



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Local Writers and More for the Literary Festival as Tickets Go On Sale

As momentum gathers for the 5th Gibunco Gibraltar International Literary Festival, Gibraltar writers have joined the list of participants.

**M. G. Sanchez** was born in Gibraltar in 1968. He was educated at Bayside Comprehensive School and at the University of Leeds, where he took BA, MA and PhD degrees in English Literature. He has written seven books about Gibraltar – three novels (The Escape Artist, Solitude House and Jonathan Gallardo), two collections of stories (Rock Black and Diary of a Victorian Colonial), a biographical tome (Past: A Memoir) and a book of essays (The Prostitutes of Serruya's Lane and other Hidden Histories) – and also edited two anthologies of Gibraltar-related writing (Georgian and Victorian Gibraltar: Incredible Eyewitness Accounts and Writing the Rock of Gibraltar: An Anthology of Literary Texts, 1720-1890). Over the years he has spoken about Gibraltarian identity on radio programmes such as the BBC World Service's 'The Cultural Frontline', ABC Australia's 'Late Night Live' and Catalan Radio station Antena Caro's 'Lletres Ebrenques'. He has also talked about Gibraltarian matters at universities in Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Portugal and the UK. In the mid-2000s he spent three years living in Bombay, India and, more recently, between 2014 and 2016, he was based in Tokyo, Japan. These days he divides his time between Yorkshire and Gibraltar.

**Paul O'Garra** was born in Gibraltar on the 8th may 1952. His father, Louis, was a British schoolteacher from Manchester turned soldier by the war and served with the Royal artillery on the Rock. He returned after the war was over and started a school, St Josephs, the first post-war school.

Louis married Teresa Azzopardi. Louis and Teresa had four children of whom Paul was the third eldest. His childhood was spent roaming across the South district, Rosia and Europa point areas of Gibraltar engaging in childish games and adventures, all the while reading extensively.

Paul was educated at Gibraltar Grammar School. Paul has since travelled the world, had a family and faced some health challenges.



The Boy who sailed to Spain is Paul O'Garra's first published work and will be followed in the next few months with a collection of short stories and a second book, Malak, making The Boy who sailed to Spain the first in a series.

**Gail Francis-Tiron** will be discussing her latest publication, which is a collection of hilarious short and true stories of the naughty and sweet things children have said and done. Gail, a former Miss Gibraltar has always been a keen artist and sells paintings locally and worldwide. After writing a short book soon after her year as Miss Gibraltar 1985 and having illustrated a children's book for a former Gibunco Gibraltar Literary Festival speaker, Gail will now be presenting her very own second paperback, which she also illustrated. The majority of the proceeds of this publication will be donated to different charities.

**Richard Garcia MBE** was educated at the Gibraltar Grammar School and read English and Spanish at the Universities of Birmingham, Salamanca and Bristol. He was a civil servant for over 30 years rising to the position of Chief Secretary of the Government of Gibraltar and head of the Civil Service, a post that he held for four years from 2007 to 2010. He served on the Public Service Commission, the Judicial Service Commission and the Specified Appointments Commission, all of which are bodies created under the Gibraltar Constitution. He was also Chairman of the Gibraltar Police Authority.

On retiring from public service, he dedicated himself to research into the social history of Gibraltar and the philatelic history of Morocco and Gibraltar. He has written 14 books on these subjects, mostly in the last 7 years. He has been invited to lecture on Gibraltar history inter alia by the University of Gibraltar, the Gibraltar Museum and the Gibraltar Heritage Trust. He has also published numerous articles in his field in the United Kingdom, France, Spain and Gibraltar. He is a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London, an Honorary Fellow of the Gibraltar Museum and he was recently elected to the Academy of European Philately. He has also written and presented historical programmes for GBC television.

Richard Garcia's latest book, *The Changing Face of Gibraltar in the 20th Century*, will be presented at this year's Festival. The book is essentially a photographic record of how the appearance of Gibraltar changed during the course of the 20th century, based on a compendium of picture postcards, mainly depicting Gibraltar in the first half of the century. The postcards are divided thematically into four groups: the topography of Gibraltar; the economy of Gibraltar; street types and leisure; and the North Front and the Gibraltar land frontier with Spain.

The presentation of the book will be accompanied by an illustrated talk, using some of the images that are illustrated in the book. It will place the book in context, and will dwell on a number of strands explored in it. Above all, it will be a celebration of how Gibraltar changed, grew and developed from being primarily a military Fortress to a buzzing, cosmopolitan, multi-cultural, outward looking society.

**Priscilla Sacramento** was born in Downpatrick to Gibraltarian parents, Priscilla Sacramento arrived in Gibraltar as a young child. Her childhood was humble but happy. Her mother would read to some neighbours who would gather in her kitchen, awakening Priscilla's love for reading and writing. She decided then that she would write a novel. At the tender age of eleven, she lost her mother to cancer, and she and her sisters were brought up by their father single-handed. Encouraged by her father, she was one of the few young women from Gibraltar who, at the time,



undertook teacher training studies in the UK. Later, having taken time off work to bring up her daughter, she was offered a temporary post teaching pupils with special needs. This led to her becoming the Headteacher of St. Martins Special School for over twenty years, and Education Adviser for Special Educational Needs until her retirement. It was then that she started to put her dormant project of writing a novel into operation. Having published 'Invisible Threads' last year, she is now planning her next novel.

Priscilla will be discussing the similarities and differences between the three cultures featured in Invisible Threads, with particular reference to the role of women.

Gaby Chiappe. Writing for film and television. Without writers actors would have nothing to say, but what does a screenwriter actually do? Sharing the personal experiences of a career spanning two decades, screenwriter Gaby Chiappe talks about what it really means to write for film and television. Using clips and examples she explores what goes into the making of screen drama and addresses key questions - what's the difference between plot and story? What makes good dialogue? How do you deal with deadlines? What's the worst line you've ever written? (spoiler alert - It's a stinker). This event is for people interested in knowing more about how screen drama is put together, as well as for those interested in screenwriting themselves.

Gaby Chiappe's family emigrated from Gibraltar to the UK when she was a child. She grew up in Brighton and now lives in Leeds with her partner and two teenage sons. She began writing for television in 1997 and over a twenty year career has written episodes of Eastenders, Casualty, Holby City, Larkrise to Candleford and The Paradise for the BBC and Vera for ITV. Most recently she wrote BBC's Shetland - winner of the Scottish BAFTA for best Television Drama 2016; and co-created The Level, an original six-part thriller for ITV. 2017 saw the release of her first feature film, Their Finest (adapted from Lissa Evans' novel Their Finest Hour and a Half) starring Gemma Arterton, Bill Nighy and Sam Claflin. She is presently adapting Michelle Paver's novel Dark Matter for Wildgaze Films and BBC films.

### **Clive, Geraldine and Stewart Finlayson.**

Clive has published over 100 scientific papers, and authored seven books, including two popular science books on human evolution with Oxford University Press, and co-authored six other books. He is Director of the Institute of Life and Earth Sciences at the University of Gibraltar and Adjunct Professor at the University of Toronto in Canada. He was elected into the prestigious Academia Europaea in 2010. He holds a DPhil from Oxford University.

Geraldine is an accomplished scientific researcher with over fifty scientific papers to her credit. She has a particular interest in landscape reconstruction and is a qualified underwater archaeological instructor with the Nautical Archaeological Society. She is a member of the Institute of Life and Earth Sciences at the University of Gibraltar and holds a PhD from Anglia Ruskin University.

Stewart Finlayson is the Director of the Gibraltar Museum's Natural History Department and is currently reading for a PhD at Anglia Ruskin University. Stewart's PhD is specifically looking at the relationship between Neanderthals and birds, how Neanderthals exploited these animals, what species, in specific, were being used, and for what reason. Stewart is also working on birds as climate indicators, trying to establish what habitats looked like based on the bird species found in



Gibraltar's fossil record. Stewart's passion has always been birds, and he has been involved in various studies around Iberia alongside his parents Clive and Geraldine. He also leads on a study of Chiroptera in Gibraltar since 2013 called Gib-Bats and heads the Gibraltar Museum's Caving Unit. Stewart is a successful wildlife photographer, member of the Royal Photographic Society and has published his works in various books and magazines. He has co-authored of 'A Guide to Wild Spain, Portugal and Gibraltar' published by Santana books.

Clive, Geraldine and Stewart will presenting their new publication "LOST WORLD. Secrets of a World Heritage Site."

Joining the Festival is **Steven Price Brown**. Steven served in the Grenadier Guards for an arduous tour in Afghanistan in 2012. His platoon suffered appalling losses and as advance team medic he was at the centre of the most horrific incidents. After leaving the forces he retreated to Africa but became increasingly ill. Diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in October 2014 he returned to the UK but ended up homeless, living in a hostel and undergoing therapy. In October 2015, he was introduced to the military sailing charity Turn to Starboard, and discovered a new love of nature and a new purpose in life.

Steven will be talking about his book Riddle of the Waves: The Inspiring Story of Military Veterans Circumnavigating the UK.

**Dr Adam Rutherford** is a science writer and broadcaster. He studied genetics at University College London, and during his PhD on the developing eye, he was part of a team that identified the first genetic cause of a form of childhood blindness. He has written and presented many award-winning series and programmes for the BBC, including the flagship BBC Radio 4 programme Inside Science, The Cell for BBC Four, and Playing God on the rise of synthetic biology for the leading science strand Horizon, as well as writing for the science pages of the Observer. His first book, CREATION, on the origin of life and synthetic biology, was published in 2013 to outstanding reviews and was shortlisted for the Wellcome Trust Prize.

Dr Rutherford will talk about A Brief History of Everyone who Ever Lived: The Stories of our Genes. Adam is the presenter on Radio 4's flagship science programme Inside Science and has written and presented programmes for BBC television.

Making a welcome return to the Festival is **Maureen Lipman** who is entering her 50th year as an actress. Her proudest moments were in the TV plays of Jack Rosenthal, her late husband (The Knowledge/ Eskimo Days) the film The Pianist, her one woman show, Re:Joyce, OLIVIER award winner, See How They Run, the National Theatre's Oklahoma and recently in the Daytona and My Mother said I never Should.

2016 saw her in Bull, Plebs, Discovering Britain and The Job Lot and on radio in the series To Hull and Back. She writes for Standpoint, Spectator Health and Woman's Weekly and her ten autobiographical books have warmed up the world for her present publication, It's a Jungle Out There.

Minister for Tourism Gilbert Licudi QC said, "It's important to celebrate Gibraltar's talent at these events as the Festival seeks to present our rich cultural heritage. Home grown talent must always feature highly in the Festival and I'm sure that our audiences will be entertained by the



presentations and discussions that our Gibraltarian writers will deliver. From children's tales to human evolution and intriguing fiction, these events will entertain and enthrall. We warmly welcome back Maureen Lipman and some new names that will no doubt provide our audiences with yet more memorable performances."

Tickets are on sale as from Monday 25th September 2017 at [www.gibraltarliteraryfestival.com](http://www.gibraltarliteraryfestival.com) and [www.buytickets.gi](http://www.buytickets.gi)

A box office will be open at the Garrison Library as from 16th October 2017.