The Australasian Centre for Italian Studies
Flinders University Department of Language Studies
and the University of South Australia’s Research Centre for Languages and Cultures

invite you to attend the public lecture

“Astolfo, ‘English Duke’ and Cultural Palimpsest”
Presented by Dr Michael Wyatt


Wednesday 11 September
6.15pm
Flinders in the City
1st Floor, Room 1
182 Victoria Square
Adelaide CBD

The lecture will be followed by two free screenings
(Italian, no English subtitles)
of PP Pasolini’s:
‘Che cosa sono le nuove’
‘I Paladini di Francia’

Refreshments will be served at the end of the lecture and before the screening.
For attendance and catering purposes
RSVP by Tuesday 10 September on
(08) 8201 5774 or ppps@flinders.edu.au

Astolfo – one of the key figures in Luigi Pulci’s organte. Matteo Maria Boiardo’s Orlando innamorato and Ludovico Ariosto’s Orlando furioso – crosses and confounds period, spatial, and ‘national’ boundaries. He is depicted in romance chivalric literature as an amalgam of contradictions: handsome and wealthy, always in search of elusive heroic and amatory adventures; one of the knights in Charlemagne’s inner circle, cousin of Orlando and Rinaldo, but feared by the emperor for his often sharply acute critical acumen; in possession of an indefatigably upbeat personality even in the face of repeated defeats and humiliations; an impudent braggart and trickster, yet among the most popular characters in the entire tradition. But one of Astolfo’s defining Italian Renaissance epic markers, ‘il duca inglese’ or English duke, appears to be the result of a misreading of the original French name of his historical source, ‘Estous de Lengres’ – ‘l’Anglois’ taken for ‘Langrois’ – and thus transformed from a medieval French nobleman into the son of (an also erroneous) English king, Otto, and his Neapolitan wife Bellafonti, a prince of England and lord of Ireland.

This talk examines the potentially fruitful consequences of such ‘mistakes’ through a consideration of Astolfo’s various and shape-shifting apparitions throughout the chivalric tradition and its subsequent metamorphoses.
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