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Contact Information

Twenty First Century Renaissance: Publisher
Email: Alison Hackett alison.hackett@21cr.ie
Web: <https://www.21cr.ie/>

Chris Fitzpatrick: Poet
Email: chriscfitzpatrick@gmail.com

Fitzpatrick takes on COVID with the healing power of poetry

Prolific poet reflects on life during a time of fear, confusion and pandemic

6 May 2022 — Twenty-First Century Renaissance is pleased to announce the release of *Poetic Licence In A Time Of Corona*, the premier collection from poet and doctor Chris Fitzpatrick. Launch in Hodges Figgis, Dawson St, Dublin 2, 6pm, Thursday 12 May.

As a physician, Fitzpatrick appreciates the ability to heal the body. But as a poet, he is eager to heal the soul and seek understanding with his telling of the gripping pain and uncertainty at the height of the pandemic.

“I am thrilled to see such amazing support across Ireland and beyond,” Fitzpatrick said.

This new work centres on a medic who finds healing for himself by writing poems on his phone as the pandemic rages around him. It relates to the story of the everyman, detailed through the lens of this poetry in the form of blank verse, from Lionel Richie sending him emails, to how images of the virus remind him of the chestnuts his father used to string for him as a child.

His stories are both familiar and personable, and a poignant account of what so many people across the globe faced as COVID took hold.

Peppered with lightness, moments of deep grief, and quirky side-steps, *Poetic Licence In A Time Of Corona* shows us how one man (who happened to be a doctor) made sense of the strangest of times.

“*Poetic Licence in a Time of Corona* is a beautiful poetic chronology of life during a pandemic. This anthology conveys the experience on the frontline of healthcare, spanning from a time of uncertainty to a time of hope and serves as a permanent reminder of what the world experienced for two years, lest we forget.” — Professor Mary Horgan, President of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI)

Professor Horgan has been invited to give the “Arthur E Mills Memorial Oration” at the Royal Australasian College of Physicians Convocation ceremony in Melbourne on Saturday 14th May.

She will be reading a number of poems from *Poetic Licence in a Time of Corona* at the end of her oration.

A doctor and a writer

While the launch of the work reflects the lyrical side of the pandemic, Fitzpatrick is familiar with COVID in a more literal way.

During the worst days of the COVID pandemic, Fitzpatrick worked as a consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist in the Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital in Dublin.

He also served as Clinical Lead for Covid-19 Vaccination in the Dublin Midlands Hospital Group (HSE) and as a clinical professor at UCD.

But COVID inspired him to dig into his roots.

Before becoming interested in medicine, he studied English at UCD. He was inspired by advice given to him when he was a junior doctor by Oscar laureate Sir Alec Guinness. This advice was to develop an interest in the humanities and to explore its role in medicine and medical education.

Poetic Licence In A Time Of Corona is his first collection.

Garrett Bennis designed the cover and layout.

The collection is available for [pre-order](#) now from the home page of Twenty First Century Renaissance <https://www.21cr.ie/> , with shipments expected to begin on May 11, the day before the launch.

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