

Buffalo-Based Stephen Eoannou, Author of Yesteryear to be Featured on Close Up Radio

BUFFALO, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, May 1, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Known as The Queen City, The City of Lights, The City of No Illusions, The Nickel City, and The City of Good Neighbors, Forbes Magazine in 2010 named Buffalo, NY as the 10th best city to raise a family. Buffalo features world class architecture, renowned sports teams, notable individuals, and is the birthplace of the chicken wing. One of the most interesting facts about Buffalo is that it's a city of art, featuring over fifty art galleries and having connections to dozens of writers from all genres. Authors such as Joyce Carol Oates, A.R. Gurney, and Mark Twain all have ties to Western New York. Our guest, Stephen Eoannou, hopes to contribute to this rich literary heritage as well.



Stephen Eoannou is a short story author and novelist that derives his inspiration from the history and landmarks in Buffalo, NY. Eoannou is announcing his upcoming novel *Yesteryear*, which will be released this October. According to Eoannou, "*Yesteryear* is a fictional imagining of how Fran Striker came up with the idea for *The Lone Ranger*, and why he sold the rights for ten dollars." He adds, that "it's based on a true story."

"What attracted me to this story was that I never knew that the creator of *The Lone Ranger* was from Buffalo where I'm from," explains Eoannou. "Not only that, he was a neighborhood guy. Not a lot of people know about him because when Striker sold the rights for ten dollars, he kept writing for the show. The person that he sold it to, George Trendle, started claiming in interviews that he was the one who created *The Lone Ranger* and the lie stuck."

“Fran Striker was part of either the best deal or worst deal in entertainment history when he sold the rights to The Lone Ranger for ten dollars,” according to Eoannou. “He sold the rights because of the Great Depression. Not only did Striker have a young family with two children to support, but he also had about a dozen members of his extended family to support who’d lost everything in the stock market crash. Trendle offered Striker a contract with a nice salary and job security. Striker took the safe bet and signed the contract and the rights away. Of course, The Ranger went on to become a cultural phenomenon and cash cow. Striker never complained nor confronted Trendle about the lie. He handled the situation with grace. In 1954, Trendle sold the rights for over three million dollars, which was a record at the time. Striker and his heirs never saw any of that money, except a small bonus.”

“Besides Fran Striker, there are characters in the book that are based on people who lived in Buffalo at that time. John L. Barrett was a radio actor for WEBR and that’s where The Lone Ranger premiered on radio as a test pilot with Barrett playing The Ranger. Ultimately the actual radio series would be broadcast from Detroit. Jimmy Slattery, who was the former light heavyweight champion of the world, was from South Buffalo and was a contemporary of Striker’s. Stefano Magaddino, who ran the Mob in Buffalo for decades, is also in the novel. I’m mixing characters based on real life people and characters of my own imagination to create a novel that is part historic, part noir, and part light comedy. It was fun to write, and I hope it will be fun to read.”



Fran Striker ultimately did receive recognition from the city of Buffalo for his contributions. He is in the Buffalo Broadcasting Hall of Fame and the National Broadcasting Hall of Fame. Also, on Washington Street in Buffalo, by the Central Library, also known as 'Lit City', is a banner recognizing Striker, along with many other writers connected to Buffalo. Striker's banner is by The Brisbane Building, where Woolworth's was once located and where Striker worked before becoming a writer.

The Lone Ranger celebrates its 90th anniversary this year.

"Muscle Cars consists of seventeen short stories about seventeen guys making bad decisions," summarizes Eoannou. "Everyone thinks that Muscle Cars is ONLY about muscle cars but is actually the title of the lead story. It was also my thesis when I received my MFA from the Queens University of Charlotte. I'd been writing for over twenty-five years without much success - I wasn't getting published. Muscle Cars was the breakthrough book that opened the door for the books that followed."

"Rook is based on the true story of a man name Al Nussbaum," Eoannou said. "Al was a Buffalo guy, grew up on the East Side, and married his high school sweetheart. He was a small businessman and would often tell his wife that he needed to go out of town on business. However, Al's real business was robbing banks. He robbed about a half-dozen banks on the East Coast before his wife and the FBI found out. He was also an avid chess player and was quoted as saying, 'Robbing banks was like chess with cash prizes' because he loved the challenge and strategy behind it all. Eventually, he was caught and went to prison. While in prison, he became a writer. When he was paroled in the mid-seventies, he went to Hollywood and wrote for television. He won an award from the Mystery Writers of America and in an interview, Al said that writing was fine but he'd rather be robbing banks. He was unrepentant to the end. Nussbaum was an interesting person that made it to the top of the Most Wanted List."

"Growing up, I liked William Kennedy and how he made Albany, NY his turf to explore. Richard Russo did the same with Upstate New York in his early work. I'm trying to do the same thing with Buffalo," Eoannou said. "Buffalo is the turf that I'm exploring."

"John Irving was also influential," adds Eoannou. "When I was in high school, The Hotel New Hampshire came out, it was serialized in Rolling Stone. My sister and I used to fight over it when it was delivered to see who'd read it first. When I finished that book, I wanted to write like him."

"I left in 1986 to go to grad school at Miami of Ohio," continues Stephen. "I then taught at Ball State University in Muncie, IN and the College of Charleston in South Carolina. I was gone for about fifteen years, and then moved back to Buffalo in 2001."

"In 2025, I will be releasing a new book titled After Pearl," Eoannou said. "I refer to this as my 'pandemic novel' as I started writing this before the lockdown and finished writing it two years later. I wrote it to escape the pandemic. It's a historical novel set in Buffalo in 1942 after the

events of Pearl Harbor. It's purely a work of fiction and is not based on any historical facts or historical people. It's about an alcoholic detective who wakes on the floor of his hotel room after a five-day bender. He takes inventory and discovers that two shots have been fired from his gun but he can't remember anything. There's also a missing singer involved that was last seen with the detective, and he's the prime suspect in her disappearance."

Eoannou has also won many awards for his work. Yesteryear was awarded the 2021 Eyelands International Book Award for an unpublished historical novel. Bookshelf also declared Yesteryear as a "Must Read for 2023". Muscle Cars was a Literary Awards Program Winner from the Santa Fe Writing Project (SFWP). Two individual stories from Muscle Cars also won awards – "Swimming Naked" was awarded an Honor Certificate from The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, while an adaptation of "Slip Kid" won the Best Short Screenplay Award at the 36th Starz Denver Film Festival. Eoannou's upcoming book, After Pearl, was a 2022 Claymore Award finalist.

"It took me almost thirty years to get published," concludes Eoannou. "There was no reason to continue, except the need to write. I kept getting up early. I kept writing. I kept submitting and getting rejected, but I didn't quit. I never gave up, and I am proud of that."

Close Up Radio will feature Stephen Eoannou in an interview with Jim Masters on Wednesday May 3rd at 11am Eastern

Listen to the show on [BlogTalkRadio](#)

If you have any questions for our guest, please call (347) 996-3389

For more information, please visit <https://www.sgeoannou.com/>

You may also pre-order his book Yesteryear at the following online retailers

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Barnes & Noble <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/yesteryear-stephen-g-eoannou/1142946812>

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Lou Ceparano

Close Up Television & Radio

+1 631-850-3314

[email us here](#)

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