**Richard Zimler**

Richard Zimler’s novels have been translated into 23 languages and have appeared on bestseller lists in twelve different countries, including the United States, UK, Australia, Brazil, Italy and Portugal. Five of his works have been nominated for the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award, the richest prize in the English-speaking world, and he has won literary prizes in America, France, Portugal and the UK.

Four of his novels explore the lives of different branches and generations of a Portuguese-Jewish family, the Zarcos: *The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon; Hunting Midnight; Guardian of the Dawn;* and *The Seventh Gate.* The author refers to this group of novels as the *Sephardic Cycle.*

Zimler’s most popular work, *The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon,* is based closely on the events of the Lisbon Massacre of 1506, in which 2,000 New Christians – Jews forcibly converted to Christianity – were murdered and burnt in two pyres in the city’s main square. The novel is narrated by a youthful manuscript illuminator and mystic named Berekiah Zarco. Trained in symbolic reasoning, he seeks to understand the *meaning* of the massacre for the Jews of Portugal and every other living person, and even for God.

*Guardian of the Dawn* explores the effect of the Goa Inquisition on a branch of the Zarco family living just outside the borders of the Portuguese colony in the early Seventeenth Century. The family is torn apart when first the father and then the son are imprisoned by the Inquisition, but who could have betrayed them? *Guardian of the Dawn* is a profound exploration of the nature of evil and a powerful denunciation of fundamentalist belief.

Zimler lives in Porto, Portugal, and he has both Portuguese and American nationality.