

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

Dear World Cultural Council, President Sir Fraser Stoddart, Professor Amílcar Falcão, Rector of the University of Coimbra, Faculty and colleagues from the University of Coimbra, my fellow Awardees, colleagues and friends,

First allow me to express how sad I am that I am not with you today. I tested positive for COVID the night before my departure. I am fully vaccinated, and I have never had COVID before, so this comes as a shock to me. I am speaking from my bedroom where I am hiding from my family to avoid infecting them. I am very disappointed not to be with you in the beautiful city of Coimbra, at your spectacular University, I have been looking at photos online. However, I am glad for the technology that allows me to express my tremendous honour and gratitude at being awarded the 2022 “Albert Einstein” World Award of Science.

I am a scientist because I simply love my job and so to also receive this lovely recognition is simply overwhelming. I want to thank many, many people who have helped along the way in my career, my PhD supervisors, Nobel Laureate Joseph Taylor and Richard Manchester, my many research colleagues and collaborators in Radio and X-Ray Astronomy and particularly to those who have devoted their careers to building and maintaining the incredible instruments that I have had the privilege of using. I also want to thank McGill University and the Department of Physics for providing me such a stimulating and supportive place to do research.

I am particularly delighted to have McGills Vice President of Research, Martha Crago present with you and able to accept the award on my behalf. Martha is one of my favorite people and has been a tremendous friend and mentor over the years, so I cannot think of anyone I rather have serve this role. I also want to thank my many former and present students from undergraduates to Masters to PhD students to post-doctoral fellows who are the lifeblood of my research and without whose energy, drive, creativity, proving questions and ultimately friendship, I do not know where I would be. Science is rewarding but, even more so, is training the next generation of scientists and knowing they will carry on long after I am gone. Finally, I would like to thank my family, my husband David and my children Ann, Julia and Halley as well as my sister Terry for being so supportive and putting up with me in my work. Again, I apologize for not being with you there today and I thank you so much for this tremendous honour.

Thank you-

Professor Victoria M. Kaspi