

Prof. Salvatore Bancheri
Emilio Goggio Chair in Italian Studies
University of Toronto
cordially invites you to a public lecture by

Prof. Nicoletta Maraschio

(Universita' di Firenze)

“Margherita Datini e Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi: la bella lingua epistolare di due donne toscane (XIV-XV secolo)”

Thursday, January 31, 2013

4.00-6.00 pm

Carr Hall 403

100 St. Joseph Street, St. Michael's College

University of Toronto

A reception will follow.

Everyone is welcome and admission is free.

Please RSVP at italian.studies@utoronto.ca

Prior to the Sixteenth Century, women's writings were extremely rare and fragmentary. From Tuscany, an area of diffused literacy, two epistolaries – extraordinary from both a quantitative and qualitative point of view – have been handed down to us. In spite of the great diversity between them, the 271 letters that Margherita Bandini Datini wrote to her husband Francesco di Marco between 1384 and 1410, and Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi's 72 letters to her own children who were exiled to Naples (1447-1470) represent documents of importance, not only for the general reconstruction of the Tuscan and Italian history of that period, or for that matter of the two women, but also as relevant tesserae of a linguistic mosaic undergoing rapid evolution. Alessandra writes in her own hand with great vivacity and competence, and in common Florentine she expresses her own emotions with immediacy while demonstrating at the same time her control and familiarity of the language of business and politics. We only have a handful of letters written by Margherita Bandini Datini, the wife of the famous merchant from Prato; however, even through her dictation to others, her sure and very responsible voice can be heard.

Nicoletta Maraschio is full professor of **History of the Italian Language** at the University of Florence. Since 2008 she has been President of the Accademia della Crusca. She is the first woman to hold such a position. Her research activities deal with various periods and themes of the history of the Italian language: from the language of individual authors (Boccaccio, Alberti, Salviati), to linguistic aspects of the Renaissance (spoken language in Sixteenth-Century grammatical reflections, the teaching of Italian abroad, Sixteenth-Century phonetic treatises). Prof. Maraschio's scholarship has also focused on the evolution of the Italian writing system from the Middle Ages to the present, on the Language of the Church, and on Twentieth-Century issues of language and its relationship to Mass Media (cinema, radio and television). Prof. Maraschio also directs, together with Massimo Fanfani and Ilaria Bonomi, the series "Italian in Public", published by Cesati. Prof. Maraschio has been visiting professor at numerous European and American universities and during her tenure as president of the Accademia, has received many prizes and awards. In 2011, the President of the Republic of Italy Giorgio Napolitano bestowed upon her the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic of "Grand Officer".