

# Making Memory Matter



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著者:Saltzman, Lisa

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In an ancient account of painting's origins, a woman traces the shadow of her departing lover on the wall in an act that anticipates future grief and commemoration. Lisa Saltzman shows here that nearly two thousand years after this story was first told, contemporary artists are returning to similar strategies of remembrance, ranging from vaudevillian silhouettes and sepulchral casts to incinerated architectures and ghostly processions.

Exploring these artists' work, Saltzman demonstrates that their methods have now eclipsed painting and traditional sculpture as preeminent forms of visual representation. She pays particular attention to the groundbreaking art of Krzysztof Wodiczko, who is known for his projections of historical subjects; Kara Walker, who creates powerful silhouetted images of racial violence in American history; and Rachel

Whiteread, whose work centers on making casts of empty interior spaces. Each of the artists Saltzman discusses is struggling with the roles that history and memory have come to play in an age when any historical statement is subject to question and doubt. In identifying this new and powerful movement, she provides a framework for understanding the art of our time.

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