EMILY ZAZULIA is the Shirley Shenker Assistant Professor of Music at UC Berkeley, having previously taught at the University of Pittsburgh. Her recent work includes studies on the role of obscenity in 15th-century song, the L’homme armé tradition, the history of music theory, and ideas about rhythm in the middle ages. Her research has been supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the American Musicological Society. A specialist in Medieval and Renaissance music, she is currently working on a wide-ranging study of notational aesthetics in polyphonic music, ca. 1350–1520, from which material for this talk comes.

John Twyning is Professor of English and Associate Dean, Undergraduate Studies. His current research focuses on various formations of English historical and national consciousness through the interconnections between architecture, literature, and landscape. His most recent book, titled Forms of English History in Literature, Landscape and Architecture (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), is a series of studies that analyze the how architectural design and discourse come to generate versions of an English national identity. His book London Dispossessed: Literature and Social Space in the Early Modern City is part of the LDS series published by Macmillan Press and St. Martin’s Press. He has also published articles on Metropolitan Literature, City Comedy, and Early Modern Rogue Literature.

The Program in Medieval and Renaissance Studies is excited to announce a workshop and lecture series on the topic of “Premodern Elements.” Before the rare earths that invisibly shape and fuel your cell phone and hybrid car—minerals of costly environmental extraction and recomdnite names—the elements were simple: as simple, shifting, complex, and storied as earth, wind, fire, and air. Together with other iconic foursomes (seasons, humors, continents) the elements organized the premodern universe, animated myth, required iconography. Drawing on recent efforts to think “with” the elements in ecocriticism, this workshop proposes a group exploration of the impact of the elements on premodern cultural production. We seek to expand elemental thinking beyond purely ecocritical or materialist concerns to include topics, texts, and objects in literary studies, history of art and architecture, and history and philosophy of science. How did earth, air, fire, and water combine to order—or disorganize—materiality, bodies, space, or texts? How did they foster, temper, or block new experiences of scale or configurations of matter? What does it mean to approach a literary text or cultural artifact through its engagement with the elements? How did elements express national or gender affiliations? What were the relations between elements and affect? To get at these questions, we will bring together a group of scholars across different disciplines for a set of public talks and group work sessions Thursday, March 23 and Friday, March 24.

Why has the idea of the commons become so prominent in contemporary radical politics? And what are the main feminist perspectives on the commons developed today internationally? Silvia Federici will address this question with reference to the formation of land and urban commons and their restructuring of everyday reproduction. Silvia Federici’s research addresses themes of enclosure, patriarchy, colonialism, labor, and racism, among others. She is best known for her 2004 book Caliban and the Witch: Women, The Body and Primitive Accumulation (Brooklyn: Autonomedia), which analyzes intersections of patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism, and violence from the fifteenth through the eighteenth century.

For more information visit: www.medren.pitt.edu or contact jwaldron@pitt.edu