

# Cinematic Intermedialities and Contemporary Holocaust Memory

Victoria Grace Walden

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and Contemporary  
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*Cinematic Intermedialities* is a book that recognises the agency of both humans and non-humans in the production of Holocaust memory, it is thus fitting that I acknowledge not only the people who have supported this work, but also the experiences and encounters with things that have inspired it. This book would not have been written were it not for the countless trips to a variety of former killings sites across Europe, from the forests of Lithuania and Latvia to the Nazi death camps now transformed into memorials and museums in Poland, from contemporary memorials in Berlin to abandoned and forgotten ruins in Alderney, the Channel Islands. Since my first Holocaust research trip in 2010, I have been inquisitive about the relationship between film, and screen media more broadly, and the topography of Holocaust memory, and I cannot forget the influence that visiting these places has had on my work, particularly my fascination with the material remnants that point to absence, and my gravitation towards films that foreground victims as individual people.

I also cannot forget how paying close attention to the movements of natural landscapes whilst distracted from reading or writing turned out to be a fruitful form of procrastination, as it informed my reading of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's notion of 'the assemblage'. Passing the volatile Vesuvius whilst I sat on an Italian train on respite during a self-imposed writing retreat ignited images of enfolding matter in my imagination. Seeing the molds of human skeletons at nearby Herculaneum that were trapped in their final poses thanks to the famous eruption, reminded me of the very material affect environmental things

can have on our bodies. Whilst sitting on the beach at Hove, a moment of writer's block encouraged me to attend to the sea water shifting pebbles around. Here, I observed the flow of affects played out as material performance between liquid and solid, without any human interaction. These experiences during the writing process had a profound effect on my interpretation of the French writers' geological examples of assemblages. As someone that had started to define themselves as a phenomenologist and thus was resistant to Deleuze's writing, I saw the poetry of his and Guattari's ideas in action in these locations, and they changed the way I looked at film, the material world, and philosophy.

Now to turn to the people, who have undoubtedly been more influential, inspirational and supportive than the places mentioned above. I would like to thank my fellow teachers at Queen Mary's College, Basingstoke, who, all those years ago, despite their busy schedules, encouraged me to write and engage in the wider film and media community from the beginning of my teaching career, and provided the stimulating academic discussions that gave me the confidence to pursue a Ph.D. Although many of them no longer work at Queen Mary's, I want to recognise the support and passion of Roy Ashbury, Jane Stables, Lee Bone and Ian Keetch particularly.

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# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Holocaust Film Beyond Representation</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>The Archive, Assemblage and Archaeology</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Animation, Assemblage, the Affection-Form</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Digital Augmentation, Assemblage, the Actual and the Virtual</b>	<b>155</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Epilogue</b>	<b>201</b>
	<b>Index</b>	<b>211</b>