

# 1 Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture

## An Introduction

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Memory projects itself toward the future, and it constitutes the presence of the present.

*(Derrida, 1986, p. 57)*

Memory remains a future act: not yet recalled, if also never yet forgotten.

*(Schneider, 2011, p. 22)*

### 'REMEMBERING REMEMBERING'

Imagine the everyday experience of compiling a shopping list. Cottage cheese is on the list. And smoked salmon, six bottles of wine, three pairs of socks—fifteen items in total. Usually, we write them down on a piece of paper, checking while we walk down the aisles of the local supermarket. But what if we want to train our memory and remember the list by heart? That is what Joshua Foer learns in *Moonwalking with Einstein* (2011). He uses the *loci* method of the *ars memoria* that was already recommended by Cicero in ancient Rome and described by Frances Yates in *The Art of Memory* (1966): translate information into images and situate them in an inner space, the 'memory palace'. Foer creates his memory palace by taking a space in mind that he knows well, the house he grew up in, and puts a vivid image of each item in a room. He conjures up the image of cottage cheese as a full bath with model Claudia Schiffer splashing around in the white stuff. The salmon is figured as a huge fish across the keyboard of the piano, and the three pairs of luxurious cotton socks hang from the lamp, brushing softly against his forehead. He then imagines walking through the house, retrieving the cottage cheese with the supermodel in the bath, the fish on the piano, the socks hanging from the lamp, thus flawlessly remembering all fifteen items on the list. Foer gets hooked by the *loci* method, starts training his memorial capacities, and a year later he is the winner of the yearly USA Memory Championship in New York.

Foer's subtitle, *The Art and Science of Remembering Everything*, betrays a deeply rooted desire in Western culture: to remember everything and forget nothing. Or, as Viktor Mayer-Schönberger so expressively puts it: 'Humans yearn to remember, although they mostly forget' (2009, p. 92). This desire takes on a particularly pressing, indeed existential, form in the case of disabled people like the late historian Tony Judt. Diagnosed with ALS in 2008, Judt soon was trapped in an immobile body. To recollect the stories he found himself mentally composing during long, lonely and sleepless nights, he similarly resorted to the age-old mnemotechnic device, referring himself to a 'memory chalet' (for he 'had no desire to construct palaces in [his] head' [2010, p. 6]) as a means to 'create, store, and recall' (p. 10):

Each night, for days, weeks, months, and now well over a year, I have returned to that chalet. I have passed through its familiar corridors with their worn steps and settled into one or two or perhaps three armchairs—conveniently unoccupied by others. And thence, . . . I have conjured up, sorted out, and ordered a story or an argument or an example that I plan to use in something I shall write the following day. (p. 7)

The scenes from Foer's *Moonwalking with Einstein* and Judt's *The Memory Chalet* encapsulate a few of the themes that we wish to explore in our book *Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture*. They show, first of all, that memory is a performance. Memory is work—creative work—doing or carrying out the act, 'the embodiment of retrieval' (Dudai, 2002, p. 190). Second, whereas memory is embodied performance, it is fully mediated. Memory does not function in a vacuum but needs a medium to be trained, shared and transmitted. Third, these contemporary recaptures of *ars memoria* demonstrate how memory is connected to spatiality, because the *loci* method visualises striking memories by locating them in the space of a house, palace or chalet, or theatre. The orientation of imagined objects within space points to a veritable 'theatre of memory', to recall the title of Raphael Samuel's volume on retro culture (1994). These three elements of memory—performance, mediation and spatiality—are brought together in this introduction.

*Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture* looks through the prism of performance at the much-debated notion of cultural memory by analysing how cultural practices such as art, literature and media perform the past in the present. In our previous book, *Technologies of Memory in the Arts* (2009), we defined cultural memory as the things and the ways in which a culture remembers. Here, too, we focus on the cultural dimension of memory, taken as both the *what* and the *how* that a culture remembers. This time, however, we wish to explore the ways in which art and popular culture constitute performative acts of memory generating an experience of the past in the present. Memory needs to be understood as an effect of

a variety of institutionalised discourses and cultural practices. As Maurice Halbwachs points out, 'It is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories' (1992, p. 38). Yet, if memory is social and cultural, it is also performative, making the past present in ways that can be experienced, generating a knowledge of the relationship between past and present that is oftentimes troubling, other times comforting. *Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture* therefore engages with memory as an embodied act grounded in the here and now, generating memory in the act of performing it. In her introduction to *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* (1999, p. vii), Mieke Bal defines cultural memory as the process of linking the past to the present and the future, thus identifying practices as crucial to understanding how memory works. The focus of our book is on the 'act' of memory, not its 'theatre' or 'palace', inquiring into the processes of making, constructing, enacting, transforming, expressing, transmitting cultural memory through art and popular culture. As Diana Taylor reminds us, 'to perform' is a verb (2003, p. 14). It is 'to do something, e.g. a piece of work', as the dictionary states. The notion of 'performing memory' thus presupposes *agency*.

Agency is perhaps not what we usually relate to memory, as personal memories seem to happen or even befall us, much like Marcel Proust was overcome by memories of his youth when the sweet smell of the madeleine cake dipped in the hot tea reached his nostrils and the pastry melted in his mouth. This kind of *mémoire involontaire*, as Proust called it, could not be further removed from the *ars memoriae* of ancient times or from Joshua Foer's memory training in recent years. And yet, as Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* testifies, even involuntary memory, once it has been conjured up, becomes subject to recall, reworking and representation. Proust's involuntary memory set into motion a process and production of active memory that resulted in the seven volumes of *À la recherche du temps perdu*. His novel shows that memory is hard work. Performing memory can thus be understood as an act of memorialisation. The focus on agency and on the act of remembering helps us to understand memory—or its representation in art and popular culture—as fundamentally processual and dynamic.

Contemporary studies of cultural memory indeed emphasise that memory 'require[s] the active agency of individuals and publics', in the words of Michael Rothberg. He continues: 'Such agency entails recognizing and revealing the production of memory as an ongoing process involving inscription and reinscription, coding and recoding' (2010, pp. 8–9). Memory, then, involves agency. Perhaps memory is even an act of identity formation that serves to narrate and produce the self, as Paul John Eakin suggests in his wonderfully evocative book *Living Autobiographically* (2008). Memory bridges the gap between the lived past and the imagined future. Eakin points out that we do not remember the past as such, but it is the

self *performing* the act of recall (2008, p. 163; our emphasis). He learns from André Aciman that such a performance of memory not only grounds the present in the past but also helps to orient us towards the future. Individual memory is understood as an act of the self to retrieve its traces in the past in order to anticipate the future. While memory may start as an involuntary event, it can turn into an act of active remembrance, even into a practice of remembering the act of memory itself. Eakin quotes Aciman: 'he was not just remembering. He was remembering remembering' (p. 163). Aciman actually refers to the poet William Wordsworth, but he could equally have been referring to Marcel Proust; they are both writers whose work embodies the agency of a practice of individual memory. The point here is that memory practices are intimately connected with making, with narrating, telling and writing—in short, with the act of creation. As Gilles Deleuze put it in his book on Proust: 'It is no longer a matter of saying: to create is to remember—but rather, to remember is to create, . . .' (2000, p. 111).

Of course, in a book on cultural memory we do not dwell on the interiorised experience of involuntary memory but rather explore the traces of the past as they are actualised in the present through practices of commemoration and remembrance in art and popular culture. In this book, then, we take our cue from the observation that art and popular culture enact memory and generate processes of memory. We thus move beyond the traditional psychoanalytical distinction between 'two contrasting ways of bringing the past into the present: acting out and remembering' (Connerton, 1989, p. 25), seeing them instead as a continuum. Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney observe that memory is performative rather than reproductive: 'It is as much a matter of acting out a relationship to the past from a particular point in the present as it is a matter of preserving and retrieving earlier stories' (2009, p. 2). Similarly, Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree and Jay Winter state: 'remembrance is performative. It is an activity, something that happens in time and place, and that on every occasion when we come together to do the work of remembrance, the story we fashion is different from those that have come before' (2010, p. 7). By understanding memory as a *performative act* in art and popular culture, we want to explore cultural practices and traditions that have hitherto not yet been studied as meaningfully related to each other. As acts of creation, memories (what the Germans call *Erinnerung*) are not static, to be deliberately retrieved or inadvertently recalled. Instead, they are dynamic and changeable, the result of an active process of memory as the act of remembrance (the German *Erinnern*) or as the capacity to remember (the German *Gedächtnis*) (cf. Erll, 2005, p. 7; the English language unfortunately does not make the distinctions that Germanic languages do between memory as process and memory as product). As such, art and popular culture 'do' memory, and in this doing of memory new questions about the cultural dimensions of memory arise: how do art objects and artistic practices perform the past in the present? What is their

relationship to the archive? Does the past speak in the performed past (or do we speak to it)? To what purpose do objects 're-call'? And for whom do they 're-collect'?

By addressing such questions, the authors in this book take remembrance in art and popular culture as a practice that negotiates memories for the social field. As we saw earlier, Maurice Halbwachs argued that memory functions within a social context and is therefore framed by it. Jan Assmann (1992; 1995) has elaborated that cultural memory has normative and formative powers, since it serves to actively construct the identity of social groups from families to nations, which in turn 'socially mediate' (1995, p. 127) individual memory. Memories are thus shaped by their social, generational and cultural context. As many have pointed out, they are also informed by their medial and technological frameworks (see, for example, Huyssen, 2003b; Rigney, 2005; Plate and Smelik, 2009; Erll, 2011; Garde-Hansen, 2011; Neiger et al., 2011). This can be illustrated by the family photo album, a technology or cultural form that is rapidly becoming obsolete but that, in the twentieth century, mediated personal and cultural memory in very specific ways (Hirsch, 1997; Humm, 2003; van Dijck, 2007). Or by the knot in the handkerchief: not so long ago, before disposable tissues became the preferred device for blowing one's nose, people would make a knot in their handkerchief to remind themselves that there was something they needed to recall—not *what* they needed to remember but *that* there was something they should not forget (see also Terdiman, 1993, p. 16). The knot in the handkerchief functioned as an *aide-mémoire*: it helped 'remembering remembering'. And with the advent of mobile cell phones with 'memory' capacity, people have stopped remembering their friends' phone numbers. What all these examples make clear is that it is imperative that we understand memory historically, as an effect of a variety of institutionalised discourses, cultural practices and technological artefacts.

At the cultural level, art and artistic practices most explicitly engage memory as re-presentation. In *Present Past* (1993), Richard Terdiman forcefully makes the case for memory as representation, explaining memory's activity as follows: 'A content of some sort is registered, with whatever fidelity the registering system can manage. Time passes. A representation appears, responsive to the content previously registered. What has happened is memory. Whenever anything is conserved and reappears in a representation, we are in the presence of a memory effect' (p. 8). Such an understanding of memory as registration, as the meaningful, interpretable trace or inscription of an absent because bygone referent, has long dominated cultural analyses of memories as interpretations of the past. It zooms in on the text, image or sign that is the object of analysis yet leaves out of focus the specific agents, institutions and contextualised processes of remembrance that make the memory happen. Instead, in this volume we seek to understand memory as an embodied and localised practice. Such a move is part and parcel of a broader paradigm shift in cultural memory studies, from a linguistic to a



performative turn. The difference is not only one of focus, shifting attention from the memory trace to its act—the event of memory, its happening. It also implies an epistemological, even ontological shift, from memory as the trace of what once was to memory as the past's present moment.

Memory is always re-call and re-collection (the terms are frequently used as synonyms), and, consequently, it implies re-turn, re-vision, re-enactment, re-presentation: making experiences from the past present again in the form of narratives, images, sensations, performances. Foregrounding the work of memory, the active labour of remembering and of forgetting, brings the focus on its creative aspect and functions theoretically to push representation beyond its borders as just representing meaning. After all, we may recall, the word 'représentation' in French means performance as well as representing or being represented. In *Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture*, we therefore wish to link this productive understanding of memory to the multilayered notion of performance.

## PERFORMING MEMORY

In the wake of Paul Connerton's pioneering work on bodily practices as performative memory in *How Societies Remember* (1989), in which he 'argue[s] for the importance of performances, and in particular habitual performances, in conveying and sustaining memory' (p. 104), cultural memory studies have embraced the notion of performance. The title of our book echoes Freddie Rokem's intentionally ambiguous title from 2000, *Performing History*, referring to the historical events as they were performed in the past, to the historical event as a form of performing like some kind of 'drama' and to the theatre performances of historical events (2000, pp. 5–6). It also resonates with Tilmans, van Vree and Winter's *Performing the Past* (2010). The multilayered understanding of 'performing' points to the time lag between the *now* of the performance and the *then* of the historical events (Rokem, 2000, p. 6). Performance, in the sense of a theatrical or artistic live show, partakes in its very live-ness of the here and now, with the physical presence of actors or performers displaying their skills before an audience (see Carlson, 2004). We will come back to the pivotal dialectics between the time and space of the events 'then' and the time and space of the performance 'now' that is implicit in the hybrid notion of performing memory, but first we want to briefly sketch the history of the concept of performance.

The concept of performance, and of performance studies, is notoriously riddled with complexities, sometimes to the point of irritation. As an interdisciplinary field—involving terrains as diverse as anthropology, philosophy and linguistics, theatre studies, and even business and management discourse—its categories are leaky, its borders porous and its terms constantly slipping away (cf. Carlson, 2004, pp. 205–6). Not only did a

new cultural practice of performance art polemically break onto the stage, but there was also a veritable 'theory explosion', as Jon McKenzie calls it (2001, p. 38), providing new methodologies and critical theories following the activism of the 1960s. In a recent article, José Medina claims that 'the performative turn' has been more groundbreaking than the linguistic turn, 'calling for interdisciplinary collaborations that reach beyond the boundaries of philosophy' (2010, p. 275). Marvin Carlson writes in the conclusion to the second edition of his *Performance. A Critical Introduction*: 'Performance by its nature resists conclusions just as it resists the sort of definitions, boundaries, and limits so useful to traditional academic writing and academic structures' (2004, p. 206). He then proceeds to write an 'anti-conclusion' to this book on an 'anti-discipline'. Yet, he lists some clear characteristics of performance. First, performance entails a display of skills demonstrated to an audience by a trained or skilled human being (2004, p. 3). Second, the display of skills involves patterned behaviour—someone pretending to be someone other than oneself, which brings consciousness to the performance (p. 3). This is what Richard Schechner has famously called 'restored behavior' (1985, p. 35), which is the 'as if' factor of 'showing doing' (Schechner, 2006, p. 28). A third way of understanding performance is the notion of achievement, to successfully act up to one's potential. Jon McKenzie (2001) has further explored this normative aspect of performance in the three paradigms he distinguishes: organisational, cultural and technological performance.

As we work in this book with the concept of 'performing memory', we want to take from anthropology the notion that humans, either collectively or individually, have the agency to shape themselves in their behaviours and beliefs. People, we believe, are—at least to some extent—agents in their own drama (Taylor, 2003, p. 7). They narrate and perform their selves (Eakin, 2008, p. 84) and are, in Zygmunt Bauman's words, 'artists of life' (Bauman, 2008). In chapter 10, Louise Wolthers's discussion of the genre of history painting underscores the importance of art for such identity performances. She analyses contemporary art that embodies collective and politically affective visions of the past while critically addressing ideas of imagined communities.

The anthropological idea that humans create and construct their own reality is, of course, fully consonant with contemporary philosophy of language, which is yet another important source of inspiration in thinking through performance, or the 'performative'. Noam Chomsky's (1965) distinction between 'competence' and 'performance' remains fully relevant (cf. Dudai, 2002, p. 189). Above all, the work of J.L. Austin has been seminal here. The performative in language refers to a situation in which 'by saying or *in* saying something we are doing something' (Austin in Bial, 2007, p. 177; original emphasis). In other words, by pronouncing the words we perform an action, as when we apologise by saying 'I apologise' or adjourn a committee meeting by stating 'the meeting is now adjourned'. Derrida

further radicalised this notion of the performative nature of language in his theory of deconstruction. For Derrida, all speech is 'iteration', a repetition of what has been said before. The citational quality of language brings it close to understanding language as performance, where meaning is forever deferred while differences unfold in the endless repetitions of language (Derrida, 1982).

Judith Butler (1988; 1990; 1993) takes up from both Austin and Derrida to bring the performative quality of language into our everyday lives, more specifically to rethink our gender and our bodies as something that are not given but rather as something that are performed. She insists that our sex is not something that we are and our gender is not something that we have but that these are social constructions constituted through performative acts. With Austin she states that the performative act is not merely theatrical but that it enacts and produces the gender that it performs. With Derrida she then argues that these performative acts need to be repeated time and again in everyday life. It is in this very citationality that a window for change and agency can be opened, because every repetition implies the possibility of making a difference. Butler's important intervention of allowing political agency into the theoretical notion of performance or, rather, performativity has singlehandedly created a new field of studies around gender and performance (see e.g. Goodman, 1998). Her understanding of identity as a practice involving repetition brings memory into the process. In a sense, the performance of gender is a performance of memory. In chapter 11, Wim Tigges addresses precisely this issue of gender, memory and performance. Inquiring into the possibilities of the genre of fantasy to re-engender the cultural memory of myth and history by telling mythical stories through female characters, he argues that, by performing alternative versions of traditional accounts, the action-fantasy television series *Xena: Warrior Princess* opens opportunities for 'correcting' memories of mythological as well as (pseudo) historical events.

Our book deals with practices of art and popular culture and therefore the field of theatre studies may give the most important clues to the study of performance. Performance art became an accepted art form in the 1970s, although it has historical roots throughout the nineteenth century, as RoseLee Goldberg describes extensively in the first history of performance art that she wrote in 1979 and expanded twice, in 1988 and 2001. Performance art as it developed from the 1960s on is known for its avant-garde roots and its radicalism in favouring the transgressive. The anti-establishment aesthetic of performance art is marked by two aspects: the presence of the performer's body and the liveness of the event. The body takes centre stage in performance art. Whether in Valie Export's Actionism, Marina Abramović's harrowing work, between Bruce Nauman and Karen Finley, and from Orlan to Stelarc, to name just a few, the boundaries of the human body are explored from every possible angle, within and without, from extreme pain to ecstatic pleasure. The radical foregrounding of the body that was and still is so

prominent in the practice of performance art aligns it deeply with the activism of the 1960s and its follow-up in the body politics of feminist and black postcolonialist theory. Again, there is an important link to philosophies of performativity, especially where feminist thinkers like Judith Butler (1993) and Rosi Braidotti (2011) have called attention to the corporeal dimension of performativity, to the body that speaks or, rather performs in and through speech. Feminist performance art even became a veritable genre by foregrounding the body most explicitly (see Schneider, 1997; Jones, 1998). The focus on issues of embodiment is thus part and parcel of performance art as well as performance theory: 'there was an attempt to pass from product to process, from mediated expression to direct contact, from representation to presentation, from discourse to body, from absence to presence', as McKenzie states (2001, p. 38).

The notion of performance, then, can be understood as embodied behaviour that privileges body over speech, presence over absence and praxis over product. Diana Taylor claims that she is not so much interested in what performance is as in what it allows her to do in memory studies, which is to challenge the preponderance of writing and revalorise embodied, expressive culture as a form of knowledge. For her, the importance of the concept of performance is first and foremost its emphasis on an 'embodied praxis and episteme' (2003, p. 17), 'a way of knowing as well as a way of storing and transmitting cultural knowledge and identity' (p. 278). This is close to Paul Connerton's notion of 'incorporating practice', designating a habitual memory in which 'the past is, as it were, sedimented in the body' (1989, p. 72). This he contrasts with 'inscribing practice' involving storing and retrieval devices such as print, records and computers and requiring 'we do something that traps and holds information, long after the human organism has stopped informing' (p. 73). Because traditions and memories are stored in the body (as in Proust's madeleine) and through mnemonic methods (as in Foer's memory palace), we can understand cultural memory as an incorporating practice that is performed time and again, building repertoires of embodied memories that allow for 'choreographies of meaning' (p. 20). Dance is, of course, such an art form of embodied memories. In chapter 9, Timmy De Laet inquires into the memory of the body by looking at the ways in which experimental contemporary dance explores and sometimes bridges the gap between the present and the past. Analysing the strategies of re-enactment that those who choreograph these dances use, he argues that in these performances, the body of the dancer functions as a living archive. His analysis bears out Taylor's claim that embodied performance is multicode, not only producing many layers of meaning, but also involving different roles for spectators, participants and witnesses (2003, p. 49).

The other important characteristic of the theatricality of performance is its liveness. For Peggy Phelan (1993), liveness is the aspect *par excellence* that gives performance its radical edge and its sense of 'realness'. It is the here and now of the live event that defines performance art. As she phrases



it, 'Performance's only life is in the present' (p. 146). However, liveness is also one of the most debated aspects of performance. Philip Auslander, for example, expresses his fatigue with the 'clichés and mystifications' (2008, p. 2) of the live as magic and real, in hostile opposition to mediated events as 'secondary and somehow artificial reproductions of the real' (p. 3). Indeed, media have penetrated not only our daily lives but also the practice of performance art. In her third edition of *Performance Art*, Goldberg (2001) includes a chapter on the 'Media Generation': 'Raised on twenty-four hour television and a cultural diet of B movies and "rock 'n roll," performance artists in the 1980s interpreted the old cry to break down barriers between life and art to be a matter of breaking down barriers between art and the media, also expressed as a conflict between high and low art' (2001, p. 190). Liveness is no longer antagonistically opposed to mediation, but they are 'parallel forms that participate in the same cultural economy', that is, in a fully mediated culture (Auslander, 2008, p. 5). As Auslander argues, there are no longer clear-cut divisions between the live and the mediated.

Although Auslander's views were controversial when his book first came out, in 1999, by now the notions of mediation, remediation and premediation have fully entered the field of cultural studies of memory. For example, in her assertion that embodied memory is live, Diana Taylor equally opens up to the view that the mnemonic systems of embodied memory, what she terms 'the repertoire', no less than 'the archive' of written documents, are mediated (2003, p. 21). And in her book on re-enactment, Rebecca Schneider fleshes out the paradoxes of performativity in crossing media and disciplines as well as time and space. She claims that the function of 'theatrical reproducibility', the replay function of time-based art, brings time again and again out of joint (2011, p. 16). The following sentence shows the hallucinatory function of the media in the events they transmit, either live or performed, for us to watch: 'We are passing the time by witnessing the passing time of doubling, redoubling, tripling, re-tripling, cross-, multi- and hyper-citational events' (p. 23). Performance and the media alike mediate cultural memory for us. In chapter 7, László Munteán explores the inextricable confusion of the real and the virtual in the highly mediated attacks of September 11, 2001, by tracing the history and representations of the famous photograph of the 'Falling Man'. He contends that the image has become a 'tabooed icon' that epitomises the 'hyper-citational event' of 9/11.

As we argued in *Technologies of Memory in the Arts*, while it is an advancement to understand memory as always already mediated, we can push the argument even further (2009, p. 16). Not only is memory shaped by media, but media are also shaped by memory. Media technologies structure our process of remembering, just as remembrance affects the way in which we make use of media devices. Focusing on digital media, Andrew Hoskins maintains that mediated memory needs to be seen 'as something created when needed, driven by the connectivities of digital technologies and media,

and inextricably forged through and constitutive of digital social networks' (2009, p. 92). Mediated memory thus results in concrete objects, products or performances, as well as in networks, which people employ and connect for negotiating the relationship between self and society, between personal and cultural memory. If we understand the medium as a process and not as a thing, we can argue not only that it re-mediate but that the medium itself also remembers. Or, to put it differently, if the past is always already mediated, then media by necessity re-mediate. Mediated memory products can so be understood as having a double mnemonic layer—that is, as being both the cultural and the medial remembrance of something.

It seems then that the live aspect of performance brings home the embodied as well as the mediated nature of cultural memory. There is yet another important consequence of the liveness, the very present-ness, of the act of performing cultural memory. It blurs the boundaries between past and present, by bringing the past to and in the here and now. As Mark Franko and Annette Richards write in their introduction to *Acting on the Past*: 'If performance is understood as "restored behavior," as fundamentally repetitive or reiterative, (though the memory it retraces need not be authentic), it necessarily brings back the past to unsettle the present' (Franko and Richards, 2000, p. 2). Performance is then the point of encounter, where the 'then and now punctuate each other' (Schneider, 2011, p. 1). Schneider makes a lot of this function of performance to 'trouble linear temporality' (p. 30): 'Time is decidedly folded and fraught' (p. 23), because in performing memory, 'the sense of past as past', even though it may be available only as re-enactment, can be touched upon.

We know from trauma theory that the past is, 'so to speak, tattooed on the present' (Le Roy et al., 2010, p. 253). Or, as Ben Highmore writes in his essay in this volume, 'Rather than overcoming the past, the complex work of time—to create and destroy, to sustain and deplete—is the horizon for any possibility of life.' Cultural trauma unsettles chronological time; the traumatic event is always both behind and before us. Le Roy, Stalpaert and Verdoodt claim that the disturbing presence of the past in the present is the subject of the performing arts and cinema that are concerned with memory and trauma. Thus, Klaas Tindemans explains in chapter 4, the gap between remembering a painful and tabooed memory—of collaborators in the Second World War—and performing that dramatic experience on stage requires careful and creative use of dramaturgical devices. Aesthetic strategies are here used to evoke and produce cultural memory in a work of art, rendering visible that which escapes us in the passing of time.

The complicated convolution of time is, of course, key to memory studies. Aleida Assmann postulates two modes of cultural memory: institutions of active memory, like the canon, preserve the past *as present*, while institutions of passive memory, like the archive, preserve the past *as past* (2008, p. 98; original emphasis). Directors of contemporary costume films seem well aware of this fact. In chapter 12, Elise Wortel and Anneke Smelik

show, in their analyses of costume drama, how such postmodern films willfully escape any attempt to 'correctly' represent the past. Rather, the films open up the past for the spectator by creating an intensive and affective performance of history. Philosophers also doubt whether memory can ever adequately access the past: 'the past's being *as past*' escapes memory, Deleuze claims (2000, p. 57; original emphasis). Deleuze takes it even further by following Bergson's *Matter and Memory*, stating that not only the past escapes us but also the present: 'For if the present was not past at the same time as present, if the same moment did not coexist with itself as present *and* past, it would never pass, a new present would never come to replace this one. The past as it is in itself coexists with, and does not succeed, the present it has been' (2000, p. 58; original emphasis). And Derrida equally wonders what it is to think the present in its presence, only to answer that the difference between presence and the present 'remains forgotten' and that the trace of the present gets lost; it can merely be erased as 'the trace of the trace' (Derrida, 1982, pp. 23 and 24). Yet, as Franko and Richards point out, 'Traces may fade completely, but marks tend to remain, like scars, yet without immediate reference to the present' (2000, p. 5). The essays gathered in this book inquire into the traces, marks and perhaps even scars of the past as they are performed in literature, cinema, television, dance and art. Ben Highmore, for example, discusses, in chapter 5, the art works of the British artists Nigel Henderson, Magda Cordell, Eduardo Paolozzi and William Turnbull, whose focus on the materiality in their art seems to defy the spectral and scarified qualities of their recollections of traumatic events during the Second World War.

The idea that the past and present coexist spells out to us the essence of the concept of the performance of memory as we explore it in *Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture*. Through our exploration of 'performance' as a methodological framework, we put the study of cultural memory within the paradigm of the 'performative turn'. Combining a methodological focus on memory as performance with a theoretical focus on art and popular culture as practices of remembrance helps us to understand cultural memory as a process of dealing with the past in the present that is embodied and mediated, linking a present to a past and to a future. Inviting a reconsideration of the persistence of the historical past in the present, this book centres not only on nostalgic or 'presentist' aspects of cultural memory but also on its historical and historicising—as well as its utopian—facets. Perhaps when the past is performed in the present it opens up to a politics of possibility where we can imagine alternative futures. As Jacques Derrida wrote: 'Memory stays with traces, in order to "preserve" them, but traces of a past that has never been present, traces which themselves never occupy the form of presence and always remain, as it were, to come—come from the future, from the *to come*' (1986, p. 58; as usual, Derrida plays with words here: future is 'avenir' in French, and to come is 'à venir').

## MEMORY AND SPATIALITY

In discussions of performances of memory, spatial metaphors abound. These metaphors structure how we conceive of memory and theorise it and what kind of research we do. For a long time, the spatial metaphors of memory were tropes of place (see Roediger, 1980; Draaisma, 2000). Indeed, archival or storehouse metaphors have dominated thinking about memory: from the memory palace of ancient Roman rhetorical treatises and Joshua Foer's best-selling *Moonwalking with Einstein*, to Pierre Nora's *lieu de mémoire*, through the house (James), rooms in a house (Freud), a library (Broadbent) or a chalet (Judt). It shaped research until well into the 1980s, when, according to 'one survey 84% of psychologists and 69% of others believed that "everything we learn is permanently stored in the mind" and is potentially recoverable' (quoted in Sutton, 1998, p. 6). In this view, the mind is a place where memories are stored forever and from which they can be retrieved through a process similar to the workings of a lost-and-found department: 'as a search for memories stored in this space, just as we can search for lost objects' (Roediger, 1980, p. 232).

Today, however, this static idea of the mind has been pushed aside for a more dynamic view of memory. Seen to co-evolve 'with the physiological, environmental, and social systems in which they are embedded', memories are now conceived as 'reconstructed rather than reproduced', 'patterns of activation across vast neural networks' (Sutton, 1998, pp. 1–2). Spatial metaphors still dominate, but, instead of focusing on *loci memoriae*, the talk is now of networks, connections (Sutton, 1998) or extensions (Hoskins, 2011), indicating a move from a static view of memory to a more connectivist and networked idea of memory. The recent interest in transculturalism in cultural memory studies reflects this trend, for transcultural memory presupposes dynamic transfers between cultural forms and discourses that transcend national and communal boundaries, as Marguérite Corporaal points out in her essay in this volume. Michael Rothberg summarises the transformation by speaking of a shift 'from *lieux de mémoire* to *noeuds de mémoire*', coining a new term to designate the 'knots' of memory at the intersection of memories and legacies of genocide, colonialism and slavery today and to 'capture the dynamism inherent in remembering—what we call memory's multidirectionality' (2010, p. 9). These knots of memory, indeed, are not to be conceived of as 'static conglomerations of heterogeneous elements', he explains (p. 8). 'Rather, it suggests that "knotted" in all places and acts of memory are rhizomatic networks of temporality and cultural reference that exceed attempts at territorialisation (whether at the local or national level) and identitarian reduction' (p. 7). In chapter 3, Rothberg investigates a particular multidirectional knot of memory—the South African mine in the work of the Britain-based German writer W.G. Sebald and the Jewish South African visual artist William Kentridge. Starting from



the spatial figure of the mine, he traces histories and memories, including apartheid, the Holocaust, slavery and colonialism, in order to relate a new view on subjectivity to multidirectional memory. Ostensibly, whether 'multidirectional' (Rothberg), 'connectionist' (Sutton) or 'connective' (Hoskins), such a dynamic view accords well with the idea of memory as performative. As we have argued, the study of art and popular culture as performances of memory is one in which emphasis is on memory as a creative act, a process that takes place in the present and that is embodied, material and susceptible to inferences from its context of production. As such, it has clear spatial dimensions.

On the one hand, memory takes place in space—it occurs in specific social contexts and cultural locations. When the taste of Proust's madeleine leads him to remember the past, it is as a place: 'And once I had recognized the taste of the crumb of madeleine soaked in her decoction of lime-flowers which my aunt used to give me', he writes, 'immediately the old grey house upon the street, where her room was, rose up like a stage set to attach itself to the little pavilion opening on to the garden which had been built out behind it for my parents . . . ; and with the house the town', indeed, 'the whole of Combray and of its surroundings, taking their proper shapes and growing solid, sprang into being, town and gardens alike, from my cup of tea' (Proust, 1956, p. 58). Similarly, war monuments and other 'sites of memory' invite specific rituals of remembrance and acts of memory, as do certain dates and times—think of 9/11, for instance, or of anniversary commemorations. In France, the government-sponsored 'tourisme de mémoire' (memory tourism) has created thematic routes designed to secrete a politics of memory through spatial practices that aim to contribute to the formation of a sense of citizenship as well as to the economic and cultural vitality of the area. Novels can contribute to this process. In chapter 6, Marguérite Corporaal describes a story set in Ireland's West that takes the reader, as it were, on a walk through a landscape marked by traces of the Famine past, such as the roads which starving Irish were digging as part of Britain's public work relief and remnants of former villages. Because of the ways in which memory is spatial, we wrote in the introduction to *Technologies of Memory in the Arts* (2009, p. 8) that memory has a geography.

On the other hand, it is not just that the act of memory occurs in specific locations and needs therefore to be seen as a contingent, localised and embodied practice. Equally important are the ways in which space is produced by memory. Space, Henri Lefebvre (1991) taught us, is socially produced in three ways: first, by how it is conceived and designed (the 'representations of space'); second, by how it is lived and experienced (the lived 'representational' space); and, third, through society's actual spatial practices of production and reproduction, work and leisure. Memory—individual memories no less than collective and cultural memory—is integral to the production of space at all three generative levels: it informs the design of space, affects the way it is experienced and shapes its practices.

Thus, Daniel Libeskind's design for the Jewish Museum Berlin, for instance, home to the two exhibitions discussed by Lisa Saltzman in chapter 2, was conceived to remember the erasure and void of Jewish life in Berlin, integrating the meaning of the Holocaust by creating a space that embodies absence. The design affects how the space is lived and experienced—visitors feel the dead end of the Holocaust Void, for example. Its effect, however, is equally the product of the visitors' state of mind, their knowledge of history and the memories of stories heard, books read and pictures seen that they bring to it. In addition, memory is integral to the production of the museum's space in that its spatial practices rely on repertoires of embodied practices of incorporated memories, for instance in the way that visitors visit the gift shop or lavatories no less than how they enter the museum by descending the stairs under the existing building foundations towards Libeskind's new building.

By understanding space as produced, the process and product of physical, social and mental practices and activities, Lefebvre's theory opens up to the notion of the performative, including the performance of memory: 'everyday life becomes a practical and sensual activity acted out in place' (Merrifield, 1993, p. 525). Andrew Merrifield explains, 'space as a material product is a *present* space: a moment absorbed in a complex dynamic process which embraces "a multitude of intersections"' (1993, p. 523). Yet, because space is so thoroughly spliced with memory, 'doing memory' (the performance of memory) inextricably entails 'doing space' (the production of space) and vice versa. In chapter 8, Kris Pint explores this intimate connection between space and memory. While historical buildings are often regarded as a static, passive form of memory, Pint argues that architecture should be regarded as an actor that engages with other human actors in performances of memory. The past may then get deformed, but such a 'deformance' is not a misinterpretation that should be corrected. Rather, it is a spatial becoming that turns the memory inscribed in the built environment into an active force. Lefebvre's spatial dialectics thus identifies 'space' as a principal element in the act of remembrance understood as a generative process, making the study of its 'textures' of critical concern for cultural memory studies. As he states: 'Redolent with imaginary and symbolic elements, [representational spaces] have their source in history—in the history of a people as well as in the history of each individual belonging to that people' (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 41). We have only to substitute 'memory' for 'history' in this quotation to understand the close links between memory and space.

The interweaving of memory with space is not surprising, since memory is such a crucial component of who we are and what we do, at the level both of the individual and of the collective. The whole social fabric is shot through by memory, including its spatial textures. Thinking through the intimate bonds between space and memory, we are led to understand that, while performances of memory take place in space and thus are mediated by it, they are also productive of space and mediate our experience of it. In



this volume, we therefore look at art and popular culture as practices that are also spatial, as acts that produce textures of space decipherable for their memory effects, for the ways in which they inscribe memory or incorporate it, to use Connerton's terminology.

## DOING CULTURAL MEMORY

The chapters in *Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture* show how the concept of a performance of memory crucially opens up to the practices of 'doing memory'. Multidisciplinary in scope, they testify to the diverse ways in which cultural memory is being performed in the codes of the artwork, be it literature, an art installation, a costume drama, a television series or a dance show. Written specifically for this book, they demonstrate that art and popular culture are dynamic processes that mediate memory through narrative strategies, visual and aural styles, intertextual references and intermedial relations and re-enactments and performances.

The chapters in the first part of the book, 'Staging Memory', present different versions of the ways in which artists and authors have staged memories of the Second World War. This section opens with Lisa Saltzman's evocative essay 'Life or Theatre, Diary or Drama: On the Performance of Memory in the Visual Arts', on two exhibitions that the Jewish Museum in Berlin conceived in the summer of 2007 and installed in purposeful relation to each other. One featured Charlotte Salomon's 1940–43 book project *Life? or Theatre?*, the other, Chantal Akerman's 2004 video installation *To Walk Next to One's Shoelaces in an Empty Fridge*. As Freddie Rokem wrote: 'In this location [the city of Berlin] the interactions between history and performance have been, and still are, more complex than in any other place I know' (2000, p. 213). Saltzman beautifully demonstrates those complexities in pursuit of instances of congruence and connection between the two artists and their work in the juxtaposed exhibitions. Staged in Daniel Libeskind's highly symbolic architecture of absence and rupture, the paired exhibitions produced a set of relations at once historical and uncanny. Forging associations across the history of the twentieth century, the curatorial juxtaposition created the conditions not only for comparison but also for conjecture. From within the divide separating the two artists, the two exhibitions and, indeed, the two halves of the twentieth century there emerged a shared set of constitutive cultural and philosophical concerns: identity and inheritance, word and image, autobiography and fiction, exile and emigration, history and memory. In exploring the acknowledged and unacknowledged affinities between Salomon's and Akerman's lives and works, Saltzman opens our understanding of the sites and situations through which the performance of memory takes shape and takes place in the present.

In the next chapter, 'Multidirectional Memory and the Implicated Subject: On Sebald and Kentridge', Michael Rothberg builds on his recent book, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*, which sought to construct a comparative archive of transnational militant and minority articulations of Holocaust memory. Clearly, however, not all forms of multidirectional Holocaust memory are militant or emerge from minoritised locations. Rothberg thus pursues a somewhat different archive here, which he proposes to call an 'archive of implication.' The deliberately open-ended term 'implication' gathers together various modes of historical relation that do not necessarily fall under the more direct forms of participation associated with traumatic events, such as victimisation and perpetration. This chapter deals with one significant corner of this terrain: how multidirectional memory works in cases of complicity or responsibility where the subjects of remembrance are ethically implicated in the realms of a dominant or even perpetrator culture, without themselves being perpetrators. In order to think through these issues, Rothberg looks closely at how two prominent contemporary figures, the late Britain-based German writer W.G. Sebald and the still active Jewish South African visual artist William Kentridge, perform multidirectional memory. In particular, he investigates how their literary and artistic performances activate one multidirectional knot of memory—the South African mine. Starting from the figure of the mine, he pursues a constellation of histories and memories, including apartheid, the Holocaust, slavery and colonialism, in order to arrive, ultimately, at some thoughts about two modes of relating multidirectional memory and implicated subjectivity.

The Second World War also takes centre stage in Klaas Tindemans's personal essay 'Phantom Pains: Dramatising Flemish Collaboration with Nazism', which explores precisely such an 'archive of implication' as theorised by Rothberg. Flanders—the northern, Dutch-speaking part of Belgium—has always had considerable difficulties in coming to terms with the collaboration of its nationalist parties with Nazism in the Second World War. Only in the past two decades have new generations of 'revisionist' historians risked showing the intertwining of Flemish nationalism and fascist ideology. This enabled a context to deal with the traumatic collective memory without excessive animosity. As a grandchild of a family of Nazi collaborators, Tindemans processed and performed his personal memory by writing and directing the stage play *Sleutelveld* (literally 'key field'), in which he fictionalised the journey of his mother—then a thirteen-year-old child—in chaotic Germany in late 1944. As he conceives it, the main difficulty when developing artistic means to render traumatic memory is the difference between the emotional recollection of war survivors—'adventurousness' in the mother's case—and the dramatic experience created on stage. Tindemans, of course, is well aware that war and especially collaboration cannot simply be recounted as 'adventurous'. This chapter reflects upon possible dramaturgical devices to deal with the vexed issue of collaboration in the

war, embedded in both historiography and a contemporary political context in which Flemish nationalism is the strongest political force. Tindemans traces his quest how to perform ambiguous memories.

In the second part of the book, 'Spectral Memories', we have brought together essays that pursue the theme of memories that are ghostlike, hovering between presence and absence, substance and insubstantiality, 'always awaiting the reality of their inscription' (Punter, 2002, p. 260). In 'Memories of Catastrophes Yet to Come: New Brutalism and Thing-Memory', Ben Highmore explores a specific type of performed memory in a range of visual art produced in London in the mid-1950s. The art and the artists that Highmore investigates were associated with a movement called New Brutalism, and their artwork seems to visualise a memory of recent catastrophes. The artists, Nigel Henderson, Magda Cordell, Eduardo Paolozzi and William Turnbull, all had some form of war trauma, either as civilians or combatants, and their visual lexicon refers to a set of image-repertoires associated with the Blitz, atomic destruction and the Holocaust. For instance, across these artworks there is an insistent rendering of shattered and fragmented bodies. In his essay, Highmore argues that memory is not performed in a linear way that would allow the past of the artistic subject to be articulated by the artwork which then embodies and enacts this memory. Rather, through the artworks' emphatic foregrounding of processes and materials, the work performs across timescales that include the archaic, the contemporary and the futuristic. This takes the artwork beyond the scale of human lifetime and into longer durations of time and memory in ways that significantly alter the performance of memory.

Marguérite Corporaal shifts the focus to traumatic recollections from another European country and period in the next chapter, 'Haunted by Hunger: Images of Spectrality in Literary Recollections of the Great Irish Famine, 1850–1900'. Corporaal argues that the spectre is one of the major transcultural mnemonic images carrying and performing the memory of the Famine in Irish and Irish diaspora fiction from the period 1850–1900. In novels and stories from this era, spectres manifest themselves as the 'living dead', the ghastly, starving bodies of the Famine stricken. Figuratively, the living dead function as the spirits of the deceased victims who claim retribution as well as remembrance in a post-Famine Ireland and as emblems of cultural memory itself. A diachronic approach towards the Famine spectre in Irish and Irish-American fiction reveals four major developments in recollection: from marginal to narratively incorporated image of memory; from enframed spectacle towards embedment in public setting and discourse; from repressed presence to symbol of worked-through loss; and, finally, from an expression of community to what Michael Rothberg has termed 'multidirectional memory'. Furthermore, Irish-American fiction tends to displace the spectre of starvation to underline the view of an idealised motherland that contrasts with inhospitable America. As such, one can speak of

a specific diasporic performance of memory that is rooted in the dislocation of ethnic identity.

We move from European trauma to the United States of America in László Munteán's essay 'Naming the Unnamable: (De)constructing 9/11's "Falling Man"'. Richard Drew's photograph of a man falling headfirst from the World Trade Center became a 'tabooed icon' of 9/11, known to everyone, yet banished from the media. Recently, however, the 'Falling Man' has appeared in a number of artistic representations, turning the image into a virtual performance of memory. Although scholars have claimed that the anonymity of the man in the picture is conducive to objectifying the horror that he embodies, two journalists have attempted to identify the 'Falling Man'. Peter Cheney (*The Globe and Mail*) and Tom Junod (*Esquire*) came to different conclusions, which they published in 2001 and 2003, respectively. This chapter treats their two texts as performances of memory, whereby the fabrication of biographies is put to the service of assuaging the picture's traumatising power. Yet, the very same gesture that frames the 'Falling Man' into biographical constructs may stigmatise the person (and his family) due to embedded social conventions such as the taboo against suicide. By way of salvaging elements from both Cheney's and Junod's narratives, Kevin Ackerman's short film *The Falling Man* (2006), which was created as a response to Junod's article, poignantly deconstructs the hierarchy between the two texts and reveals their performative dimensions.

The third part of the book, 'Embodied Memories', shifts the focus to the ways in which art and popular culture can embody memory. Kris Pint takes us to the performing powers of architecture to deform the past in his essay 'If These Walls Could Walk: Architecture as a Deformative Scenography of the Past'. Historical architecture is often considered a picturesque but lifeless scene, abandoned by the original actors. Such an approach, however, focuses too narrowly on historical buildings as a static, passive form of memory. In this chapter, Pint argues that architecture itself should be regarded as an actor that engages with the other human actors in the performance of memory. Four types of 'performers' of architectural memory spaces are discussed: the shaman, the orator, the *flâneur* and the modernist architect. In their interactive performances, the past inevitably gets deformed, but this 'deformance' is not a misinterpretation that should be corrected but a continuous spatial becoming that turns the memory inscribed in our buildings into an active, provocative force. Such an approach not only focuses on the actual building and the period of its construction but also takes into account the virtual images, the untimely fantasies it evokes in the present, as a force field that allows older ways of dwelling to be remembered in a radically different context. This deformative scenography of the past allows us to link the architectural remembrance to current problems, which can be both personal and collective, and to explore new solutions for the future.



Dance is an underrepresented art form in cultural studies of memory. Unjustly so, as Timmy De Laet demonstrates in 'Bodies with(out) Memories: Strategies of Re-enactment of Contemporary Dance'. De Laet argues that, since the turn of the century, several choreographers working in the field of experimental contemporary dance have shown a growing interest in strategies of re-enactment. Whereas traditional dance reconstructions were predominantly concerned with the faithful reproduction of an assumed original performance, artists are now expanding the scope of re-enactment by employing it for radically different purposes. While keeping a given repertoire or heritage alive, the gaze towards the past is no longer primarily informed by a nostalgic desire to rescue dance from oblivion but rather reflects the more critical aspiration to explore or even bridge the gap between the present and the past. This chapter explores different conceptions of memory that re-enactment in contemporary dance proposes. Taking a close look at the practice of Fabián Barba (Ecuador/Belgium), Nicole Beutler (Germany/the Netherlands) and Vincent Dunoyer (France/Belgium), De Laet shows that the choreographers rely on strategies of re-enactment for staging a body of memories (in a literal and metaphorical sense) in order to reveal the memory of the body. The attempt to make temporal distances productive elucidates the fact that memory is the result of a process implying both remembering and forgetting. The body functions as a living archive, conflating the clear-cut distinction between the material stability of the archive and the mnemonic capacities of the body.

We move to other art forms and media in the fourth and last section of the book, 'Mediating Memories'. In her essay 'Punctuating the Nation's Narratives: History Painting and Performativity', Louise Wolthers reinvestigates and expands the genre of history painting, which has long been considered antiquated or even kitsch. She maintains that tracing the legacies of history painting helps conceptualise current ways of performing collective and politically affective visions of the past. Conventional aspects of the genre are re-employed in contemporary art to address ideas of imagined communities critically, particularly through photographic and performative means. This is illustrated by two examples. The first is *Denmark 2009*, a painting by Peter Carlsen that paraphrases Delacroix's famous *La Liberté guidant le peuple*. Carlsen's antinationalist painting is displayed at the Danish Museum of National History, which also plays a significant role in the second example, *Sandra of the Tuliphouse or How to Live in a Free State*, by Matthew Buckingham and Joachim Koester. This five-screen projection, affiliated with the recent 'archival impulse' in the arts, tells the story of an anarchist community while performing an embodied engagement with the presence of the past.

In '“Forget Me Not”: The Performance of Memory in *Xena: Warrior Princess*', Wim Tigges takes us to the popular culture of television. This chapter discusses and illustrates aspects of performances of memory in the

action-fantasy series *Xena: Warrior Princess* (1995–2001). The intertextuality of the television series opens numerous opportunities for 'correcting' memories of mythological as well as (pseudo)historical events, by performing alternative versions of traditional accounts, for instance the return of Odysseus or the death of Cleopatra. The series also predominantly reinscribes the performance of such 'events' in a re-engendered, feminised mode. Two episodes from the series, 'Lifeblood' and 'Forget Me Not', respectively illustrate the representation of collective memory relating to the Amazons and the performance of personal memory by Gabrielle, Xena's sidekick and friend as well as the recording 'scribe' or mediator of their united exploits. 'Lifeblood' literally performs a revision of viewers' as well as characters' collective memories of the history and culture of the Amazons. In 'Forget Me Not', Gabrielle sets out on a spiritual journey to relive her traumatic memories of misprision and betrayal. Temporarily split into two 'performers', one amnesiac and one anamnesiac, she ultimately re-establishes her full identity. *Xena: Warrior Princess* triggers as well as re-engenders our cultural memory of myth and history. Thus, the series makes us question what is the 'correct' memory of historical, mythical and even religious characters and events.

The last chapter turns to the genre of costume drama in cinema. In 'Textures of Time: A Becoming-Memory of History in Costume Film', Elise Wortel and Anneke Smelik set out to investigate the creative effects of anachronism that invent new historical sensations and new ways of thinking about history. Wortel and Smelik examine how postmodern costume films allow the audience to experience the past in the present. They explore a methodological focus on memory as a cinematic performance and use Gilles Deleuze's notion of 'becoming' to show how the costume films function as particular practices of remembrance. They claim that the spectator's direct perception of the past through the intensive reality of sensations challenges the cultural hegemony of static meanings and argue that the films put forward a nonlinear experience of the past that opens up new interpretations. Wortel and Smelik's essay concentrates on four costume films that tell the story of the past differently from the classical narrative of history, changing them into cinematic performances of memory: nonlinear anachronisms in *Elizabeth* (1998); affective artificiality in *Moulin Rouge* (2001); spatial historiography in *Russian Ark* (2002); and rhizomatic assemblages in *Marie Antoinette* (2006).

Throughout the book, we ask: how do art objects and practices perform the past in the present? And how do they open up possibilities for the future? How do art and popular culture 'do memory'? And what kinds of memory do they 'do'? The essays in this volume thus explore the heuristic possibilities of understanding memory as a performative act by making analyses of the complex processes of remembering and forgetting, of re-collecting and disremembering, of amnesia and anamnesis that make up cultural memory. Covering a great variety of topics and a wide range

of art forms, they illuminate what is to be gained by using 'performance' as methodological framework. Some essays are studies of how memory, performance and affect are contingent on one another in their relation to time, looking both forwards and backwards, while being performed in the present. Other articles explore how art and popular culture, in performing affective memories, may produce a relevant experience for the spectator, listener or reader. As such, the essays in *Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture* bear out the many and complex ways in which art, literature and popular culture are implicated in cultural memory, generating acts of remembrance and producing dynamic processes of remembering and forgetting. Revealing how memory is deeply inscribed into the performative aspects of art and culture, the authors show how such performances of memory conjure up the past in the present and anticipate the future, collapsing time and space, while bringing the vicissitudes of desires, recollections and affects to the fore.