Oral practice was a widespread mode of cultural consumption in the Middle Ages. From troubadour chansonniers, the itinerant Japanese biwa hôshi and court poets like the Anglo-Saxon scops to the carnivalesque festivals of the Feast of Fools, speech and song illuminated the public and private lives of men and women throughout the medieval world. Even in the highly literate codicological culture of scriptoria, hearing and recitation were indispensable tools for understanding and producing the manuscripts we study today.

The symposium would like to pose a broad range of possible topics on the social, political, ethical, and aesthetic purposes of oral culture and its contexts.

Abstracts for 20-minute papers are welcome from scholars across all fields relevant to the study of the Middle Ages, broadly conceived in time and place. In keeping with the interdisciplinary mission of the Medieval Studies Institute, we invite submissions in areas such as art history, history, linguistics, literature, musicology, philosophy, and religious studies.

Potential paper topics can include, but are not limited to:

- memory and oral culture
- visual and literary depictions of performance
- traveling courtly musicians
- orality and literacy
- linguistic changes over time
- gossip, news, and daily life
- romance narrative and courtly love
- the transition from oral to written text
- liturgical (re)performance of Scripture
- cross-cultural encounters and exchanges

The Medieval Studies Institute invites papers by graduate students for panels sponsored by the Indiana Medieval Graduate Consortium (IMGC), and papers by faculty and graduate students for Institute-sponsored panels.

Please email an abstract of no more than 300 words to Sean Tandy, smtandy@indiana.edu, by 30 January 2015.

Keynote Speaker: Samer Ali, Professor of Middle Eastern Studies, The University of Texas at Austin