

Curriculum Vitae

I am the daughter of Lucia and Leonardo Messineo; sister of Celestina and Saro. I was born at 2 o'clock on a starry night in a place called Salinella, high in the Sicilian mountains. From there in the night you almost always see many stars, but my grandmother told me not to count them because one could never finish. I attended elementary school in Petralia Soprana and intermediate and high school in Bagheria. I began studying Astronomy at the University of Bologna in the fall of 1989. I graduated on March 21st 1997 cum laude with a thesis entitled "the mixing problem in stellar evolution and the primordial He abundance determination from population ratios in globular clusters", which I did under the supervision of Prof. Francesco Ferraro from Bologna University and Prof. Flavio Fusi Pecci from the Bologna Observatory. In 1998 I went to Baltimore for six months as a summer student to work at the Space Telescope Science Institute with Dr. Antonella Nota on ISO data of LBV stars. In 1999 I worked at the Bologna Observatory on HST photometry of the globular cluster NGC 288 in collaboration with Dr. Michele Bellazzini. On December 1st 1999, I started my PhD research in Leiden under the supervision of Prof. Harm Habing. For the first year I worked on the ISOGAL catalogue, after which my research turned to late-type stars in the inner Galaxy. This work has been done in collaboration mainly with Prof. Harm Habing, Prof. Karl Menten from the Max-Planck-Institut fuer Radioastronomie in Bonn, Prof. Alain Omont from the Institut d'Astrophysique de Paris and Dr. Lorant Sjouwerman from the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Socorro. During the past four years I have enjoyed observing with the IRAM 30m telescope in Spain four times as well as with the Heinrich Hertz Telescope in Arizona, with the ESO 3.6m and the CTIO 4m telescopes in Chile. I spent some weeks visiting the Institut d'Astrophysique de Paris, ESA in Villafranca del Castillo, Spain, and the CTIO in La Serena, Chile. I attended the YERAC 2000 school in Granada (Spain), the NOVA 2000 school in Dwingeloo (The Netherlands), and conferences in Angra dos Reis (Brazil), Sendai (Japan) and Kona (Hawaii). I gave invited presentations at the Max-Planck-Institut fuer Radioastronomie in Bonn (Germany), and at the Stichting Astronomisch Onderzoek in Nederland (ASTRON) in Dwingeloo. In September 2004 I will start working as a fellow at ESO in Garching (Germany).