

Research Fellowship at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

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Dr Ita Mac Carthy (</staff/profiles/italian/mac-carthy-ita.aspx>) is currently spending three months as a residential research fellow at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini on the island of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice.

The Fondazione Giorgio Cini is one of Venice's major cultural institutions and research centres. It was constituted by Vittorio Cini, in memory of his son Giorgio, with the aim of restoring the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore (devastated after 100 years of military occupation) and of creating an international cultural centre that would re-integrate the island into the life of Venice. Its libraries have rich holdings relating to the city of Venice, its art and literature, and its relations with the rest of Europe.

Ita is working on 'The Grace of Renaissance Venice', a project exploring the Venetian contribution to the sixteenth-century debate about what the all-important notion of *grazia* was and how it was to be achieved. At the heart of her research are the writings of the Venetian humanist, Lodovico Dolce. A prolific author, translator and editor, Dolce recognized the importance of *grazia* to the artists and poets of his day. For him, Ludovico Ariosto was the sixteenth-century poet of grace and Raphael Sanzio its painter; yet, ever the Venetian, he promoted Titian as the greatest artist of his day. Ita seeks to understand how Dolce squared his promotion of grace with his support of Titian, and how he used grace to articulate a common theoretical language for the literary and visual arts.

She is in Venice with her husband, who works in Early Modern French and is also researching in the Venetian libraries, and their two children. When not in the library, they can be found enjoying the lovely island of San Giorgio, climbing the campanile that overlooks Piazza San Marco, exploring the *Teatro Verde* amphitheatre, or playing hide and seek in the Borges labyrinth.

