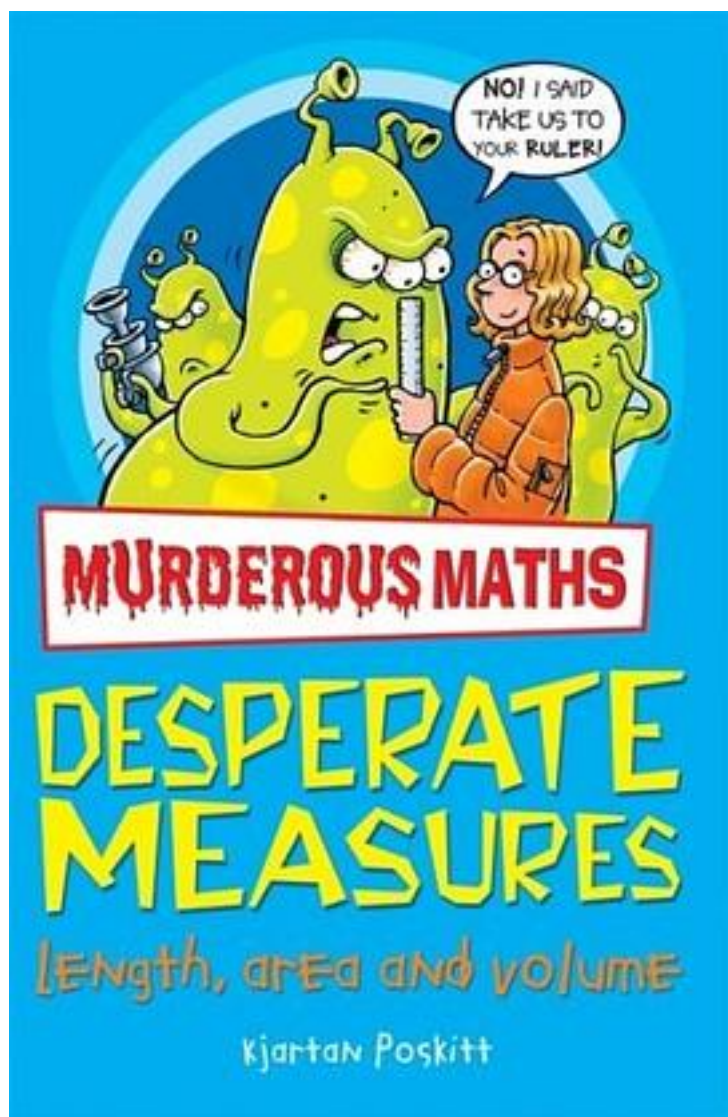


# Desperate Measures



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出版者:Oxford Univ Pr

出版时间:2006-9

装帧:HRD

isbn:9780195135381

One of the most fascinating figures of seventeenth-century music, composer and singer Antonia Padoani Bembo (c.1640 - c.1720) was active in both Venice and Paris. Her work provides a unique cross-cultural window into the rich musical cultures of these cities, yet owing to her clandestine existence in France, for almost three centuries Bembo's life was shrouded in mystery. In this first-ever biography, Clare Fontijn unveils the enthralling and surprising story of a remarkable woman who moved in the musical, literary, and artistic circles of these European cultural centers. Rebuffed in the attempt to divorce her abusive husband, Bembo fled to Paris, leaving her children in Venice. Joining ranks with composers glorifying Louis XIV, her song charmed the Sun King and won over his court's sympathy to the cause of women. She obtained his sponsorship to live in a semi-cloistered community in Paris, where she wrote music for the spiritual and worldly needs of the royal family. Offering fine examples of sacred and secular vocal repertory for chamber settings and large ensembles, Bembo's oeuvre reveals her preoccupation with female agency through dynamic portrayals of such powerful figures as the Virgin Mary and the Duchess of Burgundy. The genres in which she worked--love song, opera, motet, cantata, trio sonata, and air--testify to the magic of her voice and to her place alongside Strozzi, Jacquet de La Guerre, and other major women composers of her time. Expertly engaging with musicology, history, and gender studies, Claire Fontijn tells the story of a brave and daring woman while providing a valuable key to a long-hidden treasure trove of music. A groundbreaking biography, *Desperate Measures* details the compelling life and music of a woman with courage, determination, and talent who thrived within the dictates of society and culture.

作者介绍:

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