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BOOK INFORMATION SHEET (9.15.22)

Author (as it should appear on the book): Sandra Matthews

Title: *Occupying Massachusetts*

Subtitle: *Layers of History on Indigenous Land*

Contributors: with texts by David Brule and Suzanne Gardinier

Partner: Published in association with the Center for the Study of Place

Book pages: 104

Number and type of illustrations: 65 four-color plates by the author and 1 map = 66

Trim size: 10.0" x 8.5" landscape/horizontal

List price: \$40.00

Discount: Trade

ISBN (book): 978-1-938086-89-2

ISBNs (electronic): T.B.D.

Edition: Hardcover

E-book? T.B.D.

Interactive e-book? N.A.

Jacket: No—using a belly band.

Edition size: 850

Advances due: mid to late April 2022

Publication date: mid to late May 2022

To warehouse: late May or early June 2022

Printed in: Singapore

Distributor: Casemate/IPM

Bookstore categories (list three): Photography/Public History/Cultural Studies/New England

Audience: Anyone interested in photography, landscape history, cultural and Native American studies, and New England; historical societies, libraries, and bookstores in Massachusetts and New England.

Selling points (list three): (1) This book addresses contemporary issues—including how history is remembered and told and by whom—regarding Indigenous lands and how those lands became occupied, both in Massachusetts and more broadly New England and America; (2) with engaging photographs and texts it draws the reader into a new awareness about complex issues surrounding remembrance and concepts of home; and (3) it suggests new and valuable ways of understanding landscapes.

Tagline: This book will change the way you think about land and home!

Description of the work:

Occupying Massachusetts: Layers of History on Indigenous Land is an art book that engages with history and memory. Sandra Matthews's subtle photographs of vernacular structures and historic sites offer a uniquely personal meditation on the human occupation of land, with an emphasis on the long presence of Indigenous people, whose lands have been transformed by people coming here from all over the world since the early 1600s.

Utilizing a muted color palette, the photographs suggest the presence of deep histories that are embedded in the landscape but often are invisible. Although the book focuses on Massachusetts, it implicitly raises larger issues of settlement and conquest, nationhood and identity. How did the United States of America come to occupy its land? How is this story of occupation remembered and rendered, by whom and for whom? As a longtime occupant/occupier of Massachusetts herself, Matthews aims to understand more deeply the land on which she lives.

The main text of the book comes from her photographs of historic markers, which were installed around the state at different times by different interest groups. The words on these markers describe early relations between Indigenous people and largely English settlers, from diverse points of view. In this way, the book explores how difficult and differing histories are written and told and how those stories change over time. This theme is carried forward in essays by Indigenous activist David Brule and writer Suzanne Gardinier, who suggest how both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can reconcile the past.

Occupying Massachusetts is a profound reflection on the complex meanings of home and of place. Its insights about landscape, history, and memory will be appreciated for years to come.

Blurbs:

"*Occupying Massachusetts* is a striking composition of images and words, lending a gleam of light into long stories that linger on the periphery. They're always there, next to us, but are seldom seen full frontal—it's more, rather, that they are sensed. Your juxtapositions enable the clarity that can come when, for example, you can see a hazy star more distinctly by looking next to it, rather than directly at it."

—Rich Holschuh, Cultural Relations Liaison for the Elnu Abenaki Tribe

"The places on which we stand flicker with the subtle traces of peoples who have come before us. In this moving book, Sandra Matthews asks us to look—really *look*—at the relationship between us and them and meditate on what things such as possession, occupation, and settlement might mean. Her photographs are both haunting and disturbingly beautiful."

—Anthony W. Lee, Idella Plimpton Kendall Professor of Art History at Mt. Holyoke College, author of seven books about art and photography, and founder/editor of the acclaimed book series, *Defining Moments in American Photography*

About the Author:

Sandra Matthews is a photographer who, from 1982 to 2016, was a faculty member at Hampshire College. Her previous books are *Present Moments* (self-published, 2020) and *Pregnant Pictures*, co-authored with Laura Wexler (Routledge, 2000). In 2010, she founded *The Trans Asia Photography Review*, which she edited until 2020. Matthews's photographs are in numerous collections, including the Addison Gallery of American Art, Harvard University Art Museums, Henry Art Gallery, Portland (Oregon) Art Museum, Smith College Museum of Art, Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Women in Photography International Archive at Yale University.

About the Contributor(s):

David Brule was born and raised in Montague, Massachusetts, and is of Nehantic, Narragansett, and Huron/Wendat descent. He is President of the Nolumbeka Project, Inc., whose mission in part is “to promote a deeper, broader, and more accurate depiction of the history of the Native Americans/American Indians of the Northeast before and during European contact and colonization.”

Suzanne Gardinier was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and grew up in Scituate. She teaches writing at Sarah Lawrence College and is the author of a dozen books of poetry, fiction, and essays, including *The New World* (Pittsburgh, 1993), which was awarded the 1992 Associated Writing Program's Award Series in Poetry. She is also a recipient of the Lannan Literary Award for Poetry.