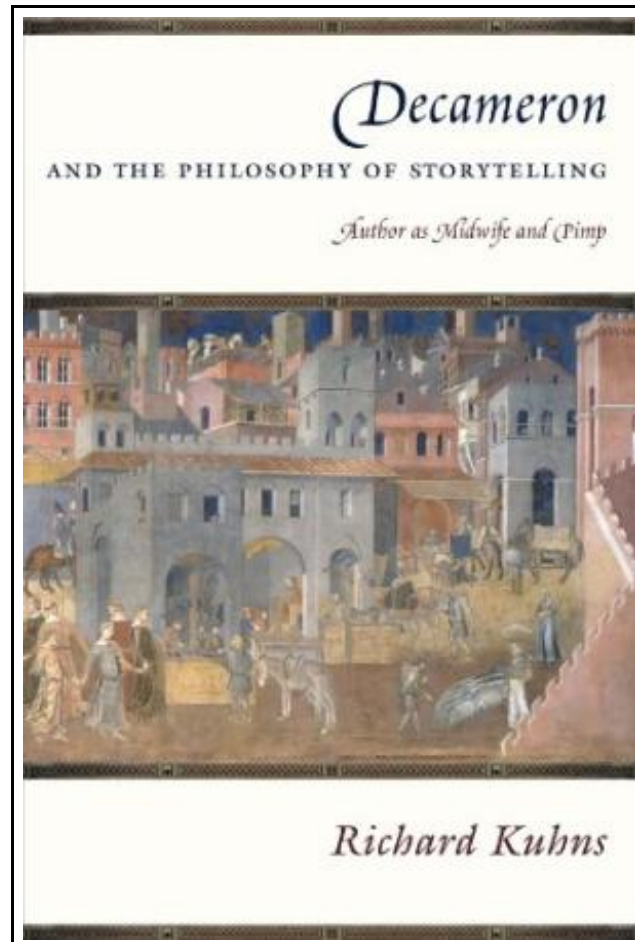


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Columbia University Press, United States, 2005. Hardback. Book Condition: New. New.. 236 x 155 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. In this creative and engaging reading, Richard Kuhns explores the ways in which Decameron ssexual themes lead into philosophical inquiry, moral argument, and aesthetic and literary criticism. As he reveals the stories many philosophical insights and literary pleasures, Kuhns also examines Decameronin the context of the nature of storytelling, its relationship to other classic works of literature, and the culture of trecento Italy. Stories and storytelling are to be interpreted in terms of a wider cultural context that includes masks, metamorphosis, mythic themes, and character analysis, all of which Boccaccio explores with wit and subtlety. As a storyteller, Boccaccio represents himself as literary pimp, conceiving the relationship between storyteller and audience in sexual terms within a tradition that goes back as far as Socrates conversations with the young Athenians. As a whole, Boccaccio s great collection of stories creates a trenchant criticism of the ideas that dominated his social and cultural world. Addressed as it is to women who were denied opportunities for education, the author s stories create a university of wise and culturally observant texts. He teaches that comic, religious, sexual, and artistic themes can be seen to function as metaphors for hidden and often dangerous unorthodox thoughts. Kuhns suggests that Decameronis one of the first self-conscious creations of what we today call a total work of art. Throughout the stories, Boccaccio creates a detailed picture of the Florentine trecento cultural world. Giotto, Buffalmacco, and other great painters of Boccaccio s time appear in the stories. Their works and the paintings that surround the characters as they prepare to leave the plague-ridden city, with their representations of Dante, Aquinas, and other thinkers, are essential to understanding the...



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