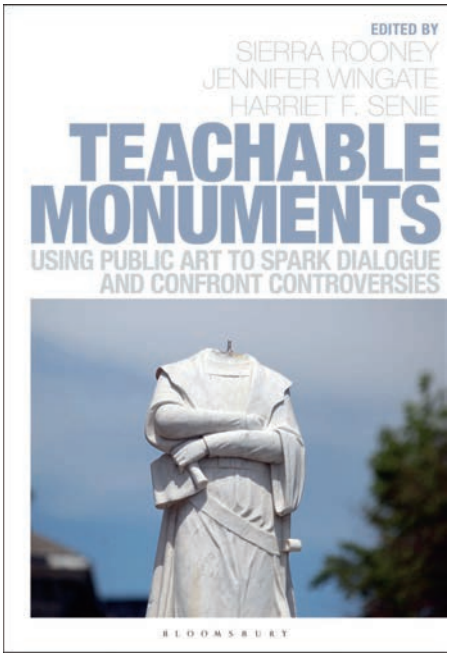
Sierra Rooney, Jennifer Wingate and Harriet F. Senie (eds), *Teachable Monuments: Using Public Art to Spark Dialogue and Confront Controversy*
London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2021, 296pp., 38 b&w illustrations, £90. ISBN 978 1 50135 694 0

In the wake of George Floyd's murder on 25 May 2020, protests in the US over Confederate and colonialist monuments reached a crescendo, an outcry that was echoed in news and social media. A moment of truth has come for these symbols of white supremacy. However, although there is a current rush for reckoning, public art scholars and practitioners have been grappling with issues of representation in public space for decades. Kirk Savage identifies a revival of interest in public commemoration as having begun in 1982 with Maya Lin's controversial but surprisingly effective minimalist design for the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial.[1] Despite a history of scholarly thought and the recent dismantling of some racist monuments, the hard work of determining the fate of many standing monuments is just now maturing. According to a 2021 update to the Southern Poverty Law Center's analysis of Confederate symbols across the United States, for every monument removed, six remain.[2]



Front cover of *Teachable Monuments: Using Public Art to Spark Dialogue and Confront Controversy*
(photo: courtesy of Bloomsbury)

Teachable Monuments: Using Public Art to Spark Dialogue and Confront Controversy, an anthology of eighteen essays thoughtfully edited by Sierra Rooney, Jennifer Wingate and Harriet F. Senie, takes up the discourse surrounding controversial monuments with a novel offering. This book's aim is to serve as a field guide, a manual of sorts, for teachers, politicians and community groups who are willing to brave the 'wild' of the public realm and address controversial monuments. This work is not for the faint of heart – many of these monuments represent the collective trauma of inequality and discrimination created by the United States' dual original sins of colonialism and slavery. How necessary and helpful, then, to have a manual of case studies for guidance. The book's main contribution is its suggestion that the painful work of determining the fate of these symbols should also be seen as a productive occasion that, if used to start an open dialogue and address controversy, can 'deepen civic and historical engagement' and begin to heal civic wounds (p. 6).

Teachable Monuments is organized into three thematic categories: teaching strategies, political strategies and engagement strategies. Each category contains six essays that offer case studies of productively engaging with teachable monuments, an approach towards public art and monuments that foregrounds their pedagogical potential. The introduction, by Sierra Rooney and Jennifer Wingate, offers a concise yet thorough summary of the recent history of this 'convulsive moment' that set off a new wave of iconoclasm, including the 2015 shooting in a Charleston, South Carolina church, the 2017 Unite the Right rally and deadly counter-protests in Charlottesville, Virginia, and the 2020 protests over George Floyd's murder (p. 3). The anthology features a wide range of contributors including museum curators, university professors, urbanists, independent scholars, an elementary school teacher, an artist and an architect, whose voices and styles benefit the volume with their variety.

The essays in the first section, 'Pedagogical Strategies', are the most practical in the book. Their focus on student pedagogy produces valuable insights for any interested

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reader. Adelaide Wainwright's chapter outlines the lesson plan she uses in her fourth-grade class that culminates in the practical and poetic realization that we can revisit present issues though lenses from the past (p. 24). Wainwright's chapter points to the pedagogical value of early exposure to the process of critiquing the public realm. In chapter 2, Mya Dosch takes the reader into a college classroom at California State University in Sacramento where students learn about artist interventions on monuments. Her class worked collaboratively to brainstorm their own intervention for the *Stela of Tlatelolco*, a 1993 monument erected to honour those killed in the peaceful 1968 student-led protests in Mexico. Dosch's chapter raises important questions about interventions, especially whether 'temporary interventions have the power to shift the discourse of more permanent monuments' (p. 30). One key benefit of her approach is that students grasp the layered difficulty of erecting public artworks and the challenges of working in committees, knowledge crucial for future public art scholars and practitioners. Annie Dell'Aria's chapter offers another take on college-level pedagogy involving digital mapping of the public art on the campus of Miami University in Ohio. This student-led project produces critical engagement with artworks that stand within the educational, institutional and social structures of a college campus. The final three chapters in this pedagogically themed section are by Jennifer Reynolds-Kaye, Sarah Sonner and Kailani Polzak. Each author focuses on campus-based decisions about monument removal and contextualization. From diversifying 'pale and male' portraits, to removing a Confederate statue from campus and recontextualizing it within a campus library exhibition, to rethinking a campus monument to colonizing missionaries through a critical exhibition, these case studies take the reader inside the process of exploring the meaning, history and messages of problematic objects on display in educational settings. The cases detailed in this part of the anthology demonstrate most clearly the objectives implied by the title of the book: *Teachable Monuments*.

How does the goal of the book fare when translated from the microcosm of the campus and classroom to the macrocosm of the public sphere? In the case studies contained in section two, 'Political Strategies', one sees less consensus, fewer concrete outcomes, and the challenges associated with public input. Anchored by Harriet F. Senie's fascinating insider's tale of her participation in the New York City Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments and Markers, the essays in this section address controversial monuments from the viewpoint of advisory commission and scholarly perspectives, which often stand at a distance from the lived experience of the people affected by the outcome of retaining or de-accessioning problematic monuments. All the same, one of the achievements of this section is the gathering in one place of disparate cities' resources, processes, recommendations and outcomes.

Senie's chapter reviews the comprehensive set of recommendations that the advisory commission developed, focusing on a detailed explanation of one case, the Theodore Roosevelt monument in front of New York City's Museum of Natural History. The statue depicts the twenty-sixth president of the United States astride a horse flanked by walking representations of a Native American man and an African American man. It is the same monument that piqued the interest of the young son of Titus Kaphar, the artist best known for monument interventions, to ask 'Why does he get to ride?'[3] At first, Senie's recommendation to retain the statue *in situ* sounds amiss. Her explanation of the concrete reasons to retain the work (the artist's intention to ennoble representations of Native Americans and African Americans, using the two figures as symbols of continents rather than peoples; and the artwork's function to represent Roosevelt in his role as explorer and conservator, rather than president) made cautionary sense in the pre-George Floyd era. Her tentative approach highlights the 'rush for removal' and problematizes the absence of the 'critical question of how (much) past ideologies should be judged by present beliefs in determining the fate of public art' (p. 126). Senie warns against reacting precipitously but concedes

that once a public artwork becomes a 'lightning rod' it is preferable to reinstall it in a place where it can be recontextualized (p. 127). And, indeed, in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protest surge, the museum decided to remove the work. Nevertheless, Senie reminds the reader that actual change must accompany the symbolic act of removing a monument.

Sarah Beetham's essay reviews the material history of several Southern monuments, suggesting that such a review can provide a way for communities to engage with issues of racial injustice and public sculpture. Her essay does the important work of linking historical Confederate monuments to the racial injustices experienced by Black Americans today. For example, she links the historical practice of siting Confederate monuments on the lawns of courthouses in order to influence justice with the contemporary reality of mass incarceration and police brutality. Beetham's key conclusion is a sound one, that a national policy addressing all problematic monuments will not work – the solution must be locally determined. She explains that 'the people most qualified to make decisions about these monuments are those who are forced to confront their presence in their daily lives' (p. 93).

If Beetham's essay describes the crucial factor of local debate over the outcomes of controversial monuments, Chris Reitz's essay is a case study of this idea in action. And it turns out to be a much more challenging and messy process than it seems in the abstract. In his chapter about the Louisville, Kentucky statue of John Breckenridge Castleman, Reitz, like Senie, brings forward the issue of an inclusive public sphere. Appointed to a city commission to evaluate the criteria by which the monuments of the city should be judged, Reitz tells the story of struggling to categorize the beneficent versus racist deeds of one man, Breckenridge Castleman, who is honoured with an equestrian statue. Castleman was an ambivalent figure who was both a Confederate soldier and the founder of Louisville's park system. Reitz discusses how the effort to create a democratic public sphere for equal representation of all viewpoints forced the commission to include 'the lived experience of oppression' or the experiential knowledge of exactly how a racist statue makes people feel (p. 110). This seemingly radical move, 'including and counting as fact information about the experience of oppression', allowed for a fair balance in the debate in Louisville and stands as an important example of a healing technique for other city commissioning agencies (p. 110). The Castleman statue was removed from the public realm.

The next three chapters, by Michele Cohen, Jennifer K. Favorite and Evie Terrono, address two cases in Washington, DC, and one in Richmond, Virginia. The two Washington cases do not fit perfectly with the book's purpose of sparking dialogue and confronting controversy because neither case is much in the public eye. One of the Washington cases concerns the question of what to do with two sculptures that once adorned the Capitol building but have long been removed because of their prejudiced representations of Native Americans. The second case tells a resolved story: the group that financed the building of the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial gave up on an effort to develop an educational museum, which had the aim of revising and glorifying the history of the United States' involvement in that conflict. Favorite highlights how the proposed educational museum, whose concept and architectural plans were well developed, had a glorifying tone which not only revised historical truth about the Vietnam war but was in direct conflict with the minimalist, sombre effect of Maya Lin's monument. Terrono's chapter deals with a Richmond case study that generated controversy and remains unresolved, thereby fitting more exactly with the volume's purpose to foreground monuments with a capacity to teach the public something about the past. When the National Parks Service sited a sculpture of Abraham Lincoln and his son Tad in Richmond, Virginia, the former capital of the Confederacy, neo-Confederates protested against the sculpture. Terrono explains the unfolding circumstances and connects some of the statue's problems to its composition and didactic form, but recognizes that the deeper problem lies in the fact that the neo-Confederate faction has not embraced the outcome

of the Civil War, a necessary step for the fruition of Lincoln's goal, to 'bind up the nation's wounds' (p. 169).

After exploring the possibilities outlined in the 'Political Strategies' section, the book's final section, 'Engagement Strategies', takes a welcome turn towards actual interventions and efforts by communities to rebalance representation in the public realm. The book's very helpful introduction characterizes these chapters as 'a sampling of some of the most creative and thought-provoking cultural work' being done in response to controversial historical monuments (p. 14). The essays in this section will hold the most interest for public art scholars, commissioners and practitioners.

Sue Mobley's chapter takes us through the ideation and implementation of *Paper Monuments*, a project that invited public proposals for new monument ideas for New Orleans and displayed the submissions on posters throughout the city. The project, undertaken in the wake of that city's 2017 removal of four Confederate monuments, was a sister project to Philadelphia's well-known entity, Monument Lab. Speaking of the local dialogue about monument removal, Mobley notes that 'the conversations generated [by the removal of the Confederate statues] were the net gain of the removal process: sharpening contradictions in perception and surfacing conflicting understandings of history and the city' (p. 189). The project *Paper Monuments* was meant to nurture and grow this public dialogue into 'active repair rather than [only] the removal of harm' (p. 191). Moving away from the category of monuments and towards public art is Charlene G. Garfinkle's chapter on the Wall Street sculptures, Arturo DiModica's *Charging Bull* (1989) and Kristen Visbal's *Fearless Girl* (2017). Since 1989, when *Charging Bull* was placed near New York City's stock exchange as an act of guerrilla art, the eleven-foot, 3,200-kilogram bronze sculpture has become an icon of the bull market and the resilience of American capitalism. This impression of the bull altered dramatically when, in 2017, another sculpture called *Fearless Girl* was placed in direct confrontation with the bull. *Fearless Girl*, a four-foot bronze image of a defiant young girl, was viewed as a symbol of feminine strength in opposition to the historically patriarchal power structures of the market represented by the bull. This rich and well-researched chapter brings up the changeable public interpretation of public art. In this case, with the introduction of the sculpture of the young girl proudly standing her ground, viewers assigned new, negative interpretations to the bull, despite its previous status as a good omen for Wall Street workers. Even after the truth behind the *Fearless Girl* statue was uncovered – that it had been commissioned by an advertising agency to promote an asset management company's new index fund composed of gender-diverse companies – the public continued to read *Fearless Girl* not as a promotional piece but as a comment on gender inequality made very real in the zeitgeist of the Donald Trump presidency. Garfinkle's chapter explores what it means 'that the public has assigned a new story to these works' and explores the 'use of public art as obfuscation' (p. 198).

In the chapter co-written by Laura M. Holzman, Modupe Labode and Elizabeth Kryder-Reid, the authors explore a commissioned public monument that never came to be. Fred Wilson's *E Pluribus Unum* for the city of Indianapolis was cancelled due to complex public controversy. Wilson's signature artistic method is to recontextualize existing objects to create new meaning. In this case, he proposed to repurpose a 'slave freed from bondage' figure from a sculptural group that is prominent in the city. Wilson proposed to rework the figure to give it agency by holding a flag composed of flags from nations in Africa. Perhaps surprisingly, the loudest protest over this conception came from the African American community who did not want to support the public representation of Black people rooted in slavery. Although in the end Wilson's commission was cancelled and replaced by another sculpture, *Talking Wall* by Bernard Williams, the goal of the authors of this chapter is to keep Wilson's project and its controversy alive in the city's cultural memory as a project that is 'good to think with' and that facilitates awareness of the 'broader systems of power' (p. 216).

In the most clear-cut exploration of the ability of public statues to enlighten and heal, Jung-Sil Lee's chapter explores the reconciliatory function of Comfort Women memorials in the United States. These memorials, which can be singular plaques or figurative statues of women, often accompanied by an empty chair standing for survivors who have died, offer sites for acknowledging the historical fact of imperial Japan's forcing of colonized women to be wartime sex slaves. These memorials offer themselves not only for meaning and memory practices for victims but as a broader stage for expanded awareness of this past trauma, leading to people hosting demonstrations in sixty cities in twenty-three different countries. In discussing the outcomes of the commissioning and siting of Comfort Women memorials, Lee notes that 'the resulting civic discourses and educational initiatives act as a calling ground where peace and reconciliation can be achieved between perpetrator and victim' (p. 233). This sentiment embodies the broader hope invoked by this anthology.

Chapter 17 was written by a group of doctoral candidates in public history at North Carolina State University, Matthew Champagne, Katie Schinabeck and Sarah A. M. Soleim, who formed a group called Historians for a Better Future. The group conducted a hybrid series of educational and activist encounters called 'Free History Lessons' in front of Confederate monuments outside the North Carolina State Capitol building in Raleigh. Their aim is to provide historical context and accuracy in the midst of heated debates about the removal of state Confederate monuments.

The final chapter takes the reader into dialogue with the artist Kenseth Armstead who, in 2018, created *Washington 20/20/20*, an intervention artwork that surrounds the pedestal of the equestrian statue of George Washington sited in New York City's Union Square. María F. Carrascal, an architect specializing in urban renewal, interviewed the artist to discuss the purpose and promise of reactivating existing public monuments. Armstead uses the metaphor of food to bring his work and purpose to life. He noted that, before his intervention, the statue of George Washington, the oldest monument in the New York City Parks collection, was uncooked white rice, a bland staple that is not even nourishing. Armstead's intervention, surrounding the sculpture's ten-foot pedestal with a perforated screen made of steel, iron, wood, paint, tar and feathers, added spices and 'cooked' the rice so that, with the addition of the screen and signage, the statue became nourishing visual culture. The signage includes details about the percentage of the population that was enslaved during the Revolutionary era, thereby, as Armstead notes, 'introducing the people of color who surround this figure' (p. 253).

Taking a step back to look at the entirety of the anthology, *Teachable Monuments* argues that confronting problematic public monuments offers 'productive ways forward … to deepen civic and historical engagement' (p. 6). However, awakening engagement, sparking dialogue and confronting controversy are not ends in themselves but pathways to a higher goal, one that goes unmentioned by the editors, the goal of human healing. When the public challenges who and what deserves public representation, they become empowered. When human effort leads to the correction of the visual landscape, the work of healing collective trauma begins.

Tola Porter

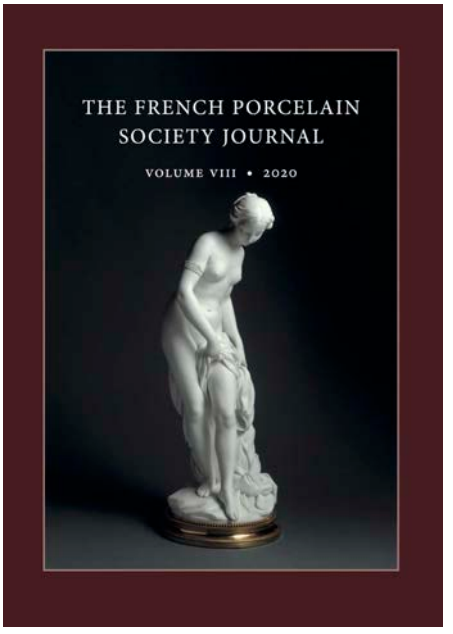
1. K. Savage, 'History, memory, and monuments: an overview of the scholarly literature on commemoration', 2006, https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/hisnps/npsthinking/savage.pdf, last accessed 13 January 2022.
2. 'States where Confederate monuments are falling – and where they're not', updated 16 September 2020, https://www.beenverified.com/data-analysis/confederate-monuments-state-removal-study/, last accessed November 2021.
3. Titus Kaphar, 'Can art amend history?' Ted Talks, 1 August 2017, https://www.ted.com/talks/titus_kaphar_can_art_amend_history?language=en, last accessed 13 January 2022.

Diana Davis, Oliver Fairclough and John Whitehead (eds), *Ceramics as Sculpture*
The French Porcelain Society Journal, VIII, 2020, 254pp., 195 colour illustrations, £20. ISSN 1479–8042

Claire Jones and Imogen Hart (eds), *Sculpture and the Decorative in Britain and Europe, Seventeenth Century to Contemporary*
London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2020, 352pp., 103 b&w illustrations, £95. ISBN 978 1 50134 125 0

Both published in 2020, *Ceramics as Sculpture* (edited by Diana Davis, Oliver Fairclough and John Whitehead) and *Sculpture and the Decorative in Britain and Europe, Seventeenth Century to Contemporary* (edited by Claire Jones and Imogen Hart) each focus on areas of sculpture that, due to their material or their perceived 'functionality', have remained on the periphery of much recent scholarship, and together the two volumes amply evidence the benefits of cross-disciplinary pollination.

Ceramics as Sculpture, published by the French Porcelain Society (FPS), is undoubtedly aimed predominantly at scholars of ceramics, but given its focus on sculpture, and the many overlaps with themes articulated in *Sculpture and the Decorative in Britain and Europe*, it is worthy of a much broader readership. As the name suggests, the FPS began as a society to further the study and appreciation of French porcelain, but it has expanded its remit more recently to encompass European ceramics from the Middle Ages to the present. The Society publishes a well-respected journal once every two years, containing fully colour-illustrated and peer-reviewed articles.

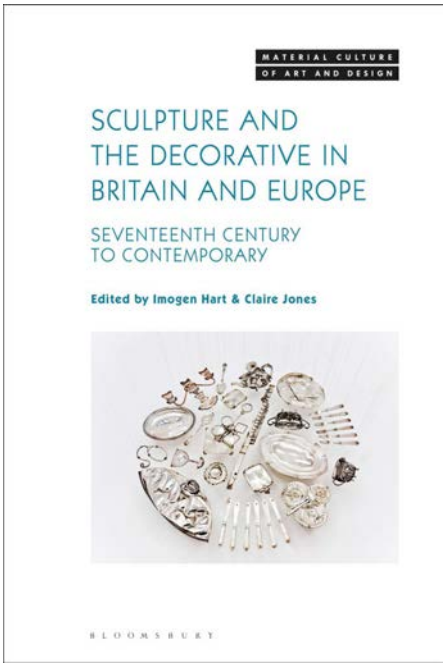


Front cover of *Ceramics as Sculpture*
(photo: courtesy of the French Porcelain Society)

This thematic issue centres around ceramics as sculpture and is particularly welcome given the dearth of publications on this subject. With the exception of scholars of the eighteenth century who have always studied porcelain figures seriously as complex works of art and luxury goods, replete with symbolism and allegory, ceramics research all too often focuses either on specific makers or factories, or the vessel form. The latter field of inquiry has been particularly vaunted since the early twentieth century and remains the centre of much scholarship, as in, for example, the international exhibition and major publication *Things of Beauty Growing: British Studio Pottery* (2017–18).

As is made clear by Claire Jones in her introduction to *Ceramics as Sculpture*, this volume aims to break down the silos of different disciplines and hierarchies. She argues persuasively for the ways in which ceramics and sculpture are suited to one another, through shared materials, shared techniques of reproduction and a shared reliance on a network of skilled collaborators, while also setting out historical differences in the conceptual framing of the two and acknowledging that much of this derives from 'sculpture's own fragile status in the fine arts' (p. xvi). Jones helpfully identifies five key themes that emerge from the book's twelve essays (two of which are published in French): 1) materiality and colour; 2) the problem of neoclassicism for ceramic sculpture; 3) subject matter: an expanded field; 4) networks of making; and 5) ceramics and their surrounding objects. Arranged chronologically according to the period covered by each essay, this collection covers a great breadth of ceramic sculpture, encompassing the domestic, institutional and ecclesiastical, with the majority of essays focusing on works produced by some of the major European factories during the eighteenth century.

One of the underlying tensions addressed by the volume is the long-held argument that ceramic sculpture relies



Front cover of *Sculpture and the Decorative in Britain and Europe, Seventeenth Century to Contemporary*
(photo: courtesy of Bloomsbury)

too heavily on the replication of existing works of art to be classified as a 'work of art', and that the divided labour necessary to produce it situates it at some distance from the 'single artist' sculptor, which is itself a Romantic construct, since most sculptors actually worked with several assistants and collaborators. Some essays, such as Tamara Préaud's overview of nineteenth-century sculptors at Sèvres, focus on ceramic sculptures that were entirely original works of art in their own right (although she acknowledges this was a tiny proportion of the factory's output), whereas others explore relationships between ceramic sculpture and other artworks, including marble sculpture, prints and paintings. Essays by Errol Manners (on François Barbin's sculptural works at Villeroy and Paris), Sarah-Katharina Andres-Acevedo (on Kändler's *Fête Galante* figures in relation to works by Watteau), Sabrina Leps (on Meissen's sacred sculpture), María Ángeles Granados Ortega (on works by Giuseppe Gricci and others active in the Buen Retiro Porcelain Factory) and Oliva Rucellai (on Gio Ponti's art direction at the Richard-Ginori factory in 1920s Italy) all compare ceramic sculptures with other, often pre-existing, works, albeit while stressing the level of creativity required to successfully translate often two-dimensional designs into three dimensions. The accusation of 'mere replication' is successfully dissected by Alicia Caticha in her wide-ranging analysis of porcelain and sculpture networks in eighteenth-century Paris, in which she compares the similarities of porcelain and bronze casting and highlights the ubiquity of clay as a modelling material, used by sculptors who went on to create work in porcelain, bronze and marble.

Addressing other means by which ceramic sculpture differs from other types of sculpture, some essays address colour and surface effect, including Federica Carta's discussion of the complex reliefs made by Luca della Robbia for the chapels of Impruneta, which she argues can be read as a dialogue between architecture, sculpture and painting, and Sabrina Leps' very interesting argument for the sacred meaning of porcelain's 'gloss' and the connection between ecclesiastical porcelain and the lustre phenomenon of the eighteenth century. Iris Moon brilliantly explores notions of whiteness and blackness in relation to Josiah Wedgwood's bust of Antinous as Bacchus, tracing changing tastes in ceramics, as well as the nuances of Wedgwood's 'copying' in relation to the neoclassical, but ultimately emphasizes the tactility and sensuousness of black basalt – covering issues of scale and the haptic that thread through both this volume and *Sculpture and the Decorative in Britain and Europe*.

Other essays situate ceramic sculpture within its surroundings, both original and later. Elizabeth Saari Browne's sophisticated essay examines the effect of Clodion's large-scale plaster *Erigone* (1782) in its original location in the Château de Maisons (now Château de Maisons-Lafitte), 'locating meaning not in classical learning but in the viewer's own sensuous experience of art' (p. 134). Browne also discusses Clodion's terracotta *Erigone* (1783), made after the plaster, and the ways in which this and other terracottas by Clodion encouraged active engagement from the viewer, according to theorist Roger de Piles's notion of the *pittoresque*. Anne Anderson provides a clear chronology of the late nineteenth-century craze for fourth-century BCE polychrome figures from Tanagra and their subsequent place in 'Aesthetic' displays, as well

as their impact on contemporary sculpture.

Themes of setting and display feature in Matthew J. Martin's excellent essay on the Zwettl table centrepiece, a hard-paste porcelain dessert service for thirty people made in 1767–68 by the Imperial and Royal porcelain factory, Vienna, and consisting of sixty-three figures and vases. After connecting the table centrepiece to the surroundings for which it was originally intended (showing how it echoed the ceiling frescoes and tied in with a musical composition commissioned from Joseph Haydn on the same occasion), Martin tackles directly the slippery question of porcelain's historically ambiguous position in relation to sculptural aesthetics and wrestles with the problematic association of decorative arts with function or utility. Traditionally classified as 'functional', figurative ceramics of the type included in the centrepiece are usually included in 'decorative' or 'applied' arts collections (as is this centrepiece), but fully articulating a point made mostly implicitly elsewhere in this volume, Martin argues that these figures have no utilitarian function yet do have meaning through iconography, thereby resituating the formal dessert table as the site of carefully staged sculptural displays. He explores further the view of porcelain sculpture as reproductive copy rather than autonomous sculpture, and the issues associated with the rejection of *Kleinplastik* (small-scale sculpture) in the latter part of the eighteenth century, which, Martin argues, continue to 'blight' porcelain's position in the canon and to affect our appreciation of 'porcelain's materiality, the mastery of its production and its concomitant representative role in eighteenth-century court culture', a status it held before it was 'relegated to the role of utilitarian material' (p. 94).

These questions of function, scale, situation and tactility are dealt with in *Sculpture and the Decorative in Britain and Europe, Seventeenth Century to Contemporary.* Whereas in *Ceramics as Sculpture*, the term 'decorative' is used mostly in relation to hierarchies of 'decorative' and 'fine' art, in this volume, edited by Imogen Hart and Claire Jones (the author of the introduction to the first volume), the meaning of 'decorative' itself is unpicked, revealing an ambiguous and unstable term that has been used to enforce boundaries within art and design and marginalize certain objects and makers, often along lines of class, race and gender. Jones and Hart acknowledge the sculptural and decorative as 'two overlapping, malleable concepts' (p. 5) without rigid distinctions and, refreshingly, call for each to make room for the other, so that they can be considered together and integrated, neither receiving priority nor hierarchical superiority.

The eleven essays in *Sculpture and the Decorative* cover myriad forms of sculpture, made from different materials, for a range of purposes, spanning the domestic, ecclesiastical, architectural and institutional, and discuss objects that have been excluded from conventional sculpture scholarship because of their failure to adhere to traditional tenets associated with the discipline. The bulk of the volume focuses on the nineteenth century onwards, with the exception of the first essay, in which Margit Thøfner considers the effect that Lutheran musical culture had on the work of the seventeenth-century Danish carver Abel Schrøder, and explains how his altarpiece at Skt Morten, Næstved, moves beyond its function as a piece of liturgical furniture to become a sculpture about sculpting, delivering a polyphonic performance. In the introduction, Hart and Jones acknowledge the lack of coverage across the eighteenth century and of sculptural works such as porcelain figures, a gap which, however, for those interested, is plugged well by *Ceramics as Sculpture.* Arranged according to the chronology of their subject matter, the essays demonstrate how perceptions of sculpture and the categorization of disciplines have evolved over time, flagging up that throughout the nineteenth century, so-called 'fine' and 'decorative' sculpture were not always viewed as separate entities.

Taking notions of the 'decorative' as a starting point, Michael Hatt artfully brings together the role of sculpture, ornament and ships in relation to the state in 'Golden Age' Denmark, using three objects – the carved figurehead for the corvette *Galathea*, the *Thorvaldsen*

Medal designed and modelled by Christen Christensen and a henta board from the Nicobar Islands – to discuss the different ways in which sculpture can 'move', whether geographically, across countries and colonies, or adapted to different forms, illustrating how 'decorative sculpture occludes the complex structures of state, colony and global relationships' (p. 74).

The relationship between the sculptural, the decorative and notions of place and nationalism is a theme that runs throughout this volume. Katie Faulkner's analysis of the interior of St George's Hall, Liverpool, encompasses freestanding sculpture, plasterwork reliefs and decorative fittings, and demonstrates that some ornamentation should be understood as sculptural. Faulkner highlights the scheme's references to Liverpool's role in the transatlantic trade in enslaved people and the ways in which the hall's South Pediment celebrates Liverpool's role as an abolitionist city while 'upholding imperial ideology' (p. 97). Referring to the juxtaposition of contemporary sculptures of statesmen with the mixture of classical, medieval and Renaissance decorative schemes within the hall, Faulkner questions the nature of this civic pantheon, pointing to the timely question of who is chosen to be celebrated in statuary form.

The effect of a multitude of styles is also explored in Imogen Hart's breakdown of the Scottish National War Memorial at Edinburgh Castle (opened in 1927), produced by more than 200 artists. Hart provides a nuanced explanation of what is meant by 'decorative' and 'sculptural' and how the decorative, in its 'simultaneous mass effect' (as General Sir Ian Hamilton described the War Memorial in a 1932 guidebook), can threaten what dealer, collector and critic Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler termed the 'independent existence' of freestanding sculpture. Instead, Hart utilises C. R. Ashbee's notion of 'aesthetic synthesis' to focus on the cooperative and interdependent nature of the many elements of the War Memorial, which, as Hart suggests, explores 'what sculpture can do when it is liberated from its conventions' (p. 178).

Melanie Polledri's original, in-depth explication of Welsh national identity and the ceremonial in William Goscombe John's *Corn Hirlas* (1898), made from silver and horn and set with gemstones, demonstrates how this alignment of sculpture and the decorative resanctioned 'the visual articulations of a Welsh nation based on the romantic valorisation of ancient myths and legends' (p. 147). As with other essays in this volume, Polledri pays attention to contemporary critical reception of the work and situates John's *Corn Hirlas* at the intersection of the Arts and Crafts movement, New Sculpture and John's inherited medieval aesthetics. Embracing materiality, Polledri's analysis of the materials and gilding shows that although this object was made for a colonized (Welsh) nation, this identity 'is expressed through imperial appropriation of other colonies' materials' (p. 158), therefore both resisting and embracing its relationship to England and the wider empire. It is a shame that the printed version of this volume is restricted to black and white illustrations only, as colour illustrations would have helped to augment many of the arguments in this chapter and others, especially those around decorative schemes and materials.

Anna Ferrari also addresses a strain of nationalism in an essay on Henri Laurens's collaborative work with architect Robert Mallet-Stephens, through which he created sculpture as an integral part of modernist architecture that often looked to the buildings of medieval France as a source of inspiration. By examining the work of Laurens in connection first with Mallet-Stevens and subsequently Le Corbusier, Ferrari illuminates the evolution of the complicated interrelationships between architecture and sculpture throughout the 1920s and 1930s, in view of the hostility towards the 'decorative' from critics including Adolf Loos, Le Corbusier and Kahnweiler, whose criticisms reappear several times throughout this volume.

Other essays explore the connections between women, sculpture and the decorative. Marjan Sterckx explores the interwoven positions of women as consumers of sculpture, women *as* sculpture and women as creators of sculpture in *fin-de-siècle* Brussels. Sterckx demonstrates that the physical

challenges involved in making large-scale sculpture resulted in most women making sculpture of reduced proportions, thus reinforcing critical perceptions of small-scale sculpture as feminine, domestic and 'decorative', related to interior decoration or made for holding in the hand. This was further compounded by the classifications in La Libre Esthétique at that time, which separated 'Sculpture' from 'Objets d'art and Decoration', although Sterckx also acknowledges that simultaneously women did become more active and visible in the world of sculpture.

This case study contrasts with Nina Lübbren's examination of the slightly later architectural commissions of Milly Steger (especially her 1911 façade of Hagen's Municipal Theatre) and the wildly popular tiny bronze animals made by Renée Sintenis in Germany during the 1920s. Lübbren argues that neither of these sculptors' careers was hampered by notions of the 'feminine' or 'decorative', although the small scale of Sintenis's work did result in it being described somewhat patronizingly as 'charming' and as a means of helping to 'domesticate Modernism' (p. 203).

This connection between the decorative and the domestic underpins the final three essays, which bring the volume up to the present day. In 'The Decorative Arts as Found Object', Lisa Wainwright traces the emergence at the end of the twentieth century of the found decorative object in sculpture, examining how in the wake of postmodernism, contemporary artists deployed and exploited items including silverware, chandeliers and light fittings, ceramics and textiles, often to address questions of race, class, gender and ethnicity. Wainwright argues forcefully for the power of the decorative arts when used as found objects – at scale in installations such as Cornelia Parker's *Thirty Pieces of Silver* (1988) and in deliberately unexpected places, such as in Nick Cave's surreal juxtapositions of materials gleaned from flea markets and antique shops, which 'sabotage' racist and regressive objects (pp. 260–61), or in Ai Weiwei's manipulation of traditional Chinese decorative works as 'strategic purveyors of national identity' (p. 253). Wainwright also elucidates the critical function of the decorative arts object in institutional critique of the 1990s, demonstrating how the inventions of artists including Joseph Kosuth, Peter Greenaway, Mark Dion and Barbara Bloom unsettled historic museum categories and broke 'the traditional taxonomic segregation of the fine and decorative arts' (p. 246). For Wainwright, in this 'post-disciplinary' moment, the boundary between fine and decorative arts has already collapsed – a more forceful articulation of arguments made elsewhere in this volume.

Focusing specifically on ceramics practice, Laura Gray makes a similar case, arguing that contemporary ceramic artists (including Paul Scott, Neil Brownsword and Clare Twomey) deliberately court the negative associations of the domestic and make use of the power of the familiar in the decorative arts and their links to the home, an intimacy that she argues sculpture struggles to access, in order to disrupt distinctions between high and low art. Concentrating on the notion of the monumental, both abstract and commemorative, Gray demonstrates how by employing 'the visual language of sculpture while remaining intellectually and materially engaged with clay' (p. 269), Scott, Brownsword and Twomey represent loss and absence in work that explores and commemorates the decline of all aspects of the ceramics industry in Stoke-on-Trent, including physical sites of production, labour and craft skills. However, by rejecting scale and physical impact in favour of performance and objects that are either small-scale or ephemeral, Gray argues that these monumental ceramic works become conceptually counter-monumental.

Points made by Wainwright (that artists already work across disciplines) and Gray (that sculpture has much to gain by absorbing the accessibility of craft) are extended by Bridget O'Gorman in her chapter on fabrication and the necessity of collaborative strategies in creative production today. Analysing the work of Emma Hart, Alice Channer and the Grantchester Pottery, she considers 'how contemporary sculpture, mediated through the decorative, might reflect wider societal concerns through the often precarious, lived experience of artistic production' (p. 291).

The relevance of contemporary art in this volume and the strength of the arguments made in relation to it highlight the lack of any essays in *Ceramics as Sculpture* that extend into the later twentieth or twenty-first century. This represents a missed opportunity to investigate whether arguments made about eighteenth-century porcelain could be expanded (or not) and applied to the work of contemporary sculptors/ceramicists who work in porcelain or parian, such as Rachel Kneebone, Hew Locke or Matt Smith.

Building on the work of scholars including Penelope Curtis and the curators of the exhibition *Sculpture Victorious* (2015), Martina Droth, Jason Edwards, Michael Hatt, Greg Sullivan, Hannah Lyons and Caroline Corbeau-Parsons, as well as earlier work by the editors Imogen Hart and Claire Jones, this collection of essays in *Sculpture and the Decorative* raises knotty and complex questions. Although there are some overlaps with *Ceramics as Sculpture*, including ideas of function, collaboration and the relationship between an object and the space around it, these essays go further and collectively probe what is meant by 'sculptural' and 'decorative', successfully demonstrating that more nuanced understanding of objects can be achieved by considering both, equally and in concert with one another. Spotlighting objects that are often liminal to sculpture as a discipline has produced a questioning, outward-looking and expansive volume, which encourages the reader to think harder and more broadly in order to make connections between objects, artists and eras they may not have considered previously, and it will no doubt prove a catalyst for further work in this area of research.

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