

Der Doctor Schnabel von Rom



Nouvelles Nouvelles

Spring
2020

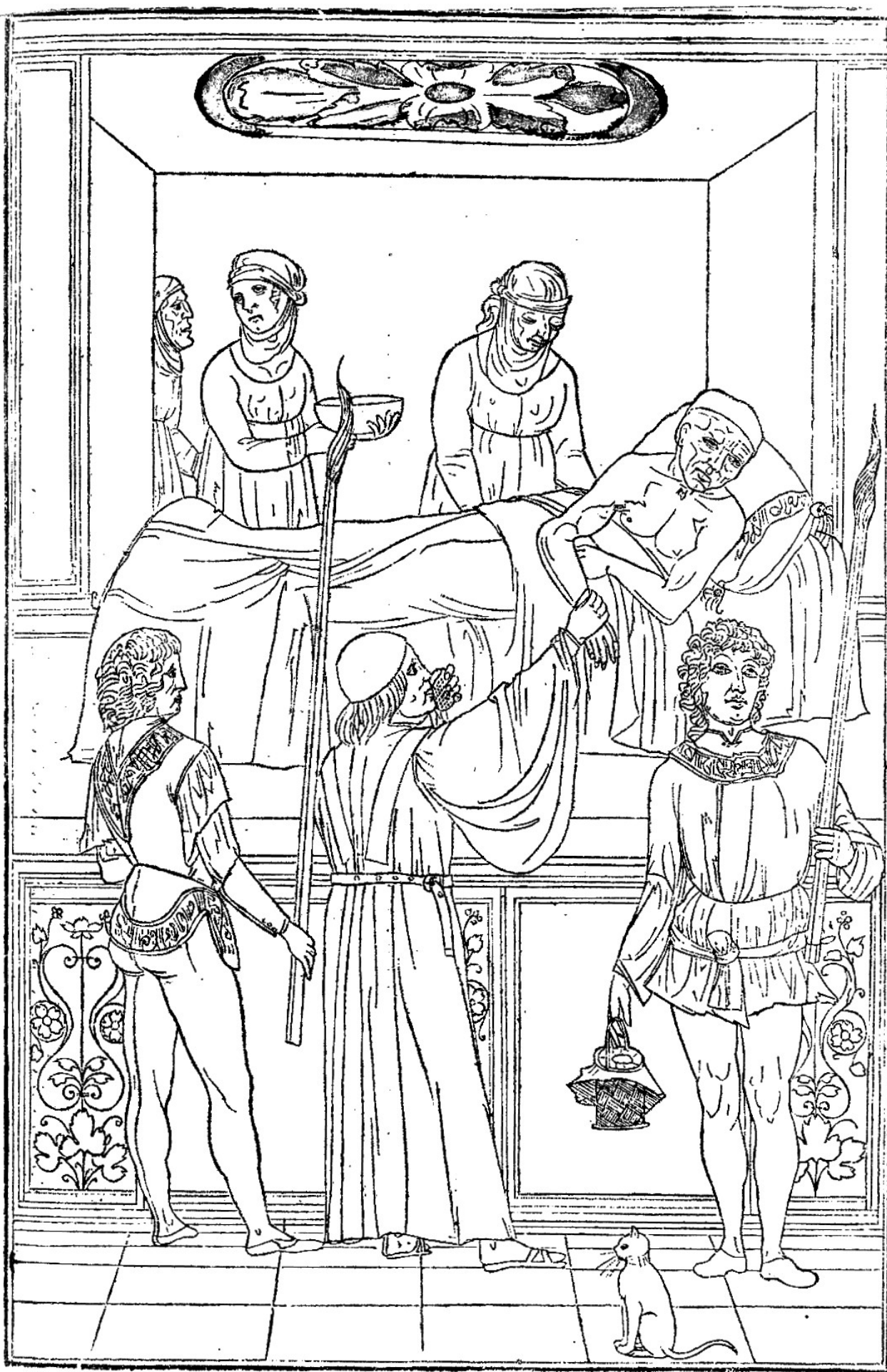
Vos Creditis, als eine fabel,
quod scribitur von Doctor Schnabel,
der fugit die Contagion
et autort seinen Lohn darvon.
Cadavera sucht er zu fryßen,
gleich wie der Corvus auf der Mythen.
Ah Credite, zihet nicht dort hin,
dann Romæ regnat die Pestin.

Quis non doberet sehr erschree,
für seiner Virgul oder stocken,
qua loquitur, als wär er stumm,
und deutet sein consilium.
Wie mancher Credit ohne zweifel
das ihn tentir ein schwarzen krieg,
Marsipium heist seine Höll,
und aurum die geholtte seel.

I. Columbina, ad vironem delineavit.

Paulus Fürst, Excudit.

Kleidung wider den Tod zu Rom. Anno 1656.
Also gehen die Doctores Medici dahin zu Rom, wann sie die ander Pest erbrachte Per-
sonen besuchen, sie zu curiren und fragen, sich wider den Ditt zu sichern, ein langes Kleid von ge-



Cover Art: Paul Fürst, *Der Doctor Schnabel von Rom*, 1656, hand-colored copper engraving; **Above:** *Fasciculus medicine*, Joannes et Gregorius de Gregoriis, 1495, Venice

**CENTER FOR
MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE STUDIES**

DIRECTOR
Christopher Highley

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
Leslie Lockett

PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Nicholas Spitulski

GRADUATE ASSOCIATES
Manuel Jacquez
Stephen Barker

Nouvelles Nouvelles is published by the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and is also available in pdf at <http://cmrs.osu.edu/nn>. Please contact cmrs@osu.edu for more information.

CMRS
The Ohio State University
455 Hagerty Hall
1775 College Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1361
Tel: 614-292-7495
E-mail: cmrs@osu.edu

World Wide Web
<http://cmrs.osu.edu>

The Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies is an interdisciplinary center in the College of Arts and Sciences at The Ohio State University. Its central mission is to foster interaction among faculty, students, and the public around themes involving the study of history, culture, society, technology, intellectual thought, and the arts from late Antiquity to the early modern era. With over twenty affiliated departments and over 100 affiliated faculty, the Center offers its own course curriculum, together with lectures, conferences, film series, and special events of interest to local, regional, national, and international audiences. Affiliated with the Medieval Academy of America, the Renaissance Society of America, and the Folger Institute, the CMRS contributes to national and international discourses on the place of medieval, Renaissance, and early modern studies in the academy and in society more generally.

In addition to this Newsletter, the Center offers courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, an undergraduate major and minor, a graduate certificate program and Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization, a series of lectures and colloquia, graduate administrative and teaching associateships, and other activities and events during the academic year. It also aspires to serve as a resource for medievalists and Renaissance scholars at other institutions throughout the state.

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GREETINGS

from the DIRECTOR

The business of the Center came to an abrupt and unexpected halt earlier this semester in response to the COVID-19 emergency. We have cancelled several talks, including the annual public lecture that Lisa Klein was scheduled to deliver. Hopefully, we can bring her and our other cancelled speakers to campus next year. As far as teaching is concerned, most of us have gone online. I am fortunate in that my seminar on Elizabeth I is small enough to be readily adapted to Zoom video conferencing. Students give presentations and discuss the assigned readings much as they would in an actual classroom. For colleagues with larger classes like our Magic and Witchcraft course, the move to online delivery has been more of a challenge. Special thanks are due to Professor Michael Swartz and his TA Manny Jacquez for handling the transition so successfully.

The current pandemic has naturally sparked interest in the history of contagious diseases from the devastating Black Death of the mid-fourteenth century, to the last major plague outbreak in London in 1665, and more recently the so-called Spanish Flu of 1918-1920. Needless to say, scholars of the Medieval and Renaissance worlds know a good deal, especially about the first two pandemics. The experience of deadly diseases touched every aspect of contemporary life and culture including diet, clothing, religion, art, and literature. Let me share a couple of examples from the world I know best: Renaissance/Early Modern England.

Plague had a significant impact on the Shakespearean stage. In London, when plague deaths rose in



warmer weather the authorities routinely closed the theaters. Although they did not know what caused the dreaded buboes or plague sores to appear on the body, they did know that self-isolating and social distancing could inhibit the spread of disease. Better-off Londoners escaped from the crowded city to the countryside. Acting troupes also took to the road, performing in provincial towns or great houses. Less fortunate Londoners including workers who served the theater industry like the Thames watermen faced economic as well as emotional distress. Playwrights may have followed the actors on tour, although Shakespeare seems to have used periods of plague closure to stay 'home' and write non-dramatic works like the narrative poems *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. There is no shortage of plague references in the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, although the most intriguing is perhaps in *Romeo and Juliet* where a plague outbreak forms

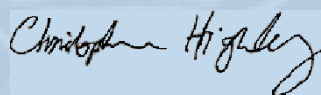
a major plot crux. After Romeo is exiled to Mantua for killing Tybalt, and Juliet is told by her parents that she must marry Paris, Friar Laurence hatches a plan whereby Juliet will drink a sleeping potion that makes her appear dead. Then, when Juliet is in her tomb and ready to awake, Romeo will return and elope with her. For the plan to succeed, Friar Laurence enlists Friar John to deliver a letter to Romeo explaining what he is to do. The plan miscarries, however, when Friar John is unable to leave Verona because of the plague. Instead of heading straight to Mantua with the letter, John goes to find a travelling companion who is visiting the sick in town. When the 'searchers' suspect that they have been in a house 'where the infectious pestilence did reign,' they seal John and his friend inside, preventing the letter from reaching Romeo. Romeo, believing Juliet is dead, returns to Verona where he enters her tomb and stabs himself shortly before she awakes. It's a tragic twist of fate. The lovers really are 'star-cross'd' as the outbreak of plague was thought to be closely connected to the malign influence of celestial bodies.

We think that Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet* in 1595 in the wake of the devastating plague that struck London in 1593-1594. This outbreak, however, paled in comparison to an even deadlier one in the summer of 1603 that coincided with the death of Queen Elizabeth and the accession of James I, who was forced to postpone his ceremonial entry into London as a result. The plague of 1603 also produced one of the most remarkable pieces of plague writing: Thomas Dekker's *The Wonderful Year*. Dekker's ironically titled prose work begins with a glowing description of England in springtime and of a joyous national mood. News of the queen's death shatters this earthly 'paradise,' only for hope to return briefly with news of James's accession. But then the plague strikes and 'general mirth' turns to 'shrieks and lamentation.' Dekker goes on to tell a series of stories, 'miserable tragedies,' about individual and collective suffering. What most strikes the modern reader (including my students) about these stories is their levity: they provoke laughter as much as horror. Take the one

about the drunkard who stumbles out of an ale-house and thinks he has arrived home when in fact he has fallen into an open plague pit. The next morning the sexton inadvertently awakens the sleeping drunk who, not a little irate, rises like a ghost from the grave and chases the terrified Sexton, driving him insane. Then there's the story of the woman who, lying sick of the plague and expecting to die any moment, confesses her many adulteries in front of her husband and neighbors. After she makes a surprising recovery, the injured wives take their revenge on her, 'worry[ing] her to death with scolding.' In an age without vaccines or effective medicines, these darkly humorous stories acted as a kind of prophylactic against the plague. As Dekker writes to the work's dedicatee: "'Tis my desire you should [laugh], because mirth is both physical and wholesome against the plague, with which sickness (to tell truth) this book is somewhat (though not sorely) infected.' Even here Dekker can't resist joking that while the reader might keep the plague at bay by laughing at these stories, the paper from which the book is made is itself likely infected!

All of us connected with CMRS hope that you and your loved ones are well and still able to manage the odd laugh and a smile. And we hope you will keep in touch during these difficult times. If you would like to read Dekker's *Wonderful Year* and other Early Modern plague texts (but without touching any paper), I recommend this anthology, available online through the OSU Libraries: *The Plague in Print: Essential Elizabethan Sources, 1558-1603*, ed. Rebecca Totaro (Duquesne University Press, 2010): <<https://library.ohio-state.edu/record=b75476562C%2C6>>.

Best wishes,



Chris Highley
Director, Center for Medieval and
Renaissance Studies

CMRS Community: A Reflection by Henry Griffy

The Ohio State Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies has been a key part of my academic career for almost 20 years now.

From the first phone call, in which then-Director Nicholas Howe explained to me (when I said that I worried about getting lost in a school as big as OSU) that the Center provided a close-knit core community of like-minded people, an island in the ocean of the university, where people were supportive and curious...

...through the early years of my PhD program, when the lecture series, workshops, and semi-regular happy hours introduced me to the surprising range and reach of that “small island.” ...through the two years I spent as Graduate Administrative Associate with Barbara Hanawalt, which helped me understand what it took to arrange, promote, and produce those lectures and other events, as well as the personal work required to maintain that community. TAing for the Center’s several courses was as fun as it was enlightening, and the technical skills I sharpened while managing the website and helping design posters fed into the work I’ve done in more recent years.

...through the supportive community I found during the (several) additional years I spent completing my dissertation, including my committee’s willingness to continue working with me semi-officially, open seats at lectures and holiday events, and frequent hallway conversations with Nick Spitulski and all the other people who make the Center work.

...through more than a decade of semi-regular Medieval Latin Reading Groups, launched by Richard Firth Green and recently revived by Leslie Lockett. Often remarkably relevant (as with our most recent readings of chronicles about the spread of the bubonic plague) and always a welcome break in the week.

The Center has, as promised, been an anchor for my scholarly life at Ohio State.

Since 2006, my career has been what the twit-terati call Alt-Ac, as in alternative to the tenure track. For 5 years, I worked in the OSU Libraries, doing a range of tasks from sorting mail to ordering supplies to managing a substantial website to helping launch their online open journals program. Since 2012, I’ve worked at the Office of Distance Education and eLearning, primarily working one-on-one with instructors across the university to build high-quality online courses that create community and engage deep thinking through a constantly developing repertoire of creative activities.

During that time, I have continued my medieval scholarship, at first by finishing my dissertation (two hours a night, four nights a week results in a surprising level of productivity!) and more recently by publishing an article, helping launch the Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies, and chipping away at a web version of the database of early Robin Hood materials I have accumulated in the course of my research.

I have become a booster of the Alt-Ac life. When occasions present, I am enthusiastic to share the word that the world is full of jobs that are as intellectually engaging, occupationally remunerative, and personally rewarding as any traditionally academic position. I highly recommend finding non-professorial work, especially if the alternative involves contingent situations or leaps that require faith in financially precarious or circumstantially constrained institutions.

But the larger point I would make is that I don't entirely buy into the distinction between traditional and Alt academia. Yes, yes "in theory there is no difference between theory and practice but in practice there is..." but clever quips aside, my experiences have taught me that it is possible to engage as fully in the work and mission of the university from any role in it. Like the janitor at OSU Wexner Medical Center who surprised the corporate consultant when answering the question "What do you do here?" by proudly saying "I save lives," my work engages me as thoroughly in the kinds of critical analysis and historical thinking as any work I did in graduate school. Indeed, studying ways the internet has and will affect the university has only deepened my thinking about the ways writing and print (and all the rest) impacted the medieval and early modern worlds. Working with colleagues in every college and dozens of departments has added layers to the perspectives my graduate work taught me to cultivate, even as I've been able to remind them about the need for historical and humanist perspectives.

It has been especially gratifying to see so many of you in the KeepTeaching sessions and Help Desk (688-4357) calls that ODEE put together in the wake of the shift to remote teaching. I have long hoped to be able to use what I've learned about instructional design and online learning to

help CMRS expand its profile and reach more students, and I hope those relationships can continue to build even after we are no longer compelled by circumstances to move courses online, whenever that might be. There are amazing opportunities for deeply engaging learning to happen in this new medium, much like print helped fuel the early modern revolutions in teaching. For my part, I have recently resumed sketching a plan for an online Robin Hood GE that would use the outlaw tradition's allure to introduce students to the wide range of materials and methods we use to make sense of the past. With the availability of almost every artifact on the internet and the power of online tools to support student interactions, even non-specialists can dig into the actual work of medieval studies.

The benefits of the synergy between studying the deep past and working in the still-nebulous present have become especially clear in recent months. In the weeks before COVID-19 emerged as a global threat, the Medieval Latin Reading group worked through a handful of texts written by chroniclers of the Bubonic plague. That glimpse of distant selves has been really helpful for empathizing with what we are all going through now. A very similar combination of hope, dread, ignorance, and intelligence is visible in every news report and zoom meeting, and I'm constantly grateful for my CMRS training that helps me make that connection, because the reminder of shared humanity that comes with it has been a constant help in finding another bit of energy to treat everyone with grace, including myself.

In sum, thank you, CMRS, and thank you, Nick Howe, for letting me know about the kind of community I would find at Ohio State.

Scholarship and Community



On Monday, April 20th from 4:00-5:30pm CMRS scholars gathered to converse with Emily Isaacson (Heidelberg, English), who presented “Dame Clapperdudgeon, cracked groats and mustard tokens, and brown-bread tannikin: Insults and Hierarchy in the (mostly) City Comedy Workshop.”

CMRS Virtual Colloquium



Top: Chris Highley, Manuel Jacquez, Sarah Neville, Aaron Pratt
Middle: Heather Frazier, Emily Isaacson, Lisa Iacobellis, Meaghan Pachay
Bottom: Tamara Mahadin, Amrita Dhar, Alan Farmer, Leslie Lockett

Early Music in Columbus: Fior Angelico

An interview with Founder and Artistic Director, Matthew Bester

What did you study while you were at CMRS?

I earned both a PhD and an MA in Musicology and a Graduate Certificate in Medieval and Renaissance Studies from CMRS. My dissertation encompassed a translation and commentary on the first book of Pietro Aaron's *Libri tres de institutione harmonica*, a music theory treatise published in Bologna in 1516.

Did your dissertation research inform your conducting of early music?

Absolutely! My commentary on my chosen treatise led me to a deep study of the history of music theory, both in Latin and in the vernacular. The treatise author, Pietro Aaron, was particularly interested in the intersection between theory and practice, questions that concern me deeply. As is true of so many performing traditions, the notation of music from the medieval and Renaissance periods invariably was an incomplete record of the information needed for performance. The performers of the time knew how to fill in the gaps, but for modern performers the task is not always so clear. Theorists of the time are important witnesses to the act of interpreting the notation as well as to other questions of musical expression. At the same time, our historical distance means that there can never be anything like a truly "authentic" early music performance, whatever that may be. As performers, each of us is guided by his or her own sense of musicality, which is formed by a lifetime of varied experiences.

A close study of the music and music theory of these periods can help to ground our performances of this music, but there always remains considerable room for interpretation and individual expression.

When did you found the group, and what is its mission?

I founded Fior Angelico in 2006. From the beginning, I intended for the chorus to focus mainly on early music (generally defined as music before 1750, encompassing the medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque periods). Our mission has been to bring this beautiful music to life for our audiences. The music that we perform is often unfamiliar to much of our audience, so I try to make it a point during our concerts to educate our listeners about the various composers and their works.

What are some of the primary characteristics of early music?

One of the most important qualities of a lot of early music is its polyphonic texture, meaning that all the voice parts share in communicating the melody. (This is in contrast to musical styles in which the melody is situated primarily in the topmost voice, while the other voice parts play mainly an accompanying role.) Each phrase of text in Renaissance polyphony often has its own unique melodic idea, called a point of imitation, which is then passed around from voice to voice as each enters in turn. From a singer's point of view (as well as that of the listener), this means that every voice part is equally important and equally interesting. Composers of the Renais-

sance also were incredibly inventive in communicating the emotion and meaning of the text in musical terms.

What are some of your favorite things about singing and conducting early music?

Early music is exquisitely beautiful and full of endless variety in melody, rhythm, and texture. Each voice part is an important part of the whole, an essential thread in the overall tapestry of the music. As both a singer and as a conductor, I've always relished this interaction between the voice parts, which is akin to that of fine chamber music. I particularly enjoy exploring large-scale works, such as multi-movement mass settings, in which the best composers explore musical connections not only across the different movements but also with other works, including those by other composers.

Who are your favorite composers?

I have a passion for the music of the high Renaissance, particularly works from the second half of the sixteenth century. I find myself repeatedly drawn back to the music of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Tomás Luis de Victoria, and William Byrd, to name a few. I also very much enjoy music from the early Baroque period in the early seventeenth century, such as the works of Claudio Monteverdi and Heinrich Schütz, composers who were equally at home writing polyphonic music for choirs and expressive music for soloists.

What opportunities are available for performing or listening to early music in Columbus?

Columbus is very fortunate to have a thriving early music scene. The ensemble The Early Interval, with whom we recently collaborated for their annual Twelfth Night Concert in January, has been presenting early music concerts since

1976. Columbus also is home to the Early Music in Columbus concert series, which brings artists from around the world for superb early music concerts during the academic year. (Disclaimer: I serve as the Vice President of the Friends of Early Music in Columbus, the non-profit board that oversees the Early Music in Columbus concert series.) Many other choirs in the area regularly feature early music as part of their programming, including the church choir that I direct at Saint Mark's Episcopal Church in Upper Arlington.

What is coming up for Fior Angelico?

For most of its history, Fior Angelico has been mainly a summertime ensemble, with mid-summer rehearsals leading to a late-summer concert. In a normal year, I currently would be deep into the planning stage for the upcoming summer program, but the Coronavirus epidemic has thrown everything into turmoil, for us and for all arts organizations. We have no idea when it will be safe to meet again to rehearse, let alone to perform before a large audience. Much is on hold right now as we wait to see how the situation evolves.

Where can people find out more?

Website: FiorAngelico.org (from there they can follow the link to our YouTube channel to hear some recordings)

Facebook: facebook.com/FiorAngelico

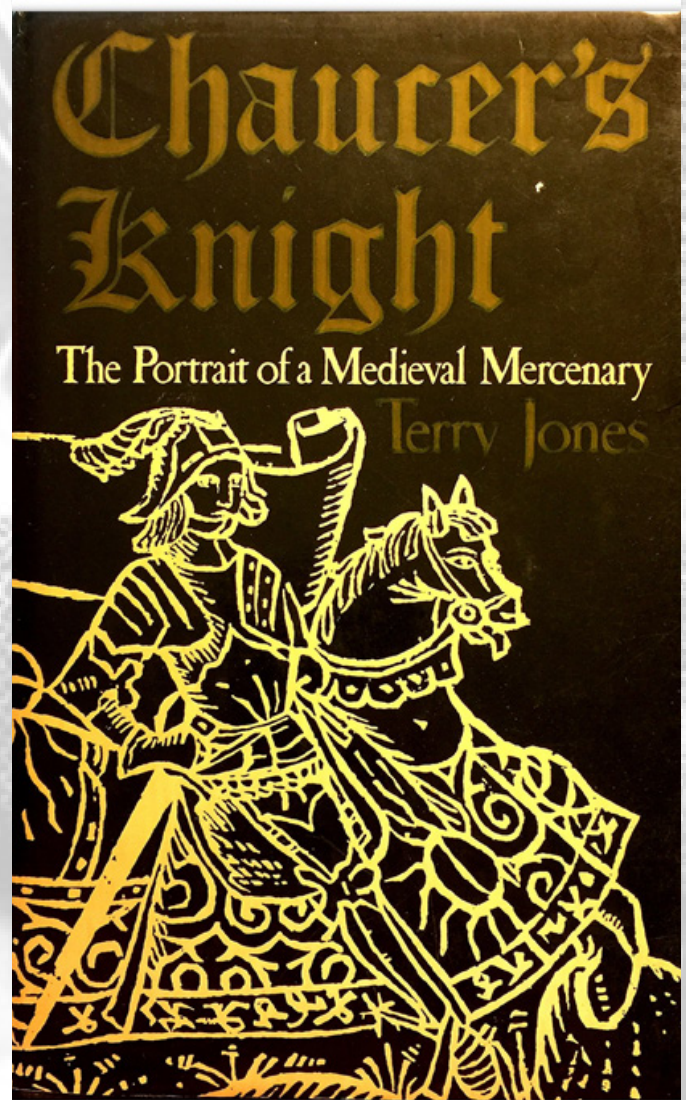
What, in your opinion, is the most obnoxious-sounding Renaissance instrument?

I think that the answer almost certainly has to be the Crumhorn, although I personally love it! There is a unique complexity to the instrument's sound that is utterly captivating. Place it in a consort of Crumhorns, and the sound is unforgettable!

In Memoriam Pythonis

Needless to say, Terry Jones, who died in January, will be sorely missed by all who have long enjoyed his surreal sense of humor, but there is a community of medieval scholars, among whom I count myself, that has suffered a particularly sad loss. Terry and I were undergraduates at Oxford at exactly the same time, and, though we were both taught by Del Kolve (now retired from UCLA), never ran across one another there. It was only after his pythonry began to wind down, leaving him time for the serious scholarship that was to lead to the publication of his *Chaucer's Knight: The Portrait of a Medieval Mercenary* (1980), that we first met. Fame and financial security provide certain advantages to the independent scholar—I recall his telling me on one occasion he'd been able to afford the multi-volume *Middle English Dictionary*, and on another that the librarian at the Huntington Library had given him unrestricted access to the priceless 'Ellesmere Manuscript' of the *Canterbury Tales*—but Terry was no solitary Casaubon. He was very much a sociable creature who

reveled in the company of his fellow enthusiasts, often showing up at meetings of the New Chaucer Society and even occasionally at Western Michigan's annual Medieval Congress.



However, I particularly recall a rather melancholy evening at one such conference, just after he had attended Douglas's Adams's funeral, when we drank a whole bottle of scotch together in his hotel room. On one occasion, while I was still director of CMRS, I got wind of a visit Terry was making to the States and asked him if he could fit in a talk for us at OSU. He spent two days here, came to a party with our graduate students, and gave a talk to an enormous general audience about Richard II, a king he had a soft spot for and one he felt Shakespeare had treated rather shabbily. He refused any kind of a fee, and after months of trying to get him at least to send us his expenses, I was driven to asking the dean of the time, John Roberts, if there was any way we could arrange for him to be sent a case of wine; to his credit, John managed to negotiate successfully the many bureaucratic hurdles that such a request must have burdened him with.

The last time I saw Terry was at the Medieval Congress in Kalamazoo when a group of his academic friends presented a *festschrift* to him called *The Medieval Python* (I'd like to think that he found [my own contribution](#)—a history of the bellicose amputee in

honor of his Black Knight—amusing). That was seven years ago, but sadly his health began to decline shortly afterwards and I'm thankful that my last memory of him remains that of the jovial, loveable man who was everything that his screen persona might have led one to hope for.

Richard Firth Green
CMRS Director Emeritus





2516 - Medieval Jewish Experience

Daniel Frank, TR 8:00-9:20am

This interdisciplinary GEC course surveys ten centuries of medieval Jewish history, literature, religion, and culture from the rise of Islam to the death of the false messiah, Shabbetai Zvi. Students will read a wide range of primary sources in English translation. We will examine the transformation of Jewish culture in Europe and the Middle East and will explore the impact of host societies upon specific Jewish communities.

Autumn 2020



2215 - Gothic Paris: 1100 - 1300

Sarah - Grace Heller, WF 2:20-3:40pm

Paris became a center for learning, beauty, power, and shopping in the Gothic Age, 1100-1300. Discover the world that conceived and built the soaring Notre-Dame-de-Paris: Courtly Love, strategic kings and queens, the birth of the great university, the arguments of monks and philosophers like Abelard and his brilliant student Heloise. Explore daily life in medieval Paris with hands-on experiences and readings: the rich fabrics, the knightly chain mail, the foods, the stones.

2217 - Shakespeare's London

Chris Highley, WF 12:45-2:05pm

This course will explore roughly one and a half centuries of the history, politics, and culture of London, beginning with the religious upheavals of the Protestant Reformation, moving onto a Civil War that saw the King lose his head, and culminating with the devastating plague and Great Fire of London in 1666. We will ask why London experienced such phenomenal growth in the sixteenth century, making it the center of economic, political, and cultural life in Britain. We will study various primary documents, including maps, plays, poems, and pamphlets that explore the opportunities and problems created by rapid urbanization (social mobility, poverty, disease). And we will look closely at institutions and figures like the Lord Mayor and the guilds that regulated city life.



MedRen Courses

5610 - Manuscript Studies

Leslie Lockett and Eric Johnson,
TR 12:45-2:05

This course introduces students to the pre-print culture of the European Middle Ages and trains them in the fundamental skills required to read and understand handwritten books, documents, and scrolls from ca. 500-1500 AD. Students will work with manuscripts held in the OSU library's Special Collections and will benefit from numerous guest lectures. Knowledge of Latin and other medieval languages is NOT a prerequisite for enrollment.



CMRS Affiliate Accomplishments

Abigail Greff has been awarded the Robert M. Estrich Fellowship from the Department of English.

J. Albert Harrill has published several articles: “Atheist Catalogues as an Organizing Technique in Classical Literary Culture,” *Early Christianity* 11 (2020); and “Shaping Buildings into Stories: Architectural Ekphrasis and the Epistle to the Ephesians in Roman Literary Culture,” in *Literature and Culture in the Roman Empire, 96–235: Cross-Cultural Interactions*, edited by Alice König, Rebecca Langlands, and James Uden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020). Professor Harrill was an Alexander von Humboldt Renewed Research Fellow at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Bonn, Germany, from June to August 2019.

Chris Highley ran a Zoom seminar for the Shakespeare Association of America on “London’s Indoor Playhouses.” His own paper, “Reconstructing a Lost

Anti-playhouse Petition of 1641,” dealt with an attempt by three London parishes to inhibit performances at the Blackfriars theater the year before parliament closed all the city’s playhouses.

Sarah-Grace Heller has published two articles: “The Lexicon of Apparel in the Pastourelle Corpus: Refashioning Shepherdesses,” for *Refashioning Medieval and Early Modern Dress*, eds. Maren Clegg Hyer and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer Press, 2019), pp. 175-190; “Mocking Medieval French Fashion: Troubadours Debating Trade versus Plunder in the Late Twelfth to Thirteenth Centuries,” for special issue “Fashion in French History,” *French Historical Studies* (April, 2020): 145-166; and a review, Wendy Doniger, *The Ring of Truth: And Other Myths of Sex and Jewelry* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), *Speculum* 94.4 (October, 2019): 1145-47.

Mira Kafantaris has won a highly competitive short-term residency fellowship from the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

Daniel Knapper has won the 2020 Muste Dissertation Prize for the best dissertation completed in the Department of English for “The Tongue of Angels: Pauline Style and Renaissance English Literature.”

Clint Morrison has received the Hope Emily Allen Dissertation Grant from the Medieval Academy of America.

Jordan Schoonover has received the Schallek Award from the Medieval Academy of America.



Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig: *De consolatione philosophiae*, MS 1253, f.3r, c.1230



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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*Boccaccio and company, storytelling and social distancing during the Florentine Plague, 1348:
The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 133.A.5, 3v, workshop of the Master of Bruges*