Course Announcement – Fall 2018
MEDIEVAL MUSIC  MUS-M 651 (34584)

Tuesday and Thursday, 11:15-12:30
Room MU 204

Instructor: Giuliano Di Bacco <gdibacco at indiana dot edu>

This course explores the musical repertories and practices cultivated in Western Europe in the period ca. 800-1420, and more broadly the role of music in medieval culture and society. This was a period of experiments: the beginning of music writing, the rise of secular music, of polyphony, of the professional musician. New forms and techniques were developed, very different from today’s practices, as different was the way composers, performers and listeners approached music. From plainchant to polyphonic sacred genres to secular songs and instrumental music, many pillars were erected that allowed greater musical edifices to be built in the centuries to come.

We will study how and where these new styles, forms, and a number of individual pieces originated, were performed and circulated, including in the picture contemporary historical events and broader cultural experiences. Coursework will include reading on general musical topics, listening and analyzing individual works and their contexts, participating in class discussion, a semester-long project, and two exams. The class format will have an emphasis on discussion, with moderate lecturing. One or more sessions will be held at the Lilly Library to examine a number of medieval volumes.