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Sixty seconds with Michael Gregorio...

Husband and wife, Daniela De Gregorio and Michael Jacob, write together as Michael Gregorio. Their first novel, *Critique of Criminal Reason*, featuring a Prussian magistrate, Hanno Stiffeniis, was published in 2006. *Days of Atonement* was the second in the series. The third Hanno Stiffeniis investigation, *A Visible Darkness*, was published in the USA by St Martins

Press in April, 2009, while the Faber & Faber edition appeared in the UK this August.

RTE: Describe yourself in a sentence?

Gregorio: Daniela: Cosmically pessimistic.
Michael: A rough diamond with a heart of gold.

RTE: What's the one record you'd take to a desert island?

Gregorio: Daniela: Don Giovanni by W. A. Mozart
Michael: The Mattheus Passion by J. S. Bach. Or a Django Reinhardt anthology. Both, or I'd refuse to go!

RTE: What did you want to be when you were growing up?

Gregorio: Daniela: A writer. My father was a famous painter, which is a hard act to follow.
Michael: A beachcomber in the Bahamas, as I told my careers interviewer at Newcastle University.

RTE: Who's your oldest friend?

Gregorio: Daniela: Myself.
Michael: Age-wise: Julian Wolff, daguerreotype collector. Mates-wise: John Ferris, a Liverpool FC fan, who lives in Fort Worth. Dearest-wise: Daniela and I have known each more than 30 years.

RTE: If I ruled the world...

Gregorio: Daniela: I would make everybody study philosophy.
Michael: Me? What a mess it would be!

RTE: Which book do you wish you'd written?

Gregorio: Daniela: *A Visible Darkness*.
Michael: The next one...

RTE: What makes you angry?

Gregorio: Daniela: Moral cowardice.

*This
space
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rent.*

Michael: Empty promises.

RTE: Name your five dream dinner party guests.

Gregorio: Daniela: Socrates, Kant, Sean Connery, Gerard Depardieu, and I suppose I ought to invite my husband.

Michael: Daniela, naturally, Immanuel Kant, Hanno and Helena Stiffeniis, Serge Lavedrine (all characters from our books, with the exception of Dani, and the real bits of Kant).

RTE: Who would you least like to be stuck in a lift with?

Gregorio: Daniela: Someone wearing lousy perfume and having bad breath.

Michael: Myself. I can be very impatient.

RTE: What inspired you to start writing?

Gregorio: Daniela: I like listening to stories, and I like to tell them.

Michael: I was living in Italy, speaking too much Italian, so I started to write short stories in English. I was afraid of forgetting my native language.

RTE: Where would you most like to live?

Gregorio: Daniela: Somewhere in the English countryside, but with a village shop selling olive oil, prosciutto, mozzarella, wild asparagus and fresh artichokes.

Michael: In a small town with a swimming-pool in Umbria (all we're missing is the pool).

RTE: Sum up your latest book in no more than 12 words.

Gregorio: Daniela: Someone butchers women who harvest amber on the Baltic shore: Stiffeniis investigates.

Michael: A titanic struggle between good and evil, or something of the sort.

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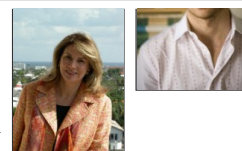
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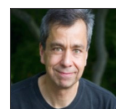
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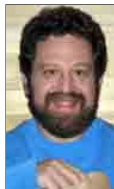
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