Stanford



Sarah Prodan

Assistant Professor of French and Italian

Bio

BIO

Sarah Prodan is an Italianist, early modernist, and Michelangelo scholar whose research and teaching span literature, cultural history, religion, art, and intellectual history. Her work centers on Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries while pursuing broader questions about spirituality and religious experience, human nature and selfhood, perception and knowledge, creativity, and the ways individuals understand and fashion themselves in relation to others and the world.

Her first monograph, Michelangelo's Christian Mysticism: Spirituality, Poetry and Art in Sixteenth-Century Italy (Cambridge University Press, 2014), was awarded the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies by the Modern Language Association. Her forthcoming book, Poetics of Piety in Early Modern Italy: Devotional Literature and the Spiritual Life in the Long Sixteenth Century (Cambridge University Press, 2026), offers a thematic genealogical study of the lyric as a site of devotion in early modern Italy, examining the relationship between literary expression and religious experience and addressing the broader non-materialist, non-dualist worldview exemplified in the religious verse itself.

Her current book projects include Michelangelo and the Knowing Self, an exploration of perception, knowledge, and selfhood across Michelangelo's textual and visual production, and Between Gods & Beasts: The Struggle for Humanity, a transhistorical and transcultural study of competing conceptions of the human and the enduring tension among humanity, divinity, and animality.

Across her scholarship and teaching, Prodan brings literary analysis into conversation with cultural, religious, intellectual, and art history, using the early modern period both as an object of historical inquiry and as a vantage point from which to investigate enduring questions about human experience.

Prodan is also a writer and singer-songwriter. Her creative work includes Imminence: Florence, 1494, a historical novel set in Renaissance Florence, and three albums of original music.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Assistant Professor, French and Italian

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Faculty Director, Education as Self-Fashioning Program, (2026- present)
- Chair, Undergraduate Affairs Committee, Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages, (2025- present)
- Director, Undergraduate Studies, Department of French and Italian, (2025- present)

LINKS

- Personal Website: https://www.sarahprodan.com

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Between Gods and Beasts: The Struggle for Humanity: ESF 18 (Aut)
- Between Gods and Beasts: The Struggle for Humanity: ESF 18A (Aut)
- Education as Self-Fashioning: Lecture Series: ESF 50 (Aut)
- From Humanities Training to Professional Skills: DLCL 289C (Aut, Win)
- Michelangelo and His World: OSPFLOR 76F (Spr)
- Word and Image: ARTHIST 265A, ARTHIST 465A, COMPLIT 225, ITALIAN 265, ITALIAN 365 (Aut)

2025-26

- Between Gods and Beasts: The Struggle for Humanity: ESF 18 (Aut)
- Between Gods and Beasts: The Struggle for Humanity: ESF 18A (Aut)
- Great Minds of the Italian Renaissance and their World: ARTHIST 210, HISTORY 240C, ITALIAN 140, ITALIAN 240 (Win)
- Humanities Research Intensive: ENGLISH 9R (Win)
- Michelangelo: Gateway to Early Modern Italy: ARTHIST 218A, ARTHIST 418A, HISTORY 237B, HISTORY 337B, ITALIAN 237, ITALIAN 337 (Win)

2023-24

- Between Gods and Beasts: The Struggle for Humanity: ESF 18 (Aut)
- Between Gods and Beasts: The Struggle for Humanity: ESF 18A (Aut)
- Great Minds of the Italian Renaissance and their World: ARTHIST 210, HISTORY 240C, ITALIAN 140, ITALIAN 240 (Aut)
- Humanities Core: Great Minds of the Italian Renaissance and their World: HUMCORE 122 (Aut)
- Professional Workshop: DLCL 311 (Win)

STANFORD ADVISEES

Orals Chair

Max Fennell-Chametzky, Courtney MacPhee

Doctoral Dissertation Advisor (AC)

Ty Davidian

Orals Evaluator

Fernando Martinez Periset

Doctoral (Program)

Ty Davidian

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Phenomenology of Revelation: Faith, Truth, and the Darkness of God in Sixteenth-Century Italy** *RELIGIONS*
  Prodan, S.

2025; 16 (12)

- **Comedy and Civilization: Anti-Conflict Dynamics in Sixteenth-Century Italian Literature (Book Review)** *RENAISSANCE QUARTERLY*
  Book Review Authored by: Prodan, S.
  2025; 78 (3): 957-959
- **From Lover's Glance to Pilgrim's Gaze: Vision and Discernment in Michelangelo's Rime** *SIXTEENTH CENTURY JOURNAL*
  Prodan, S.
  2024; 55 (3-4): 635-662
- **Poems of Widowhood: A Bilingual Edition of the 1538"Rime." (Book Review)** *EARLY MODERN WOMEN-AN INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL*
  Book Review Authored by: Prodan, S., Targoff, R.
  2024; 18 (2): 385-388
- **Between Repentance and Desire: Women Poets and the Word in Early Modern Italy** *RELIGIONS*
  Prodan, S.
  2023; 14 (5)