



Contact: Paula M. Krebs
646 576-5102, awards@mla.org

**MELINA ESSE AND THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS TO RECEIVE
SCAGLIONE PUBLICATION AWARD FOR A MANUSCRIPT IN ITALIAN LITERARY
STUDIES FOR *SINGING SAPPHO*; DIANA GARVIN TO RECEIVE HONORABLE
MENTION**

New York, NY – 14 December 2020 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced it is awarding its twenty-third annual Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies to Melina Esse, associate professor of musicology at the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, for *Singing Sappho: Improvisation and Authority in Nineteenth-Century Italian Opera*, to be published by the University of Chicago Press. Diana Garvin, assistant professor of Italian and Mediterranean studies at the University of Oregon, is receiving an honorable mention for *Feeding Fascism: The Politics of Women's Food Work*, to be published by the University of Toronto Press.

The award is one of eighteen that will be presented on 9 January 2021, during the association's annual convention, to be held online. The members of the selection committee were Andrea Ciccarelli (Indiana Univ., Bloomington), chair; Richard H. Lansing (Brandeis Univ.); and Nicoletta Marini-Maio (Dickinson Coll.). The committee's citation for the winning manuscript reads:

Melina Esse's *Singing Sappho: Improvisation and Authority in Nineteenth-Century Italian Opera* is a highly refined and insightful examination of the aesthetic results produced by the relation between musical composition and interpretation in well-known Italian operas. Esse's work is an enjoyable, well-written, and well-conceived volume. Its rigorous theoretical framework is perfectly combined with subtle, intuitive, and intriguing conclusions that shed an original critical light on many different major works. This is a book, ultimately, that does not shy away from discussing broad aesthetic positions, while also analyzing the individual empirical interpretations that affect both the musical composition and its performance.

The committee's citation for the honorable mention reads:

Diana Garvin's *Feeding Fascism: The Politics of Women's Food Work* is a fascinating work focusing on what seems to be a normal aspect of life, identifying how fascist policies aimed at controlling and manipulating daily occurrences relating to culinary objects and traditions. Garvin also reveals how Italian women actively participated in this enterprise, proposing original ideas or countering directives and indications about food, tools, and habits. Garvin projects her anthropological and historical conclusions into the post-World War II years to make a sound comparison as well as to remind us of a hidden continuity of customs that would not be contested, culturally and nationally, until 1968 and its aftermath.

The Modern Language Association of America and its over 24,000 members in 100 countries work to strengthen the study and teaching of languages and literature. Founded in 1883, the MLA provides opportunities for its members to share their scholarly findings and teaching experiences with colleagues and to discuss trends in the academy. The MLA sustains one of the finest publication programs in the humanities, producing a variety of publications for language and literature professionals and for the general public. The association publishes the *MLA International Bibliography*, the only comprehensive bibliography in language and literature, available online. The MLA Annual Convention features meetings on a wide variety of subjects. More information on MLA programs is available at www.mla.org.

The Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies is awarded under the auspices of the association's Committee on Honors and Awards. Other awards sponsored by the committee are the William Riley Parker Prize; the James Russell Lowell Prize; the MLA Prize for a First Book; the Howard R. Marraro Prize; the Kenneth W. Mildener Prize; the Mina P. Shaughnessy Prize; the MLA Prize for Independent Scholars; the Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize; the Morton N. Cohen Award; the MLA Prizes for a Scholarly Edition and for Collaborative, Bibliographical, or Archival Scholarship; the Lois Roth Award; the William Sanders Scarborough Prize; the Fenia and Yaakov Leviant Memorial Prize in Yiddish Studies; the MLA Prize in United States Latina and Latino and Chicana and Chicano Literary and Cultural Studies; the MLA Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures, Cultures, and Languages; the Matei Calinescu Prize; the MLA Prize for an Edited Collection; and the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prizes for Comparative Literary Studies, for French and Francophone Studies, for Italian Studies, for Studies in Germanic Languages and Literatures, for Studies in Slavic Languages and Literatures, for a Translation of a Literary Work, and for a Translation of a Scholarly Study of Literature. A complete list of current and previous winners can be found on the [MLA website](#).

The Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Endowment Fund was established and donated by Aldo Scaglione to the Modern Language Association in 1987. The fund honors the memory of Scaglione's late wife, Jeanne Daman Scaglione. A Roman Catholic, Jeanne Daman was headmistress of a Jewish kindergarten in Brussels, Belgium. When arrests and deportations of Jews began in 1942, she worked with Belgian and Jewish resistance units, helping to find hiding places for two thousand children throughout Belgium. She also helped rescue many Jewish men about to be deported as slave laborers by obtaining false papers for them. Jeanne Scaglione's life and contributions to humanity are commemorated in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.

Aldo Scaglione, a member of the Modern Language Association from 1957 until his death in 2013, was Erich Maria Remarque Professor of Literature at New York University. A native of Turin, Italy, he received a doctorate in modern letters from the University of Turin. He taught at the University of Toulouse and at the University of Chicago. From 1952 to 1968 he taught at the University of California, Berkeley, and from 1968 to 1987 he was W. R. Kenan Professor of Italian and Comparative Literature at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. In 1987 he came to New York University as professor of Italian and then chair of the Department of Italian. Scaglione was a Fulbright Fellow and a Guggenheim Fellow, held senior fellowships from the Newberry Library and the German Academic Exchange Service, and was a visiting professor at Yale University, the City University of New York, and the Humanities Research Institute of the University of Wisconsin, Madison. In 1975 he was named Cavaliere dell'Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana. Scaglione was president of the American Boccaccio Association and was a member of the MLA Executive Council from 1981 to 1984. His published books include *Nature and Love in the Late Middle Ages* (1963), *Ars Grammatica* (1970), *The Classical Theory of Composition* (1972), *The Theory of German Word Order* (1981), *The Liberal Arts and the Jesuit College System* (1986), *Knights at Court: Courtliness, Chivalry, and Courtesy from Ottonian*

Germany to the Italian Renaissance (1991), and *Essays on the Arts of Discourse: Linguistics, Rhetoric, Poetics* (1998).