



The Center for Early Modern History Presents

Friday, October 26th
12:15 pm ~ 1210 Heller Hall

“I Figli d’Arte Cuticchio’, Tradition and Innovation in Contemporary Sicilian Puppet Theater”



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Abstract: The form of puppet theater - the *Opera dei pupi* - that arose in the late eighteenth century in Sicily found in both literary and popular versions of Medieval and Renaissance chivalric romance a dynamic model for recounting the long and varied history of the island, its struggles and triumphs. The most important among the remaining companies, the Figli D’Arte Cuticchio, have sought through their work as both performers and curators of a vast material patrimony of puppets, costumes, scenery, banners, and much else to demonstrate how through centuries of reinvention the tales of the knights of Charlemagne come full circle, from the remote battlefield of Roncesvalles, in Spain, where Orlando and his comrades-in-arms are said to have met their tragic end in 778, to early twenty-first-century Palermo.

Biography: Michael Wyatt is an independent scholar. He has taught at Northwestern University, Wesleyan University, the Università degli Studi di Trento, and Stanford University, where he also served as the first Associate Director of the Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies; he has lectured extensively in the United States, Europe, and Australasia. Among his publications are *The Cambridge Companion to the Italian Renaissance* (2014); *Writing Relations, American Scholars in Italian Archives: Essays for Franca Nardelli Petrucci and Armando Petrucci* (2008); and *The Italian Encounter with Tudor England: a Cultural Politics of Translation* (2005). He is currently working on two projects: *John Florio and the Circulation of ‘Stranger’ Cultures in Stuart Britain* and *Dido’s Legacy: Oblivion and Promise in Italy’s Past Present*.



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