

Massimo Riva is a scholar and professor of Italian Studies at Brown University. Educated in Italy and the USA, he is the author of several books, published in Italy, and dozens of essays written in Italian and English on a variety of literary, historical and cultural topics, ranging from literary maladies and national identity in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Italy, posthumanism and the hyper-novel, and the future of literature in the digital age. He is the editor of an anthology of contemporary Italian fiction, published by Yale University Press in 2004, and the co-editor of three more books, including the Cambridge University Press edition of Pico della Mirandola's *Oratio "On Human Dignity"* (2012). His most recent work is a born-digital monograph entitled *Shadow Plays. Virtual Realities in an Analog World*, published by Stanford University Press in 2022 (an Italian translation is in press). A project of Brown University Digital Publications, made possible by a major grant of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, *Shadow Plays* explores the prehistory of virtual reality in a series of case-studies from the eighteenth- and the nineteenth-century, focusing on popular spectacles and optical devices such as the cosmorama, the camera obscura, the magic lantern, the phantasmagoria, the moving panorama and the stereoscope, and includes a series of 3D models and simulations of these devices. The monograph is the winner of the Association of American Publishers 2022 PROSE award in the category of eProducts and a finalist of the ACLS Open Book Competition in the born-digital category.

As a scholar of Italian Studies, Massimo Riva is well known for his pioneering digital projects, created in collaboration with graduate and undergraduate students at Brown, and colleagues from a variety of disciplines and countries: The Decameron Web, awarded two back-to-back two-year grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (1999-2001); The Pico della Mirandola Project, an international collaboration among scholars at Brown University, the University of Bologna, the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, and the University of Sydney, Australia; the Virtual Humanities Lab, awarded a two-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (2004-2006); the Garibaldi Panorama & the Risorgimento Archive, supported by a Digital Innovation Fellowship and grant from the American Council of Learned Societies (2011-12). For his engagement with research-based teaching and teaching with technology, M. Riva was named Royce Family Professor of Teaching Excellence (2015-2017). His awards and honors also include the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic (with the rank of *Ufficiale*) for his contribution to the dissemination of Italian culture in North America.

Since joining Brown, he was invited to teach as a visiting professor at several universities in the U.S and abroad, including the University of Bologna, and the University of Modena and Reggio, in Italy; the École des Hautes Études in Paris, the University of London, the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, and the University of Sydney, Australia.