

The ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, Europe 1100 - 1800 presents:

SHAKESPEARE, HEGEL AND MODERN FREEDOM

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When: Monday, April 20, 12-1pm
Honours/Postgrad Masterclass 1-2pm
Location: Rogers Room, Woolley Building,
The University of Sydney
Enquiries: craig.lyons@sydney.edu.au
All welcome

EWAN FERNIE



Ewan Fernie is Chair, Professor and Fellow at the Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham, Stratford-upon-Avon. He is General Editor (with Simon Palfrey) of the *Shakespeare Now!* series. His latest book is *The Demonic: Literature and Experience*.

Ewan Fernie argues that in literary history Shakespeare comes to mean freedom first and foremost because of a fundamental connection between personal liberty and what is widely acknowledged as his greatest achievement—his creation of dramatic characters more spirited and alive than any that have been created before or since. In his *Aesthetics*, the great German philosopher G.W.F. Hegel presented Shakespeare's characters as 'free artists of their own selves', an insight which the contemporary critic Harold Bloom singles out as 'the best critical passage on Shakespearean representation yet written'.

Fernie will revisit and explore Hegel's proposition about Shakespearean freedom in relation to the insights of materialist criticism. He will argue that Shakespearean drama can't ultimately be seen as a hymn to purely individual liberty. It's true that we're always concerned with character in the plays; but we are never concerned with just one character. Shakespearean freedom is never forged in isolation; it is always made in interaction. In short, it is always political.

Professor Fernie will be holding an honours and postgraduate masterclass directly after this talk, from 1-2pm, in the Woolley Building. For more information please contact:

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