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Sommario/riassunto

Personification, or prosopopeia, the rhetorical figure by which something not human is given a human identity or 'face', is readily discernible in early modern texts and images, but the figure's cognitive form and function, its rhetorical and pictorial effects, have rarely elicited sustained scholarly attention. The aim of this volume is to formulate an alternative account of personification, to demonstrate the ingenuity with which this multifaceted device was utilized by late medieval and early modern authors and artists in Italy, France, England, Scotland, and the Low Countries. Personification is susceptible to an approach that balances semiotic analysis, focusing on meaning effects, and phenomenological analysis, focusing on presence effects produced through bodily performance. This dual approach foregrounds the full scope of prosopopoeic discourse—not just the what, but also the how, not only the signified, but also the signifier.
