

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has three origins that I want to acknowledge. The first was the Histories Project directed by Michael Boyd at the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) in 2007–2008. I had not given Shakespeare’s history plays much thought until I saw Boyd’s stunning production of *Richard II* in the summer of 2007, an experience that led to my returning to England, in the excellent company of Regina Buccola, to see all eight plays over a four-day weekend in spring 2008. When I began to teach a course on the histories at Villanova, I had the benefit of an enormous cache of production photos from the Boyd cycle that were generously shared with me by John of Gaunt himself, RSC cast member Roger Watkins. My fascination with these plays has been indelibly shaped by those productions, Roger’s photos, and the experience of seeing and thinking with Gina.

The book’s second origin was a 2010 exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in New York titled *Haunted: Contemporary Photography/Video/Performance*, which I attended as I was writing my first essay on the histories and preparing to teach them for the first time. In the wake of seeing *Haunted*, I became interested in Andy Warhol’s electric chair paintings, and I formed from that exhibit my earliest intuition that the paintings and their subject had something to teach me about the history plays. This intuition led me to an essay in the exhibition catalog by Peggy Phelan, whose work I only passingly knew at the time. Along with *Mourning Sex, Unmarked*, and her writing on Andy Warhol, Phelan’s essay on *Haunted*, “Haunted Stages: Performance and the Photographic Effect,” was my entry point into performance theory and eventually into the scholarship of Phelan’s students Rebecca Schneider and Daniel Sack, whose work has been important to my thinking in this book.

The third origin of this project was my timely introduction to the art of David Maisel, whose photograph of an X-ray of a sculpture belonging to the Getty Museum, *History’s Shadow* (GM1), is the cover image of this book. I am indebted to a college friend, Alan Rapp at Monacelli Press, for distinguishing the murky contours of my aesthetic curiosity and inviting me to what would become a formative gallery show: Maisel’s *History’s Shadow* at Yancey Richardson

in 2014. Maisel's work—especially *History's Shadow* and *Library of Dust*—has significantly shaped this project, and I am deeply grateful to the artist for the gift that his photographs have been to me. The Maisel photograph on the book's cover generated my early thoughts about much of what came to occupy this book: the temporality of X-rays, the sensation of being observed by inanimate objects, the afterlives and afterdeaths of historical and aesthetic artifacts, the intermediality of those artifacts and their collapse of linear time, the ontological status of the reproduction, and the aesthetic generativity of death. Although I do not address Maisel's photography directly in these pages, I am everywhere indirectly addressing it—using it to think through and toward many of the major claims this book makes. The cover image by Maisel has been my polestar, map, and muse.

I am indebted to a generous, supportive community of scholars, especially in my home city of Philadelphia. Lauren Shohet offered invaluable comments on every chapter of this book, and her own wide-ranging interests have made her an inspiring colleague throughout my career at Villanova. This project was made better by Melissa Sanchez's incisive, thoughtful reading of the full manuscript—reading that was critical to my late-stage thinking and revising. Long after this book is out in the world, I will continue to be enriched by Melissa's magnanimous feedback and her example of scholarly generosity. Joseph Drury, Matt Kozusko, Zachary Lesser, and Kristen Poole have been readers, dear friends, and fonts of moral support through the tricky process of bringing this unusual project into being. I have learned from collaboration and conversation with Rebecca Bushnell and Gina Bloom, whose curiosity about territory new to early modernists has been a precedent for my own. I am grateful for the many colleagues who have listened, read, commiserated, offered insight, and otherwise supported me in this work: Beth Burns, Brooke Conti, Travis Foster, Matthew Harrison, Andrew Hartley, Peter Holland, Wendy Beth Hyman, Shawn Kairschner, Farah Karim, Jeremy Lopez, Genevieve Love, Jim Marino, Paul Menzer, Marissa Nicosia, Chelsea Phillips, Holly Pickett, Richard Preiss, Donovan Sherman, Tiffany Stern, Andrea Stevens, Maggie Vinter, Sarah Werner, and Katherine Schaap Williams. I owe special thanks to Jonathan Walker for leading me back to David Bowie, an old love and one of this project's genii. For mentorship that keeps giving, I thank Linda Bannister, Lowell Gallagher, Holli Levitsky, and James Simpson. And I thank the women scholars before me who have written much of the very best work on Shakespeare's history plays, especially Phyllis Rackin, without whose *Stages of History* my project would not have been possible.

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HOW TO DO THINGS WITH DEAD PEOPLE

