The very ethos of the avant-garde as it is commonly construed hinges on the idea of a total break—an act of creativity that incurs no debts and is not bound by any retrospective need. In this book I have done my best to unravel that idea, and I am happy to acknowledge that my own debts are many.

*The Unfinished Art of Theater* began as a dissertation written at New York University. The first nod, then, goes to my dissertation director, Diana Taylor, and to Martin Harries, Mary Louise Pratt, and Jill Lane for their many insights and advice, and also for knowing when to hold back and let me figure things out on my own.

No one else knows and understands this project as well as Kahlil Chaar Pérez. Kahlil has seen it all from the beginning and has helped give it shape by talking through ideas with me, giving pointed feedback on the manuscript, and occasionally telling me: Sarah, it’s time to take a break and have a drink. In addition to being the truest of friends, he is always my first reader.

Several other people read parts of the manuscript. Jonathan Eburne, Tom Beebee, Ignacio Sánchez Prado, Jonathan Abel, and Martin Harries were all generous with their time and helped make it a better book. Anna Indych-López was a fantastic workshop respondent to a draft of one article that was also a chapter-in-the-making, and I received valuable feedback on one of my chapters when it was workshopped by the faculty and grad student fellows at Berkeley’s Townsend Center for the Humanities during my time as a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in 2010–2011. A third chapter was workshopped at the Tepoztlán Institute for the Transnational History of the Americas in Summer 2014, and the conversations I had with fellow participants at the São Paulo Symposium at the University of Chicago in May 2013 were notably helpful. At various points Manuel Cuellar, Deborah Caplow, Eduardo Contreras Soto, and Heloísa Pontes all shared key references and/or tips on unpublished archival materials that found their way into the book. The two anonymous readers for the press offered suggestions that improved the final version immensely; series editor Nicholas Ridout took a keen eye to the next-to-last draft, and it has been a pleasure to work with such a professional crew at Northwestern University Press, including Gianna Mosser, Nathan MacBien, Maggie Grossman, copyeditor Christi Stanforth, and indexer Steven Moore.

Harder to quantify but in some ways even more important were the many informal conversations with colleagues and friends that helped shape my thinking about this project, or just my thinking in general. For their wise words

State College (where I have spent the last five years) can be a challenging place for a person who winds up there alone, and so I was lucky to arrive at Penn State with a good cohort of new colleagues. Judith Sierra-Rivera, Hoda El Shakry, Shaoling Ma, Marco Martínez, and Justin Clark are responsible for some great memories during those first two years. More recent arrivals whose conversation and friendship I value are Matt Tierney, Anita Starosta, Tracy Rutler, Christian Haines, Magalí Armillas-Tiseyra, Courtney Morris, Bruno Jean-François, and Julie Kleinman. A warm thanks to my Latin Americanist colleagues in the Department of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese—John Ochoa, Julia Cuervo-Hewitt, Judith Sierra-Rivera, and Krista Brune—as well as to Matthew Marr, Mary Barnard, Maria Truglio, and my department head Giuli Russias, who went to great lengths to support my research. Class sessions and conversations with grad students also sharpened my thoughts on various points, and I especially enjoyed my chats with Fernando Fonseca Pacheco and Alex Fyfe at Saint’s Café.

This book was written with the support of a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Humanities at the University of California, Berkeley and an American Council of Learned Societies New Faculty Fellowship at the University of California, Santa Barbara. It draws on my research at a number of different libraries and archives. In Brazil, these include the Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros at the Universidade de São Paulo, the Arquivo Edgard Leuenroth and the Centro de Documentação Cultural Alexandre Eulálio (both at the Universidade Estadual de Campinas), the Biblioteca Nacional do Brasil, and the Museu da Imagem e do Som−Rio de Janeiro. In Mexico, most of my work was at the Archivo Histórico de la Secretaría de Educación Pública, the Biblioteca de las Artes del Centro Nacional de las Artes, and the Centro Nacional de Investigación, Documentación e Información de Artes Plásticas. The staff at each of these places was helpful, but special mention must be made of Roberto Pérez Aguilar at the Archivo Histórico de la Secretaría de Educación Pública and Elisabete Marin Ribas at the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros. João Malatian at the Theatro Municipal de São Paulo shared several beautiful images of the theater, and Elisabeth di Cavalcanti Veiga graciously gave me permission to reproduce a woodcut image by her father Emiliano di Cavalcanti. In the United States, I depended on the assistance of librarians and
staff members at the New York Public Library as well as libraries at Harvard University, the University of Texas–Austin, and Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. A slightly abridged version of chapter 3 appeared in the journal Cultural Critique, and part of a much earlier version of chapter 6 appeared in Modernism/Modernity.

Last but certainly not least are people who have played the part of family, whether that is their official designation or not. In Santa Barbara, Pablo Frasconi and Fredda Spirka will always have my gratitude. In Los Angeles, Murray remains in my heart. In Lodi, the Hux Vineyard crew led by Barb Hucksteadt, Tom Hucksteadt, and Tom Townsend has kept me in good spirits over the years (in more ways than one). Thanks as well to Tom for the many road trips, and for his occasional inquiries as to what was new among the intelligentsia. Rachel Townsend and Nick Van Veldhuizen have given me a couch to crash on in the Bay Area more times than I can count, and some of my favorite memories from the past few years are of spending time with them, and with Finnley and Devlin.

I dedicate this book to Steve and Sandy Townsend, each of whom in very different ways gave me the best education a kid could hope for, and whose love and support I have never once had a reason to doubt. I also realize that I was very lucky to have had access to the formal education and professional opportunities that I did; given the defunding of universities and declining labor conditions in academia, it is far from certain I would be so fortunate if I were starting out today. In addition to my parents, then, I want to give a nod to all the would-be authors whose own books, for reasons not of their own making, remain unfinished.
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of Theater