

PRESS RELEASE

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First U.S. Museum Show by Irish Artist Brian Maguire Opens at the Missoula Art Museum *In the Light of Conscience* Tackles Human Rights, Current Events

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The Missoula Art Museum presents [*Brian Maguire: In the Light of Conscience*](#), the artist's first exhibition in a U.S. museum. Maguire, an internationally renowned artist represented by galleries in New York City, Dublin, and Paris, has worked closely with museum staff to put together this survey exhibition.

Maguire, born south of Dublin, draws attention to marginalized voices and human rights atrocities on large canvases. "The goal of my work is public outrage," he said in an interview with the museum in 2021. His abstract expressionist techniques are striking and evoke intense responses in the viewer. This exhibition unites several recent bodies of work from his travels around the world. Bombed-out buildings depicted in dripping paint characterize his *Aleppo* series from 2017. Additional paintings in the show reference immigration and refugee crises, border crossings, and drug wars in Mexico. Maguire tackles these profound issues with masterful strokes of vibrant colors.

"It amazes me that Brian, aside from being one of the best contemporary painters, allows his heart to dictate where he should turn his attention," said Brandon Reintjes, senior curator at the museum. "He's a storyteller, bringing to light that which otherwise goes untold."

MAM staff learned of Maguire through his connections in nearby Hope, Idaho, where he has spent his summers over the last 20 years. In 2020, MAM staff invited Maguire to participate in a curatorial research project funded by the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation. The project was designed to investigate how the museum might present an exhibition around the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP). Maguire parlayed a 2021 Fulbright Scholarship into a journey from Ireland to Missoula and an artist residency at MAM specifically for this work. MAM has planned two exhibitions of the artist's work over the next two years. This exhibition features a selection from his major series, and an upcoming exhibition in 2023 will feature his MMIP portraits from across Montana.

Maguire's artwork has roots in his involvement in the civil rights movement of his native Ireland in the 1970s and his extensive travels. Over the course of his career, he has spent time in Aleppo, Syria; Bentiu, South Sudan; São Paulo; Juárez, Mexico; Tucson, Ariz.; and others. Maguire harnesses a journalist's attention to detail and humanity with his immense artistic talent during his travels. He visits and listens with families of displaced or missing peoples and works with professionals on the frontlines of these migratory and geopolitical issues.

The exhibition includes loans from the Tia Collection in Santa Fe, N.M., the Fergus McCaffrey Gallery in New York City, the Rhona Hoffman Gallery in Chicago, the Kerlin Gallery in Dublin, and collectors Christian Groenke and Gulia Bruckmann. Exhibition support comes from Culture Ireland, the Williams family of Missoula, and Fergus McCaffrey Gallery. Maguire is represented by the Fergus McCaffrey Gallery in New York City, the Kerlin Gallery, and Galerie Christophe Gaillard in Paris.

Brian Maguire: In the Light of Conscience opens March 18 and will be on view at the Missoula Art Museum through August 13, 2022. MAM will host a reception with the artist Friday, April 1, from 5 to 7 p.m. and a tour and gallery talk with the artist Saturday, April 2, at 1 p.m.



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About the Missoula Art Museum: Founded in 1975 and accredited by the American Alliance of Museums since 1987, MAM is emerging as the leading contemporary art museum in the Intermountain West. MAM is situated on the traditional, ancestral territories of the Séliš (Salish or “Flathead”) and Q̓lispé (upper Kalispel or Pend d’Oreille) peoples in Missoula, Montana, USA. MAM is committed to respecting the indigenous stewards of the land it occupies. Their rich cultures are fundamental to artistic life in Montana and to the work of MAM. MAM is a fully accessible, free public museum boasting eight exhibition spaces, a library, and an education center in the heart of Missoula’s historic downtown.