

# HoCoPoLitSo

Howard County Poetry and Literature Society  
10901 Little Patuxent Parkway • Horowitz Center 200 • Columbia, MD 21044

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Mike McCormack to read at HoCoPoLitSo's 40<sup>th</sup> Irish Evening of Music and Poetry

HoCoPoLitSo's guest for its 40<sup>th</sup> annual Irish Evening on February 9, 2018 is the award-winning novelist and short story writer **Mike McCormack**, whose latest novel is a tour-de-force in a single sentence. McCormack's reading will be followed by new and traditional Irish music by **Narrowbacks** featuring Jesse and Terence Winch, with stepdancers from the Culkin School. Irish coffee, Guinness and other beverages and snacks will be offered for sale beginning at 7 p.m. and during intermission. The evening program begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Smith Theatre of the Horowitz Center for Visual and Performing Arts on the campus of Howard Community College. General admission tickets are \$35 each; available on-line at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3099986> or by sending a check and self-addressed envelope to HoCoPoLitSo, 10901 Little Patuxent Parkway, Horowitz Center 200, Columbia, MD 21044. Each ticket purchased by January 15, 2018, includes a complimentary adult drink.

Mike McCormack's most recent novel, *Solar Bones*, won the 2016 Goldsmith's prize, given to fiction with "qualities of creative daring," and was longlisted for the 2017 Man Booker Prize. The book, which takes place in the mind of a middle-aged Irish civil engineer, has little punctuation and no chapter breaks, and Goldsmith's chair of judges Blake Morrison said of the book, "its subject may be an ordinary working life but it is itself an extraordinary work."

*The Guardian* subtitled their review "an extraordinary hymn to small-town Ireland." *The Times U.K.* named *Solar Bones* one of the best fiction books of 2017 and noted that the novel, "follows meandering memories of his wife, his adult children and his work; these simple materials make for a beautiful and strangely compulsive read." *The Wall Street Journal* also listed it as one of the best new books of 2017. Former Irish Evening guest novelist Colum McCann wrote, "With stylistic gusto, and in rare, spare, precise and poetic prose, Mike McCormack gets to the music of what is happening all around us."

In 1996, McCormack won the Rooney Prize for Irish Literature for his first collection of short stories, *Getting It in the Head*. His novel *Notes from a Coma* was shortlisted for the Irish Book of the Year Award in 2006; in 2010, John Waters of *The Irish Times* described it as "the greatest Irish novel of the decade just ended." Val Nolan noted in an article in *Ariel* (April 2012) "McCormack's fiction is cerebral and often surreal, depicting a west of Ireland that moves beyond narrow, realistic interpretations and into spaces that exist outside of government and history." McCormack has also published the novel *Crowe's Requiem* (2012) and a short story collection, *Forensic Songs* (2012).

McCormack joins the long list of illustrious Irish authors HoCoPoLitSo has brought to Howard County audiences, including Frank McCourt, Colm Tóibín, Anne Enright, Colum McCann, and Emma Donoghue. For 40 years, HoCoPoLitSo's Irish Evening has celebrated the substantial impact of Irish-born writers on the world of contemporary literature.

HoCoPoLitSo works to cultivate appreciation for contemporary poetry and literature and celebrate culturally diverse literary heritages. The society sponsors literary readings and writers-in-residence outreach programs, produces *The Writing Life* (a thirty-minute writer-to-writer talk show), and partners with the public schools and cultural organizations to support the arts in Howard County, Maryland. For more information, visit [www.hocopolitso.org](http://www.hocopolitso.org).