

{what are you like?}

Roisin Fitzpatrick

Roisin Fitzpatrick, Artist of the Light®, is a leading contemporary Irish artist. She grew up in Howth, Co. Dublin, the youngest of four daughters. Her father was a director of Fitzpatrick Shoes and later established Thomas Patrick Shoes on Grafton Street. She is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin and the University of Geneva. Roisin specialized in business and international relations, speaking both French and Italian. She followed a career at the United Nations, European Commission and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Following a brain aneurysm and a near death experience, Roisin turned this adversity into a positive life change. She was inspired to create a series of contemporary artworks evoking a sense of serenity and peace. Roisin's primary intention through her art is to share the beauty of the light and create a greater sense of well-being.

Many leading European and U.S. art collectors own Artist of the Light® artwork, including Christy O'Connor, Jr., Mark Burnett, TV producer of *The Apprentice*, and actress Roma Downey of *Touched by an Angel*. Roisin's art is also featured at entrepreneur Richard Branson's new resort near New York City, and at the Fitzpatrick Grand Central Hotel. Her work has been endorsed by Deepak Chopra and critically acclaimed by *Forbes*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Boston Globe*, *Irish Arts Review*, *The Irish Times* and *Artnews*.

Roisin exhibits regularly on both sides of the Atlantic, with six exhibitions in Manhattan in the past two years. Roisin has self-financed all of her exhibitions.

Her solo exhibition in the fall of 2011 at the Consulate General of Ireland in New York was opened by Loretta Brennan Glucksman, and 10% of the sales was donated to three of the American Ireland Fund's children's charities.

Her most recent exhibition at the VisArts Kaplan Gallery near Washington D.C. was launched on the date of the winter solstice, December 21, a wonderful serendipity for her Newgrange-inspired pieces. Michael Collins, Ambassador of Ireland to the United States, officiated at the opening. He said "Roisin's artworks are a great example of contemporary Irish art. Thank you Roisin for bringing much-needed light into our lives at this time when we risk being overwhelmed by darkness. Thank you for creating works of beauty and joy...Ireland is very proud of our rich culture and the work of our contemporary artists. It is a measure of the vibrancy and resilience of Ireland that we continue to produce such wonderful talent as Roisin."

Her art provided the stage setting for the Conscious Capitalism Conference in 2011. Roisin was also a guest speaker at the United Nations SRTC Enlightenment Society in New York.

Roisin has upcoming exhibitions at La Luna Gallery in Washington, D.C. for March and April, at the Irish American Heritage Museum in Albany from May 8 – June 30, and in the Gallery at Four Green Fields in downtown Boston through July and August.

See www.ArtistoftheLight.com for information about Roisin's upcoming exhibitions in the United States.



Your earliest memory?

Sitting on the floor beside my dad's chair watching *Come Dancing* on the television. I asked him if he could dance like that and he said "No, I have two left feet" and I looked at him and looked at his feet and replied "Thank goodness you are in the shoe business, Dad." I really thought my father had two left feet!

Your perfect day?

Waking up to a sunny morning and going for a swim in the sea across from my house. Then having breakfast in the garden and creating art for the day continuing well into the long summer evening.

Your favorite extravagance?

A huge 9 ft by 7 ft Victorian gilt mirror in my sitting room, to bring more light into my home. It seemed like a great idea when I saw this fabulous mirror in an antique warehouse. However, watching five of my friends squeezing it into my house was nerve-wrecking. I assure you that mirror is never leaving my home!

What's on your bedside table?

A gratitude journal – I write five highlights from every day and it has been one of the best things I have ever done. It keeps me focused throughout the day on what brings joy and happiness. It is amazing to see the pattern over time. I generally write about the kindness of people and the beauty of nature. I am so grateful for the support and genuine kindness of so many people from the Irish American community who have helped me since I have been in the United States.

Your hidden talent?

Tango and salsa dancing – thank goodness I did not inherit my father’s two left feet! I love tango dancing at weekends in Central Park during the summer.

Movie you will watch again and again?

It’s a Wonderful Life is a classic for a good reason. I watch it every Christmas without fail and it becomes more relevant every year.

Your favorite qualities in close friends?

Absolute honesty, always having each others’ best interests at heart, enjoying life and having a great laugh together.

Your most prized possession?

A beautiful quartz crystal blessed by the Dalai Lama when he was in Ireland last year. I was so lucky to have met him and will treasure this for the rest of my life. Ah well, so much for the Buddhist approach to life and not to have any attachments to possessions!

Your favorite hero in real life?

The Irish revolutionary leader Michael Collins. He was a brilliant visionary.

The best advice you were ever given?

It is from my aunt who is 94 – she always reminds me “Life is so short dear, live a happy and fulfilled one.”

The most interesting person who inspired you?

I have to say there were 60 people who inspired me, not one. Walter O’Hara, Jr., chairman emeritus of All Hallows School in the Bronx, asked me to give a talk to the students. I honestly thought how on earth am I going to connect with 60 boys all around the age of 13 when I cannot even begin to imagine the tough challenges they face every day? The boys, led by their vice principal Kelvin Ramirez, were unbelievably inspirational. Listening to their fears and joys, dreams and hopes, challenges and passions was an incredible experience. The great irony was that I intended to give these young men a sense of hope to create a great future, and that is exactly what they gave me!

Your greatest passion?

I love creating the art and then seeing when someone really connects with it. I literally see the person transform in front of me and light up from within.

Your favorite country you have visited?

I was so lucky as a child. My family went to Italy every year, as my father combined his holiday with shoe-buying trips. So I grew up with a passion for the food, culture and arts.

Your favorite color?

White because it is a combination of all colors. I love all colors – the more vibrant and alive the better.

Your favorite writer?

Frank O’Connor

Your favorite artists

Philip Grey and Judy Cobbe.

If you could have a drink with anyone dead or alive, who would it be?

My mum and dad, to thank them for being the best parents. I love them dearly.

What is your driving force?

A few years ago I was lucky enough to have a life-changing near death experience. While “I” was out of my body, I connected with the “Oneness” eastern philosophies speak of – it was alive, vibrant and infinite. I made the decision to come back and fully integrate all of this energy and live my life from my heart and share the beauty of this light with people. I have absolutely no fear of death whatsoever and a passionate joy to live life to the full!

Your core values?

I believe life is really so simple. It is about coming from the heart, treating everyone with respect and sharing the light that is within us all, and giving back in whatever way we can. For me it is through the art and by donating art to raise funds for different charities.

Your idea of happiness?

That wonderful deep sense of inner peace and connection I feel that is totally unshakable, no matter what challenges life may bring.

Best line from a book?

“As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.” From Marianne Williamson’s book *A Return to Love*.

Accomplishment you are most proud of?

Bringing the art to the U.S. and self-financing the exhibitions. I was told by many people that this could not be done. However, thanks to the kindness of people in the Irish American community it was made possible.

What are you working on now?

My upcoming exhibitions in Washington for March and April, with the Irish American Heritage Museum for May and June, and in Boston during July and August. IA

