



THE NEWBERRY

*Center for Renaissance Studies*

Dante Lecture

Saturday, February 27, 2016, 1:30 pm

The Newberry Library

*The Apotheosis of Self-Reflection*  
*Dante and the Inauguration of the Modern Era*

William Franke  
*Vanderbilt University*



Dante serves as a focal point in the middle of the trajectory for contemplating the stakes of self-reflection as a revolutionary, epoch-making turn of consciousness. The apotheosis of self-consciousness in Dante links with a new secular outlook and attitude, our inescapable heritage today, yet also with a theological vision that lies more in our past—though perhaps also in our future. This historical perspective provides the backdrop for examining some of the remarkable operations of self-reflexive thought and language in Dante's writing.

Viewed in this optics, Dante's texts raise the intricate issues concerning self-reflexivity with which we struggle still today. Self-reflexivity emerges in Dante as a liberating resource for remaking our world in the human image, but also as a disaster entailing a humanistic, Narcissistic reduction, cutting us off from genuine relation with and openness to alterity, and leading to nihilism and death.

A reception will follow the lecture.

This program is free and open to the public, but space is limited and **registration in advance is required.**

Register online at:

[www.newberry.org/renaissance](http://www.newberry.org/renaissance)

*Cosponsored with the Devers Program in Dante Studies at the University of Notre Dame  
and the Italian Cultural Institute of Chicago.*