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**The Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies  
in collaboration with the College of the Humanities, Carleton University  
and**

**The Dante Alighieri Society of Ottawa**

**presents an illustrated lecture**

***The Chapel of Theodotus in the church of S. Maria Antiqua, Rome***

**by**

**Dr. John Osborne**

**2 p.m., March 4th, 2018**

**Room 303 Paterson Hall, Carleton University**



In January 1900, excavations in the Roman Forum at the foot of the Palatine Hill revealed the substantial remains of a first-century CE structure which in the sixth century had been converted into a Christian church: S. Maria Antiqua. Between the sixth and the eleventh centuries, the building was painted and re-painted on a number of occasions, and these murals, now fragmentary, constitute our primary documentation for painting in Rome in the period of the early Middle Ages.

This lecture will focus on a chapel whose decorations were commissioned by a papal official, Theodotus, in the time of Pope Zacharias (741-752). Among other themes, the murals depict a large Crucifixion, a hagiographic cycle of two fairly obscure saints (Quiricus and Julitta, martyrs at Tarsus), as well as portraits of Theodotus and other members of his family. The talk will address issues of patronage, iconography, and the cult of the saints in eighth-century Rome.

A graduate of Carleton University (BA 1973), the University of Toronto (MA 1974), and the University of London's Courtauld Institute of Art (PhD 1979), John Osborne is Distinguished Research Professor and Dean Emeritus at Carleton University, Ottawa, with broad research interests in early medieval Italy and a special focus on the material culture of the cities of Rome and Venice. His publications cover topics as varied as the Roman catacombs, the fragmentary mural paintings from excavated churches such as San Clemente and S. Maria Antiqua, the decorative program of the church of San Marco in Venice, 17th-century antiquarian drawings of medieval monuments, and the medieval understanding and use of Rome's heritage of ancient buildings and statuary. In 2006 he was elected as an Honorary Fellow of the British School at Rome, and in 2011 invested as a Knight of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic.

A reception will follow