



Haunted Hearts and Household Ghosts

Dead But Not Departed in Victoria's Britain

Debra N. Mancoff

Tuesday, October 30, 2018
6:00 to 7:00 pm

When Queen Victoria's beloved husband Prince Albert died in 1861, she swathed herself in black and mourned his loss for the rest of her life. But in her household, Albert was never truly gone.

His image appeared in family portraits, she wore jewelry that featured his likeness, and she transformed his possessions into sacred objects. In turning his memory into an ever present ghost, Victoria was not alone in her desire to keep the dead from departing. Her subjects had their own ways of keeping the memory of lost loved ones alive, including mourning etiquette, household memorials, and ritualized means to contact the dead.

Today we may find such practices chilling, but in the time of the Widow of Windsor and her ghostly consort, these tributes provided solace to haunted hearts. On the night before Halloween, come explore Victorian-style mourning in a light-hearted look at the rituals and relics—from graveyard gatherings and séances to posthumous portraits, hair jewelry, and spirit photography—that gave the dead a vital role in daily life.

Debra N. Mancoff explores the interconnections of art, fashion, and culture, with a focus on Britain. She is a Scholar in Residence at the Newberry Library, where she regularly teaches in the Seminars Program. Mancoff will sign copies of her most recent book, *The Face: Our Human Story*, commissioned by the British Museum, following the lecture.



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