

“Looking at the Stars”: Irish Art at the University of Notre Dame

August 17 – December 14, 2019

Snite Museum of Art

Notre Dame, IN- The Snite Museum of Art presents *“Looking at the Stars”: Irish Art at the University of Notre Dame* on view beginning August 17. With the recent gift of modern paintings by artists such as Jack B. Yeats (1871-1957), Rodreric O’Conor (1860-1940), and Mary Swanzy (1882-1978), among others, from the Donald and Marilyn Keough Family, the University of Notre Dame has laid a solid foundation on which to build a rich collection of Irish art that will inspire audiences the world over. This is the premier examination of many works from the Keough gift as well as several other significant collections of Irish Art. Taken together, the collections combine to create a landmark exhibition at the Snite Museum of Art.

The exhibition will also include selected gifts to the Museum of photographs by Alen MacWeeney. Born in Dublin in 1939, the photographer established a worldwide reputation when he chronicled the native itinerants of Ireland known as the Travellers. The artist’s genre studies in the chapels and pubs of Dublin, and his country landscapes, possess a mood of poetic evocation. Also included in the exhibition are MacWeeney’s photographs of O’Neill House in Southwestern County Kerry. Approximately fifty-five photographs, ranging in date from 1965 to 2015, will be shown.

Additionally, important collections from the Museum, including a celebrated group of James Barry (1741–1806) prints, and substantial holdings in the Hesburgh Library’s Special Collections, will be featured. These gems and others currently held by the university are cause for celebration and pride with the addition of the Keough and the MacWeeney gifts.

Finally, the Museum is honored to announce the loan of several modern and contemporary masterpieces from the renowned collections of Pat and John O’Brien of Chicago. Such works continue a deeply appreciated relationship with the

O'Briens who have made their collections available to the Notre Dame Community and the world.

The history of Irish visual art may be less familiar to visitors than the performing or literary arts, but it is no less compelling. The Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies at Notre Dame is renowned for promoting new lines of inquiry and research; it is a partner with the Snite Museum in this important exhibition endeavor. As partners, the Museum and Institute offer audiences the intractable wit, tenacity, and infinite invention of the Irish spirit through this exhibition. As such, Oscar Wilde's words in *Lady Windemere's Fan* (1892), may apply to Irish artists within the broader art community: "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars."

"In celebrating the visual arts in Irish culture, the Museum is proud to honor our donors, lenders, and partners in a meaningful and meaning-filled way." Joseph A. Becherer, Director, the Snite Museum of Art.

"The gift of paintings that is at the centerpiece of this important exhibition is all the more meaningful because it comes from the Keough family, one of the most generous benefactors to the University and to our Institute for Irish Studies. The paintings are more than an aesthetic contribution to Notre Dame. They are part of an exhibit that helps to build a bridge between Ireland and America—an endeavor that is at the very heart of our Institute." Patrick Griffin, Madden-Hennebry Professor of History and Director, Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies

Programming:

Public Reception: Friday, September 6, 5-7 p.m. This reception is free and open to all. Details about speakers and events TBA



Image credit: Mary Swanzy (1882–1978), *Young Claudius*, 1942, oil on canvas, 20 x 24 inches. Gift of the Donald and Marilyn Keough Foundation, 2019.001.002

MEDIA CONTACT - If you would like high-resolution images or in-depth information, please contact Gina Costa, Marketing and Public Relations Manager, (574) 631-4720, gcosta@nd.edu

The Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame

Considered one of the finest university art museums in America, the Snite Museum's permanent collection contains over 25,000 works that represent many cultures and periods. Notable are the Museum's holdings in Mesoamerican and Olmec art, African art, European art from 1400-1900, Decorative art, Prints, Drawings, Photography, the George Ricky Sculpture Archive, and Ivan Meštrović Collection. Sculpture is displayed in the Mary Loretto and Terrence J. Dillon Courtyard, and the Charles B. Hayes Family Sculpture Park.

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Directions: nd.edu/visitors/directions

Hours:

Tuesday–Friday, 10: a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Thursday evening until 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, noon–5:00 p.m.

Closed Sunday, Monday, and major holidays.

Admission is free.

650 words