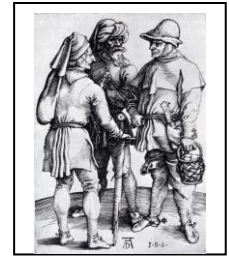


The Fifty-Third Season of the
**TORONTO RENAISSANCE AND
REFORMATION COLLOQUIUM**

Founded by Natalie Zemon Davis and James K. McConica in 1964



Gianni Cicali
(Georgetown University)



**“The Cross,
the Medici,
and the Jews”**

**Thursday, 30 November 2017
4:00 p.m.**

**Carr Hall, 406
100 St Joseph Street, Toronto
St Michael’s College, U of Toronto**

**This lecture is presented in
partnership with the Emilio
Goggio Chair in Italian Studies**

The Medici family had a particular devotion to the Holy Cross of Jesus. One member of the family even wrote a long sacred

play based on the legend of the discovery of this most holy relic for Christians everywhere. The *Inventio Crucis* and the *Exaltatio Crucis* were part of the liturgical calendar and were also included in Jacopo da Varagine’s highly influential *Legenda Aurea*. They were also extremely popular subjects in Italian art from Taddeo Gaddi to Piero della Francesca, from Veronese to Raphael and many others. And they included such figures as the Emperor Constantine, his mother St Helen, and the inevitable obstinate Jew. This talk will analyze some representative declinations of this legend in Italian theatre and art.

Gianni Cicali is Associate Professor of Italian Theatre at the Department of Italian (Georgetown University). He holds a Ph.D. in History of Theatre (Università di Firenze), and a Ph.D. in Italian Studies (University of Toronto). He is the author of a book on eighteenth-century opera, *Attori e ruoli nell’opera buffa italiana del Settecento* (2005), and one on Renaissance Florentine theatre, *L’Inventio Crucis nel teatro rinascimentale fiorentino: una leggenda tra spettacolo, antisemitismo e propaganda* (2012), and a number of articles on Italian theatre and culture from the fifteenth to eighteenth century.

Image: Piero della Francesca, “Finding the True Cross” from the cycle “The Legend of the True Cross” (1452–1456). Basilica of San Francesco, Arezzo.