

HoCoPoLitSo

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

Date: November 21, 2018
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Poetry, music, cocktails at HoCoPoLitSo's 41st Irish Evening of Music and Poetry

HoCoPoLitSo's guest for its annual Irish Evening on February 8, 2019, is the award-winning poet Vona Groarke, recipient of the 2017 Hennessy Hall of Fame Award for Lifetime Achievement. Groarke's reading will be followed by a concert of Irish music and championship step dancing. During intermission, complimentary snacks and non-alcoholic beverages will be available. Irish coffee, specialty cocktails, and Guinness will be offered for sale beginning at 7 p.m. and during intermission. The 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. A special two for one ticket promotion is in effect through January 8, 2019, with two tickets for \$40. After January 8th, general admission tickets are \$40 each. Tickets are available on-line <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3905864>, by phone or mail. To purchase by phone, call 443-518-4568 or by mail, send a check and self-addressed envelope to HoCoPoLitSo, 10901 Little Patuxent Parkway, Horowitz Center 200, Columbia, MD 21044.

Vona Groarke's most recent collection, *Selected Poems*, won the 2017 Pigott Prize for the best collection of poetry by an Irish poet. Noted as "brilliant and original" by the *Irish Times*, Groarke writes haunting and candidly sensual poems. At Irish Arts Center's annual PoetryFest in New York, organizer and author Nick Laird extolled Groarke's voice as "always modulated beautifully, assured and daring, often wry, (that) in the end keeps faith with the world."

Groarke has published ten books, including a 2016 book-length personal essay, *Four Sides Full* and one translation, *Lament of Art O'Leary* (from an eighteenth-century Irish classic). A new collection of poems, *Double Negative*, is due in 2019. Her work has been recognized as one of Irish poetry's "most consistently satisfying voices" (*Agenda* magazine) and "among the best Irish poets writing today" (*Poetry Ireland Review*). She has been the recipient of many prizes and grants, including the Brendan Behan Memorial Prize for her first collection, *Shale* (1994), the Michael Hartnett Award for *Flight* (2002), and is currently a Cullman Fellow at New York Public Library.

Groarke 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 more than 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.