

The Weidenfeld Scholarship Programme and Novel Rights are pleased to invite you to the Weidenfeld debate on

The Power of Literature and Human Rights

Tuesday, March 6th
6.00-7.30PM, Reception to follow
Queen Elizabeth House
3 Mansfield Road, Oxford



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Literature, specifically fiction, has a unique capacity to touch the hearts and minds of people and engage them in a way that is distinctly different from political or academic texts. It has the potential to lead to personal or social change. Thus, literature may offer an important tool to educate people about and promote human rights.

Join our panelists, the distinguished authors

Lisa Appignanesi, Roma Tearne & Marina Nemat

as they discuss the role of literature in the face of human rights violations. Facilitated by Susan Hitch, the discussion will explore the role of the authors in human rights work. Should literature be politically and socially engaged? Should authors take political or social stands? What consequences does it carry for their art? Can NGOs benefit by using literature in their human rights work? Should publishers have a moral obligation regarding the work they choose to publish?

This event is open and free to the Oxford community and the general public. We especially welcome authors, scholars of literature, publishers and activists. We hope to foster a discussion that will cross boundaries, stimulate research and facilitate collaboration and action.

We look forward to seeing you

Best regards,
Yael Litmanovitz on behalf of the Weidenfeld Scholars
Vered Cohen-Barzilay, Novel Rights

For further information please contact: novelrights@gmail.com



Authors' Biographies:

Roma Tearne is a Sri Lankan-born artist and novelist living and working in Britain. Roma became Leverhulme Artist in Residence at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford in 2002. Her first novel, *Mosquito*, was shortlisted for the Costa First Book Award. Her books explore themes of conflict and forced migration. She is currently the holder of a three-year AHRC Fellowship at Brookes University, Oxford. Roma is currently working to help further the cause of the Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace & Justice. <http://romatearne.blogspot.com>

Lisa Appignanesi is a renowned British writer and a campaigner for free speech. President of the writers' organization English PEN, her latest book is *All About Love: Anatomy of an Unruly Emotion*. Her previous book, *Mad, Bad, and Sad: A History of Women and the Mind Doctors* won the 2009 British Medical Association Award for the Public Understanding of Science. <http://lisaappignanesi.com/>

Marina Nemat is the author of a memoir about growing up in Iran, serving time in Evin Prison for speaking out against the Iranian government, escaping a death sentence and finally fleeing for a new life in Canada. Marina was awarded the first Human Dignity Prize in December 2007 by the European Parliament and the Cultural Association Europa. <http://www.marinanemat.com/>

This event is supported by the following organizations:



The Institute for Strategic Dialogue: An independent policy organisation and think-tank working with leaders to enhance Europe's capacity to act effectively with key players in the global arena. Its Cultural Bridges Programme works with media and cultural leaders to establish alternative channels for communication across national, regional and cultural divides representing the 'cultural diplomacy' branch of the Institute's work. The Institute's

Weidenfeld Scholarship Programme enables students from all over the globe to pursue graduate studies at Oxford University. The flagship of the programme is the Debate Series, bringing professionals and academics to Oxford to discuss issues affecting our world. For more information: <http://www.strategicdialogue.org>

Novel Rights: A social enterprise specialising in art projects for NGOs, Novel Rights recognises the power of art, especially literature, to drive change and motivate people to take action. Alongside producing events, panels and book fairs promoting literature that supports human rights values, they operate an e-Publishing (e-Pub) house. Encouraging the literary community to share in human rights literature, expand their understanding and knowledge on human rights topics and violations, inviting them to take action. Novel Rights e-Pub provides a community space for awareness of authors, audiences and activists with a view towards acting to ensure freedom and equality for all. For more information: <http://novelrights.com>



Green Templeton College: Green Templeton College is the University of Oxford's newest college. International in membership and outlook, lively and supportive in spirit, and with an intellectual agenda focusing on issues relating to human welfare it aims to lead the way in graduate education in Oxford. For more information: <http://www.gtc.ox.ac.uk/>