



# Nouvelles Nouvelles



Autumn 2021



# November

## Calendar

**November 8, 2021**

**CMRS Colloquium Series:** Megan J. Hall (Notre Dame) and Nick Hoffman (English, OSU) - "*Ancrene Wisse* and Its Readers: Reappraising Medieval Women's Education and Critical Readership"  
4 PM | Online via Zoom

**November 19, 2021**

**CMRS Lecture Series:** Kristina Olson (George Mason University) - "Dante's Sartorial Poetics: Belts, Cords, Girdles and Perizoma"  
4 PM | Online via Zoom



# December

**December 3, 2021**

**2021-2022 CMRS Symposium:** Animals and Humans in the Medieval and Renaissance Worlds  
9 AM - 3:15 PM | Thompson Library 204 & Online via Zoom

**December 3, 2021**

**CMRS Symposium Keynote/Lecture Series:** Kathleen Walker-Meikle (UCL) - "Rabies, Scabies, Beast and Man: Animals and Disease in the Medieval and Early Modern Period"  
3:15 PM | Online via Zoom

**December 4, 2021**

**2021-2022 CMRS Symposium:** Animals and Humans in the Medieval and Renaissance Worlds  
9-11 AM | Thompson Library 204 & Online via Zoom





Center for Medieval and Renaissance  
Studies

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*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](mailto:cmrs@osu.edu) for more information.

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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.



Image: Jean Pucelle, "Annunciation to Shepherds," in *The Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux, Queen of France*, 1324-28, Metropolitan Museum of Art



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## GREETINGS: A WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

WRITTEN BY CHRISTOPHER HIGHLEY

### Dear Affiliates and Friends:

The Fall semester is in full swing and here at CMRS we have already seen several events come and go. The year began with a tribute to our late colleague and friend Professor John N. King (English) who was always a great advocate for the Center and its teaching and research missions. Thanks to the most generous endowment of John's widow, Pauline King, CMRS will be able to host an annual lecture in John's memory. The inaugural lecture was given by Professor Mark Rankin of James Madison University who spoke about the fascinating differences he has found in his wide-ranging survey of copies of Foxe and Day's *Book of Martyrs*. Mark proved the perfect speaker to honor John. He had been John's Ph.D. student and the two had subsequently collaborated on several projects. They had even planned to co-teach a CMRS-sponsored NEH seminar on the Reformation of the Book in Summer 2021 (Mark will now lead the seminar by himself in the OSU library rare book room in July 2022—please let us know if you are interested in applying). More than anyone, Mark carries forward John's intellectual legacy in Reformation culture, early modern religion, and print culture. He plans to complete and see into print John's manuscript on early book history that he left unfinished at his death. Even as we remember and mourn John, we thank him and Pauline for putting CMRS at the center of their planning. Pauline has not only endowed the annual lecture, she has donated many of John's sixteenth- and seventeenth-century books to the OSU library's Special Collections where they will be well used by students and researchers alike. Finally, Pauline's generosity also means that the Center will be able indefinitely to maintain membership in the Folger Institute's Consortium. Until now, finding the membership fees had been a perennial worry.



Mark Rankin



From left to right: Pauline King, Chris Highley, and Mark Rankin



Arts and Humanities Divisional Dean Dana Renga and Pauline King



Thanks to the Kings, generations of OSU students and faculty can benefit from the Folger Library's many seminars, workshops, and other opportunities. John himself held several fellowships at the Folger during his career and was a familiar figure in the reading rooms after he retired.

The Medieval and Renaissance Graduate Student Association (MRGSA), ably led by English Ph.D. candidate Tamara Mahadin, recently held another successful symposium. Conducted entirely online and anchored by a keynote address from Whitney Trettien (Assistant Professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania), the symposium featured six speakers in addition to the keynote and seems to have attracted a much larger audience than we would have seen in-person. On a lighter note, CMRS hosted a film screening of the newish *Green Knight* by 'acclaimed' producer David Lowry, starring Dev Patel, and based loosely on the Middle English poem 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.' As part of this Halloween-themed evening, we also had a costume contest. First prize went to a splendid Raven that also bore a passing resemblance to a plague doctor. Another CMRS movie night may be on the horizon as Nick is in negotiations with A24 (a movie distribution company) about the new *Macbeth*, directed by Joel Coen and starring Denzel Washington.

Our next speaker will be Professor Kristina Olson of George Mason University who will mark the 700th anniversary of Dante Alighieri's death with a lecture on the sartorial poetics of Dante's *Commedia* and lyric verse. The lecture will be delivered over Zoom at 4PM on Friday, November 19th. We wrap up the semester with our annual symposium, devoted this time to the topic of 'Animals and Humans in the Medieval and Renaissance Worlds' (Friday and Saturday, December 3-4). This will be our first fully hybrid event, with four US-based speakers attending in person and two Zooming in from overseas.

This semester has been especially grueling for Nick Spitulski because of the lack of our regular GA and Work Study support. Of course, Nick continues to perform yeoman's service and we are also fortunate to have the support of GA Gillian Zhang, a Ph.D. candidate in Art History studying early modern Chinese art. You might have noticed that Gillian has a special talent for designing striking posters. We are also indebted to the efforts of Jared Gardner, the Director of the rebranded Humanities Collaboratory, whose technical expertise allowed us to stream our first lecture through Facebook Live.

Finally, it's nice to know that a passion for all things Medieval and Renaissance is alive and well in the Buckeye state. After living here for nearly 30 years, I finally made it to the [Ohio Renaissance Festival](#) that takes place between September and October every year. It's about an hour drive south of Columbus and well worth the trip. The permanent walled site is ringed by shops and taverns selling everything from chain mail, bagpipes, and drinking horns, to turkey drumsticks and ale. Dotted around the 'shire' are various performance spaces for acrobatics, fire-eating, jousting, and dancing pigs. I enjoyed a send-up of Dante's *Inferno* performed around a mud pit, but had to leave before that evening's 'Naughty, Bawdy Pub Show' (strictly 21 and above). [Actors and visitors](#) alike spend ages fabricating their costumes and personae and are very happy to engage in Olde Englishe banter. It won't be 30 years before I visit again. Perhaps a CMRS group outing in 2022?

Best wishes,  
Chris Highley



Director, Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies





# RENAISSANCE FAIR



credited to: Wood-n-photography



# INTERVIEW WITH MARK RANKIN

INTERVIEWED BY GILLIAN ZHANG



(Click the button to play ↑)

GZ: Hello, this is Gillian Zhang with the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at The Ohio State University. I'm talking today with our guest speaker, Dr. Mark Rankin, who will present a talk later this evening, entitled "Accuracy and Error in the Production of John Foxe and John Day's *Acts and Monuments*." Dr. Rankin's talk will be the first lecture in our 2021 to 2022 lecture series, and also held in honor of Professor John King, who was designated Distinguished University Professor at OSU in 2004. Dr. Rankin was an advisee of Professor King, and they have collaborated on a variety of projects. After completing his PhD at OSU, Dr. Rankin has been teaching at the Department of English, James Madison University until present. He has also obtained many prestigious scholarships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Huntington Library, Folger Shakespeare Library, just to name a few. So today, we are going to be talking about Dr. Rankin's research experience in the field of Medieval and Renaissance studies, about some of his memories of OSU, working with Professor King, and about the university's Rare Book collections. So welcome, Dr. Rankin. Welcome back to OSU. It's a pleasure to talk to you today.

MR: Thank you for having me.

GZ: Before we delve into more specific questions, can you tell our listeners more about yourself? When did you first become interested in Medieval and Renaissance studies or English literature?

MR: Sure, I've always loved reading and the story goes back a long way. I became interested in Renaissance studies through the Reformation actually. And in my upbringing, in the Anglican/Episcopal world, I became interested in the ways in which the Church of England and different versions of Christianity came out of the Reformation. And the story of that attracted me a great deal in terms of the literary side more than the historical side per se, because of the creativity involved in representing the events of the Reformation. That's why I gravitated to literature, and I decided to specialize in that area when I came here to OSU, after having previously studied novels and some other things.

GZ: I see. So you're interested in the Reformation, like back to high school?

MR: I think so. I took a Western Civilization Advancement class in high school, and the teacher had the PhD in Reformation Studies. He inspired me to think about the complex, including the players, the actors, the events, and the personalities, and how the ways that books during the Reformation affected the spread of ideas, the way that books circulated, and the ways that authors attempted to influence people's thinking, and translations of the English Bible as well.

GZ: When you entered college, did you study English literature?

MR: I started actually far afield in engineering. I made the switch to English literature and education. I spent some time studying 19th-century novels, but then I made the switch to the Renaissance.

GZ: Wow! It's like a big decision, right? To change your major from engineering to English literature.

MR: I hated engineering. I just did it and didn't like it, and I came to what I love. You were asking about how I came to study the Renaissance here at OSU. Is that right?

GZ: Yes, like what drew you to this specific program?

MR: The story is that I did my MA at Ohio University about 80 miles southeast of here. I had a professor there who knew about OSU, and he encouraged me to apply when I was looking at the PhD, so I did. I came to OSU and saw it as an ideal opportunity for me to really delve deeper into my interest in Reformation Studies. The Renaissance and early modern became my natural home. By the same token, Professor King's research was a natural draw for me because of his pioneering work in that field.

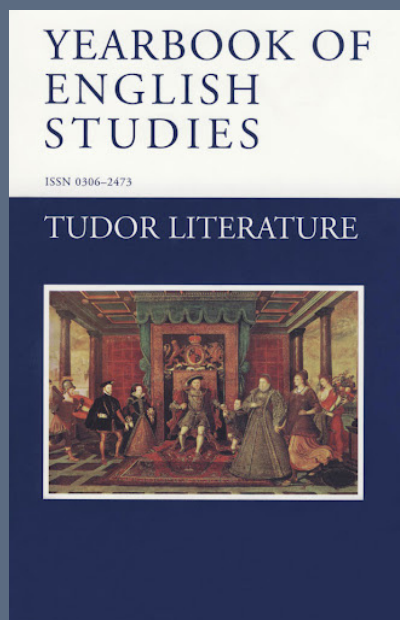
GZ: I noticed that you and Professor King collaborated on a lot of co-writing articles and you co-edited a monograph. What is your first collaboration?

MR: Right. They all happened almost the same time. When I was finishing up my dissertation, John invited me to collaborate with him on several projects. We did an article together, in *The Yearbook of English Studies*, on translations of Reformation works, English translations of continental reform. That was a project that I believe John had proposed as a special issue, and he asked me to co-author the piece with him. Also, the edited collection, *Henry VIII and His Afterlives*, was published in time with the 2009, 500th anniversary of King Henry VIII's accession to the throne, so it seemed a great time to look at how Henry VIII was represented in different kinds of literature and historical texts. That was the subject of my dissertation research. I don't know who first came up with the idea. Chris Highley as well was involved, and the three of us approached Cambridge, and we were able to do the collection, so that was another big collaboration. Then I also collaborated with John on five separate National Endowment for the Humanities summer seminars. The sixth will be offered here at OSU in 2022.

GZ: That's next year.

MR: Yes, next summer.





GZ: There are so many collaborations.

MR: Right, and I think that I was very fortunate. I understand that not every doctoral student enters into such rich collaboration with the advisor. John invited me to collaborate with him, and I've always taken opportunities to collaborate with other scholars, if the product is something that I can't produce myself that if the end result is better than anything any of us could do individually. That's been my philosophy in collaboration, and that's what guided my work with Professor King.

GZ: Yeah, I think this is not that common, but as you said, teamwork is really important. In science fields, they have a lot of collaboration, but in humanities, I think we should have more.

MR: We should! John also offered me friendship fairly early on. I did my due diligence, but there was a time when the relationship became more of a colleague relationship, probably soon after I graduated from OSU. I really put a lot of the thanks on him, because the collaboration wouldn't have happened if it were not for his generosity and his gracious willingness to provide me with opportunities to advance my career. That's really what it was about. I just simply took the opportunities that he offered.

GZ: As our listeners may also know, the OSU library has a very good collection of rare books. I think Professor John King also helped to make our collections the finest John Foxe collections, right? And we have the unparalleled collection of books printed by John Day. So is there one particular book that you think is extremely interesting or remarkable?

MR: Can I tell the story of some of those collections being built first? Is that possible?

GZ: Of course.

“ In 2002, Ohio State won the national championship in football and the money that came to the University was divided up in different piles, and a huge pile of that went to the library.”



MR: Jim Bracken was the librarian here for many years, and he and John collaborated beginning when John arrived at Ohio State in the late 1980s. They began to purchase copies of Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. The early editions were printed by John Day who was the premier printer of 16th-century England and Queen Elizabeth I's reign. There was a bookseller in Ireland. OSU sent deaccessioned duplicate copies of ordinary books across the ocean to this Irish bookseller, in exchange for copies of *Acts and Monuments*. This was built up over a period of years in the late 1990s and early 2000s, being finished right when I was here from 2001 to 2007. The result of that collaboration has made Ohio State one of the finest John Foxe collections in the world. There are only two or three other institutions in North America whose collections rival Ohio State's. There was also a very fortuitous arrangement made between the libraries and the football program. In 2002, Ohio State won the national championship in football and the money that came to the University was divided up in different piles, and a huge pile of that went to the library. When that happened, there was several hundred thousand dollars in cash. At that same time, the University made an offer for something called the James Stevens-Cox STC collection. Stevens-Cox was a rare book collector. He had a collection of books that is so rare that the Standard Catalog of rare books, the Short Title Catalogue, or STC, lists him as a named collector. Most of the time, this catalogue only lists institutions, but if the book is rare enough, it would list individual owners as well. Well, the estate, when Stevens-Cox passed away, wanted to sell the whole collection to an institutional library in one piece, and it happened that Ohio State had the cash to make that purchase. This is extraordinary because these books survive in only one, two or three copies anywhere.

In addition, John King and James Bracken built on the John Day collection as well, using various funding and arrangements similar to what I have described. It has really made Ohio State a destination for the study of printing in the first century or so after Caxton. I think that the Foxe collection is my favorite for various reasons. Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* is such an extraordinary book. It's the most complicated book printed in England during this time. I'll talk more about this tonight at the CMRS lecture. However, for this discussion, I'd like to mention one of the Stevens-Cox books by the English preacher Francis Rous. It's called the *Mystical Marriage*. In the front, on a blank page is a note that the book was owned in the 17th century by a parish church. In the front are instructions for the book to be circulated as part of an early lending library, to parishioners. It also has three or four names of people who signed out the book and the date, and then the date it was returned, and then the next borrower. This kind of thing is extraordinary, and these are the kinds of discoveries that can be made only by looking at collections of this kind. So that's a real gem.



GZ: Was that a very rare discovery?

MR: Right! Because you know, if there's no written record, then there's no knowledge that had happened. And so this book tells us that it was part of this library, and the evidence is in the book. And so this is why, for example, the individual physical book matters. The internet and online books are wonderful and have changed the way we do research. But there is knowledge preserved within the physical copy of the book sitting on your desk. There may be no other copy of that book. Plus, the *Mystical Marriage* is from the collection of extremely rare books, there may only be one or two copies that survive, or very few in any case.

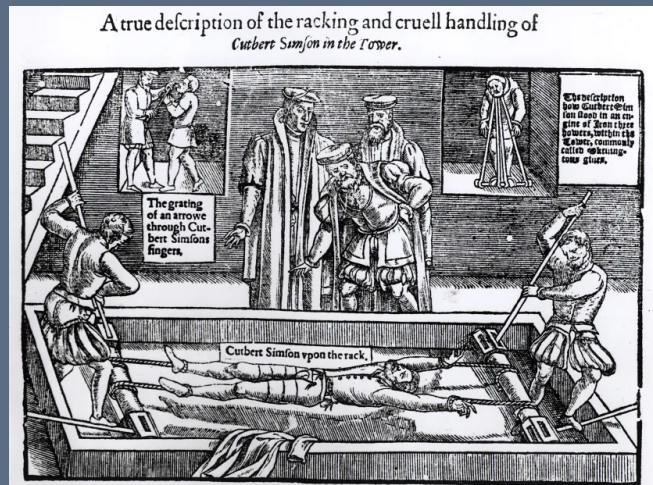
GZ: I am also interested in book history, and I noticed that recently book historians not only pay attention to the contents of the book, but pay more attention to the materiality of the book, and also the various stages of a work's life, like from author to publisher, to printer and bookseller, and also readers. So I'm curious about your methodologies.

MR: Great question. For me, the history of the book is the story of the relationship between a book's physical features, and the contents of the text or texts that it contains. The physicality of a book evolves in relationship to the contents in ways that can be described. And that actually illuminates the contents in several possible ways. For example, if a printer designs a book in a certain way, that could tell us something about how that work was intended to be received. For example, now, you mentioned the lifecycle of a book. There is a scholar who has developed an idea called the "communication circuit," which you might have in mind, where you have authors, printers, distributors, publishers, readers, binders, and it's sort of a circuit that's been very influential in book history. For me, my approach is to look at as many copies of a book of any given title as possible to try to find some things out about the book that may be unique in the copies that are in front of me. So for example, my talk today is going to be looking at John Day, the printer's approach to correction in Foxe's book. Among other techniques, he glues in little pieces of paper with text printed on top of incorrect text. He doesn't do this in every copy. You have to look at as many copies as possible to see how Day approaches the problem of error. And so I'm very entrepreneurial. I think of my work in some ways as the Indiana Jones of rare book research, that is, I go beyond the major archives, you know, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the British Library, the Bodleian. I go to those places, but I also tried to go off the beaten path, because every book tells a story. And in a way, my approach is to follow the story. I think that the best book history goes beyond the nuts and bolts of signature markings and, you know, gatherings and collation and all that to tell a bigger story about ideas. For me, the history of the book allows researchers to explore ideas, and the history of thinking; you know, we can learn about patronage, for example, from dedications, but also from the way a book is made. Are its illustrations hand colored? Is it bound in a special way?

GZ: Yeah, excellent! I think that's very interesting that you track different copies and different versions of a book to see how the texts or contents changed.

MR: Right! We have to understand that printers in the period did not leave records of their business operations, by and large, in England, especially. Or if they left them, they've been lost. So there's no diary that tells us that this is John Day's approach to the problem of error. He simply worked on the fly. And so to recover that, you have to look at the artifact and deduce what he's doing from the evidence in front of you. Do we have time for another story?

GZ: Yes, of course!

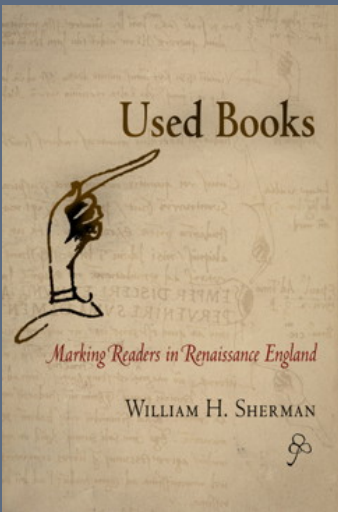


MR: I would like to give another example of this. Some of my work has dealt with a man called Richard Topcliffe. And Topcliffe was a despicable man. He was a torturer. And yet he was also a reader. He worked for Queen Elizabeth's government. He confiscated books from the houses of English Catholics. As he read them he wrote in the margins, reacting to the ways in which the book in front of him conformed to existing statute law against things like royal assassination and allegiance to a foreign power. Remember it wasn't illegal to be Catholic, but it was illegal to pledge allegiance to a foreign power, like the Pope. Topcliffe collected evidence that Catholics were seditious, and that they were breaking the law so that the government would have evidence to prosecute them. And he did this in the margins of his books. And so this is a great example of how the study of a reader can get into issues concerning police brutality, and issues concerning how books are controversial. And so I always try to, whether it be Foxe or English Catholic books, or other kinds of printed books, I always try to find that story. Because that's really what legitimizes the history of the book, within the broader humanities.

GZ: That's a fascinating story. I noticed that you pay a lot attention to readers. I know that readers are really important, but sometimes it's not easy to find them, right?



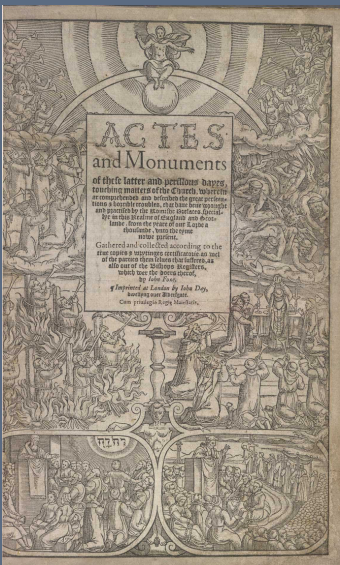




MR: Right! For sure. It can be very hard, but William Sherman in *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England*, argues that by definition the reader is impossible to recover, and that reading leaves no sign of its having happened. And so if a reader has written something down about the reading, then they are writing, not reading. And so immediately, the question of readers really becomes, like sand falling through your fingers. And so often, what readers write down in the margin isn't the kind of thing that we would be interested in seeing. It can be very difficult. One of the things that I do is I look at as many copies of a book as possible, as I mentioned, to see what kinds of readers do write things in the margin. Also, the study of the history of reading now, is evolving rapidly toward representations of reading, and different kinds of reading, reading aloud, for example, or hearing versus reading because hearing something read isn't the same phenomenon as reading something aloud. It gets very, very interesting in terms of sort of how you talk about the history of reading. There are also visual representations of reading in this period. In some ways, it's all of these categories of evidence working together at the same time that helps me tell the story I'm looking for.

GZ: Have you written about readers?

MR: One of the things I'm doing right now with Foxe is a census of surviving copies of the first four editions, those that Foxe worked on with John Day. And that census has reached 189 copies out of about 250 total. Now, as I approach the 250 mark, my plan is to look at authors who themselves read Foxe, and to go beyond existing work, mostly by John King, actually, on the history of the reading of Foxe to compare the things that readers are putting in the margin of their copies of Foxe with what authors are saying about Foxe who have read him and are writing about him. In this way, I hope to tell a broader story about precisely how the *Book of Martyrs* or the *Acts and Monuments* was understood. By looking at all of those copies, I can add to the conversation in ways that would not otherwise be possible. Remember that the *Acts and Monuments* went into nine additions down to 1684, but I'm only looking at the first four, those of 1563, 1570, 1576, 1583. Those are the four that Foxe himself edited. I'll leave it to someone else to look at the later editions.



GZ: I also have a question about the term "edition." I know in Chinese book history, edition is a very complicated term. Most Chinese pre-modern books were published by woodblock printing technology. An edition means the whole number of copies of a book that are printed from the same set of blocks. If a book is published in a later time period but using the same set of blocks, it is still the same edition.

MR: Right, so in early printing, bookmaking is an industrial process. And type is not a verb. It's a noun. Type is something that you hold in your hand. It is a piece of metal that has a letter on the end and is made through a casting process. And these individual letters on pieces of type were assembled in order in what's called a form on a flat surface, and then tightened all together and rolled under the printing press for bookmaking. Now, if a work is so produced, and then the type is disassembled, and returned to the case, and then re-assembled, you have a new edition. So when you assemble type into your printing process, and you print your book on a hand operated press, as long as you keep the type together, it's the same edition. Now very rarely in England was type ever held together after a book was made because there was not enough type to go around for other jobs. And so I suppose that if, you know, let's say if it was something like an ABC that was held together and then printed again two years later, that would be a new edition. For the most part, it is the idea of assembly and disassembly that marks an edition.

GZ: I see. That makes sense. And so for each edition, the printers will make some change, because he or she would notice that there's maybe some mistake.

MR: Possibly, it depends really. Foxe is a special case, because each of the editions that he worked on was different. Compared to the first edition, the production of the second edition was more complicated. He's bringing stuff into the printing house as it's being printed, which forces John Day to resort to all kinds of creative techniques in order to fit material in. Most authors are usually not so ambitious, they're usually not so driven. And oftentimes, they're not even present in the printing house. In those cases, an edition could be reprinted from a previous printing, with no changes. And in effect, the changes that would result would be errors introduced in the printing process, for example. If there was the wrong letter in the wrong place, and the compositor or the printing workman who puts the letters together, if he grabs the incorrect letter, then you have an error in the resulting text. This happens often in the printing of Shakespeare's plays, for example. But in the case of Foxe, you have an author who's continuing to compile and continuing to produce during the production process. That's a very unique case, or a rare case I should say.

GZ: Thank you Mark very much for sharing your research and your experience with us.

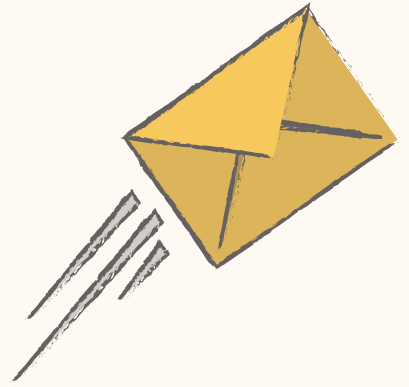
MR: Thank you. It's been a pleasure.





# EIGHT YEARS AND TWO EMAILS

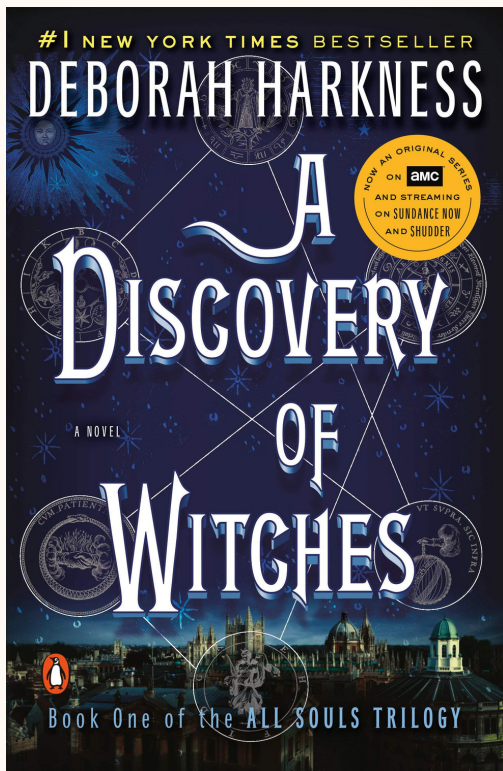
WRITTEN BY ANGELA VOLCENSEK



It is an old cliché that it's the small things that change lives. However, it is only when we look back that we see the catalyst which brought us to our present circumstances. My catalyst was a book sale one random night at my local public library. As I strolled the rows of dilapidated books, idly scanning the titles, a newer, more pristine book caught my eye. The title intrigued me instantly: *A Discovery of Witches* by Deborah Harkness. It was a relatively lengthy book for a middle school student, and the volunteer gave me a perplexed look when I handed her my payment, but I started reading the novel that same night.

Diana, the heroine of the story, is a history professor who specializes in early modern alchemy. While a mildly relevant plot point, I couldn't help but be fascinated by the description of her work and the concept of historical research. History had always been my best subject, but it was *A Discovery of Witches* that truly developed my mild interest into budding passion. The book became a staple of my childhood, and I reread the series a few times before I went off to high school.

Ninth grade came with a flurry of questions about my future career plans, and I was faced with a dilemma. History was my passion, and to be a historian was a dream of mine, but teachers and fellow students alike told me that it would be a "waste" to major in the humanities. I found this greatly discouraging because my passion was considered meaningless by many of the people I respected. It was with this in mind that I started my research on historical studies as a possible future. At some point during that first year of high school, I was casually flipping through the now well-worn pages of the book when I decided to read the author's description on the back page. The description stated that Deborah Harkness was a historian and professor by trade.



It was not long after that I decided to email Professor Harkness and ask her about her job as a historian. The email that I originally sent has since been lost, but I believe I asked something to this effect: “As an aspiring historian, I am concerned that there will be no room in this career field for me. How do I make this path more ‘practical’?” If I try hard enough, sometimes I am able to believe that I was that eloquent all those years ago!

As I sent the email, I considered the possibility that Professor Harkness would be much too busy to reply. After all, I was a thirteen-year-old from a town few knew about, on the opposite side of the country. At the very least, I thought it might just end up in a spam folder, never to see the light of day. However, this was not the case.

Professor Harkness not only replied to my email, but she gave me perhaps the best advice of my life. Her email read: “No profession, whether engineering, sciences, or history, has any place for a person who is lukewarm about what they are doing.”

The statement was a powerful one, and an idea that I had never considered. What if dedication, hard work, and passion were enough to forge a career in the “impractical” humanities? In a high school that was influenced more by STEM than any other discipline, it seemed like a rather radical thought.

Years passed, and eventually I found myself applying to Ohio State as a Psychology major. The subject had piqued my interest, but I found that I was restless in my studies. It wasn’t until I took History 3231: “Creating Medieval Monsters” with Professor Sara Butler that I was reminded of my passion for history. My time with the Psychology department had been wonderful—and I was still interested in the major—but I began to realize that interest and passion do not always go hand-in-hand. I made the switch to becoming a History major not long after, and Professor Harkness’s words rang in the back of my mind.

Earlier this semester, I recounted this story to my newest roommate Megan, and she suggested that I update Professor Harkness on my progress in college. At first, admittedly, I shied away from this idea. In the years between my first email and what would later be my second, *A Discovery of Witches* had become a complete success. I had even watched on in pride as it became a television show! With her undoubtedly eventful schedule in mind, I tentatively sent another email. I informed her of my triple major in History, Italian, and Medieval and Renaissance Studies, and my determination to apply to graduate programs. No less than a week later, I found a reply from her in my inbox. She wished me well in my final year of undergraduate studies and into the future; it was truly an uplifting way for these events to come full-circle.

In the time between then and now, I’ve gotten to reflect on all of the lessons that I have learned and how much I have changed. I do not think my thirteen-year-old self would have believed I would be living my dream this way eight years later. As I look towards the future, the words of the initial response email still come to mind. Perhaps it is not what we choose to do with our lives—but rather that we have a passion for something—that determines our success.



# A SUPERNATURAL PODCAST

WRITTEN BY CHRIS WOODYARD



So, a Brit and a Yank walk into a supernatural podcast nattering about fairies, folklore, ghosts, and the impossible.

*Boggart and Banshee: A Supernatural Podcast*, is the latest project of CMRS alumna, author Chris Woodyard, and co-host Dr. Simon Young, a British academic living in Italy, author of numerous folklore publications.

“I first met Simon through a blog. He was a brilliant conversationalist and I was relentlessly informative. He asked me to write a chapter on American fairies for his book, *Magical Folk: British and Irish Fairies: 500 AD to the Present*. We later co-wrote an article, “Three Notes and a Handlist of North American Fairies,” published in *Supernatural Studies*.



“Our first podcast episode, released 1 October, 2021, continues the fairy topic with a discussion of a case Simon calls ‘the scariest British fairy encounter,’ ‘The Elf Dancers of Cae Caled.’” Among other topics, future episodes will cover the ghostly apparitions of Women in Black, the Epworth Rectory poltergeist, Jenny Greenteeth, and the origins of fairy wings.

“In starting a supernatural podcast, we wanted to get past the silly Halloween and TV-ghost-hunter side of the supernatural and look at some of the weirder, quirkier stories from history,” says Dr. Young. “Chris and I have very different views on the supernatural, but similar values. This makes for good arguments. Chris also has that knack of asking the right question and her knowledge of American ghost-lore is second to none.”

“We trade off discussing pet subjects, so there are fairies one week; ghosts in shrouds the next—I generally focus on ghosts or death,” added Woodyard, who is the author of the Haunted Ohio series of ghost stories, as well as *The Victorian Book of the Dead*, a book on the popular and material culture of 19th-century death and mourning.

“Simon is much more disciplined. He likes to assemble a source file and look at a single case. I am more free-form and like to compare phenomenon from a variety of traditions. I think our different styles and fields of expertise—not to mention our accents--complement each other. There is something to be said for an interdisciplinary American author lobbying objections into a British academic's carefully executed case study.”

## Why boggart and banshee?

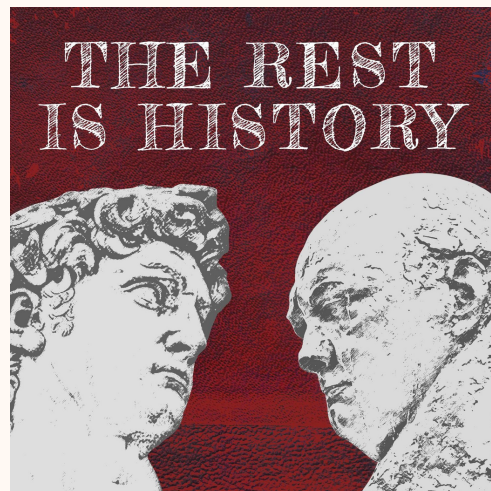
“Simon is an expert on boggarts; his book *The Boggart: Folklore, History, Placenames and Dialect* will be published by Exeter University Press in 2022, and I am fascinated by death omens, like the banshee. It seemed a natural pairing. We hope that listeners will find it both entertaining and informative.”

*Boggart and Banshee: A Supernatural Podcast* is available on Apple, Spotify, Amazon, Google and other platforms.

The Rest is History --

### 113. Hallowe'en and Modern Paganism

Hosted by a historian of the ancient world and a historian of post-war Britain, this episode features an interview with Professor Ronald Hutton. Hutton is a professor at the University of Bristol and a former CMRS speaker.



Salem witch trials podcast, episode 1: Introduction

Join us for the first episode of our series on the Salem witch trials, one of the most fascinating moments in

History Extra --

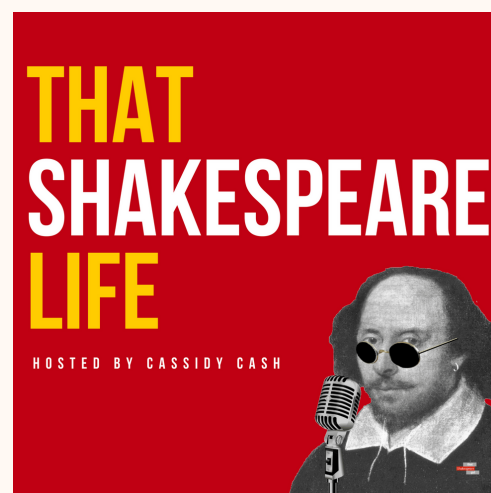
### Salem: Investigating the Witch Trials

The BBC podcast 'History Extra' recently broadcast nine episodes about the Salem witch trials of 1692, which delve into one of the fascinating moments in American history.

That Shakespeare Life --

### **184: The Case of Elizabeth Stile with Carole Levin**

The podcast 'That Shakespeare Life' recently had an episode about Elizabethan witch trials with Tudor historian Carole Levin.







Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH  
Medieval Treasures from Münster  
Cathedral

Sat, 05/22/2021 to Sun, 08/14/2022  
Gallery 115

Gold and silver reliquaries, jeweled crosses, liturgical garments, and illuminated manuscripts are among the rare treasures kept in the Cathedral of Saint Paul in Münster, in northwestern Germany.

Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, OH  
Rembrandt: Master Printmaker  
Online

Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (1606–1669) is one of the world's most recognized artists. While best known as a painter, Rembrandt made significant contributions to printmaking and is considered a great master of the medium.

"Rembrandt Master Printmaker" explores several of the artist's technical, narrative, and emotional approaches that still make a lasting impact today. The works on exhibition all come from the Cincinnati Art Museum's impressive collection.



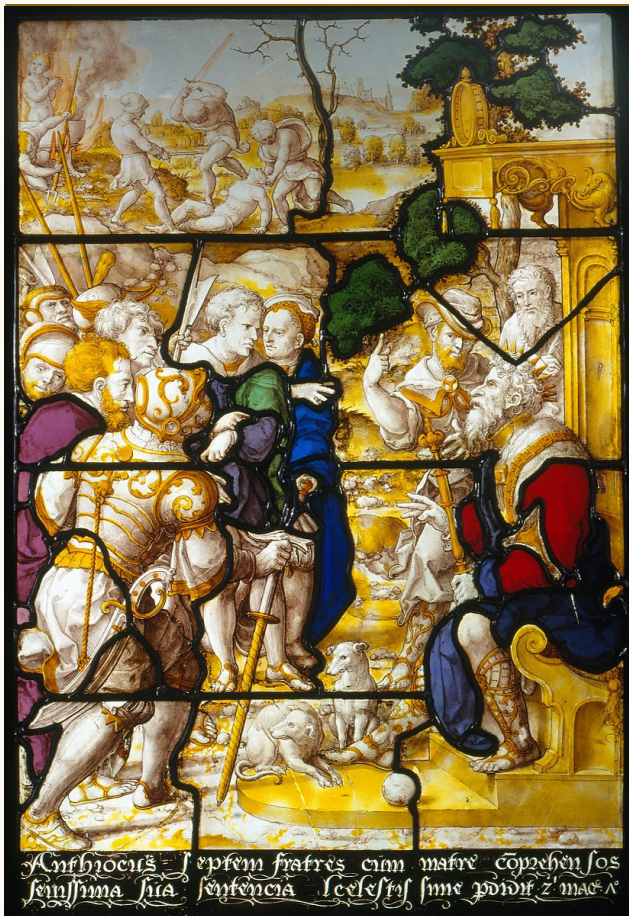




Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City  
**The Medici: Portraits & Politics, 1512-1570**  
 June 26, 2021 - October 11, 2021

[Exhibition Objects](#) || [Exhibition Podcast](#) ( [click to view and listen](#))

“A spectacular exhibition... Organized around fabulous loans from far-flung lenders and a deeply intellectual premise, ‘Medici Portraits’ would be a feat in any climate. In a pandemic, it’s a triumph.” —  
 Wall Street Journal



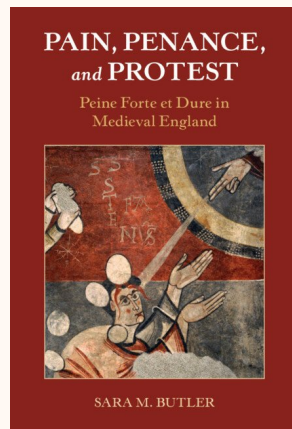
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City  
**Relative Values: The Cost of Art in the Northern Renaissance**  
 August 7, 2017 – January 23, 2022  
 Gallery 521

Bringing together sixty-two masterpieces of sixteenth-century northern European art from The Met collection and one important loan, this exhibition revolves around questions of historical worth, exploring relative value systems in the Renaissance era.



# CMRS Affiliate Accomplishments

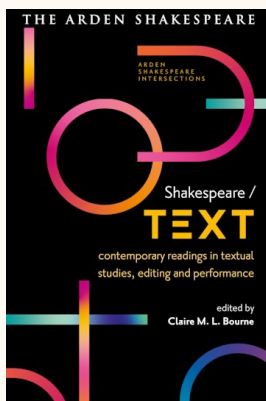
**Charles M. Atkinson** (Emeritus, Musicology) delivered the keynote address, "Über Tonartwechsel im östlichen und westlichen Gesang: Techniken, Texte und Rhetorik" ("On Modulation in Eastern and Western Chant: Techniques, Texts, and Rhetoric") at the meeting of the German-Language Section of the Associazione Internazionale Studi di Canto Gregoriano, held on the island of Reichenau, Germany, November 12-14, 2021.



**Sara M. Butler** (History) has published a book *Pain, Penance, and Protest: Peine Forte et Dure in Medieval England* (Cambridge University Press) in November, 2021.

**Sarah-Grace Heller** co-organized the conference, "Festin de la littérature médiévale: Women, Food, Knowledge, and Poetry," held at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva NY in October 11-13, 2021. She also delivered a paper, "Dressing for festins: Shopping chez les Frères Bonis in Montauban."

**Elizabeth Kolkovich** (English) presented a paper "Female Masquers in Timon of Athens" at the 11th World Shakespeare Congress "Shakespeare Circuits," held virtually at the National University of Singapore in July 18-24, 2021. She has also published a couple of essays :



"Digital Humanities and Early Modern Women's Writing," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching (SMART)*, 28.2 (2021): 107-116;

"Public/Private," in *Shakespeare/Text: Contemporary Readings in Textual Studies, Editing and Performance*, edited by Claire M. L. Bourne (New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2021): 66-83.

**Sarah Neville** (English) will deliver a paper "Herbals, Illustrated and Un-Illustrated: Selling Botany in Early Modern England" at the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, UCLA as the Sixteenth Kenneth Karmiole Lecture on the History of the Book Trade on December 7, 2021.



**Adena Tanenbaum** (Near Eastern Languages and Cultures) has published a couple of essays:

"Review of Uriah Kfir, *A Matter of Geography: A New Perspective on Medieval Hebrew Poetry* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018)," *Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies* 96.3 (June 2021): 840 – 842;  
<https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/715131>

"Hidden Gems: The Hebrew Maqāma from Yemen," *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* (May, 2021): 1–34; <https://doi.org/10.1163/2212943X-20201022>

**Lisa Voigt** (Spanish and Portuguese) has been Visiting Professor of Spanish and Portuguese at Yale University in fall 2021. She has just joined the Interim Editorial Team of *Renaissance Quarterly*, and will be Special Issues Editor of *Colonial Latin American Review* beginning in January 2022.

**Chris Woodyard** (CMRS alumni) has delivered a number of papers:

"Undercover" at the Sartorial Society Series, Season 4 "The Woman in Black: Victorian Mourning Costume as Criminal Disguise" on September 30, 2021;

"Grief and Grievance: Mourning Crape as a Means of Protest" at the Costume Society of America, National Symposium on May 26, 2021;

"Putting the Nursery into Mourning: Children in Crape" at the Royal Holloway University of London Death Conference on April 15, 2021.







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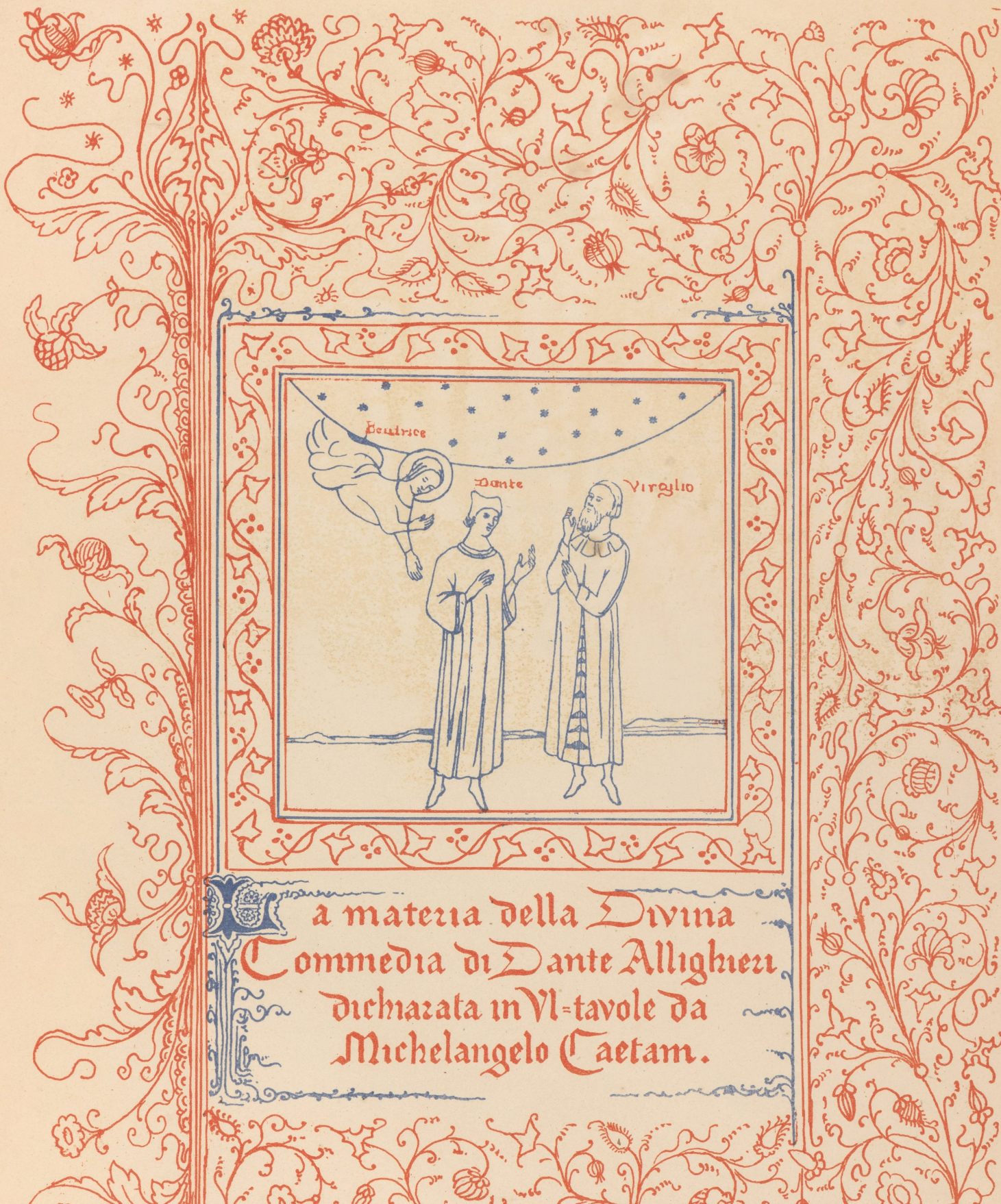
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dichiarata in VI-tavole da  
Michelangelo Caetani.