

SHAKESPEARE AND THE VISUAL IMAGINATION

Shakespeare's knowledge of the practices of visual art, its fundamental concepts and the surrounding debates is clear from his earliest works. This book explores this relationship, showing how key works develop visual compositions as elements of dramatic movement, construction of ideas, and reflections on the artifice of theatre and language. *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Richard II* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are explored in detail, offering new insights into their forms, themes, and place in European traditions. The use of emblems is examined in *Titus Andronicus* and *As You Like It*; studies of *Venus and Adonis*, some sonnets and *The Rape of Lucrece* reveal different but related visual aspects; a later chapter suggests how the new relation between seeing and soliloquy in *The Rape of Lucrece* is developed in other plays. Extensively illustrated, the book explores Shakespeare's assimilation and exploration of visual traditions in structure, theme and idea throughout the canon.

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Frontispiece Prefatory illustration to Book 33, perhaps by Thomas Cockson, *Orlando Furioso*, translated by Sir Thomas Harington (London: 1591). In showing two separate perspectives, a series of foreground images, and figures reading them, it brings together elements central to the contemporary English approach to visual art, and hence to Shakespeare's visual imagination.

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STUART SILLARS





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For my grandson,
Sebastian Peter Sillars
Born 26 February 2014

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