

The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)  
announces a public lecture

by

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***Cantum Pulcriorem Invenire: Thirteenth-Century Latin Poetry and Music***

The long thirteenth century (c1170 to c1320) saw the emergence of three coherent repertoires of polyphonic music: settings of liturgical chant called *organum*, motets that were originally derived from parts of *organum* and the *conductus*. *Organum* and the motet have been the subject of impressive levels of musicological study in the last 150 years whereas the *conductus* – despite its status as the first consistent repertoire of newly-composed polyphony – has remained somewhat in the shadows. Although the repertoire has been catalogued, little work, admittedly very distinguished, has been built on these bibliographical foundations. The *conductus* therefore stands at the centre of this project, merging Latin poetry and music in a single genre. *Cantum pulcriorem invenire* (the title quotes lines from the treatise *Ars cantus mensurabilis* that instruct would-be composers of *conductus* first of all ‘to find a more beautiful melody’) seeks to understand the Latin poetry and music of the *conductus* with a view to reinstating it alongside *organum* and motet, the position that it enjoyed in the eyes and words of all thirteenth-century theorists. This understanding is gained by an analysis of repertoires and chronology, poetry and music, in conjunction with a review of the highly contested question of the genre’s rhythm and metre.

**2 May 2013 at 6 pm, Room 0003**

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