

Tina Pisco | Cork City Libraries' Writer-in-Residence

MAY 2021

Residency Objectives:

- 1. To provide a writer with a unique opportunity to develop their practice within the library setting. They will also be given time to advance his/her own work during the residency.**

The seven months of my residency have allowed me to concentrate on writing short stories for my second collection (working title: The Dithering/Tales from the Peri-Apocalypse). The financial security, and the support for my writing that this residency has provided, was a terrific boost to my productivity.

I have written seven final drafts of stories and have six other stories in development.

I also used my time to expand my personal development as a writer:

- ✚ by attending writers' conferences, literary events and participating in workshops, most notably Lynn Buckle's (UNESCO WIR) workshop "Put the Planet in your Prose". The participants of this workshop have now become a Climate Writers Group
- ✚ by having the time to read, watch videos, and films on the subject of climate change, thus giving me a much deeper knowledge on the subject on both a local and a global level
- ✚ to become aware of, and in some instances join, organisations promoting creative writing that is engaged with climate change
- ✚ to understand the importance of promoting positive climate solutions in creative writing, not just spotlighting dystopian scenarios

✚ I applied and was awarded an Arts Council Personal Development Grant, which has allowed me to:

- to have Mary Morrissey as a mentor and editor
- to experience two weeks at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre this summer, to continue writing and editing the short stories from my residency.

2. To engage the public on climate change and sustainability through a creative process

Because of Covid19 restrictions, and uncertainty about the future, it was decided early on that all engagement with the public would be planned to be remote. It was hoped that by the spring we might be able to do events/workshops in person. However, the entire residency was carried out remotely over zoom.

-I got a professional Zoom account, and learned how to use it for meetings, webinars, and workshops thanks to a series of webinars run by Poetry Ireland. I also attended courses on online teaching and child protection, content, and copyright.

Creative Writing Workshops (x2)

Open to the general public: These were once off workshops of 1.5 hours. The first had 13 participants. The second had 9.

We explored our reactions to climate change, discussed solistalgia and normalcy bias, and wrote some poetry and flash fiction inspired by our discussions.

Creative Non-Fiction Workshops (x4)

These were attended by the Cork Non-Fiction Writing Group and were generally 1.5 hours long. 14 participants.

The group was given a reading, and video link list on the subject of climate change. We explored the difference between news reporting, creative non-fiction and fiction. Other subjects included solastalgia and memoir, global versus local, environmental solutions, and where to showcase writing. The group was very engaged and productive. Some of their work will appear online and in the 2021 Cork Words Anthology.

The Many Tongues of Cork Collaborative Project

This group met regularly from January to May. There were ten participants who joined our discussions, with six participants contributing to the final audio-visual project in six different languages.

The goal was to discuss our feelings, reactions, hopes and fears in relation to climate change and how our multi-lingual background shaped how we expressed ourselves. The project grew organically over the first few meetings as we assembled words, bits of writing, and notes that slowly started to form the final project.

The result (still being edited by Joanna Dukkipati as I write this) will be a 10-20 minute poetry film made of writing, pictures, video and music created by members of the group.

The film will be launched as a part of Heritage week in August 2021.

The poems will be a part of Cork City Libraries Poetry in the Park in August 2021

I intend to enter the video into several poetry film competitions and festivals.

-To promote the awareness of Cork City Council Library Service and its resources, by establishing a dynamic link between Libraries and the community

Due to Covid 19 restrictions there were no public events during my residency. All promotions and events had to be on-line. We did, however, perhaps engage with a larger range of people by being on-line, than if we had on-site events. This served to promote Library Services in general, not just in the city.

I wrote and shared a number of posts over the course of the residency promoting Cork City Council Library Service as well as sharing and high-lighting the library service's on-line platforms and resources:

- by writing and sharing a Press Release about the residency
- by writing a regular blog
- by directing traffic from my social media to library links and on-line events
- by publishing my novella "A Carol's Christmas" on the library website
- by participating in Ireland Reads, and recording my short story "Imagine This/Imagine That" for the library service
- Cork World Book Festival: Hosted an event with Conal Creedon and Sara Baume on the writer's role in addressing climate change, and other issues.
- Final interview on the residency (TBC)