

## SHAKESPEARE, TIME AND THE VICTORIANS

Time and the visual sense were two essential preoccupations of the Victorians, and both were central to their presentations of Shakespeare's plays. In this extensive new study, Stuart Sillars examines multiple facets of this complex relationship. The desire for authenticity in production, in the work of Charles Kean and his followers, leads to elaborate sets that define and direct the performances' movement through time. Visual artists of all kinds fracture and extend the plays' movements, the Pre-Raphaelites through new techniques and approaches, illustrators through new forms of engraving and printing, and photographers through the emerging forms of the medium. The book also considers the multiple forms in which performances were recorded and recreated visually, and absorbed into the memories of their viewers. With many previously unpublished images, it draws together multiple fields to offer a new perspective on one of the most productive and various periods of Shakespeare activity.

STUART SILLARS is Professor of English at the Universities of Bergen and Agder, Norway. He has written extensively on literature and the visual arts, and his most recent books are *Painting Shakespeare: The Artist as Critic, 1720–1820* (2006) and *The Illustrated Shakespeare, 1709–1875* (2008), both published by Cambridge University Press. Earlier books have explored visual and literary art in the two world wars, illustration and the Victorian novel and the special forms of irony involved in English writing of the early twentieth century.



*Frontispiece* Dante Gabriel Rossetti, engraved by Seymour Hayden. *Hamlet and Ophelia* c. 1880. The engraving combines multiple facets of the Victorian concern with time. It presents Hamlet and Ophelia in the scene where their earlier relationship is both recalled and suspended. While the setting refers to earlier episodes of the play, and the carvings make allusions to relevant biblical scenes, through reversing the original (see Plate 21) in the engraving process, the image reverses the narrative progression to offer a wholly new account of the play's movement through time. See Chapter 3, pp. 96–9.

# SHAKESPEARE, TIME AND THE VICTORIANS

A PICTORIAL EXPLORATION

STUART SILLARS



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*For my Cambridge companions:*

*Charles and Jenny*

*Clive and Patricia*

*Ed and Rosalind*

*'constant in all other things'*

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