

# VareseNews

## Varese, the outer space capital

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Are there other forms of intelligent life elsewhere in the universe? This is a question that we have always wondered about, and there are those that have dedicated their lives to researching it. It is indeed a noble question, if we leave out the ideas of charlatans, one to which Varese is dedicating an entire day. On Saturday, the World Day dedicated to bio-astronomy and to researching extraterrestrial intelligence, Varese is hosting two prestigious events, both of which will be strictly scientific in nature.

The first is the “50th Ozma Bio-Astronomy SETI” international conference, which will take place in the Great Hall of Insubria University in Via Dunant, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. This conference is going to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Ozma Project, the first research on artificial radio signals from stars, which was started by Frank Drake, on 8 April 1960. The decision to organise this event in Varese was by no means accidental, as Italy is considered to be at the forefront of research on life forms in space (bio astronomy) and signals from outer-space (SETI).

With the sponsorship and collaboration of Insubria University, the conference has been organised by SETI ITALIA “G. Cocconi”, with the involvement also of UniversAUSER Varese, the Astronomic Observatory, FOAM13 Tradate, and the Astronomic Group in Tradate. The meeting is not for the gullible, which is born out by the fact that it has been approved by CICAP, the prestigious Italian committee that verifies statements made about the paranormal, which was founded by the Italian television science presenter, Piero Angela.

The members of CICAP include the astrophysicist Giovanni Bignami, who will be taking part in both of the “extraterrestrial” events in Varese. After the conference, Bignami will speak at the second event, which has been organised by the “Circolo

Sant'Alessandro" in Castronno. The former chairperson of the Italian Space Agency, a consultant at the Max Plank Institute, and a member of the "Lincei" Academy, who has also bee decorated with the Legion of Honour by the French government, is going to explain how "We are the Martians, and we came from the Big Bang".

"Today, we can give some sure answers to the usual questions of 'Who are we?', 'Where do we come from?'," explains Bignami in his introduction to the topics to be covered in the meeting at the "Circolo Sant'Alessandro", which marks the return of culture to this group. "We know that we aren't at the centre of the Universe, and that are composed of matter that was created in the Big Bang. We know that the building bricks of life are wandering around the universe and maybe they fell onto the Earth with meteorites and comets. We don't know how to go from a lorry load of bricks to a fully-built house, we don't know what life is, and we also don't know what there was before the Big Bang. We scientists leave a bit of room to philosophy and religion.

The meeting is at 8.30 p.m., at the "Circolo Sant'Alessandro".

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