

Humanities Center Summer Research Grant Presentation

Friday, March 6
12 noon
Humanities Center

Kate Crassons

Associate Professor of English
Director, Lehigh University Press



Chaucer's Saint Cecilia and the Insecurities of Faith

Abstract: Bringing Chaucer's *Second Nun's Tale* together with Wycliffite writings and Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, this talk explores how Chaucer's legend of Saint Cecilia both foresees and criticizes a version of religious belief that imagines faith as a habit of certitude. When read in light of religious developments in the fifteenth century, Chaucer's saint's life emerges as a work that provocatively anticipates a set of theological problems arising in both Wycliffite and orthodox arguments about the Eucharist, Christ's miracles, and the nature of faith more generally. Chaucer's legend of Cecilia thus ultimately comes to offer a prescient reflection on the fascinating convergences that develop between heretical thought and the orthodox defenses marshaled against it.

<http://humanitiesctr.cas2.lehigh.edu/> • 610-758-4649 • humanities@lehigh.edu

Bring Your Own Lunch • Beverages and Dessert Provided