

BOYDELL & BREWER

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STONE FIDELITY

Marriage and Emotion in Medieval Tomb Sculpture

JESSICA BARKER

Summary

A unique study of the striking and often poignant ‘double tomb’ effigies of the Middle Ages.

Key Points

- *[A] magnificent and original study.* Christopher Howse, DAILY TELEGRAPH
- Winner of the Historians of British Art Book Prize 2022
- 33 colour and 63 b/w illustrations
- Includes gazetteer of sites to visit
- A delightful book for church visitors and anyone interested in monuments, shrines and sculpture
- Art history, ecclesiology, medieval gender and social history

Description

Medieval tombs often depict husband and wife lying side-by-side, and hand in hand, immortalised in elegantly carved stone: what Philip Larkin’s poem *An Arundel Tomb* later described as their “stone fidelity”.

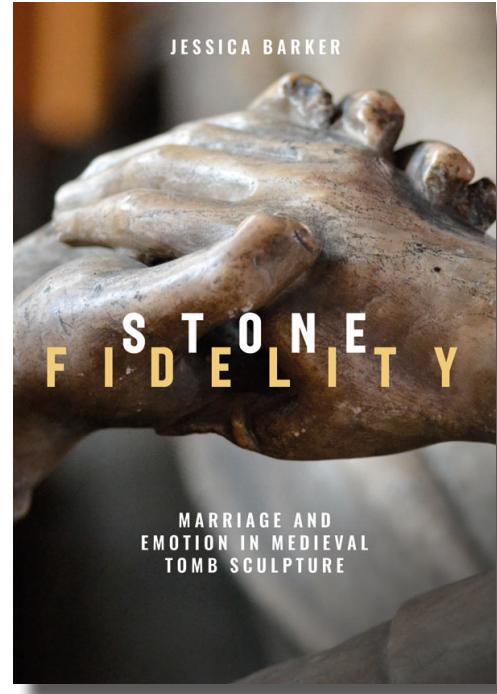
This first full account of the “double tomb” discusses its rich tradition in the contexts of gender, marriage, politics and emotion during the Middle Ages. As well as offering new interpretations of some of the most famous medieval tombs, such as those found in Westminster Abbey and Canterbury Cathedral, it draws attention to a host of lesser-known memorials from throughout Europe, providing an innovative vantage point from which to reconsider the material culture of medieval marriage.

Setting these twin effigies alongside wedding rings and dresses as the agents of matrimonial ritual and embodied symbolism, the author presents the “double tomb” as far more than mere romantic sentiment. Rather, it reveals the careful artifice beneath their seductive emotional surfaces: the artistic, religious, political and legal agendas underlying the medieval rhetoric of married love.

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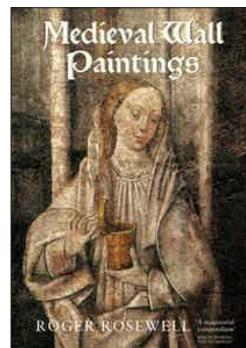
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Contents & sample illustrations

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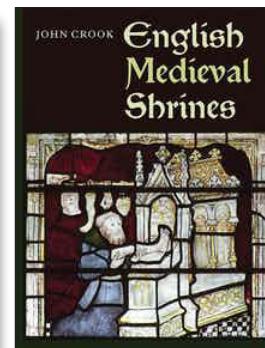
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Gender, Agency and the Much-Married Woman

Holding Hands: Gesture, Sign, Sacrament

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Bibliography



Top left: Monument to Richard II and Anne of Bohemia, 1395–99

Top right: Monument to Margaret Holland, duchess of Clarence, John Beaufort, earl of Somerset and Thomas of Lancaster, duke of Clarence, 1439

Above: Effigies of Margaret Holland and Thomas of Lancaster, duke of Clarence

Bottom left: Detail of coronation miniature from the Gospels of Henry the Lion, Helmarshausen Monastery

Middle left: Monument to a Fitzalan knight and lady

