April 21, 2017

A Reading by Jenny McPhee of her translation of Natalia Ginzburg’s *Lessico Famigliare* at Princeton University

*Presented by the Lewis Center for the Arts’ Program in Creative Writing, the Humanities Council and Department of Comparative Literature*

Photo caption: Jenny McPhee’s translation of Natalia Ginzburg’s *Lessico Famigliare* (*A Family Lexicon*)

**What:** A reading of Jenny McPhee’s recent translation of Natalia Ginzburg’s *Lessico Famigliare* (*A Family Lexicon*)

**Who:** Jenny McPhee, novelist and translator

**When:** Thursday, April 27 at 4:30 p.m.

**Where:** Room 219 in Aaron Burr Hall on the Princeton University campus

**Free** and open to the public
Novelist and translator Jenny McPhee will be reading from her recent translation of Natalia Ginzburg’s *Lessico Famigliare (A Family Lexicon)*, on Thursday, April 27 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 219 in Aaron Burr Hall on the Princeton University campus. Presented by the Lewis Center for the Arts’ Program in Creative Writing, the Department of Comparative Literature, and the Humanities Council, this event is free and open to the public.

*Lessico Famigliare,* or *A Family Lexicon,* was published in 1963 and paints a portrait of the anti-fascist Levi family and their routines, eccentricities, and traditions. Set in Italy during Mussolini’s dictatorship and based on author Natalia Ginzburg’s own family, the story follows the Levis as they must navigate a world quickly descending into danger and world war, adapting storytelling into a method of survival.

**Jenny McPhee** is a writer and translator from New Jersey. Her debut novel, *The Center of Things,* was a *New York Times* Notable Book. She has published two other novels, *No Ordinary Matter* and *A Man of No Moon,* the latter of which was named a Book Sense Notable Book. She also co-authored *Girls: Ordinary Girls and Their Extraordinary Pursuits* with her sisters Martha and Laura. McPhee has translated *Natural Histories,* *A Flaw of Form,* and *A Tranquil Star* by Primo Levi; *ZIBALDONE: The Notebooks of Leopardi* by the renowned Italian lyric poet Giacomo Leopardi; and *Canone Inverso* by Paolo Maurensig, among others. Her work has appeared in *The New York Times Magazine,* *The New York Times Book Review,* *Brooklyn Review,* *Glamour,* *Santa Monica Review,* and elsewhere. McPhee currently lives in New York.

Prior to this public reading, McPhee will visit with Princeton students in Jhumpa Lahiri’s spring course, “Imitating Italians,” a beginning fiction workshop designed to introduce students to the craft of imitation as a point of creative departure. Lahiri is a Pulitzer Prize-winning author of the short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* and the novel *The Namesake.* Her memoir *In Other Words,* written in Italian, was published in 2016.

**Natalia Ginzburg** was a renowned Italian writer of stories that explored fascist politics and intricate family relationships, considered one of the greatest female writers in postwar Italy. She
was awarded the 1963 Strega Prize, one of Italy’s greatest literary awards, for *Lessico Famigliare*; she was also awarded the 1984 Bagutta Prize, another celebrated literary award, for *La famiglia Manzoni*. Her other novels include *Valentino, Le voci della sera, Le piccole virtù, Mai devi domandarmi*, and *Vita Immaginaria*, among others. In 1991, the year she died, she was made a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

To learn more about this event, the Program in Creative Writing, or the more than 100 events presented each year by the Lewis Center for the Arts, visit: arts.princeton.edu.

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