



GIBUNCO GIBRALTAR LITERARY FESTIVAL

Author Information Pack

Bringing literature and inspiration to your classroom



This year's Gibraltar Literary Festival will run from the **10th to the 16th of November**. The school's programme is made possible by continuous support from the John Mackintosh Educational Trust.

Schools programme

The programme will run on weekdays during school hours. Please take time to read the information booklet carefully, checking availability of authors and target audience.

What to Do

1. Check author availability
2. Check target audience
3. Choose your author(s)
4. Fill in our online Booking Form.

BOOK NOW

If no availability is stated, it is likely that this author has greater flexibility. When you have chosen your author(s), please fill out our online form. Any questions or queries can be directed to tasmin.griffith@culture.gov.gi or call us on **20041839**.

Important: Sessions are allocated on a first come, first served basis — book early!





James Mayhew

James Mayhew is an award-winning children's author and illustrator. He has been creating books for over 30 years, and his many titles include the best-selling Katie series, Ella Bella Ballerina, and Once Upon A Tune, inspired by the many musicians and symphony orchestras he has collaborated with. A companion volume *A Symphony of Stories* was published in Autumn 2024. His highly acclaimed concerts incorporate art, created in time to the music, live on stage.

His collaborators include the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, London Mozart Players and the Britten Sinfonia, bringing classics like Peter and the Wolf, The Four Seasons and The Firebird to life in paint. James taught illustration on the UK's first Masters programme in Children's Book Illustration at Cambridge School of Art (Anglia Ruskin University) for over 20 years.

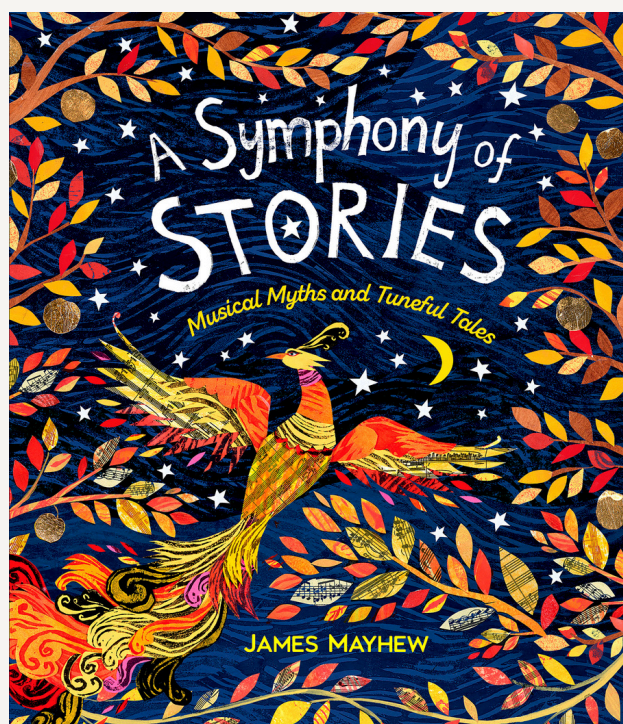
He is a regular visitor to both literary and music festivals at home and internationally. James lives in Suffolk, with his husband Toto and Diva the dog, where the big skies and gentle light are perfect for artists.

A Symphony of Stories

Music is a wonderful way to tell a story, and in this book, James has gathered six fantastic tales that inspired great classical music. Explore Debussy's sunken city, be dazzled by Holst's planets and fly like a Firebird with Stravinsky... as James paints illustrations in time to the music. His unique approach opens great music for children and is exciting for adults too!

Target age group: Upper Primary | Year 3 to Year 6

Availability: Theatre sessions on Monday 10th November, 9am, 11am and 2pm. School visits and workshops on Tuesday 11th November at 9am or 11am.





The Great Rumble

'The Great Rumble' is a 650-word picture book that highlights the preciousness and fragility of home. While home, with its safety and coziness, may seem ordinary to many, for Sunny Bunny and his friend Summer, that comforting feeling is lost. Can it be restored? Can their quest to reclaim the familiar and snugly succeed? I will be reading from my book alongside a presentation.

Target age group: Lower Primary |
Reception to Year 2 | Ages 4-7

Lenka Tryb

Lenka Tryb is an architect and fashion designer from the Czech Republic, now based in Gibraltar. A lifelong observer and creator, she has turned her love of sketching and storytelling into a passion for illustrating books.

Inspired by her work with children in primary education, Lenka's illustrations are vibrant, expressive, and often created using paper collage, blending her architectural eye for structure with her background in fashion design.

Her work celebrates character, movement, humour, and the textures of everyday life. Lenka has received awards for her paintings, sculptures, and illustrations, most recently winning first prize in an international Zine competition exhibited in Gibraltar, St Vincent, Vienna, and London's ICA.





Shane Dalmedo

Shane Dalmedo is a practising artist whose work spans a variety of media, including mixed media, sculpture, illustration, and digital art. Her creative approach blends traditional and contemporary techniques, allowing her to explore storytelling and visual expression in diverse forms. She has exhibited widely, taking part in numerous group exhibitions as well as holding her own solo exhibitions, which reflect the depth and diversity of her artistic practice. In addition to her personal art projects, Shane has worked in the animation industry bringing her artistic skills into commercial and collaborative settings.

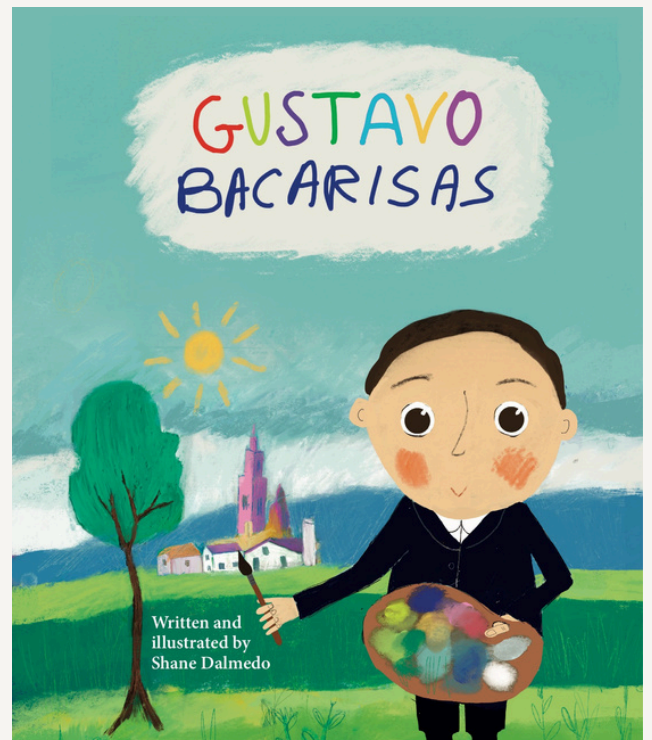
Shane is also the author and illustrator of a children's book about the life of the Gibraltarian artist Gustavo Bacarisas. The book introduces young readers to his work and legacy through colourful illustrations and storytelling. Through her diverse body of work, Shane continues to share her passion for art, creativity, and imagination across multiple platforms and audiences.

Gustavo Bacarisas

Join Shane Dalmedo for an inspiring and interactive session that celebrates the power of words. In this workshop, Shane will explore the joys and advantages of reading and writing, sharing insights from her own journey as an author and her published book. Perfect for readers, aspiring writers, and poetry lovers alike. Storytelling of the book and Q&A on the life of Gustavo Bacarisas, his art and travels.

Target age group: Lower Primary | Reception to Year 2 | Ages 4-7

Availability: Monday 10th to Friday 14th November





Warrior: A Tale of Courage

Neil embarks on a solitary journey in a quest to achieve his lifelong dream: to show the world just how brave we can all be when we trust in our innate superpowers to successfully overcome the obstacles we experience as we grow up. Will he be able to conquer the many challenges he is faced with and defeat the mighty enemies he encounters along the way? Join Neil in his journey to discover the warrior within YOU.

Target age group: Upper Primary | Year 3 to Year 6

Melanie Piñero

Melanie is a primary school teacher from Gibraltar whose life purpose is to help the youth become resilient and embrace self-belief when enduring difficulties.

Having experienced the tragic loss of her late brother, Melanie was inspired to write a story of how we can all use life's setbacks to develop the courage to thrive in achieving our lifelong goals.





Rebecca Fa

Rebecca has been working as Admin & Support Assistant with the Heritage Trust since 2021. From a young age she has found a love for the arts, history, and culture, both locally and abroad.

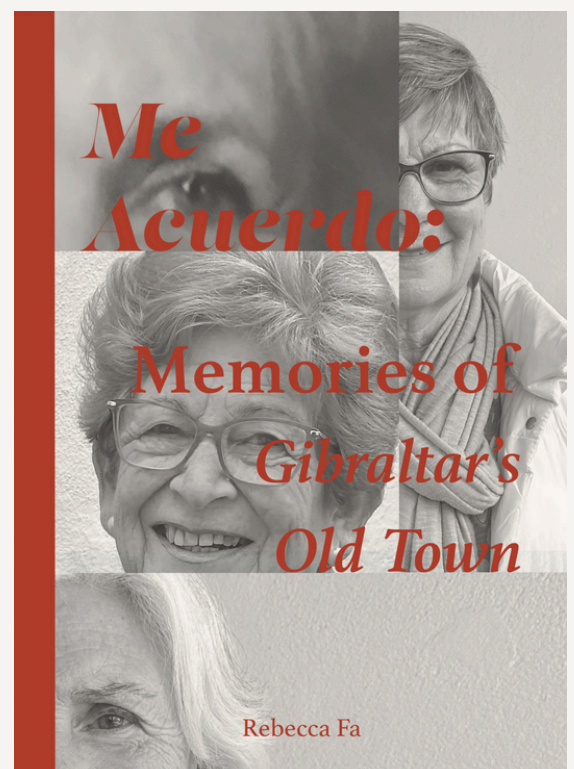
She took up dance until she was 13 and enjoys creating in her spare time. After graduating with a BA Hons in History from Bath Spa University in 2020, she was recruited by the Trust to take on her current role which includes general administrative duties, events and tour organiser and social media supervisor.

She recently published her first book with the Trust and hopes to develop her career in the field of heritage.

Me Acuerdo: Memories of Gibraltar's Old Town

Rebecca Fa's workshop will explore the importance of preserving living memory, beginning with a presentation on life in Gibraltar 70 years ago and her experience interviewing her grandmother for her book. Students will practice interviewing each other with guided questions, then share insights in a group discussion. The session will conclude with Rebecca encouraging students to record stories from grandparents or community elders to deepen their understanding of Gibraltar's past, with the possibility of developing the project further in schools.

Target age group: Upper Primary | Year 3 to Year 6





Marathon Vat: Encouraging identity and promoting multiculturalism through reading

Karim Vatvani

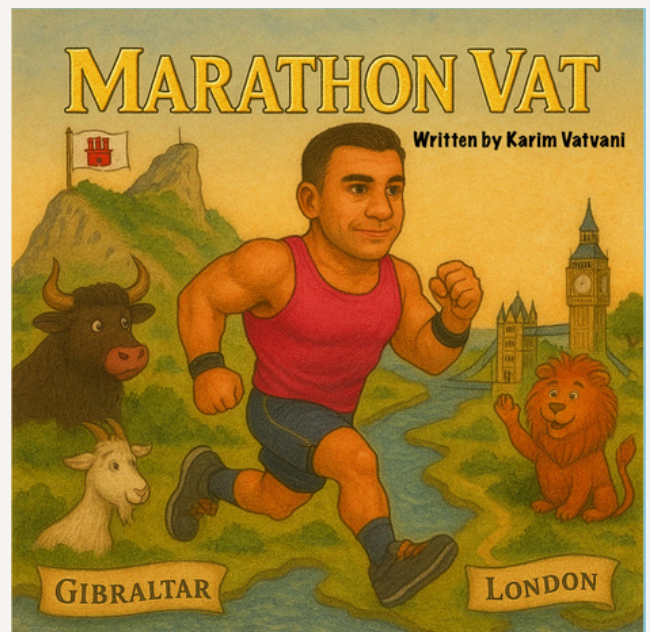
I have been a published author since 2021 but in truth, as an educator I have been a writer and a storyteller for much longer than that.

I find that stories offer children an escape into a World that is entirely different from their own; one that captivates and inspires them to be the best version of themselves and shine their light on a World that is rapidly changing and being presented with serious and ever-growing challenges.

I hope that my stories achieve this and, whether you are 1 or 100, I hope that they offer you the happiness that can only truly be enjoyed through the wonder of literature.

“I’ll speak briefly about my previous books on sustainability, but I’ll mainly be reading from my new book *Marathon Vat*, which explores multiculturalism and the ways we can navigate language barriers and cultural differences to support one another globally.”

Target age group: Upper Primary | Year 3 to Year 6 | Ages 7-11





The Curtain Call

“I’ll share the benefits of reading and writing from my book, and show how it can inspire others to begin writing themselves or even explore reciting poetry.”

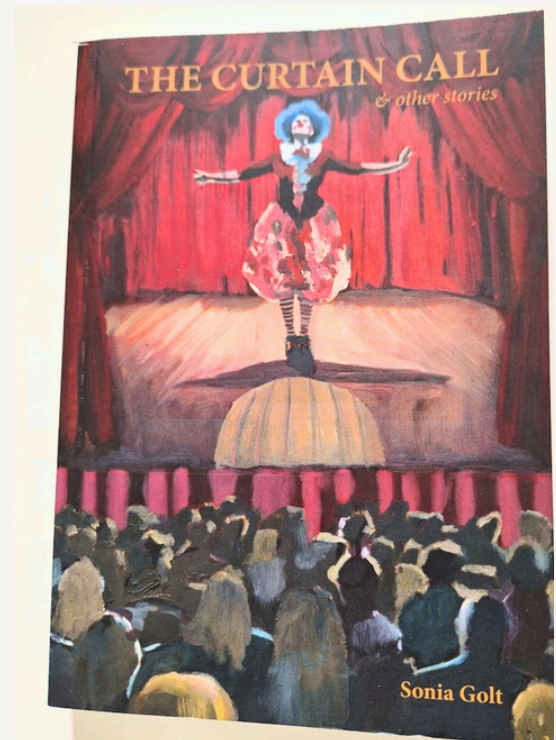
Target age group: 15+

Sonia Golt

Sonia Golt BEM began her career in journalism at 15 with the Gibraltar Evening Post, later contributing to the Gibraltar Chronicle, Panorama, and serving as Editor of The Weekly Review.

In her late teens, she became a well-known radio and TV presenter with Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation, where she spent nine years before continuing to create special programmes on her return to the Rock.

Influenced by her poet father, Sonia published her first poetry book in the Bahamas and has since released several more, alongside short stories, a children’s book, and a coffee table collection. Her 2023 release Seeking Inspiration sold out quickly, raising part of the £7,000 she has donated to cancer charities. A breast cancer survivor herself, she founded The Bosom Buddies Cancer Trust and was awarded the British Empire Medal for her charitable work. On her 80th birthday, she published her first thriller, The Curtain Call, exploring themes of obsessive love.





Kieron Prescott

I'm Kieron Prescott, author of "The Shadows We Call Home: A Tale of Transformation and the Pursuit of Truth", a fable-like novella that blends fantasy and philosophy to explore life's deeper questions.

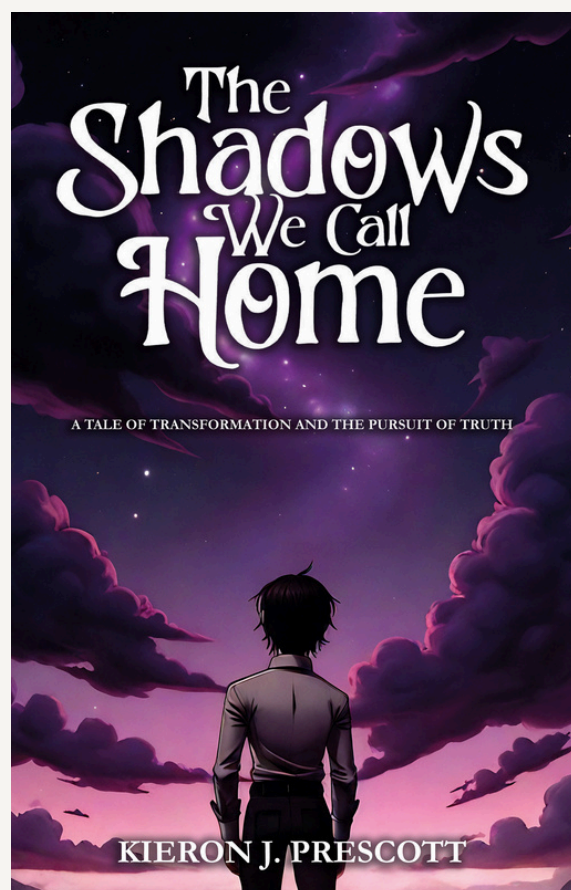
By day I work in the insurance industry, but I've always been drawn to questions about perception, identity, and meaning - the kind of questions we all ask at some point, even if we don't say them out loud. My writing is inspired by Stoicism and thinkers like Carl Jung, Aldous Huxley and Sydney Banks. It's about questioning the reality we often take for granted, and exploring how our thoughts create that reality, whether we're aware of it or not.

Understanding this can help us live with a little more clarity, calm, and peace of mind. I believe philosophy doesn't have to be heavy or dense but can also be fun and accessible. While I'm not an experienced speaker, I'm passionate about sharing the ideas in my book with young people, especially those who might be questioning the world around them.

The Shadows We Call Home

The workshop aims to guide students through the core ideas behind the book in a thought-provoking, accessible way. Using visual prompts, thought experiments, and real-life examples, we'll explore questions like: Who am I, really? Can I change how I feel by changing how I think? How much of what I believe is true? The goal is to help students reflect on their inner world, challenge limiting beliefs, and leave with a greater sense of self-awareness.

Target age group: Comprehensive |
Years 12 & 13





Manolo Galliano

Manolo Galliano is a Gibraltarian author and historian with a lifelong passion for the Rock's history and culture. He has written several books about Gibraltar's streets, churches, and traditions, including *A Rocky Labyrinth*, *Beyond the Ramparts*, and *Pan Dulces & Mince Pies*, which celebrate our unique Llanito heritage.

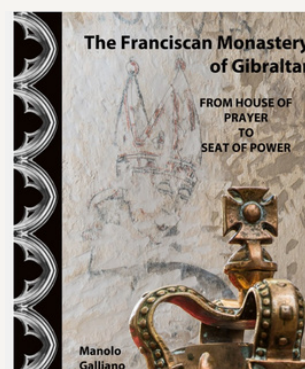
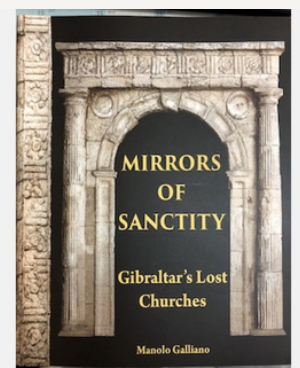
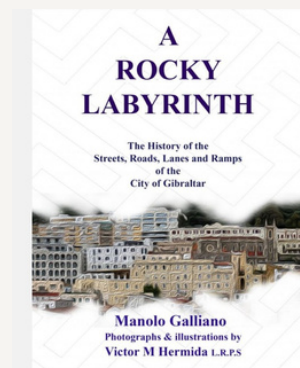
Manolo is also a former Trustee of the Gibraltar Heritage Trust and has dedicated many years to protecting and sharing Gibraltar's past. He enjoys bringing history to life by telling the stories behind our buildings, streets, and customs, helping young people discover the rich heritage that surrounds them every day.

Various Books

Manolo has written a variety of books including; *Of Monks & Nuns*, *Under the Shadow of the Crescent and the Cross*, *Mirrors of Sanctity*, *The Franciscan Monastery of Gibraltar*, *A Rocky Labyrinth*, *Beyond the Ramparts* and *Pan Dulces & Mince Pies*.

He will providing a short talk followed by a Q&A. Students are advised to prepare questions in advance.

Target age group: Comprehensive Schools





Alice Mascarenhas

Alice Mascarenhas, MBE, is the daughter of the late Manolo Mascarenhas, and is a well-known Gibraltarian journalist and broadcaster herself. Her career spans nearly five decades and has been marked by significant contributions to Gibraltar's media, cultural, and civic life.

In 1977 she joined the staff at Radio Gibraltar and worked extensively on GBC Television. 22 years of her professional life was spent at the Gibraltar Chronicle newspaper joining the team in 1997 as its Features Editor and later becoming its first female Deputy Editor in 2015.

After retirement, she has continued her association with the newspaper through her weekly column, Alice's Table – now the subject of seven books. She was awarded an MBE in 2019 for services to media, culture, and the arts in Gibraltar.

Palabras al Viento

Journalist and broadcaster Alice Mascarenhas MBE, presents a book on her late father, prominent journalist and broadcaster Manolo Mascarenhas, who is known for his Radio Gibraltar 1960s broadcasts of 'Palabras al Viento' as the book is aptly titled. 'Palabras al Viento' is central to this book which is not only biographical but a record of his writings in the newspapers from 1946 to 1972 and which cover most aspects of life in Gibraltar at the time.

This year's festival panel will reflect on Palabras al Viento, which helped sustain Gibraltarians' morale during the escalating Spanish political campaign and the 1969 frontier closure, preserving community identity and historical memory.

Target age group: Comprehensive | Years 10 to 13





Molly McElwee

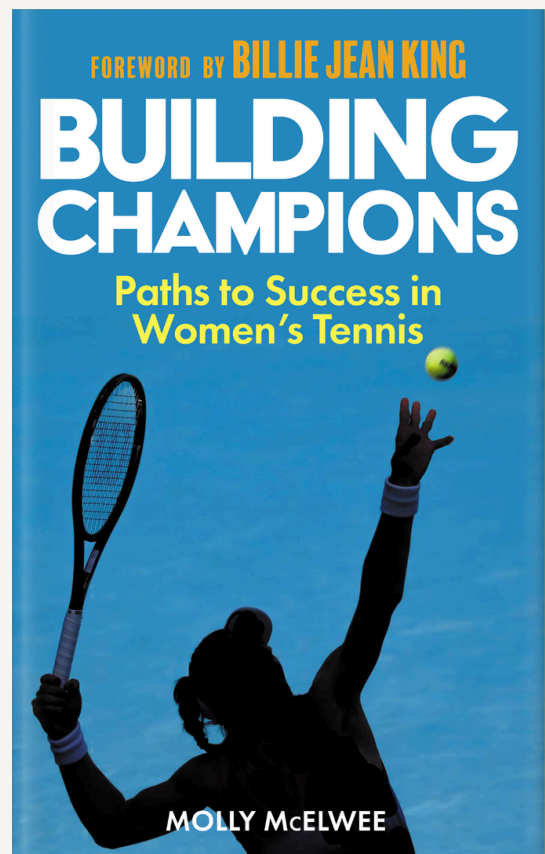
Molly McElwee is a journalist specialising in women's sport and tennis, as well as writing about football and Olympic and Paralympic disciplines. She spent more than five years as a sportswriter for the Daily Telegraph and hosted a podcast called Off The Bench. In 2024 she won the Tom Perrotta Prize, awarded by the International Tennis Writers' Association (ITWA) to a writer aged 35 or under who shows excellence in tennis journalism..

Building Champions

Since 2000, women's tennis has become one of the world's most unpredictable sports, with 36 different Grand Slam champions and upsets now the norm. These champions come from diverse backgrounds from Czech prodigies to Coco Gauff, Kim Clijsters' post-motherhood comeback, and Emma Raducanu's unique coaching strategy. This book explores their remarkable journeys, as told by those close to them, and reveals what this generation can teach us about the future of the game. Q&A With Molly. Students should prepare questions in advance

Target age group: Comprehensive

Availability: Friday 14th November





Justin Rollins

Justin Rollins is a critically acclaimed writer. His autobiographical book *The Lost Boyz* (Waterside Press, 2011) is currently studied nationwide within criminology degrees and championed by the UK's leading criminologist Professor David Wilson.

A competent speaker, Justin lectures at universities and prisons, and has appeared on numerous media platforms including Sky News, BBC News and radio, LBC radio, Five News and This Morning (ITV), providing first hand expert knowledge, advice and opinion on the Criminal Justice System and associated social factors.

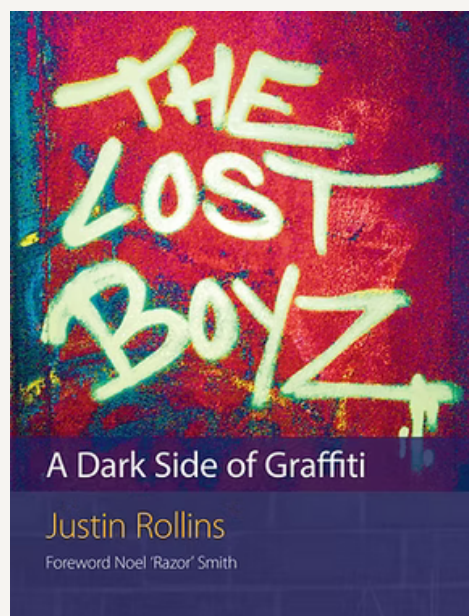
In addition, Justin gets commissioned to paint murals and creates art that sells to private collectors.

Target age group: Year 8

Availability: 09:30 am on Friday 14th November

Graffiti: Creativity or Crime?

Graffiti has long divided opinion—artistic expression or sheer vandalism? For many, it serves as a raw, powerful voice for the marginalized, bursting with creativity, social critique, and cultural identity. Yet to others, it's an eyesore—dripping tags and etched windows that deface rather than decorate. The rise of Banksy shifted the narrative. His clever, politically charged stencils became coffee shop conversation starters and were soon embraced by the middle classes. Suddenly, street art was in vogue. But here lies the distinction—Banksy is a street artist, not a graffiti writer. True graffiti is freehand, not stencilled. It emerged from the ghettos of New York, a working-class culture that travelled the globe and spoke through trains, walls, and rooftops. I was one of those youths, captivated by its energy. This is an exploration into the origins of graffiti, the rise of street art, and the class tensions that shape both.





Ian Moore

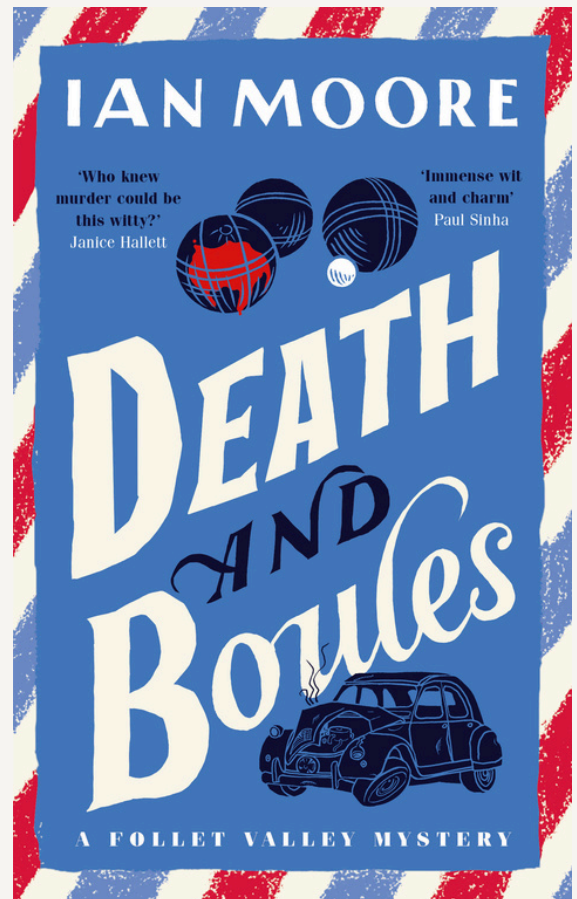
Ian Moore is a leading stand-up comedian, known for his sharp, entertaining punditry.

A BBC TV and radio regular, he was a Champion on Richard Osman's House of Games and stars in Radio 4's The Now Show. Ian lives in rural France with his family, where he seeks solace in the production of fine chutney.

Death and Boules

Short presentation on his work and life followed by Q&A. Students should prepare questions in advance.

Target age group: Comprehensive Schools





Gibraltar: A Brief History and Geography

Target age group: GCSE/A Level Students

In this engaging and insightful talk, the Finlaysons draw on decades of firsthand research to explore the rich and complex history of Gibraltar. They will discuss how the region's unique geography and natural environment have helped shape its identity over millennia, and highlight the remarkable heritage that still endures today.

Blending personal experience with historical depth, the Finlaysons will share stories, discoveries, and a visual journey through time—featuring both their own striking photographs and rare archival images. This talk offers a unique and personal perspective on Gibraltar, bringing to life the layers of history that make it such a fascinating place.

The Finlaysons

Geraldine Finlayson is CEO of the Gibraltar National Museum and co-director of the Gibraltar Caves Project. She holds a PhD from Anglia Ruskin University, an MSc in Museum Studies (Leicester), and is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. A researcher for over 30 years, she has published 60+ papers and several books, mainly on Neanderthal landscapes, climate, and biodiversity. Her interests also include Gibraltar's cuisine, dialect, and underwater archaeology.

Stewart Finlayson is Director of the Natural History Department at the Gibraltar National Museum. His PhD focused on Neanderthals and birds, and he also researches bats through the long-running Gib-Bats project. He is a member of the IUCN Bat Specialist Group and Spanish Bat Research Council (SECEMU). A wildlife photographer and author, he has published widely on Iberian nature and Neanderthal research.

Clive Finlayson is Director, Chief Scientist, and Curator of the Gibraltar National Museum, and Beacon Professor at the University of Gibraltar. He holds a DPhil from Oxford and is an evolutionary ecologist specializing in hominin and avian biogeography. An MBE and member of Academia Europaea, he co-directs the Gorham's and Vanguard Caves research. He has authored numerous influential books on human evolution and bird ecology, often illustrated with his own photography, and has advised UNESCO.

