NOTHING SACRED
FARCE, PORNOGRAPHY, AND THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

a lecture by

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Thursday, 22 October • 6 pm • Presidents’ Room, University Club, IMU • reception to follow

“NOTWITHSTANDING THE CRITICAL commonplace that medieval comedy was ever destined to be the standard-bearer for social conservatism, fifteenth- and sixteenth-century French farce invites a surprisingly nuanced rethinking of political theology (or is that theological politics?). As the epitome of politically incorrect theory and practice, farce endlessly stages its filthy, leaky, explosive, sexual, and sexualized bodies, the better—and the worse—to incarnate and contest bodies of theological knowledge. In literal, spiritual, and satirical ways that are positively (and negatively) pornographic—farce penetrates the veneer of men and women of the cloth. In so doing, it problematizes the true, the false, and the verisimilar in ways that tell us as much about theater as they do about theology, ideally as it makes us laugh. With multiple examples from my new translations of farces that have never before been seen in the English language, I too hope to do both.”