

The Borgias, the Most Infamous Family in History?

Date: Thursday 15 February 2018, 8 pm

Lecturer: Sarah Dunant

Location: DESY Auditorium



Possible portrait of Lucrezia Borgia, Bartolomeo Veneziano (c. 1510)

LECTURE SUMMARY

Murder, poison, corruption and incest: all perfect ingredients for sensational popular culture. But in an age known for its brutality and church corruption were the Borgias really so bad?

This lecture reveals the real family that dominated the Papacy and Alexander VI, living inside his sumptuously decorated apartments, the career of his son, Cesare, cardinal, general, employer of Da Vinci and the model for Machiavelli's *The Prince*, and the journey of Lucrezia Borgia from "the greatest whore in Rome" to a devout and treasured duchess of the city Ferrara. Sometimes truth is more intoxicating than myth.

BIOGRAPHY OF LECTURER

*A novelist, broadcaster and critic, Sarah read history at Cambridge, then worked for many years as a cultural journalist in radio and television on such programmes as Kaleidoscope (BBC Radio 4), The Late Show (BBC 2), and Night Waves (BBC Radio 3). She has published thirteen novels, taught renaissance studies at Washington University, St Louis, is a visiting tutor on the MA in creative writing at Oxford Brooks and has lectured around the world at festivals and conferences. Her last five novels have been set within the Italian Renaissance. Her latest, *In the Name of the Family* completes the story of the Borgia family and the remarkable period of Italian history in which they lived.*

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Pat Pledger Tel: 040 821858
Jeannie Rewerts Tel: 04101 64572

The Arts Society Hamburg e.V.

Number in the Hamburg register of associations: 11755
Registered office and postal address: c/o Pat Pledger, Goerresring 1, 22609 Hamburg
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