



**Media Release
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Literary greats grace Galle for International Festival

World-famous authors are preparing to gather in Sri Lanka in one month's time to take part in the internationally renowned Galle Literary Festival. The event, dubbed the "No 1 Literary Festival in the world" by Harpers Bazaar after its inception last January, is set to be even more successful this year with hundreds of people expected to enjoy a breath-taking line-up of celebrated writers and a varied programme of cultural and educational events.

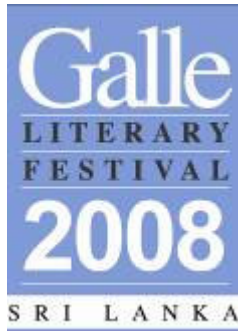
The four-day programme of writing workshops and competitions, panel discussions, topical debates on issues such as climate change, poetry readings, theatre and children's activities is being staged within the magnificent and historic UN World Heritage Fort, which organisers say proved the perfect setting last year. Highlights include acclaimed novelist, essayist and playwright Gore Vidal talking about his six-decade writing career and a rare chance to meet and listen to the renowned poet and novelist Vikram Seth. Creator of the international best selling series The No 1 Ladies' Detective Agency, Alexander McCall Smith is another high profile newcomer to the Festival.

The contribution of many of Sri Lanka's finest authors to English Literature is also celebrated with appearances by Yasmine Gooneratne, Carl Muller, Punyankante Wijenaik, Karen Roberts and Shyam Selvadurai among the most notable. Organisers say the Festival is a real opportunity to put Sri Lankan Literature on the world map, as many talent-spotting publishers from around the globe will be attending. Well known author and Festival committee member, Ashok Ferrey, explained: "The Galle Literary Festival is creating a real buzz around Sri Lanka, Asia and the world. For lovers of literature it's a wonderful chance to meet their favourite international and Sri Lankan authors, but it's also a chance for us to promote what's great about Sri Lanka to the rest of the world - its beauty, its history, its culture and, of course, its literature."

Far from being a Festival just about reading books, the event also looks to celebrate the use of the English Language whether it's written, heard or spoken. Festival Director Libby Southwell said: "We want to show how language and communication help improve educational opportunities, stimulate debate and can be a force for change. The Festival has been set up to act not just as a platform for writers, but as a forum for ideas, creativity, sharing of perspective, knowledge and experiences."

The Festival has a stronger community focus this year with local school children involved in preparing for a debating competition, a number of teachers from the Southern Province invited to attend and then share their experiences with other teaching professionals and pupils and 60 university students being given complementary passes to attend. A special pricing structure has been developed for students this year and a number of events are also being staged free of charge.

It's this aspect of the Festival that has attracted Sri Lanka Telecom to come forward as this year's principal event sponsor. Mrs Pat Abayasekara, Chief Corporate Officer of Sri Lanka Telecom believes the Festival has already established itself as a positive force for good in the country: "The Galle Literary Festival is not only attracting much needed visitors from overseas, but is also achieving some outstanding work in the community. We are proud to be working closely with the organisers to help them develop this aspect of the Festival even further."



Visitors to the Festival, which takes place between January 16-20 at a variety of venues within Galle Fort, will be spoilt for choice with over 10 events a day. Journalists, chefs, adventurers and historians also feature in the line-up, there will be chances to meet authors informally at literary lunches and dinners and there are excellent activities for children including recycled art and chess. Full details of the programme, where and how to get tickets and other useful information are available on the Festival website at www.galleliteraryfestival.com

The Galle Literary Festival is proudly sponsored by Festival Partner - Sri Lanka Telecom, Festival Host - Sri Lanka Tourism Bureau as well as Sri Lankan Airlines, Jetwing Hotels, Sri Lanka Ports Authority, Etv, Amangalla, Printcare, University of Melbourne, The Fortress, Wijeya Newspapers Ltd, Emirates, Dilmah, Pyxle, Embassy of the United States of America, Hemtours, British Council, Penguin India, Taru Villas, The Sun House, The Dutch House, Intrepid, Aditya, Boutique Sri Lanka, Efm, WaterMark, Barefoot, Rithihi, Kahanda Kanda, Six Senses Spa & Resorts and Favourite International.

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Not for publication

For more information please contact the Festival Director, Libby Southwell on +94 (0) 773 918 207 or fd@galleliteraryfestival.com

Notes to Editors

Comprehensive press packs are available on request by emailing: info@galleliteraryfestival.com.

The Galle Literary festival welcome members of the media to attend the 4-day international festival. The press conference will be held on Wednesday, 16th January 2008 at 4pm in Galle Fort . Should you wish to attend the festival please register your name, company, designation and proposed articles and author interviews by emailing: info@galleliteraryfestival.com.

PLEASE CONFIRM YOUR INTEREST IN ATTENDING THE FESTIVAL:

Name:	
Designation:	
Organisation:	
Telephone/email contact:	
Proposed articles to be written:	
Proposed authors to be interviewed:	

All requests are to be received by Friday, 11th January 2008.