

A brief overview of Colum McCann's works and prose style

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Abstract: Colum McCann is a renowned Irish writer and the author of *Let the Great World Spin*, *TransAtlantic*, and *Apeirogon*. His works explore important themes such as migration, historical memory, social inequality, and human solidarity. McCann masterfully blends reality and fiction, creating poignant and profound stories that resonate with readers worldwide. This article examines his style, key themes, and influence on contemporary literature.

Keywords: Colum McCann, contemporary literature, historical memory, migration, social inequality, *Let the Great World Spin*, *Apeirogon*, *TransAtlantic*.

Introduction: Colum McCann was born on February 28, 1965 in Dublin, Ireland. He is the author of seven novels, three short story collections, and two non-fiction books. McCann was raised and educated in Dublin before moving to the United States to pursue a career as a writer. McCann began his career as a journalist for *The Irish Press*. In the early 1980s, he crossed North America by bicycle and worked as a guide in a youth offender program in Texas. He later spent a year and a half in Japan before moving to New York City with his wife, Alison.

Colum McCann is the author of such acclaimed works as: *Let the Great World Spin*, published in 2009. This novel brought McCann worldwide recognition and numerous awards, including the National Book Award in the United States and the Best Foreign Novel Award in China. In 2013, *TransAtlantic* was published, a novel that became an international sensation and won several international awards, including the Mondello Citta de Palermo Prize in Italy.

Another famous novel by the writer, *Apeirogon*, became an instant bestseller and won many

international awards, including the Prix Montluc, the Elle Prize and the Jewish National Book Award in the United States. The film rights to the book were acquired by Steven Spielberg's Amblin Company. His works have been published in more than 40 languages and have appeared in publications such as *The New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *Paris Review*, *Granta*, *The Atlantic Monthly* and many others.

Colum McCann is also the president and co-founder of Narrative 4, a non-profit organization dedicated to the global exchange of stories. Narrative 4 connects young people from all over the world, helping them to "stand in someone else's shoes." The organization operates in 21 countries and has facilitated almost a million story exchanges between young people. Colum McCann currently lives in New York City with his wife Alison and their children. He teaches at Hunter College, where he is the Thomas Hunter Writer in Residence. McCann is also active in organizations such as the Irish Arts Centre, The Irish Repertory Theatre, Origin Theatre, PEN, the New York Public Library, Art for Amnesty and others.

METHOD

Colum McCann's work is marked by a unique ability to explore deep and multi-layered themes that span diverse geographical and cultural contexts. His works range from descriptions of homeless people in the New York subways to complex stories related to the conflicts in Northern Ireland and the aftermath of the tragic events of September 11. McCann masterfully combines poetic sophistication with a realistic depiction of reality, which led to the emergence of the term "poetic realism" to describe his style.

Through his novels and short stories, McCann masterfully intertwines reality and fiction, creating works that not only captivate, but also encourage reflection on questions of existence. His creativity and boldness in choosing his subjects make him one of the most significant and influential writers of our time.

In his novel *Apeirogon*, these aspects are revealed through the stories of Israeli Rami Elhanan and Palestinian Bassam Aramin, who lost their daughters in the conflict. Instead of seeking revenge, they seek peace and justice, share their stories in public speeches, dream of a safe and happy future for their children, and find common ground, becoming symbols of solidarity and reconciliation between the Israeli and Palestinian communities.

Flannery also notes that "McCann's concern for ideas such as migration, displacement, the durable currency of private stories, and racial politics resonate in much of the more recent fictions, though based in radically diverse geographies." [1, 2] (Colum McCann and the *Aesthetics of Redemption*) (McCann focuses on ideas such as migration, displacement, the enduring significance of personal stories, and racial politics, which resonate in much of his recent work, albeit based in radically diverse geographic contexts.)

These themes also feature prominently in Colum McCann's novel *Let the Great World Spin*, which explores migration and displacement through the lives of various characters trying to find their place in 1970s New York City. McCann emphasizes the enduring significance of personal stories, linking them to larger historical events and social changes through multiple plot lines in the novel. The central event of the novel is French tightrope walker Philippe Petit's legendary walk between the World Trade Center towers. This daring act becomes a symbol of hope and excitement for the city's inhabitants, linking their destinies against the backdrop of one of the most significant events of the time. In a new storyline centered on the brother of the late priest Coramba, the character decides to care for the homeless and drug addicted in the New York City subways. His mission symbolizes the desire for redemption and change despite personal loss and

suffering.

A storyline centered on Tilly, an African-American heroine of origin, and her daughter Jazmine, shows their struggle with systemic racial discrimination and social inequality. McCann describes their lives with deep empathy, showing the difficulties and injustices they face, but also their strength and resilience. In the story of Clara and Solomon, a couple who lost their son in the Vietnam War, their personal tragedy is intertwined with the social and political changes of the time, showing how historical events affect individual destinies. In the storyline dedicated to artists and former drug addicts Lara and Blaine, they experience a crisis in their relationship and search for new meaning in life. Their stories reflect themes of redemption and personal change against the backdrop of turbulent times. As such, *Let the Great World Spin* serves as a wonderful example of how McCann explores themes of migration, change, personal histories, and racial politics, connecting the destinies of various characters to major historical events and social changes.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is worth noting that Colum McCann is one of the most important contemporary writers who explores complex and profound themes in his works. His novels and short stories intertwine historical events and personal stories, allowing readers to take a fresh look at important issues of our time. McCann skillfully combines poetic sophistication with a realistic depiction of reality, which led to the coining of the term "poetic realism" to describe his style. His works are not only fascinating, but also make you think about important questions of life. McCann is also actively involved in public life, supporting various charities and projects. His unique creative approach makes his works meaningful and relevant to readers around the world, while maintaining a deep connection with Irish culture and history. McCann continues to contribute to world literature by exploring themes that have global significance and showing how history and personal stories can intertwine to create multi-layered and profound narratives.

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