



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

# **Petites Nouvelles – Issue #13**

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Suggestions and submissions of content for future issues are always welcome! Please contact either [cmrs@osu.edu](mailto:cmrs@osu.edu) or [spitulski.1@osu.edu](mailto:spitulski.1@osu.edu) with your ideas. The deadline for submitting items for inclusion in our final 2020-2021 issue will be **Sunday, April 18**.

Also, be sure to "like" us on **Facebook** and check out our **Instagram** and **Twitter** feeds for more news, links, & MedRen miscellany!

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Archive**

# Greetings

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Dear Readers:

As winter finally turns to spring, we are happy to bring you in this issue an interesting essay by Emeritus Professor and friend and Visiting Scholar of the Center, John Friedman. John takes up the conceit of the poet as either spider or bee to reflect on the different trajectories that academic careers can take. It is cheering to know that although retired John continues not just to publish, but to explore new topics. Learning is indeed a life-long journey!

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## **“Be a Spider, Be a Bee” (John B. Friedman)**

One popular 18th century English literary trope often used to describe two sorts of poets was that of the spider and the bee. One spun out poetry like the gossamer silk of the spider while the other hopped from flower to flower sipping nectar to make honeyed verses. There were, of course, many debates about which method was better.

The trope also has application to contemporary scholarship. As someone with a Ph.D in English literature and a career in an English Department I have faced the pressure of being a spider for many years when all of my inclinations were to be a bee. Sticking with one’s original subject from dissertation to retirement or beyond has obvious advantages—being a name among names, and having the sort of coverage in depth which only many years on the same topic can give. For example, one of my former graduate students, now soon to retire, has spent his whole career studying letter formularies, medieval manuscripts on how to write diplomatic letters, say, to a ruler or a pope, with certain predetermined formulaic openings and closings. He is an ace at this topic and probably knows more about it than anyone alive. I have often envied him, his solidity, his certainty, his reputation for being “Mr. Letter Formulary” among other scholars. And certainly, in the present fraught academic climate his course is much the safest and the most likely to produce a tenured job and the strokes that come with being “the gal or guy” in that subject area. In contrast, the sipper at flowers has both the pleasure of the chase and the risk of dilettantism (and even of scorn from disciplinary gate keepers). In my own thirty-one year career in an English department, I managed to do many articles on Chaucer, and other purely literary topics while writing books on things only tenuously tied to English literature. But once retired, I was able to fly here and there as widely as any bee, and have, indeed, done so. My own scholarly attention span has been on the order of seven to twelve years in any one subject area; then I find myself drawn to something that may be an offshoot, or an outtake, or even quite new altogether.

One less well-known advantage of the secret lives of such bees is that coming to a fresh subject with specialized knowledge often puts one in the way of gratifying scholarly finds. I myself have had this experience twice recently. First, as something of a fashion historian, I began looking at a certain painting by Hieronymus Bosch, and saw in the outmoded fashions of the clothing and the material culture depicted a moral comment on the vanity of fashion that had not been previously noticed. A second instance of such a scholarly find happened on going to see Antoni Gaudi’s *Sagrada Familia* basilica in Barcelona a couple of years ago. Though the totality of the building is overwhelming, I noticed at once some

small elements of the decoration which as a medievalist, not as a student of Spanish Modernist design or Gothic Revival architecture, I was peculiarly fitted to recognize. This was the sense that Gaudi had had in mind the story in the Apocryphal Infancy Gospels of the five-year old Jesus miraculously animating clay sparrows and making them fly off when he used a great many bird motifs in the decoration of the Nativity or East façade of the basilica. I had to make myself acquainted with Gaudi, with Catalan nationalism, and with Medievalism, but now after two years of work have just sent off an article on Gaudi and the Infancy Gospels largely because I was in the right place at the right time and saw something being a general medievalist trained me to see.

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I can announce that next year's symposium will be about 'Animals and Humans in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.' When looking through the CMRS archives and thinking about potential topics I was surprised that we had not explored Animal Studies at past events. Over the last decade or so this has become a dynamic field of interdisciplinary scholarship, especially in the pre- and early modern periods. I'm also delighted to announce that one of the luminaries in the field, Dr Kathleen Walker-Meikle has agreed to be our keynote speaker. Her book *Medieval Pets* (Boydell Press, 2016) is at the top of my summer reading list! The symposium is scheduled for Friday December 3 and Saturday December 4, 2021, although it remains to be seen whether we will meet in-person or via zoom (or a combination of formats). Watch this space for future announcements.

Finally, our last events of the academic year are the April 16 talk by Luke Pecoraro on the impacts of changing archaeological interpretation of artifacts and site patterns on the living history programs and collections at the Jamestown Settlement museum, and of course our annual Spring Awards Reception, which we've just decided to hold at 4 p.m. on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. A more formal announcement about the latter will circulate through our mailing lists soon.

Christopher Highley  
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Director, Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies  
The Ohio State University  
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## **The Joys of Interdisciplinarity**

Last Spring I taught an Honors course on the Renaissance, "Mixed Media Before the Modern." It was an English course, but it might more properly have been a CMRS course, since it embodied the kind of interdisciplinary convening that the Center is all about. My colleagues who study the Middle Ages might say the same, but the Renaissance was fundamentally a multi-media culture, as well as an international one, and I

hoped to bring into my course a variety of works that don't find an easy fit in the standard departmental cubbyholes of the modern university.

Where, for instance, should you study emblems? Invented by the humanist lawyer Andrea Alciato, a Milanese who taught at Avignon and Bourges and published *Emblematum liber* (1531) in Augsburg, an emblem consisted of a picture (often symbolic), a motto (often proverbial), and a verse inscription

[<https://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/alciato/books.php?id=A31a>].

This immensely popular genre swept across Europe over the next two centuries (and beyond) and developed into subgenres including religious, moral, and courtly emblems, though some collections included all three.

The *Emblems* of Francis Quarles

[<https://libraries.psu.edu/about/collections/english-emblem-book-project/quarles-toc>] went through over a dozen editions in the

seventeenth century, and each included an engraved allegorical picture by William Marshall with a Latin motto, a Bible verse in English, a substantial English poem in a variety of verse forms, a couple of paragraphs from the church fathers, and a final epigraph by Quarles.

Each of Philip Ayres's *Emblems of Love* (1683?)

[<https://publicdomainreview.org/collection/emblems-of-love-in-four-languages-dedicated-to-the-ladys-1683>] had an image on the left-hand page and short poems in Latin, English, Italian, and French on the right.

Many emblems or parts of them were borrowed from one book to another, some dating back to Alciato. For his *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne*

[<https://digital.libraries.psu.edu/digital/collection/emblem/id/904>],

George Wither "borrowed" 200 stunning engravings by the Dutch Crispin de Passe that originally appeared in a German emblem book by Gabriel Rollenhagen. De Passe's pictures were encircled by a Latin motto; Wither added an English translation above, and his own English poem below.

Wither was a prolific but not a very good poet, though he has a certain charm, as when boldly confessing,

What in this Emblem, that man's meanings were,  
Who made it first, I neither know nor care;  
For, whatsoere, he purposed, or thought,  
To serve my purpose, now it shall be taught.

But the poems in emblem books cannot be read on their own; their meaning is interwoven with and dependent upon the other elements – picture, motto, epigraphs. The same is true of many other artistic works, like popular ballads.

Obviously, any song is a combination of words and music, but broadside ballads were often printed with pictures as well, designed not just to be read and sung but perhaps pinned to walls as decoration. In fact, some ballads were not just songs but news, spreading word of crimes, freakish events, or the deaths of great persons. *A Proper New Ballad* of 1586 included profile portraits of the fourteen executed traitors who were the subject of the song [<https://digital.nls.uk/english-ballads/archive/74516000?mode=transcription>], and *A Ballad of the Strange and Wonderful Storm of Hail* featured the events described: men



cattle struck down, birds falling from the sky, others having snowball fights. The one thing missing from these prints, curiously, is the music. Ballad writers fitted their words to popular tunes already in circulation, so the music didn't need to be printed (for which printers were no doubt grateful). Instead, the names of tunes were given beneath the titles, as with "Aim not too high" for the *Storm of Hail*, and "Weep weep" for the *Fourteen Most Wicked Traitors*. Projects like the English Broadside Ballad Archive (UC Santa Barbara) [<https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/>] are doing great work not only in gathering and digitizing hundreds of surviving ballads, but in tracking down, transcribing, and recording the tunes to which they were sung.

Words and music, though not usually pictures, were also combined in psalms and hymns sung for church worship and domestic devotion, and the lute songs or ayres that were popular at court and in many homes. These were, again, mixed-media forms that were immensely popular across Europe. With the development of music printing, songbooks were published that accommodated a variety of kinds of performance. Many men and women of a certain social class could play the lute or its cousin the orpharion, so they could sing to themselves (as did Sir Robert Dudley, Lady Margaret Hoby, Queen Elizabeth I, and George Herbert) or to entertain company. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* includes poems by Thomas Campion, but especially with Campion, unusually accomplished as both a poet and a composer, the words were written to be sung, and the experiences of reading a text and listening to a song are quite different. My students were lucky to learn this first-hand when, partly through the support of CMRS, Canadian singer and lutenist Bud Roach visited our class and performed songs by Henry Lawes. But many songs could be performed not just by a singer and instrumental accompaniment but by groups of singers in four-parts. To facilitate this many songbooks were printed in table-book format, with each part facing a different direction so singers could sit around the book

[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGX1XQaLQ0M>]. Much of the territory of Renaissance song is still relatively unexplored, since many poems written for singing survive only in manuscript, as do many tunes to which printed poems were sung, and scholars of literature and music don't often get together. Most Renaissance songs have also never been recorded. The manuscript songbook of Elizabeth Davenant, for instance, survives at Christ Church, Oxford. Davenant was the daughter of an Oxford vintner, and sister to Sir William, the poet and playwright (once rumored to have been Shakespeare's son), and she loved singing. Her book includes one of Campion's published songs, as well as musical settings of printed poems by Michael Drayton and Robert Herrick. Some of the songs were never printed but do appear in other manuscripts, though at least a few (word and music) survive only here. A number of songs are from plays, including John Wilson's setting of a song from John Fletcher's *The Mad Lover*, Robert Johnson's setting for one from Fletcher's *Valentinian*, and "Drop goulden showers" from *The Courageous Turk* by Thomas Goffe, performed by Christ Church undergraduates in 1618. Goffe's play was printed in London in 1632, but the music of this song survives nowhere but in Davenant's book.

Theater has crept into my account, and it featured prominently at the

end of the course, since it brings so many media together in single experience: poetry, the visual arts (painted sets, costumes), vocal and instrumental music, gesture, dance. Visual spectacle was particular prominent in civic and court entertainments, pageants and masques. These are virtually impossible to reproduce, since they were one-off extravaganzas, fantastically expensive and geared to particular persons and occasions. Some drawings of floats, architecture, and costumes do survive, though (*see right*), and while the texts of these shows were usually printed without music, some of the music has survived in other sources. Thus Philip Pickett and the Musicians of the Globe were able to reconstruct (with some creative additions) the full auditory experience of Ben Jonson, Alfonso Ferrabosco, and Robert Johnson's *Masque of Oberon*, performed in the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall for King James I [[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NhPhu-Rdss&list=OLAK5uy\\_kqbTaS-saMVngZTgfbLGRiVAOEqd\\_wv9w&index=13](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NhPhu-Rdss&list=OLAK5uy_kqbTaS-saMVngZTgfbLGRiVAOEqd_wv9w&index=13)]. Since the Banqueting Hall itself has miraculously survived the destruction of the rest of the palace, perhaps Jeff Bezos will develop a passion for Jacobean Masque and finance a completely reconstructed performance. Who knows?

But it's not just masques that were multimedia performances; plays were too, though this isn't always obvious in modern productions, let alone the classroom. Many plays included songs (like the ones Elizabeth Davenant enjoyed), but there was also instrumental music sprinkled throughout, and many also included (or ended) with music and dance. Later in Shakespeare's career, his and others' plays showed the influence of masques, incorporating more music and dance, miraculous stage effects, and exotic and magical costumes. Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* includes all of these, as well as a traveling ballad seller, singing just the kinds of songs I mentioned above.

Despite having to shift online due to the pandemic, we were able to manage remarkably well in *Mixed Media Before the Modern*. I had to give up on inviting Clint Morrison and Tamara Hauser to lead us in Renaissance dance, but, as you can see and hear from the links in this article, there are so many terrific resources online that we had little trouble finding recordings of ballads, songs, and masque music, or Inigo Jones's designs, or emblem books, or even more peculiar oddities like the Little Gidding Harmonies, gorgeous cut-and-paste scrapbooks of the Bible, incorporating illustrations, translations, and commentaries. These could never be printed, but Harvard has now digitized the Harmony in their collection [[https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:45243608\\$1i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:45243608$1i)], and the King's Harmony commissioned by Charles I has been converted into a remarkable digital edition by Stuart Williams and Ryan Sempel [<http://littlegidding.pauldyck.com>].

The students in the course seemed to enjoy the interdisciplinary adventure into the Renaissance, judging from the mixed media commonplace books they produced over the semester. Mara Vavaroutsos, for instance, created a fantastic blog embedding within her own observations digitized images, photos, film clips, songs and musical scores [<https://vavaroutsos1.wixsite.com/maravcommonplacebook>]. Sidney Kalouche also created a stunning blog, not just packed with



information but so richly decorated it's almost an artwork in itself [<https://sidneykalouche.wixsite.com/commonplacebook>]. Do have a look at these – they really deserve more attention than a course assignment typically gets! Students also had to write a final essay, and Sarah Robinson wrote a fabulous study, “The Emblems of the *Contradas* of Siena and Heraldic Coats of Arms,” based on both the course and her experience studying Italian in Siena. She included photos she'd taken of Siena and the festivals of the *contradas* (something like wards or guilds), and she conducted an interview with a former captain of one of the *contradas*.

I'm a strong proponent of both disciplinary expertise and interdisciplinary studies. As OSU Emeritus Professor Harvey Graff has argued, interdisciplinarity does not supplant disciplinary expertise, it depends upon it. There are good reasons for our academic disciplines, though their number and nature evolve over time. English Literature, for instance, my own field, hasn't been around for much more than a century, but literature is an artistic medium and cultural form distinct from music, the visual arts, and dance, and there are good reasons for focusing on a single language. But inevitably the cracks between disciplines fill up with odds and ends that fall between them. Sometimes I think it's worth dredging the betwixt and between to turn up delights like court masques and broadside ballads, lute songs and pageants, illustrated poems and speaking pictures. My students seemed to agree.

Hannibal Hamlin  
Professor of English

## **Upcoming CMRS and other MedRen Events**

**2020-2021  
Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies  
Lecture Series**

# From Festival Park to Museum: Six Decades of Living History at the Jamestown Settlement

**Luke Pecoraro**

Director of Curatorial Services  
Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation



**Friday, 16 April 2021**

**4:00 – 5:30 p.m. EST**

**Zoom** (pre-registration requested)

***\*\*Free and Open to the Public\*\****

Founded in 1957 to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in North America, the Jamestown Festival Park made living history its signature approach towards interpreting the events of 1607 through immersive outdoor exhibits. The field of historical archaeology was just beginning to coalesce as

a discipline, and historical accounts combined with 16th and 17th c. illustrations guided how James Fort, the three replica ships, and Powhatan's Lodge were constructed. The archaeological discoveries of the original site of Jamestown as well as other 17th c. sites across Virginia and contemporary Native American sites led to a richer interpretation of material culture that led to an endurance of the Festival Park to survive beyond the 1950s and become the Jamestown Settlement Museum.

This final lecture in the Center's 2020-2021 series will highlight the changes in archaeological interpretation of artifacts and site patterns that have influenced the changing landscape of the Jamestown Settlement Museum's living history programs and the growth of the permanent collection over its sixty-plus years of existence. The skilled craft of the Settlement's interpretive staff will also be discussed in the context of rediscovered industrial arts as revealed through archaeology.

*Live captioning will be provided at this event; however, if you require other accommodation to participate, please contact [cmrs@osu.edu](mailto:cmrs@osu.edu). Requests made by about 10 days before the event will generally allow us to provide seamless access, but the university will make every effort to meet requests made after this date.*

*\*\*Funding provided by the [Global Arts and Humanities Discovery Theme](#)\*\**

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## Old French Reading Group: April 6, 13

The Old French Reading Group will meet each Tuesday afternoon 4:30 – 5:30 throughout the Spring 2021 term. Read aloud in Medieval French and learn about the language and culture -- for scholarly inquiry or sheer amusement.

No prior experience needed!

Contact Prof. Sarah-Grace Heller ([heller.64@osu.edu](mailto:heller.64@osu.edu)) for more information.

Register via Zoom: <https://osu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwvc--vqz8sHdf9m4m1BwPg0NPnKnCR97k>

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## Medieval Latin Reading Group: April 8, 15

The Medieval Latin reading group will meet on Thursdays, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m., during the Spring 2021 semester.

Participants in the group are not required to prepare the readings ahead of time, and nobody should feel obligated to participate aloud, if you're more comfortable listening. We are happy to accommodate participants with all levels of Latin expertise, including those who have never tried Latin or who have forgotten everything they once knew.

If you would like to receive the Zoom meeting link and be added to the mailing list for future links and readings, please contact CMRS Associate Director Leslie Lockett at [lockett.20@osu.edu](mailto:lockett.20@osu.edu).

## News & Notes

### LOTR Soviet TV Adaptation Rediscovered after Thirty Years

Recently-retired and longtime CMRS affiliate Barbara Haeger came across this Guardian article of undoubted interest to all *Lord of the Rings* fans: Khraniteli, a nearly-lost 1991 Soviet television adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring* recently rediscovered and now



**Durham University**  
**IMEMS Slater**

posted on YouTube!

[Link to the Guardian Article](#)

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**Upcoming Columbia University Seminar in the Renaissance – April 13**

Massimo Ceresa, Adjunct Associate Professor of History at the Catholic University of America, will present “In the Service of the Church and of the Learned: The First Inventories of Printed Books in the Vatican Library (1608-1610)” as part of this year’s Columbia University Seminar in the Renaissance Series April 13 at 4 p.m. EDT.

[Seminar Series Website](#)

**Fellowship – May 9 Deadline**

University College and the Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies (IMEMS) at Durham University invite applications for the 2021/22 Slater Fellowship, a three-month residential, senior fellowship at Durham University. The Slater Fellowship is provided by University College and offers the post holder full board and accommodation for one University term, membership of University College’s Senior Common Room, and £200 towards travel expenses.

To be eligible for the post, applicants must hold a senior position at another University and have research interests that fall within the scope of IMEMS.

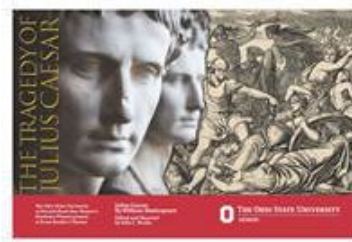
[Additional Information](#)

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**The Tragedy of Julius Caesar – Pandemic Players at the Black Box Theatre Virtual Opening April 15**

The second Pandemic Players production, *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare, directed by Edie L. Norlin, will premiere on April 15! Please follow the link below. Also, you can still catch the

troupe's *Macbeth* production from the fall semester through the same link.



**Pandemic Players  
Website**

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### **CMRS Affiliate Accomplishments**

In addition to his contribution to this issue of *Petites Nouvelles* above, CMRS Visiting Scholar John Block Friedman has been keeping busy with a number of recent and forthcoming articles, including:

- "Tracking the Mysterious Loz in the *Secrets of Natural History*," *Reinardus* 32 (2020): 102-134;
- "Gog and Magog by Any Other Name: A Propagandistic Use of the Legend," *Viator* 50.2 (2019): 307-350;
- "Monsters," in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020 – in press); and
- "Reading Monstrous Peoples in Greece and Rome," in Debbie Felton ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Monsters in Classical Myth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021 – in press).

His "Bonnacon Defence in Medieval Natural History" will appear in the upcoming *Archives of Natural History*, and entries on "Chaucer and Clothing" and "Yorkshire" are to be included in *The Chaucer Encyclopedia* (2021). Finally, as noted further above, "Antoni Gaudí's *de la Sagrada Família*, Medievalism, and the Apocryphal Infancy Gospels," as well as "Medicine in the Market-Place: A Discourse against Physicians in Medieval Popular Culture," have been completed and submitted for review.

**Next Issue: April 19    Submission Deadline: April 18**





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Renaissance Studies



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