HUMANITIES WEST PRESENTS

Lucrezia’s Family: The Renaissance Borgia Dynasty
Friday & Saturday, May 4 & 5, 2018
Marines’ Memorial Theatre, 609 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (SAN FRANCISCO, 21 February, 2018) Humanities West’s 2017-2018 Season culminates with Lucrezia’s Family: The Renaissance Borgia Dynasty, a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and music exploring the influence of the Borgia Dynasty during the Italian Renaissance. The program takes place on Friday, May 4, from 7:30pm to 9:30pm, and Saturday, May 5, from 10am to 4pm, at Marines’ Memorial Theatre, located at 609 Sutter Street in downtown San Francisco.

Tickets for Lucrezia’s Family: The Renaissance Borgia Dynasty are priced as follows: Single tickets for individual Friday programs are $60 orchestra and $45 balcony and individual Saturday programs are $80 orchestra and $55 balcony, single tickets for both days of each program are $125 orchestra and $90 balcony. Order direct from City Box Office 415-392-4400 or www.cityboxoffice.com. Individual balcony tickets for teachers and students are available for $25/day for any program. Free tickets are available in limited quantities for students age 25 or younger (inquire at info@humanitieswest.org).

Lucrezia’s Family: The Renaissance Borgia Dynasty brings together a panel of noted scholars to re-examine the Borgias in the context of their considerable contributions to the Italian Renaissance as reflected in art, music, literature, and social mores. Much maligned for their misuse of power, the Borgias are being reassessed in our age of secular power politics. Often described as scheming and unscrupulous, this program examines whether the politically cunning Borgia family has been accurately stereotyped as Machiavellian or misrepresented by a poor understanding of how their political power was used.
On Friday evening, Thomas Dandelet (UC Berkeley) gives the opening lecture, *The Borgia and the Renaissance of Empire in Italy*, providing an overview of the power, drama, and controversy of the Borgia family of Valencia, Spain, as they shaped the cultural, religious, and political life of Renaissance Italy.

Completing the Friday evening program is *Music in the House of Borgia*, a special musical performance by Shira Kammen and the Gallimaufry Chamber Chorus, introduced by Clifford “Kip” Cranna (SF Opera), and offered with support from the Italian Cultural Institute. The performance includes works by Josquin des Pres, Bartolomeo Tromboncino, Cristobal de Morales, and by Sephardic Jews.

On Saturday, Carol Lansing (UCSB) presents *Giulia “La Bella” Farnese: Papal Concubines and Families in Renaissance Rome*, exploring the history of open arrangements of Roman priests with their concubines. This talk will view papal scandals through the eyes of the women and families, and show how the brilliant and ambitious Giulia Farnese was able to use her role to advance members of the Farnese family.

Jon Snyder (UCSB) follows with a lecture on *Confidence Games: Rulers, Courtiers and the Ends of Power in Machiavelli’s The Prince*. Niccolò Machiavelli immortalized the feared warlord Cesare Borgia’s meteoric rise and fall in his treatise, *The Prince*. In this presentation Snyder examines some of Machiavelli’s seminal—and still highly controversial—ideas about statecraft based on Cesare’s cunning ruthlessness that severed ethics from politics.

The program continues with a presentation by Meryl Bailey (Mills College) on *Rodrigo Borgia’s Legacy as Art Patron*. Bailey discusses Pope Alexander VI’s (Rodrigo Borgia) use of the visual arts to promote his family and cement his claims to power. For centuries, scholars minimized the influence of the Borgia on later developments in Renaissance art, but this talk reconsiders Alexander VI’s legacy and his impact on later pontiffs.

The two-day program culminates with a talk by Allyson Burgess Williams (SDSU), *Silk Clad Walls, Portraits and Living Spaces of Lucrezia Borgia, Duchess of Ferrara*. This talk reveals Lucrezia’s attempt to move out from under the shadow of her Borgia past, by commissioning a series of portraits presenting her as a virtuous and magnificent duchess. Lucrezia’s new persona was reflected in her fabulous living quarters filled with sumptuous textiles and precious objects.
A panel discussion with the presenters will follow, addressing questions from the audience.

*Ancillary programs providing opportunities to learn more about the featured topic and related issues complement this two-day event. For a complete program schedule and additional information about the presenters please visit www.humanitieswest.org

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About Humanities West
Serving the Bay Area since 1983, Humanities West Explores History and Celebrates the Arts through time and across the globe, bringing illuminating lectures and dynamic performances that focus on the people, places, and events that have shaped, and still inform, modern cultures.

Each season Humanities West presents a number of programs in which leading scholars and artists present lectures, performances, readings and discussions to audiences in San Francisco’s Marines’ Memorial Theatre. These one- or two-day events represent an opportunity unique not only to the Bay Area, but also to the entire United States. Humanities West also presents performance salons at Hotel Rex. In cooperation with other institutions, such as the Mechanics’ Institute Library and the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, additional public lectures and panels are presented to further expand upon program topics.

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CALENDAR LISTING: EVENTS/LECTURES/ARTS & CULTURE
WHAT: Lucrezia’s Family: The Renaissance Borgia Dynasty
Humanities West presents Lucrezia’s Family: The Renaissance Borgia Dynasty, a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and music exploring the influence of the Borgia Dynasty during the Italian Renaissance. Presenters include noted professors from Berkeley, Mills, UC Santa Barbara, and San Diego State University, with a musical performance by Shira Kammen and the Gallimaufry Chamber Chorus.

WHEN: 7:30pm to 9:30pm, Friday, May 4, 2018
10am to 4pm, Saturday, May 5, 2018

WHERE: Marines’ Memorial Theatre
609 Sutter Street, San Francisco

TICKETS: $25 - $80
Tickets are available through City Box Office at 415-392-4400 or online at www.cityboxoffice.com
Group tickets: info@humanitieswest.org

PUBLIC INFO: 415/391-9700 or www.humanitieswest.org

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*Related Events for Lucrezia’s Family: The Borgia Dynasty

HUMANITIES WEST BOOK DISCUSSION led by Lynn Harris:
The Borgias and Their Enemies: 1431-1519
Paperback – September 16, 2009 by Christopher Hibbert

When: 6:30pm, Wednesday, April 18, 2018
Where: Commonwealth Club of California
110 The Embarcadero, SF, CA
Cost: $5
TIX: www.commonwealthclub.org or 415-597-6700
FIRESIDE CHAT with George Hammond:
Lucrezia’s Family: The Renaissance Borgia Dynasty – Preview
Join Humanities West board member George Hammond for a preview of Lucrezia’s Family: The Renaissance Borgia Dynasty, a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and music exploring the influence of the Borgia Dynasty during the Italian Renaissance.

When: 6:30pm, Tuesday, May 1, 2018
Where: Orinda Library,
       26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA
Cost: Free

HUMANITIES WEST BOOK DISCUSSION led by Lynn Harris:
Borgias, The Prince
By Niccolo Machiavelli

When: 6:30pm, Wednesday, May 16, 2018
Where: Commonwealth Club of California
       110 The Embarcadero, SF, CA
Cost: $5
TIX: www.commonwealthclub.org or 415-597-6700