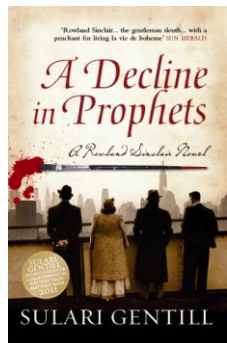


Sunday 2 September 2012

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Pantera Press author Sulari Gentill's *A Decline in Prophets*: WINNER 2012 DAVITT AWARD FOR BEST ADULT CRIME NOVEL BY AUSTRALIAN WOMEN



Last night at a gala dinner and awards ceremony at Melbourne's Celtic Club, *Sisters in Crime* announced Sulari Gentill's second book in the Rowland Sinclair series, *A Decline in Prophets*, Winner of this year's Davitt Award for Best Adult Crime Fiction.

"... An elusive killer, a charming sleuth... glossy, original and appealingly Australian"  
THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY

"... a devilish sense of humour..." AUSTRALIAN BOOK REVIEW

"... a sparkling crime series... Evelyn Waugh meets Agatha Christie..." THE AGE

"To receive any literary award is gratifying, but when the award is the Davitt—for which writers would not only kill, but in fact must kill in order to be eligible—it is a truly extraordinary honour," says Sulari Gentill.

"Thank you to the Sisters in Crime who not only administer this award but who have welcomed me and my stories from the first. I value you as colleagues and comrades, and I am ecstatic, moved and deeply grateful that the panel would choose to give the Davitt to *A Decline in Prophets*. Thank you."

Sulari Gentill is a writer to watch. All six of her novels have been **critically acclaimed** and her debut novel, *A Few Right Thinking Men*, the first in the Rowland Sinclair series, was **shortlisted for the prestigious Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book**.

**Winning the prestigious Davitt award for *A Decline in Prophets* (the second Rowland Sinclair novel)**, as well as publishing the third and fourth books in the series earlier this year, establishes Sulari's reputation as a writer of prodigious quality and depth.

**This year 49 books published in 2011 competed for five Davitts. The awards were announced and presented at a gala dinner and ceremony by award-winning Swedish crime writer Åsa Larsson at the Celtic Club in Melbourne last night.**

*Sisters in Crime* has named the Davitts in honour of Ellen Davitt (1812-1879) who wrote Australia's first mystery novel, *Force and Fraud*, in 1865.

*A Decline in Prophets* is the second novel in Sulari's award winning Rowland Sinclair mystery series, meticulously researched stories about art, money, and crime, with charmingly Australian characters and set in a backdrop of the 1930s and the Great Depression.

"In each book Rowland's adventures explore both well-known and obscure yet extraordinary events, based on the tensions of extreme left and right wing movements of the early twentieth century," adds Sulari.

"Sulari was one of the first signed authors to Pantera Press, so this is especially exciting news. We are thrilled to have Sulari win the Davitt Award, following a Commonwealth Writers' Prize nomination. This year sees Sulari as a regular on the Australian literary festival circuit. This is a truly wonderful recognition for a very talented author," said Alison Green, CEO of Pantera Press. "We are over the moon. It's another step for Pantera Press in our mission to be a great new home for the next generation of Australia's best-loved authors."

***A Decline in Prophets* by Sulari Gentill is out in all good book stores and [www.PanteraPress.com](http://www.PanteraPress.com)**

BOOK RRP \$22.99, BOOK ISBN 978-0-9870685-3-8

eBOOK RRP \$13.99, eBOOK ISBN 978-1-921997-01-3

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## SULARI GENTILL:



Uncommonly, Sulari Gentill writes in two genres. The Davitt Award is for the second book in her Rowland Sinclair adult historical crime mysteries (where Pantera Press has just released the fourth, *Paving the New Road*). She also writes for Young Adults with her Hero adventure series, set among the Greek myths (where Pantera Press has just released the second, *Trying War*).

Sulari lives and writes on a small farm in the foothills of New South Wales' Snowy Mountains. She feels like she has always been a part of this place, but Sulari was actually born in Sri Lanka. She travelled through several continents and time zones before she was two years old. For a time, her family settled in Lusaka, Zambia, which is where she learned to speak

English. She was six years old when she arrived in Australia.

Sulari grew up, or at least grew older, in Brisbane where she built cubby houses in the mulberry trees by the Brisbane River, embarked on various ill-conceived schemes of adolescent entrepreneurship and attended her local school. She set off to the Australian National University in Canberra to study Astrophysics because the stars had never ceased to fascinate her. Imagine her disappointment when she realised that her professors thought stars were simply balls of gas, described by mathematical formulae, rather than the mythological, literary bodies described by the poetry of Homer and those who came after him. Sulari decided that she was perfectly happy with the story of Orion, and would leave it to others to analyse the gaseous masses that made up his constellation. And so she moved on and became a lawyer.

A series of accidental opportunities then saw Sulari end up as a corporate counsel in the water and energy industries. It wasn't a bad life, and the legal profession is certainly not completely divorced from the production of fiction! Indeed Sulari now looks at her legal career as an apprenticeship of sorts. After a number of years however, clauses, codicils and amendments no longer held the same allure and Sulari found herself strangely restless – not exactly unhappy, but increasingly aware that this was not what she was meant to do.

In 1997, Sulari and her husband, Michael, purchased a small farm outside Batlow in the Snowy Mountains. Of course being a town of 1500 people, Batlow doesn't have a lot of call for corporate lawyers, so Sulari worked away for a couple of years, primarily in Tasmania, on the disaggregation of the Hydro Electric Corporation. Returning home, she founded a consulting company with a few friends, which allowed her to telecommute quite happily with only the odd trip interstate. Sulari was also appointed to the boards of a couple of environmental management authorities, which saw her travelling widely through rural NSW. Around then, Sulari and Michael planted a trufflerie on their property which inevitably cemented their image amongst Batlow locals as "mad blow-ins". They have now had several successful harvests of A-Grade French Black Truffles...though the opinion of the locals probably hasn't changed.

So, busy with truffles, a business, a persistent love of painting and two wild colonial boys, Sulari managed to ignore the feeling that there was something else she was supposed to be doing...until 2007. It was then she had an idea for a series. The floodgates were opened. Suddenly Sulari found herself carried on by a torrent of ideas, and excitement and sheer joy in the creative process. 2010 saw Pantera Press publish Sulari's debut novel, *A Few Right Thinking Men*, which was shortlisted in the 2011 Commonwealth Writers' Prize for best first novel in the South East Asia and Pacific region. In 2011 Pantera Press published *A Decline in Prophets*, the second book in the Rowland Sinclair series as well as *Chasing Odysseus*, the first book in the Hero trilogy for young adults. 2012 sees the release of the third and fourth Rowland Sinclair books, *Miles Off Course* (February) and *Paving The New Road* (August) and the second book in the Hero Trilogy, *Trying War* (March).

For Sulari, writing is as natural as breathing now and the consequences of stopping would probably be as dire.

The most unexpected and delightful thing about Sulari's new found passion is the literary partnership the Rowland Sinclair series has given her with her husband. Michael is an historian, with a particular expertise in the proto-fascist movements of the 20s and 30s. His historical insight and her creative intuition have found a wonderful common ground in this fascinating part of Australia's past.

Sulari's future is now about writing, exploring other genres and stories, and happily revisiting the characters who have already become old and beloved friends. There will be other things of course, but in the middle of it all is writing.

## ABOUT PANTERA PRESS

Established in 2008, Pantera Press is an independent Australian book publisher with some big differences.

Its core goal is to be “a great new home for Australia's next generation of best-loved authors”. So its passions are to publish books that readers will rave about by discovering and nurturing the talented new Australian authors who create them... previously unpublished authors of well-written, riveting reads in quality popular fiction or non-fiction.

Pantera Press's many releases since 2010 have included Simon Benson's acclaimed *Betrayal, the underbelly of Australian Labor* and Sulari Gentill's 1930s Rowland Sinclair Mysteries, a charming historical crime fiction series that saw her nominated for **the prestigious 2011 Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book** in the South East Asia and Pacific region and winning the **2012 Davitt Award for Best Adult Crime Novel by Australian Women**.

Pantera Press is also a social enterprise with a unique mix of business and philanthropic objectives: *good books doing good things™*. As well as launching talented new authors, Pantera Press funds projects to help close the literacy gap, to promote the joys of reading and quality writing and to foster debate on hot topics.

Since 2010, Pantera Press has been in partnership with *The Smith Family* and *Let's Read*, a literacy program for pre-school children and their families which *The Smith Family* is implementing around Australia, including Indigenous communities. Pantera Press has also sponsored a number of Writers' Festivals, as well as the prestigious Walkley Awards for excellence in newspaper feature writing.

## BEHIND PANTERA PRESS...



Pantera Press operates out of its offices in Neutral Bay, Sydney, and was **founded by father-daughter duo John and Alison Green**.

Pantera teams its **passion and love for literature** and **philanthropy** with **solid business expertise**, and the **backing of major book distributor *Simon & Schuster***.

**Alison Green** is Pantera Press CEO.