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"In consequence of their whiteness": Photographing Marble Sculpture from Talbot to Today

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Marble. Heavy, hard, sometimes smooth, sometimes rough. Or, as the battered *Concise Oxford Dictionary* sitting on my desk puts it: "Limestone in crystalline (also, in granular) state & capable of taking polish, used in sculpture & architecture."[1] Unlike my timeworn lexicon, however, an actual piece of marble is not within hand's reach as I write this essay. Instead, dense, solid marble—and, more specifically, marble sculpture—is conjured up immaterially through memories, words and reproductive images. It is this latter mode of engaging with the medium that will be the focus of the present chapter, which will explore the role played by photographs in the interpretation of marble sculpture, as well as the role played by marble sculpture in the history of photography, from the pioneering photographer William Henry Fox Talbot to the Pictorialist Edward Steichen and on to contemporary artists such as Robert Mapplethorpe, Nan Goldin and Marc Quinn.[2]

When one speaks of "firsts" in photographic history, heated debates inevitably ensue, but a plausible candidate for the first-ever photograph to illustrate a printed book is an image taken in 1844 of a marble sculpture: a bust of the recently-deceased daughter of the owner of the London *Times*.[3] [Fig. 1] Catherine Mary Walter had died in January of that year, aged just 25. In the following months, her distraught family commissioned a privately-printed book that included as its only illustration a photograph of her marble portrait bust taken by Nicolaas Henneman, Talbot's former butler.[4] The salted paper print shows the sculpture against a dark ground, a shadowy tabletop barely visible

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[1] H. W. Fowler et al., eds., *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 729.

[2] For an introduction to the photography of sculpture in general, see Geraldine A. Johnson, ed. *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Idem, "*(Un)richtige Aufnahme*: Sculpture, Photography and the Visual Historiography of Art History," *Art History* 36 (2013): 12-51; Idem, "Photographing Sculpture, Sculpting Photography," in *Photography and Sculpture: The Art Object in Reproduction*, ed. Sarah Hamill and Megan Luke (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, forthcoming).

[3] For a summary of candidates for the first photographically-illustrated published book, see John Hannavy, ed. *Encyclopedia of nineteenth-century photography*, 2 vols. (New York: Routledge, 2008), vol. 1, 187.

[4] The accompanying text is dated 24 January and was written by the deceased's brother: I. W. [James Walter], *Record of the death-bed of C.M.W. [Catherine Mary Walter]* (London: Gilbert & Rivington, 1844). The book's exact publication date in 1844 remains uncertain, but it was probably soon after Henneman wrote on 31 May to Talbot that he had taken further photographs of the bust that pleased the girl's father, one of which was presumably used to illustrate the volume. It may have been photographed again in August. See doc. 5005 and 5037 in Larry J. Schaaf (ed.), "The Correspondence of William Henry Fox Talbot," http://foxtalbot.dmu.ac.uk/letters/letters.html. See also Helmut Gernsheim, *Incunabula of British photographic literature: A bibliography of British books illustrated with original photographs* (London: Scolar, 1984), 15.

beneath its pedestal. Although the dead girl's father was reported by Henneman to have been "very much pleased" by the photograph, the strict profile composition and uniform head-on lighting discourage any emotional engagement with the outside beholder and produce an image that is a rather flat and coolly-detached record of a marble object, rather than an emotive tribute to the deceased.[5] The visual convention of photographing a sculpture against a neutral dark or light ground in strict profile or (in other cases) in a head-on view for documentary purposes, which soon became standard practice for most museum catalogues and academic publications, is thus already evident in the earliest years of the development of the photographic medium.

Like the image of Catherine Walter's marble bust, a photograph taken by Talbot himself in 1842 of a bust he thought depicted the ancient Greek hero Patroclus is similarly set against an undifferentiated dark background.[6] [Fig. 2] But Talbot's use of dramatic lighting and a more intimate composition, which seems to thrust the sculpture into the beholder's own space thanks to its base being cut off by the bottom edge of the photographic print, results in a much more engaging countenance in both formal and psychological terms. In Talbot's photograph, Patroclus appears about to turn his head further to the left, a searching expression emerging from the shadowed sockets above the sightless eyes and with lips slightly parted as if about to speak. Even though the bust represents a fictional character, the effect is much more expressive and dynamic, one could even say lifelike, than the photograph of the real Catherine Walter's marble portrait.

The photograph of the Patroclus bust, together with another view of the same object seen in profile, were two of the 24 illustrations that appeared in Talbot's ground-breaking publication, *The Pencil of Nature*, published in six parts from 24 June 1844 onwards.[7] The book, which probably appeared within weeks, if not days, of the privately-printed memorial to Catherine Walter, is generally agreed to be the first commercial publication with photographic illustrations. The photographs of sculpted busts published in both books suggest that even in the earliest years of photography, a spectrum of photographic responses to statuary, from an apparently objective documentary record to a more self-consciously interpretive and artistic image, is already evident. At the same time, as we shall see, separating the documentary from

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[5] The comment by the girl's father, John Walter, was reported in a letter of 31 May 1844. See doc. 5005 in Schaaf (ed.), "Correspondence of Talbot". In a much later recollection, an assistant to Henneman claimed it was because Walter had seen the "beautiful Marble bust" being photographed that an article appeared in his newspaper announcing Talbot's new negative-based—and thus reproducible—form of photography. See *The Times* (London), 6 September 1844, p. 7, and V.F. Snow and D.B. Thomas, "The Talbotype Establishment at Reading - 1844 to 1847," *Photographic Journal*, no. 2 (1966): 60-61.

[6] On this photograph and others of the same bust, see Susan L. Taylor, "Fox Talbot as an Artist: The 'Patroclus' Series," *Bulletin: The University of Michigan Museums of Art and Archaeology* 8 (1986): 38-55; Larry J. Schaaf, *Introductory Volume: Facsimile of William Henry Fox Talbot, The Pencil of Nature* (New York: Hans P. Kraus, 1989), 48-49; Carol M. Armstrong, *Scenes in a Library: Reading the Photograph in the Book, 1843-1875* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1998), 145-149.

[7] William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, & Longmans, 1844-46).

the artistic in the case of photographs of sculpture is perhaps not quite as straightforward as this initial division suggests.

These were far from the only photographs of sculpture taken in the first decades of the medium's development. In fact, photographs of sculpted objects were among the earliest and most popular subjects for photographers working throughout Europe and further afield in the mid- to late nineteenth century.[8] The popularity of sculptural subjects was due at least in part to the technical advantages associated with photographing light-coloured objects, as explained by Talbot in the text that accompanied the first illustration of the Patroclus bust in *The Pencil of Nature* [see Fig. 2]:

> Statues, busts, and other specimens of sculpture, are generally well represented by the Photographic Art; and also very rapidly, in consequence of their whiteness. These delineations are susceptible of an almost unlimited variety: since in the first place, a statue may be placed in any position with regard to the sun…. And when a choice has been made of the direction in which the sun's rays shall fall, the statue may be then turned round on its pedestal, which produces a second set of variations….And when to this is added the change of size which is produced in the image by bringing the Camera Obscura nearer to the statue or removing it further off, it becomes evident how very great a number of different effects may be obtained from a single specimen of sculpture.[9]

In other words, for Talbot, a white sculpture like the bust of Patroclus—which he photographed at least 30 times over several years[10]—was an ideal subject because it could remain still long enough and was sufficiently luminescent for the extended exposure times demanded by early photographic processes. Such objects also allowed photographers to produce a wide range of visual effects by changing how they were lit, the angle from which they were photographed, and how near or far they were positioned in relation to the camera.

Contemporary sources seconded Talbot's enthusiasm for sculptural subjects, singling out photographs of the Patroclus bust for particular praise when reviewing *The Pencil of Nature*. For instance, an article that appeared in the *Literary Gazette* less than a week after the first part of the book was published in mid-1844 stated that the photograph of the bust was "really sublime in style and effect. Photography is admirably adapted for sculpture," while a review in *The Art-Union* echoed Talbot's own words by agreeing that the Patroclus bust was "an excellent subject for photography, in consequence of the whiteness of the material; hence all casts and busts are well adapted for representation. This is a most beautiful reflection, the shadows are finely transparent, and the whole singularly soft, round, and substantial."[11] One of

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[8] Although scholars have tended to focus on European photographers when writing about the development of photography in this period, there is increasing interest in the work of non-European practitioners. However, a proper consideration of the latter's photographs of marble sculpture, such as the remarkable images of temple carvings taken by the prolific Indian photographer Lala (or Raja) Deen Dayal from the 1870s onwards, is a subject for another essay.

[9] Talbot, *Pencil of Nature*, pl. V. The quotation in the title of the present essay is taken from this text.

[10] Taylor, "Patroclus," 39.

[11] Both cited in Schaaf, *Introductory volume: Pencil of Nature*, 48.

Talbot's friends, the Welsh mathematician, painter and amateur photographer Calvert Richard Jones, even claimed that the photographs of the Patroclus bust he had seen were the equals of Michelangelo's drawings, enthusing that "the beautiful Calotypes" of "the marble head" particularly "delighted" him.[12]

There is just one problem with this last comment: the Patroclus bust was not made of marble, but was instead a plaster cast of a Roman marble bust in the British Museum that was itself based on a lost Hellenistic original.[13] As Talbot himself confirmed in a letter written in 1840 from his estate of Lacock Abbey to the great English polymath and early experimental photographer Sir John Herschel when sending him photographs of the Patrolus bust: "These are from plaster casts, I have no marble bust here to copy from."[14] Jones's confusion about the bust's material is understandable given the rather "soft" qualities of Talbot's salted paper prints, to use one of the adjectives deployed by the reviewer in *The Art-Union*, which made fine distinctions between the surface texture of marble versus plaster hard to discern. But perhaps even more significant than the technical reasons why marble and plaster could so easily be mixed up when viewed in early photographic reproductions are the cultural circumstances that facilitated such errors in the first place and that presumably prompted Talbot to clarify in his letter that the photographs he was sending to Herschel were not of marble objects despite their initial appearance. The key factor in this type of confusion about material was the near-universal reverence in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe and North America for the white marble statuary of Classical antiquity. It was precisely this veneration of the antique that allowed a light-colored reproduction in either plaster or photographic form of a sculpture—whether ancient, Renaissance or Neo-Classical—to stand in for the original marble object in terms of its cultural signification. The photographic reproduction of a plaster reproduction of an ancient sculpture (which, in the case of the Patroclus bust, was itself a reproduction of yet another, even more ancient work) was thus a perfectly acceptable substitute that instantly alluded by visual means to Classical antiquity, the historical period most revered by those of Talbot's class and gender at this time.

In fact, one could argue that for early practitioners like Talbot, photographs of white sculpture, whether marble or plaster, served a key function that went well beyond the technical advantages of being light-colored, immobile objects. Instead, the choice of sculptural subjects that visually recalled ancient marble statuary (whether actually made from this material or not) provided a kind of legitimacy-by-association for the new medium of photography—and, by extension, for its practitioners and purchasers—

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[12] Letter of 4 June 1841. See doc. 4250 in Schaaf (ed.), "Correspondence of Talbot". Talbot initially referred to all his photographs as "photogenic drawings." See Taylor, "Patroclus," 49-50 and 54, n. 21. "Calotype," along with "Talbotype," refers to the negatives used to make salted paper prints by a process patented by Talbot.

[13] The cast forms part of the Talbot Archive that was recently acquired by the Bodleian Libraries at Oxford University. Talbot rather fancifully identified the bust's subject as Patroclus, Achilles's companion, but it is now thought to represent one of Ulysses's men. See "Marble head of a companion of Ulysses (Roman copy, c. 100-150, of Hellenistic original), British Museum," http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=460029&partId=1&searchText=GAA8748&page=1.

[14] Letter of 28 February 1840. See doc. 4046 in Schaaf (ed.), "Correspondence of Talbot".

by linking it to the prestige of the Classical past. Whether the subjects were actual ancient marble sculptures like those photographed in the 1850s by Robert Macpherson in the Vatican Museum in Rome or Roger Fenton in the British Museum in London, full-scale plaster copies like the Patroclus bust photographed repeatedly by Talbot beginning in 1839, or miniature plaster replicas photographed from the later 1830s onwards in often fanciful arrangements by Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre and many other early photographers was almost irrelevant as long as the resulting image visually referenced well-known Classical prototypes in white marble and their later classicizing descendants.[15]

The paradigmatic properties of photographs of light-colored sculpture, whether actual marble statues or their plaster replicas, is also suggested by the frequent use of such reproductions as key exemplars of the new medium's technical and artistic potential. Talbot himself, for instance, repeatedly sent (or was asked to send) photographs of the Patroclus bust and other sculptures that referenced the white marble statuary of antiquity to key correspondents in his bid to legitimize the new, reproducible form of negative-based photography he had invented—not only to Herschel, but to everyone from close family and friends to the Austrian Chancellor Metternich and the head librarian in Dresden.[16] Equally significantly, when Talbot's uncle, William Fox Strangways, the Earl of Ilchester, enumerated in a letter of 1840 the ten subjects most suitable for the new medium of photography, at the very top of the list was "sculpture," a term that inevitably served as shorthand for ancient marble statuary and its classicizing descendants and replicas.[17]

That photographs of sculpture could serve as a key means of demonstrating the new medium's technical potential and cultural significance is also implied in an incident in 1854 when Talbot photographed "a marble bust" in response to legal challenges to his

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[15] Talbot first mentions photographing the Patroclus bust in a letter of 7 December 1839 to Herschel. See doc. 3987 in ibid. On photographs of ancient sculpture and their replicas, including examples by Daguerre and Macpherson, see Julia Ballerini, "Recasting Ancestry: Statuettes as Imaged by Three Inventors of Photography," in *The Object as Subject: Studies in the Interpretation of Still Life*, ed. Anne W. Lowenthal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 41-58; Elizabeth Anne McCauley, "Fawning over Marbles: Robert and Gerardine Macpherson's *Vatican Sculptures* and the Role of Photographs in the Reception of the Antique," in *Art and the Early Photographic Album*, ed. Stephen Bann (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 91-122. For Fenton's British Museum photographs, see Valerie Lloyd, *Roger Fenton: Photographer of the 1850s* (London: South Bank Board, Hayward Gallery, 1988).

[16] See letters to and from Talbot discussing images taken by him of sculpted objects (often specified as the Patroclus bust), including ones sent to Sir John Herschel (Dec. 7, 1839, doc. 3987, and Feb. 1, 1840, doc. 4013); from Charles Lemon (Dec. 13, 1839, doc. 3988); to Charles Toogood Downing (Jan. 27, 1840, doc. 4005); from Charlotte Traherne (March 28, 1840, doc. 4063); from Antonio Bertolini (June 14, 1840, doc. 4089); and from Calvert Richard Jones (June 4, 1841, doc. 4250). Talbot's mother, Lady Elisabeth Feilding, asked him to send four sample photographs to Metternich, including one of an unspecified statue (Feb. 1, 1840, doc. 4013), while his half-sister, Caroline Edgucumbe, included a photograph of the Patroclus bust among the six sample images she gave to the Dresden librarian (Aug. 5, 1841, doc. 4318). These letters are transcribed and annotated in Schaaf (ed.), "Correspondence of Talbot".

[17] Letter to Talbot of 7 March 1840. See doc. 4056 in ibid.

various photographic patents. In order to discredit his accusers, Talbot tried to replicate one of the processes claiming precedence over his own method. To Talbot's evident relief, the result was not a photographic print of the bust, but a completely blank piece of paper, thereby confirming that this particular rival process was fundamentally flawed.[18] What is notable here is that it was a light-colored, three-dimensional sculpture that was selected to be the test subject. Although Talbot specified in his letter that he had photographed a marble object, it is also possible that he was using "marble bust" as shorthand for Classicizing sculpture in general and that he had once again photographed the plaster Patroclus bust given that his letter was sent from Lacock Abbey, where nearly 15 years earlier no marble busts were to be found. Plaster, of course, would also have been easier to photograph than polished marble given its matte, non-reflective qualities. But whether Talbot photographed the plaster Patroclus bust or another bust actually made of marble, the key point is that the choice of a light-colored sculpture had not only technical implications, but semiotic ones as well given the ability of marble, plaster or even photography to produce images that served as visual signifiers of the Classical tradition.[19]

In more scholarly contexts, the semiotic interchangeability of marble original, plaster replica and photographic reproduction is evident well into the twentieth century. In 1915, for instance, the founding father of Formalist art history, Heinrich Wölfflin, placed a photographic illustration of a marble relief by the Renaissance sculptor Antonio Rossellino alongside an illustration of a plaster reproduction of the same work in order to demonstrate the effects of different types of lighting on sculptural reliefs in one of three articles he published on the photography of sculpture.[20] The implication is that it was the formal and stylistic characteristics of a sculpture that were of greatest importance to art historians rather than the particular qualities of its medium. More generally, it is interesting to see a preponderance of photographs of light-coloured sculptures in marble and, occasionally, plaster in many later nineteenth and early twentieth-century art historical publications that included photographic illustrations, no doubt at least in part due to the fact that it was much easier to photograph a luminous white sculpture than a work in dark, highly-reflective bronze. For instance, only three of the 22 illustrations in Wölfflin's articles on the photography of sculpture depicted bronze objects, with one of these (Verrocchio's bronze *David*) once again illustrated alongside a plaster replica, in this case to demonstrate the "correct" angle from which to photograph the statue, regardless of whether it was the original or a copy.[21]

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[18] The letter describing the experiment was sent by Talbot to M.H.N. Story-Maskelyne on 23 November 1854. See doc. 7059 in ibid.

[19] My thanks to Larry Schaaf for generously sharing his views on the question of whether Talbot really did photograph a marble bust in this case. (Personal communication by email, 8-10 November 2015.)

[20] See the illustrations in the last of Wölfflin's articles, which appeared in 1896, 1897 and 1915 and have recently been translated by Geraldine A. Johnson (trans.), "Heinrich Wölfflin: 'How One Should Photograph Sculpture'," *Art History* 36 (2013): 69, fig. 21-22.

[21] See ibid., 55, fig. 2-3. On Wölfflin's fascination with establishing the "correct" point of view for photographing a sculpture, see Geraldine A. Johnson, "*(Un)richtige Aufnahme*: Sculpture, Photography and the Visual Historiography of Art History," ibid.: 27-31.

Wölfflin and other art historians of a formalist or connoisseurial bent were well aware of the crucial role played by photographs in their work. In the Preface to the first edition of his influential *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe* also published in 1915, Wölfflin makes this point explicit: "The illustrations…are numerous enough to arouse an interest on their own and to stimulate the reader to come to his own insights about the suggestions [made] in the text." He goes on to say that while photographing "Classic" paintings could produce acceptable results, in the case of "Baroque" paintings, the photographs almost always seriously "distort the facts."[22] Wölfflin considered the photography of sculpture in particular in his key chapter on "linear" versus "painterly" forms through a pair of illustrations on facing pages of white marble statues by Jacopo Sansovino and Pierre Puget, the light-colored sculptures clearly silhouetted against the dark shadows of their surrounding niches. [Fig. 3] What is fascinating about this particular pairing is Wölfflin's shift in his text from analyzing the marble sculptures to scrutinizing their photographic reproductions, much as he had done in more general terms in his Preface when discussing photographs of Classic versus Baroque paintings:

> For the full-length figure, we illustrate by a parallel between J. Sansovino and Puget. The reproduction [of Sansovino's figure] is too small for us to obtain a very clear idea of the treatment of detail, yet the contrast of style makes itself felt with the utmost clearness. Firstly, the St. James of Sansovino is an example of classic silhouette effect. Unfortunately, the photo is not taken from the absolutely characteristic front view and hence the rhythm looks somewhat vague. We can see where the mistake lies—in the slab at the feet. The photographer stood too far to the left. The consequences of this mistake make themselves felt everywhere, mostly perhaps in the hand holding the book:…the relation between the hand and the forearm has become so unintelligible that a trained eye must protest. [But] If we take up the right standpoint, the whole thing becomes clear at once, and the clearest view is also the view of complete rhythmic self-sufficiency.[23]

This is, in effect, a formal analysis of a photograph of a statue, rather than of the marble sculpture itself, a practice regularly—though often unselfconsciously—engaged in by most art historians ever since the nineteenth century. Even those great advocates of so-called scientific connoisseurship, Giovanni Morelli and Bernard Berenson, were ultimately as much reliant on photographs as on objects for making many of their attributions. Indeed, Morelli's famous illustrations comparing how various artists depicted fingers and ears were based on tracings made from photographs, while Berenson enthused: "Photographs, photographs, photographs. In our work we can never have enough of them."[24] Wölfflin's interest in defining the general formal

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[22] My translation from Heinrich Wölfflin, *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Das Problem der Stilentwicklung in der neueren Kunst*, 1st ed. (Munich: Bruckmann, 1915), vii. Note that the prefaces accompanying the first English translation do not mention the illustrations at all. See Idem, *Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art*, trans. Mary Hottinger (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1932).

[23] The translation is from the first English edition in which the sculptures were not reproduced on facing pages. Idem, *Principles*, 59.

[24] Berenson is cited in Ernest Samuels, *Bernard Berenson: The Making of a Connoisseur* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), 75. On Morelli's tracings, see Richard Wollheim, "Giovanni Morelli and the Origins of Scientific

characteristics of a particular time and place meant that the vast majority of the illustrations that appeared in his publications featured complete views of individual sculptures, paintings and buildings, rather than close-up images of details. In contrast, connoisseurs like Morelli and Berenson were interested precisely in the telling detail that would magically reveal the hand of the individual artist. Berenson himself even admitted that looking at actual art works "as a whole" could be distracting when trying to make an attribution, instead preferring to submit a piece "to the leisurely scrutiny of photography. The more photographs of the same object, the better."[25]

The demand for photographs of art works and especially the "mania…for 'details' and for 'details of details'," as Roberto Longhi put it, grew exponentially in the first decades of the twentieth century.[26] Perhaps the most extreme example of this "mania" were the dozens upon dozens of photographs of sculptural details published by the self-styled "scholar-photographer" and historian of Classical and Renaissance sculpture, Clarence Kennedy.[27] Kennedy is best known today for his exquisite photographic portfolios of Greek and, especially, Italian sculpture, the majority made of marble. On the title pages of several of the volumes he published under the series name of "Studies in the History and Criticism of Sculpture," Kennedy made his formalist and connoisseurial agenda clear: "Photographic details of figure sculpture and architectural decoration [have been] taken expressly to facilitate the study of attributions and the critical analysis of style."[28] Just how many details this could comprise can be seen in his 1928 volume on a marble tomb monument by the Renaissance sculptor Desiderio da Settignano.[29] This portfolio, which had no text apart from that found on the titlepage, included a single image of the monument as a whole followed by 56 close-ups of details that in many cases would not have been easily visible to a beholder standing before the work in the dark and cavernous church of Santa Croce in Florence. [Fig. 4] Although exposure times would have been enormously reduced compared to the situation in Talbot's day thanks to more sensitive film and the availability of electric lights, white marble's ability to emerge clearly from the deep shadows engineered by Kennedy in his more theatrically-lit photographs recalls the technical advantages Talbot had highlighted more than 80 years earlier when discussing the photography of light-colored sculpture. But rather than a single, complete sculptural object silhouetted against a dark background, Kennedy's photographs of marble sculpture taken in the later 1920s and early 1930s dissected each work into a series of atomized fragments.

Connoisseurship," in *On Art and the Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 192.

[25] Bernard Berenson, *Aesthetics and History in the Visual Arts* (New York: Pantheon, 1948), 204.

[26] Cited in Ettore Spalletti, "La documentazione figurativa dell'opera d'arte, la critica e l'editoria nell'epoca moderna (1750-1930)," in *Storia dell'arte italiana: l'artista e il pubblico*, ed. Giovanni Previtali (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1979), 478.

[27] On Kennedy, see Melissa Beck Lemke, "A Connoisseur's Canvas: The Photographic Collection of Clarence Kennedy," in *Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History*, ed. Costanza Caraffa (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2011), 323-333; Johnson, "Visual Historiography," 33-35.

[28] See, for example, the title page of Clarence Kennedy, *The Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini by Desiderio da Settignano and Assistants*, Studies in the History and Criticism of Sculpture, vol. 2 (Northampton, Mass.: Smith College and Carnegie Corporation, 1928).

[29] Ibid.

The motivation was ostensibly "scientific," part of Art History's more general desire in this period to be seen as a serious academic discipline that assessed visual data as dispassionately as a scientist looking through a microscope or a telescope. But the resulting images owe as much to a contemporary Surrealist aesthetic of the fragment, the found object and the unconscious as to supposedly more objective scientific methodologies.

In his obituary of Kennedy, Ulrich Middeldorf summarized his colleague's approach as one in which photographs of sculpture "were not 'more beautiful than the originals' as has been said,…[but made a sculpture's] qualities better understood than any verbal analysis could do." Indeed, for Middeldorf, it was a photograph by Kennedy of a detail showing "an angel's head…which still meets best my idea of [the Renaissance artist] Verrocchio as a marble sculptor."[30] Other scholars in this period likewise argued that photographic illustrations, which often consisted of close-up views, could be the most effective means of making an art historical—and, more specifically, a formalist or connoisseurial—argument. For example, in a 1924 report produced at the University of Marburg, where art historians were being trained at the time in both photography and more conventional forms of academic scholarship, it was claimed that photographs of ancient Greek marbles could on their own generate new interpretations: "they call for a change in assessment of these objects."[31]

Kennedy published seven deluxe portfolio volumes replete with close-up views of sculpture between 1928 and 1932, with an eighth volume on the marble decoration of a funerary chapel in Florence by Antonio Rossellino left unfinished when he abandoned the series in c.1933-34. Thirty years later, his photographs and related research notes were incorporated by Frederick Hartt into a monograph on Rossellino's chapel. Although now accompanied by an extensive textual apparatus, the 192-page volume included nearly 160 illustrations, the majority details of the chapel's marble carvings taken by Kennedy three decades earlier.[32] Hartt's involvement in this project is significant since less than a decade later, he began his long association with Kennedy's most important successor as a documentary photographer of sculpture, the American PR-man-turned-photographer David Finn.[33] Rather than the hints of Surrealism evident in some of the details photographed by Kennedy in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Finn's images from the late 1960s onwards of works like Michelangelo's *Rondanini Pietà* in Milan transformed close-up photographs of three-dimensional marble sculptures into dramatic two-dimensional graphic studies of light and shade that owe more to the aesthetics of high Modernist abstraction than to museological and academic conventions of documentary photography. [Fig. 5] Like Kennedy, however, Finn believed that photographs—and, by implication, photographers—could be as

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[30] Ulrich Middeldorf, "Clarence Kennedy 1892-1972," *Art Journal* 32, no. 3 (1973): 272.

[31] Cited in Pepper Stetler, "Art History without Words: The Photographic Books of the Marburg Archive," in *Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History*, ed. Costanza Caraffa (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2011), 314.

[32] Frederick Hartt, Gino Corti, and Clarence Kennedy, *The Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal, 1434-1459, at San Miniato in Florence* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964). How Kennedy's photographs came to illustrate the volume is explained in Hartt's Preface. See ibid., 7-8.

[33] Their first collaboration was David Finn (photographs) and Frederick Hartt (text), *Donatello, Prophet of Modern Vision* (New York: Abrams, 1972).

effective in analyzing sculpture as the text-based arguments presented by curators and art historians. This conviction is evident in the subtitle of books such as *Michelangelo's Three Pietàs: A Photographic Study by David Finn; text by Frederick Hartt*, in which the professional art historian is pointedly given second billing.[34] In an essay accompanying another volume co-produced with Hartt in which the collaborators used a combination of visual and textual arguments to attribute a newly-discovered sculptural model to the hand of Michelangelo, Finn makes his position clear: "I believed that my camera might help to determine the work's authenticity."[35] Elsewhere, in a volume co-authored with Kenneth Clark, Finn goes as far as claiming that "through my photographs, I had joined the sculptors in making a creative contribution to their work."[36]

In the publications illustrated by Finn, the line between photographs of sculpture as documents and photographs of sculpture as works of art in their own right is repeatedly blurred, even though both he and his academic collaborators insisted that his images were ultimately intended to serve the needs of rigorous formal analysis and convincing connoisseurial attribution. Already in the first years of the twentieth century, however, the aesthetic possibilities of sculpture photography were being celebrated without any academic pretensions whatsoever by Pictorialist photographers like Edward Steichen. His self-consciously "artistic" photographs of sculpture, which dispensed with the crisply-focused and carefully-centered visual conventions associated with documentary modes of photography, were part of a broader bid to claim for the medium the status of a fine art. One of Steichen's earliest and most influential images deployed in this campaign was his 1901 portrait of Auguste Rodin, in which he silhouetted the controversial French sculptor against his recently-completed marble monument to Victor Hugo, with the famous author positioned as both presiding spirit and artistic double of the man who had conceived his effigy.[37] [Fig. 6] In this photograph, which was published in 1903 in the second issue of Alfred Stieglitz's influential journal *Camera Work*, Steichen's soft-focus technique, dramatic lighting and innovative composition clearly sought to challenge the beauty, grandeur and gravitas of painting. The articles that accompanied Steichen's image made these ambitions clear. For instance, the German-Japanese critic Carl Sadakichi Hartmann, who wrote for *Camera Work* under the pseudonym Sidney Allan, enthused that Steichen's portrait of Rodin was a "masterpiece," laying particular emphasis on the tonal contrasts between the shadowy sitter and the white marble background:

> It is a whole man's life condensed into a simple silhouette, but a silhouette of

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[34] Idem, *Michelangelo's Three Pietàs: A photographic study by David Finn; text by Frederick Hartt* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976).

[35] See Finn's comments in Frederick Hartt (text) and David Finn (photographs), *David by the hand of Michelangelo: The original model discovered* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 138. In this case, Hartt (who discovered the model) did receive first billing.

[36] See Finn's comments in Kenneth Clark (text) and David Finn (photographs), *The Florence Baptistry Doors* (New York: Studio, 1980), 24.

[37] On the complicated histories of Rodin's various Hugo monuments, including the marble version carved in 1901 that appears in Steichen's photograph, see Jane Mayo Roos, "Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo: Art and Politics in the Third Republic," *The Art Bulletin* 68 (1986): 632-656; Ruth Butler, Jeanine Parisier Plottel, and Jane Mayo Roos, *Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo* (London: Merrell Holberton, 1998), esp. pp. 15-20 and 65-90.

> somber splendor, powerful and personal, against a vast background, where black and white seem to struggle for supremacy. This print should, once and for all, end all dispute [about]…artistic photography….A medium, so rich and so complete, one in which such a masterpiece can be achieved, the world can no longer ignore. The battle is won![38]

In the same issue, Charles Caffin highlighted the "painter-like qualities" of Steichen's photographs, once again using the portrait of Rodin as a key example given its "introspective depth and subtlety of imagination [that]…sum up with tolerable succinctness the genius of Rodin." These effects were the result of the "contrast of masses and of tones" and of the sculptor being "darkly silhouetted against the half-tones of the plaster cast of the Hugo statue."[39]

Although the *Monument to Victor Hugo* had, in fact, originally been shown at the Paris Salon of 1897 as a roughly-finished plaster model, by the time Steichen produced his photographic portrait, the sculpture had been reworked and carved in marble in order to be displayed at the Salon of 1901. Caffin, however, clearly mistook marble for plaster much like Talbot's contemporaries had confused plaster with marble. Given that he was writing in the U.S. without direct access to Rodin's studio and had relied on an image produced with Steichen's signature photographic technique that intentionally blurred surface textures, Caffin's mistake is understandable—indeed, doubly so given Rodin's own medium promiscuity when endlessly reworking sculptural themes in iteration after iteration in plaster, marble, wax, bronze and even photographic form. On the one hand, the function of Rodin's *Monument to Victor Hugo* within Steichen's photograph was clearly iconographic: the established great man of letters carved in expensive white marble literally framing the sculptor seeking to confirm his own greatness, with both figures in turn allowing the photographic medium and its practitioners to bask in the reflected glory of their mutual artistic "genius." On the other hand, the choice of an expanse of white marble for the backdrop provided Steichen with ideal tonal and compositional possibilities for expressing his Pictorialist aesthetic. But whether the sculpture he photographed was actually made of marble or plaster was, in the end, quite literally immaterial in terms of how the resulting photograph looked.[40]

A lack of interest in documenting the marble monument as an actual physical entity is also implied in Steichen's second portrait of Rodin made in 1902, which was subsequently published in 1906 in *Camera Work*.[41] **[Fig. 6*-optional extra image]** Here, the negative taken in 1901 is reversed and combined with a new photograph of Rodin's bronze statue *The Thinker* to produce a second Pictorialist meditation on the sculptor's genius and the artistic ambitions of the photographer himself. In this version, the *Monument to Victor Hugo* is blithely rotated 360 degrees in order to create a more

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[38] Sidney Allan [Carl Sadakichi Hartmann], "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," *Camera Work*, no. 2 (1903): 28.

[39] Charles H. Caffin, "Eduard J. Steichen's Work.--An Appreciation," ibid.: 21-22.

[40] On the immateriality of sculptural subjects in photographic images, see Geraldine A. Johnson, "'All concrete shapes dissolve in light': Photographing sculpture from Rodin to Brancusi," *Sculpture Journal* 15 (2006): 199-222.

[41] On Steichen's two portraits of Rodin, see Malcolm R. Daniel, *Stieglitz, Steichen, Strand: Masterworks from the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2010), 13; Mia Fineman, *Faking It: Manipulated Photography before Photoshop* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2012), 28-30 and 209-210.

aesthetically-pleasing composition in which Rodin, now posed on the left looking towards the center, artfully mirrors *The Thinker* set on the right and also facing towards the center, with both the silhouetted sculptor and the dark bronze statue theatrically positioned in front of the white marble background. This reworking of the original negative confirms that the marble monument was intended to serve Steichen's overarching artistic agenda rather than act as a distinct sculptural subject in its own right. But while both portraits of Rodin resist documenting the marble sculpture in any conventional way, the photographs themselves taken as a whole clearly document Steichen's own artistic ambitions—they are, in other words, simultaneously art and document.

In the work of Steichen and Talbot before him, we have seen how photography could undermine medium specificity, with white marble being mistaken for plaster and plaster for marble when viewed on the surface of a photographic print. Rather than such inadvertent transpositions, photography could also be used very deliberately to transform marble statues not into plaster, but into living bodies and, conversely, change flesh into stone. One example of this phenomenon is the imagery associated with the so-called Physical Culture movement in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century.[42] In this period, famous showmen like the Anglo-German bodybuilder Eugen Sandow were repeatedly compared in texts and photographs to ancient marble statues. [Fig. 7] By posing during their performances in attitudes that mimicked Classical sculptural models, sometimes going as far as doing so while balanced on pedestals, Sandow and other strongmen suggested that the body—especially the male body—could be sculpted through exercise into the ideal forms of ancient statuary, in the process providing their displays with a veneer of cultural respectability by visual association. Significantly, Sandow claimed that his decision to devote his life to transforming himself into a living approximation of a Classical statue was inspired by seeing actual ancient sculptures of athletes on a boyhood trip to Rome.[43]

The interchangeability of man and marble is likewise evident in contemporary writings, as seen in a review of one of Sandow's shows in 1910, which claimed that while many people had insisted "that the mighty men of muscle which were portrayed in the

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[42] See Michael Anton Budd, *The Sculpture Machine: Physical Culture and Body Politics in the Age of Empire* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997); Tamar Garb, "Photography, Physical Culture, and the Classical Ideal," in *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 86-100; Michael Hatt, "Eakins's Arcadia: Sculpture, Photography, and the Redefinition of the Classical Body," ibid., 62-65.

[43] See Idem, "Eakins's Arcadia," 62. Sandow's body was literally petrified when it served as the model for a monumental white marble sculpture of the Battle of the Lapith and the Centaur completed in 1900 by Gustave Adolphe Crauck and still on display at the *Mairie* of the *6eme arrondissement* in Paris. He was also cast in plaster for a short-lived exhibition at the forerunner to London's Natural History Museum and served as the model for a bronze statuette designed by William Pomeroy in 1891, which is still awarded to champion bodybuilders today. See David L. Chapman, *Sandow the Magnificent: Eugen Sandow and the Beginnings of Bodybuilding* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 15, 124, 129-130 and 191; David Waller, *The Perfect Man: The Muscular Life and Times of Eugen Sandow, Victorian Strongman* (Brighton: Victorian Secrets, 2011), 28-29 and 177-181.

marble by the sculptors of the classical age were simply products of the sculptors' imagination….here we have a…man [Sandow] who lives and breathes at this very moment…and comes favourably out of a comparison with any of them."[44] Similar connections were made by the notorious Francis Galton, the founding father of eugenics, who in 1901 attended the world's first major bodybuilding competition at the Royal Albert Hall in London. The event was judged by the organizer, who was none other than Sandow himself; the author and great admirer of Sandow, Arthur Conan Doyle; and Charles Lawes, a sculptor who was also a former champion athlete. According to Galton, while most of the competitors "did not bear comparison with Greek statues of Hercules and other athletes, being somewhat ill-proportioned and too heavily built….Sandow afterwards exhibited himself in a pose…and in that statuesque position I place him as far superior to all the competitors."[45] Another observer made the link even clearer when he claimed that Sandow's arms seemed "to have been hewn out of marble."[46]

Such comparisons were undoubtedly encouraged by and given permanent visual form in the photographic illustrations of Sandow and other "statuesque" bodybuilders published in popular Physical Culture magazines, how-to exercise books and individual prints. A particularly telling example is the juxtaposition of a photograph of Sandow with a reproduction of the marble *Farnese Hercules* that appeared in one of his many guides to perfecting the body through exercise, each figure set against a monochromatic background that allowed the contours of the light-colored bodies to stand out clearly for the beholder's leisurely perusal.[47] [see Fig. 7] Here, the strongman presents himself as his ancient model's double, with the photograph of Sandow trimmed at the base to approximate the plinth seen beneath the marble statue. In images showing Sandow from the front, strategically-placed fig leaves were often included in order similarly to recall contemporary display conventions for nude male figures.[48] The *Farnese Hercules* would have been known to most of Sandow's admirers through plaster, bronze, photographic or engraved reproductions (given that few would have seen the statue itself in Naples), but twinning the strongman with the much-admired marble original in a pair of photographs was crucial to creating a socially-licit, even inspirational image of the bodybuilder ennobled by his direct visual association with one of the most famous works of the ancient world.[49] Of course, the plausibility of such comparisons was very much dependent on the leveling effects of black-and-white photography, which allowed male bodies and male statuary to become visual equivalents—something that would have been much more difficult to achieve convincingly in a head-to-head comparison of the skin-colored body of a living man with a dead white marble statue. Photography's ability to make flesh and stone appear to be interchangeable was further enhanced by bodybuilders' practice of dusting

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[44] Review in *The Strand Magazine* (Jan. 1910) cited in Idem, *Perfect Man*, 69.
[45] For Galton's comments and a summary of the 1901 competition, see ibid., 173-181.
[46] Cited in Chapman, *Sandow*, 35.
[47] The illustrations were presented as the final, culminating image of the last chapter ("Life of the Author as Told in Photographs") of Eugen Sandow, *Life is Movement: The Physical Reconstruction and Regeneration of the People* (Hertford, U.K.: Simson & co., 1919), 500. The preface to the book was written by Conan Doyle.
[48] A life-size plaster cast of Sandow likewise included a fig leaf while on public display. See note 43 above.
[49] The marble statue in Naples was itself probably a copy of a lost bronze cast attributed to the Greek sculptor Lysippos.

themselves with white talcum power before being photographed so as to better evoke the color and surface texture of marble statuary in the resulting prints.[50]

Just how widely-available such images were is suggested by the fact that photographs of Sandow, often in *all'antica* poses based on famous marble statues, were produced and offered for sale not only in Britain, but also in Europe, the U.S. and Australia, and were collected by enthusiasts ranging from the Prince of Wales to the author and *fin de siècle* advocate of homosexual relationships John Addington Symonds.[51] While Symonds clearly enjoyed the "splendid" (as he put it) images of Sandow for their arousal value, it was precisely photography's ability to transform bare male bodies into visual equivalents of the marble statuary of antiquity that allowed potentially homoerotic images to be transformed into socially-sanctioned exemplars of the Classical tradition fit for public consumption and admiration. Significantly, Symonds himself framed his desire for such photographs in the aesthetic language of art appreciation when he admitted that although he owned so many images of nude male bodies that he could "paper a little room" with them, he continued to collect photographs of figures like Sandow in the hope of finding "the supreme form & the perfect picture"—with the question of whether this "perfection" was artistic or erotic left intentionally ambiguous.[52]

Anything but ambiguous is the erotic charge evident in photographs taken in the 1970s and 1980s by Robert Mapplethorpe in which marble statues are transformed into life-like objects of desire and, in a kind of reverse Pygmalion effect, living bodies morph into almost impossibly perfect statue-like beings.[53] Most of Mapplethorpe's photographs of Antinous, Apollo, Hermes and other idealized white marble figures omit the tell-tale plinth or pedestal that would confirm their stony materiality, while in other cases, he focuses on statues' faces in intense close-ups that recall his bust-length

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[50] See Garb, "Physical Culture," 86-100; Michael Hatt, "Eakins's Arcadia: Sculpture, Photography, and the Redefinition of the Classical Body," ibid., 63. Bodybuilders also sometimes dusted themselves with powder before public performances, in effect making themselves look more like both marble statues and the black-and-white photographs taken of their own statuesque bodies. See Chapman, *Sandow*, 144; Hatt, "Eakins's Arcadia," 63.

[51] See Chapman, *Sandow*, 33-34 and passim; Waller, *Perfect Man*, 71 and passim.

[52] Symonds' comments, made in response to receiving photographs of Sandow in 1889, are cited in Idem, *Perfect Man*, 8 and 71. On Symonds' aestheticized responses to living, photographic and sculpted bodies, see Stefano Evangelista, "Aesthetic Encounters: The Erotic Visions of John Addington Symonds and Wilhelm Von Gloeden," in *Illustrations, optics and objects in nineteenth-century literary and visual cultures*, ed. Luisa Calè and Patrizia Di Bello (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 87-104.

[53] On Mapplethorpe's photographs of sculpture, see: William Hood, "A Lazy Man's Approach: Robert Mapplethorpe and the Language of Sculpture," in *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Germano Celant, Arkady Ippolitov, and Karole Vail, *Robert Mapplethorpe and the Classical Tradition: Photographs and Mannerist Prints* (New York: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 2004-5); Franca Falletti and Jonathan Nelson, eds., *Robert Mapplethorpe: Perfection in Form* (Kempen: teNeues, 2009); Judith Benhamou-Huet et al., *Mapplethorpe Rodin* (Paris: Actes Sud Editions, 2014).

portraits of living sitters.[54] This blurring of the distinctions between lifeless sculpture and living model through the use of analogous formal strategies is seen in Mapplethorpe's 1989 photographic diptych of a statue modeled on Antonio Canova's famous marble of the ancient pugilist Creugas (or Kreugas) in the Vatican Museum. [Fig. 8] That the replica was made of polished marble rather than matte plaster is confirmed by the reflected highlights on the figure's buttocks, which are captured in the equally glossy surface of the gelatin silver print.[55] At the same time, the marble materiality of the statue is counteracted by Mapplethorpe's decision to set the figure against an inky black background, omit its pedestal and crop it just below the torso. These visual strategies serve to emphasize the taut, muscular buttocks in the rear view and the exposed genitals in the front view, body zones of formal interest and homoerotic fascination in many of Mapplethorpe's similarly-composed photographs of living male sitters.[56] Thanks to the use of black-and-white photography and the deployment of interchangeable formal approaches, Mapplethorpe's marble pugilist could therefore easily be mistaken at first glance for one of the photographer's equally athletic and equally buffed-and-polished living models.

Conversely, Mapplethorpe photographed a number of living subjects—male and female, black and white—in poses that explicitly recall marble prototypes and traditional display conventions for figurative sculpture. For instance, in 1974 Mapplethorpe took a series of photographs of Manfred, a young male sitter, in statue-like poses inside a niche, while in a sequence taken in 1981, a model named Ajitto is shown crouching on a draped pedestal like a sculpture on public display.[57] Similarly, in 1985 Mapplethorpe photographed two muscular young men, Derrick Cross and Von Hackendahl, standing on circular bases in a clear echo of the poses and plinths associated with Classical sculpture and its later variants.[58] Once again, as was the case with the images associated with the Physical Culture movement, the transformation of flesh into marble and marble into flesh is enabled by the leveling effects of black-and-white photography. However, unlike bodybuilders such as Sandow, who used visual references to antiquity to make popular entertainment with potentially homoerotic undertones more socially acceptable, Mapplethorpe's photographs of petrified bodies

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[54] For an example of the latter phenomenon, compare Mapplethorpe's *Ken Moody and Robert Sherman* (1984) and *Apollo* (1988) in Celant, Ippolitov, and Vail, *Mapplethorpe*, pl. 81 and 112.

[55] I have been unable to identify the marble copy that Mapplethorpe photographed, so its scale remains unclear.

[56] For example, see Mapplethorpe's *Derrick Cross* (1983) and *Larry* (1979) in Celant, Ippolitov, and Vail, *Mapplethorpe*, pl. 4; Benhamou-Huet et al., *Mapplethorpe Rodin*, 204, cat. 105. On the intersection of the formal and the homoerotic in Mapplethrope's work, see Mike Weaver, "Mapplethorpe's Human Geometry: A Whole Other Realm," *Aperture*, no. 101 (1985): 42-47. I would like to thank Mike Weaver for sending me a copy of his article.

[57] For the Ajitto images, see Celant, Ippolitov, and Vail, *Mapplethorpe*, pl. 15-18. For the Manfred series, see: http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/

[58] Photographs of Cross and Hackendahl were donated by the Mapplethorpe Foundation to the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, home of Michelangelo's marble *David*, after they were exhibited there in 2009. See Falletti and Nelson, *Mapplethorpe*; Rachel Lee Harris, "Mapplethorpe Photos to Stay in Florence," *The New York Times* (21 March 2010), http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/22/arts/design/22arts-MAPPLETHORPE_BRF.html.

and life-like white marble statues are instead unapologetic explorations of his own sexuality and identity as a gay man, as well as evidence of a general interest in this period in the politics of gender and sexual orientation as witnessed by the burgeoning Women's and Gay Rights movements.

The whiteness of marble, which is such a key feature of Mapplethorpe's high-contrast images of Classical and classicizing statues, is of course nothing more than a convenient myth. Leaving aside the fact that marble sculpture has been made in a whole range of hues, from the deep violet of *mischio di Seravezza* to the orange-yellow of *giallo antico brecciato*, even so-called "white" marble is anything but uniformly monochromatic when seen outside the confines of a black-and-white reproduction, with undertones of gray, gold or rose often evident, not to mention the changing effects of ambient light, both natural and artificial, on its perceived color.[59] At the same time, the tones and textures of so-called black-and-white photographs themselves also encompass a much wider range than is usually acknowledged, from the brownish-yellow shades of an early salted paper print by Talbot or Henneman to the deep glossy blacks of a gelatin silver photograph by Kennedy or Mapplethorpe or the smoky matte shadows of a Steichen photogravure reproduced in *Camera Work*. [see Fig. 1, 2, 4, 6, **6*(optional)**, 8] In other words, neither white marble statuary nor its photographic reproductions are ever truly "monochromatic" in any absolute or essential sense.

At the same time, as we have seen, photographers have long exploited the leveling effects of so-called black-and-white photography and have played with beholders' expectations about how both bodies and statues should be reproduced in various photographic media. In the case of Nan Goldin, it is color photography, both in analogue and digital form, that is deployed to create formal and conceptual equivalences between art and life. For instance, in *Scopophilia*, a series begun during her residency at the Louvre Museum in Paris in 2010, Goldin juxtaposes color photographs of marble statues, painted canvases and an array of family and friends.[60] [Fig. 9] Shown both as a slide show and in a series of large framed chromogenic prints and collages, *Scopophilia* jumps from marble, to paint, to flesh and back again. Some of Goldin's photographs of marble statues, such as one of a sleeping Hermaphrodite, are printed as single images that completely fill the picture frame. **[Fig. 9*-optional extra image]** In this case, the photograph is taken from above as if looking down onto

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[59] On the color of marble, including the "whiteness" of white marble, see: Nicholas Penny, *The Materials of Sculpture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 49-67 and 93-101; Andreas Blühm, *The Colour of Sculpture, 1840-1910* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1996); Charmaine Nelson, "'So Pure and Celestial a Light': Sculpture, Marble, and Whiteness as a Privileged Racial Signifier," in *The Color of Stone: Sculpting the Black Female Subject in Nineteenth-Century America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 57-72; Roberta Panzanelli, Eike D. Schmidt, and Kenneth D. S. Lapatin, eds., *The Color of Life: Polychromy in Sculpture from Antiquity to the Present* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2008); Gian Enzo Sperone et al., *White: Marble and Paint, from Antiquity to Now* (London: Robilant+Voena, 2012); Philippe Jockey, *Le mythe de la Grèce blanche: histoire d'un rêve occidental* (Paris: Belin, 2013).

[60] Nan Goldin, "Nan Goldin: Scopophilia (2011 exhibition)," Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, http://www.matthewmarks.com/new-york/exhibitions/2011-10-29_nan-goldin/. For a review of the exhibition, see Karen Rosenberg, "A Voyeur Makes Herself at Home in the Louvre," *The New York Times*, 9 December 2011, Weekend Arts section, 1 and 34.

the Hermaphrodite lying gracefully entwined in bed linen, with a smoothly curving torso, soft wavy hair and just-visible male genitalia—an intimate and seemingly unstaged composition that recalls Goldin's similarly sympathetic snapshot portraits of the transvestites and transsexuals who have been central to her artistic practice since the mid-1970s.[61]

This photograph of the marble Hermaphrodite reappears in the lower right corner of a collage titled *The Back*, with a second view of the same sculpture taken from another angle included in the lower left corner. [see Fig. 9] In this latter image, the Hermaphrodite's genitals are hidden from view so that the figure's sex and sexuality are as ambiguous as those of the other figures whose backs are presented in the collage in marble, paint and flesh. The poses selected by Goldin leave questions of gender and sexual identity intentionally open and fluid, with the range of implicit possibilities echoed in formal terms in the equally wide range of colors and textures of the backs on display, from the matte grayish hues of the Hermaphrodite and the slightly more polished and rosy tones of the marble torso in the center, to the ruddy, yellowish, caramel and dark brown shades of the other painted and living sitters. At the same time, pairing celebrated marble statues and famous painted works from the Louvre with a typical assortment of Goldin's unidealized living models both ennobles the latter and draws the former into the realm of the *demi-monde* that has been the focus of her attention for over four decades—but without displaying the kinds of social anxieties about decency and decorum that were evident in similar juxtapositions concocted by advocates of the Physical Culture movement a century earlier.

Playing with and against the cultural associations of white marble statuary is also a key aspect of the final work that will be considered in this essay, Marc Quinn's imposing marble sculpture of the artist Alison Lapper, which was displayed for two years on the so-called Fourth Plinth in London's Trafalger Square in front of the National Gallery.[62] [Fig. 10] Lapper, born without arms and with truncated legs due to a genetic condition, was one of the models used by Quinn for a series of life-sized white marble statues of sitters with missing or incomplete limbs that he called, with intentional irony, *The Complete Marbles* (2000). Lapper posed for her statue while heavily pregnant and it was presumably this striking feature that led Quinn to use this design as his submission for the Fourth Plinth competition. After Quinn was awarded the commission for this prestigious site, the original model was massively enlarged into a statue made of white Carrara marble weighing 13 tons and standing 3.55 m high. Although the selection of Quinn's design was initially controversial, its reception once unveiled on Trafalger Square in September 2005 was, with a few notable exceptions, remarkably positive

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[61] Her most well-known collection of such images is Nan Goldin, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*, ed. Suzanne Fletcher, Marvin Heiferman, and Mark Holborn (New York: Aperture Foundation, 1986). For *Young hermaphrodite sleeping, Le Louvre* (2010), see: http://www.matthewmarks.com/new-york/exhibitions/2011-10-29_nan-goldin/works-in-exhibition/.

[62] On this project, see: Marc Quinn and Richard Rogers, *Marc Quinn Fourth Plinth* (Göttingen: SteidlMACK, 2006); Ann Millett-Gallant, *The Disabled Body in Contemporary Art* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 51-81; Chelsea Nichols, "Human Curiosities in Contemporary Art and their Relationship to the History of Exhibiting Monstrous Bodies" (University of Oxford, 2014), 115-162. See also Lapper's co-written autobiography, Alison Lapper and Guy Feldman, *My Life in My Hands* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2005).

given the challenging nature of the subject for such a public location.[63]

The choice of white marble for both the initial statue and the over-life-sized monument on Trafalger Square was crucial for linking the design visually and conceptually to the Classical tradition of European statuary. Quinn himself, in discussing the figures carved for *The Complete Marbles* series, makes the significance of the medium clear: the statues "had to be made in marble, not plastic or plaster. I like to use materials for their intrinsic and metaphoric content….Those [marble] pieces would be very different to someone who had never seen antique sculpture."[64] The connections between incomplete living bodies and the limbless statues of antiquity were also evident to Lapper herself: "And then one particular book I was looking at fell open at a photograph of the Venus de Milo. It showed a white marble statue, in the ancient Greek style, of a woman with both her arms missing. There was a flash of recognition—hey, that's me!"[65]

Lapper's recollection highlights the important role played by photographic reproductions in allowing her sculpted body to be read as a contemporary comment on ancient icons of beauty such as the *Venus de Milo*. Like Lapper, the majority of the public would have been most familiar with Classical sculpture through photographic reproductions, both analogue and digital, even if such works were also occasionally encountered in the flesh, so to speak. Similarly, many Londoners would have first and—for those who did not visit Trafalger Square while Quinn's sculpture was on display—only seen *Alison Lapper Pregnant* in photographic reproductions. The mediating role played by such images was also hinted at in some of the articles that appeared when the work was unveiled. Adrian Searle writing in *The Guardian*, for instance, claimed that: "Marc Quinn's *Alison Lapper Pregnant* is a much more arresting, impressive and strange work than photographs can convey….It isn't just the size and mass of Quinn's sculpture, or the cool, off-white marble, lighter than any of the stone of the square or buildings around it. It is all in the form, and the strangeness of Alison Lapper's body itself, its irreducible familiarity and otherness."[66]

Like Searle, other writers commented on the contrast between the intense whiteness of the marble figure and its immediate surroundings, which consisted of both the classicizing architecture of the adjacent buildings and the sky above, sometimes a dull gray and at other times a brilliant blue. For example, Nigel Reynolds writing in *The Telegraph* observed that "the statue stands crystal white against the yellow-grey Trafalger Square buildings," while Rachel Cooke in *The Observer* linked the statue's whiteness to ancient marble prototypes: "White and dazzling, Quinn's sculpture has set a grey corner of a grey space unexpectedly ablaze….Against a sky the colour of old underwear…Quinn's womanly but warrior-like Lapper in marble from Pietrasanta, Italy, glowed like a beacon.…It brings to mind the classical statues that grace our greatest museums, other sculptures from other times which also have, whether by

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[63] For a sample of press reactions, see Quinn and Rogers, *Fourth Plinth*.
[64] Robert Preece, "Just a load of shock? An interview with Marc Quinn," *Sculpture* 19, no. 8 (2000): 14-19.
[65] Lapper and Feldman, *My Life*, 186.
[66] Adrian Searle, "Arresting, strange and beautiful," *The Guardian* (16 September 2005), http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2005/sep/16/art.

accident or design, missing arms and legs."[67] The striking color contrasts noted by these writers were also captured in many of the photographs that illustrated not only printed and online articles, but Quinn's own website and publications, as well as in the dozens upon dozens of digital images uploaded to the internet by visitors to the square.[68] [see Fig. 10]

Quinn's choice of bright white marble clearly served both iconographic and formal functions, with the immediate visual impact of the material as captured in widely-circulated photographic images allowing him to reference and implicitly critique the Classical tradition's aesthetic ideals, as well as confront present-day prejudices about disability. It is thus deeply ironic that when the design was enlarged yet again, this time to the size of a three-story house, it was no longer made of marble but instead was transformed into a giant inflatable shell that served as the centerpiece for the grand finale of the London Paralympic Games' opening ceremony in 2012. With an estimated world-wide viewing audience of nearly 11 million people, it was Lapper's pregnant white body with its missing and malformed limbs that stood spot-lit by massive beams of light at the very center of an otherwise darkened Olympic Stadium.[69] Viewers around the world, conditioned by more than a century and a half of photographic reproductions of sculpture, would have "read" the enormous dirigible as marble, a modern-day *Venus de Milo* now celebrated for her courage in the face of disability, as well as for redefining the canons of beauty itself. Through the virtual reality of digital photography and video images, the actual medium of the replica was less important than what it signified "in consequence of its whiteness," to paraphrase Talbot's comments on the Patroclus bust, another photogenic sculpture (mis)read as marble through the mediation of photography. We have come full circle, with the technical advantages and cultural resonances of light-colored sculpture as a photographic subject still as much in evidence today as in Talbot's time, irrespective of whether a particular work is actually made of white marble or not. It is, in other words, the idea of marble, the memory of marble more than its material reality that is evoked and enabled by photography—but it is this idea and this memory that are often more real and more present to us than any actual marble sculpture ever can be.

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[67] Nigel Reynolds, "Whatever would Nelson think?," *The Telegraph* (26 October 2005), http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1498490/Whatever-would-Nelson-think.html; Rachel Cooke, "Bold, brave, beautiful: Marc Quinn's sculpture of Alison Lapper has completely transformed Trafalger Square," *The Observer* (18 September 2005), http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2005/sep/18/art.

[68] See, for instance, Fig. 10 in the present essay, which is the cover image for Quinn's definitive book on the project, Quinn and Rogers, *Fourth Plinth*.

[69] See the photograph and video (at 3:29:00) of the Opening Ceremony: "Show of strength," *The Sunday Times* (2 September 2012), http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/newsreview/theweek/article1116387.ece; "Opening Ceremony - London 2012 Paralympic Games," (29 August 2012), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kd4FgGSY5BY. An inflatable version of the sculpture—presumably the same one used at the Paralympic Games—was also displayed at the Venice Biennale in 2013. See Waldemar Januszczak, "Magical mystery tour," *The Sunday Times* (9 June 2013), http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/culture/arts/Visual_Arts/article1269086.ece.

Illustrations Captions and Notes

Fig. 1: Nicholas Henneman (attr.), *Marble Bust of Catherine Mary Walter*, frontispiece of I.W. [James Walter], *Record of the death-bed of C.M.W.* (London, 1844). Salted paper print from a paper negative. [photo by permission of the British Library (General Reference Collection C.193.a.25)]

Fig. 2: William Henry Fox Talbot, *Bust of Patroclus*, in Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature* (London, 1844; n.b. image taken in 1842), pl. V. Salted paper print from paper negative. [photo courtesy of New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Jean Horblit, in memory of Harrison D. Horblit, 1994, accession no. 1994.197.1 (5), www.metmuseum.org]

Fig. 3: Unknown photographer(s), *Marble statues by Jacopo Sansovino (left) and Pierre Puget (right)*, page spread in Heinrich Wölfflin, *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Munich, 1915), pp. 64-65. [photo courtesy of the author]

Fig. 4: Clarence Kennedy, *Urn; Right Foot*, in Kennedy, *Studies in the History and Criticism of Sculpture, Volume II: The Tomb of Carlo Marsuppini by Desiderio da Settignano and Assistants* (Northampton, Mass., 1928), pl. 26. Gelatin silver print on Kodak Athena paper mounted on paperboard. [photo courtesy of Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, Massachusetts. Gift of David and Diane Thomas. SC 2011:42-26. © Kennedy estate]

Fig. 5: David Finn, *Michelangelo's* "*Rondanini Pieta" (detail)*, in David Finn (photographs) and Frederick Hartt (text), *Michelangelo's Three "Pietàs"* (London, 1976), p. 142. [photo © David Finn]

Fig. 6: Edward J. Steichen, *Rodin*, in *Camera Work*, no. 2 (1903; n.b. image taken in 1901). Photogravure. [photo courtesy of Google Art Project, commons.wikimedia.org]

***[optional]* Fig. 6*:** Edward J. Steichen, *Rodin—Le Penseur*, in *Camera Work*, supplement issue (1906; also published as a half tone in *Camera Work*, no. 11, 1905; n.b. left-hand image taken in 1901). Photogravure. [photo courtesy of Google Art Project, commons.wikimedia.org]

Fig. 7: Unknown photographer(s), *The original "Farnese Hercules"* and *The Author [Eugen Sandow] in a similar pose*, in Sandow, *Life is Movement* (Hertford, U.K., 1919), p. 500. Half-tones. [photo courtesy of Wellcome Library, London, wellcomeimages.org]

Fig. 8: Robert Mapplethorpe, *Wrestler* [diptych after Antonio Canova's *Creugas*], 1989. Gelatin silver prints. [photos © Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation. Used by permission]

Fig. 9: Nan Goldin, *The Back* [from *Scopophilia* series—two views of *Young Hermaphrodite sleeping* in lower left and right corners], 2011. Chromogenic print. [photo © Nan Goldin, courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery)

***[optional]* Fig. 9*:** Nan Goldin, *Young Hermaphrodite sleeping, Le Louvre* [from *Scopophilia* series], 2010. Chromogenic print. [photo © Nan Goldin, courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery)

Fig. 10: Marc Quinn Studio (photographer), *Marc Quinn's "Alison Lapper Pregnant," 2005, on Trafalger Square*, front cover of Quinn and Richard Rogers, *Marc Quinn Fourth Plinth* (Göttingen, 2006). [photo © Marc Quinn Studio]

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