminine*, Matthew Head restores this earlier musical history and explores the role that women played in the development of classical music.
