Latin love elegy is one of the most important poetic genres in the Augustan era, also known as the golden age of Roman literature. This volume brings together leading scholars from Australia, Europe and North America to present and explore the Greek and Roman backdrop for Latin love elegy, the individual Latin love elegists (both the canonical and the non-canonical), their poems and influence on writers in later times. The book is designed as an accessible introduction for the general reader interested in Latin love elegy and the history of love and lament in Western literature, as well as a collection of critically stimulating essays for students and scholars of Latin poetry and of the classical tradition.

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Long disregarded as frivolous poetry, Latin love elegy currently enjoys widespread recognition as a powerful vehicle for dazzling aesthetics, political poignancy, social provocation and challenging gender-representations. This Companion explores Latin love elegy as a form of expression that is both playfully light and gravely serious within the context of earlier Greek and Roman poetry, as well as that of later literature. Designed as a comprehensive introduction to the main characteristics of the literary genre, it also includes cutting-edge research and fresh scholarly approaches, in the hope of inspiring future endeavours in the increasingly blooming field of erotic-elegiac scholarship.

The contributors to this volume merit my heartfelt thanks. It has been a pleasure, and an immensely enlightening one, to work with scholars capable of producing works that are as informative as they are stimulating. I also wish to thank Professor Alessandro Barchiesi and Dr. Martin Dinter for their inspiration and moral support, which provided the sine qua non for the future of this volume at early stages. My greatest thanks are however due to Professor Stephen Harrison, whose exceedingly generous and learned help has been indispensable throughout the entire process. My thanks to him are also due to the fact that he kindly acted in an editorial capacity for my own contributions to the volume. Similarly, I owe thanks to the various anonymous readers who have been involved at different stages in the process. The staff at the Bodleian Library and – not least – the staff at the University of Science and Technology Humanities Library both merit my humble thanks: their patience has been impressive. Thanks are also due to Terje Breigutu Moseng for consolidating the bibliography and to Professor Lasse Hodne and Svein Henrik Pedersen for helping me find the right jacket picture. Finally, at the Cambridge University Press I owe heartfelt thanks to senior editor Michael Sharp for his expertise, support and patience during some four years and to editor Elizabeth Hanlon for rewarding collaboration, especially during the final lap. Thanks are also due to production editors Elizabeth Davey and Rachel Cox for their assistance and to Andrew Dyck for copy-editing the volume.
ABBREVIATIONS

AE    L'Année Épigraphique
A&P   Aris and Phillips Classical Texts
AP    Anthologia Palatina
BT    Bibliotheca Teubneriana
CEG   Carmina Epigraphica Graeca
CIL   Corpus Inscriptiarum Latinarum
FLP   The Fragmentary Latin Poets, ed. Courtney
K-A   Poetae Comici Graeci, R. Kassel and C. Austin
LIMC  Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae
LTUR  Lexicon topographicum urbis Romae, ed. Steinby
OCD   Oxford Classical Dictionary, 3rd edn, ed. Hornblower and Spawforth
OCT   Oxford Classical Texts
OLD   Oxford Latin Dictionary
PIR   Prosopographia Imperii Romani
PC    The Penguin Classics
PL    Patrologiae Cursus, series Latina, ed. Migne
RE    Real-Enzyklopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft
LCL   Loeb Classical Library
WC    The World’s Classics