



# HIGH WIRE

Michael Fitzsimons

To be released 22 February 2025

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100pp • poetry

Illustrations by Brian Nelson

- third collection by Wellington poet
- poems that reflect on humanity and the natural world, this 'high-wire existence'
- a spiritual worldview underpinned by the years he spent training as a Catholic priest



Six years after *Michael, I Thought You Were Dead*, Michael Fitzsimons continues to be surprised by being alive and the way ordinary of things are extraordinary because he's still here to see them. There's the intimate world of his hillside home with Rose overlooking Wellington Harbour, and the wider world where friends and whānau live, and miseries, as Suzanne Aubert said, 'ride behind us on horseback'. Everywhere Michael looks, life is both precious and precarious: a thrilling high-wire existence. Some of the best lines of *High Wire* are simply that – a handful of words on a page to mark something fleeting that will make a reader laugh or puzzle or wonder. You can't ask more of poetry than that.



Michael Fitzsimons has published two previous books of poetry. His first collection *Now You Know* was recommended in RNZ's annual poetry highlights. His second collection, *Michael, I thought you were dead*, dealt with a cancer diagnosis and was described by Joy Cowley as 'a feast for the soul'. Michael is a professional writer and member of the three-person South Wellington Poetry Society. He

was co-founder of the Wellington communications and publishing company, FitzBeck Creative. He lives with his wife, Rose, in Seatoun on a hill overlooking the harbour. They have three children spread from Wellington to Warsaw to upstate New York.

"Mike Fitzsimons' *High Wire* set me thinking that we need to purge the term 'worldliness' of its negative connotations. These poems are 'worldly' in the finest sense: they are 'full of bounce and soft foliage'; there are mysteries aplenty, sensory pleasures and a seagull-flock of epiphanies. Get ye to this Mystic Kitchen!"  
Gregory O'Brien

"Michael Fitzsimons has the uncanny ability to transform moments, memories and life's fragments into something out of the marvellous, thereby doing the necessary work of poets and poetry – nourishing our existence."

Peter Biggs



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