



BRIAN MAGUIRE
Arizona 14, 2022
 Acrylic on canvas
 35 x 47 inches

BRIAN MAGUIRE

North and South of the Border

September 16 - October 22, 2022

Rhona Hoffman Gallery is pleased to present *North and South of the Border*, an exhibition of new and recent paintings by Irish painter and social activist Brian Maguire. The exhibition is comprised of a selection of portraits and landscapes from three different bodies of work: *Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (M&MIP)*, Montana; *The Remains*, Arizona; and *The Aleppo Paintings*, Syria. Spanning depictions of scenes and individuals from Montana, Mexico, Central America, Arizona, and Aleppo, Syria, Maguire's paintings represent the voices of marginalized groups whose stories are not widely disseminated.

The *M&MIP* painted portraits, the most recent body of work in the exhibition, was created while Maguire participated in a residency at the Missoula Art Museum in Montana. Missoula is a city near both the Flathead Reservation and the Blackfeet Reservation and proved an apt location for the project. Throughout parts of the United States and Canada, an epidemic is quietly transpiring wherein thousands of Indigenous peoples have disappeared or have been murdered. Maguire's memorial portraits are rendered from photographs that the family members select, the finished painting being an intimate rendition capturing the likeness and spirit of the subject. There are ultimately two paintings created, one for public exhibitions and one for the family.

Regarding his *The Remains* (Arizona) paintings - the second body of work reflected in this exhibition - Maguire says: "...it is the death I record or memorialize in this project. No family would like to retain this image of a loved one, except as needed by a process of seeking justice. My work since 1997 has become increasingly focused on lives lost, often with a political perspective on the event of the loss." These gestural paintings of skulls in the dirt or a splayed face-down body, as is the case in *Arizona 6*, reference the migrant crisis at the US/Mexico

border, specifically the annual fatalities of Central Americans in the deserts around Tucson, Arizona. *The Remains (Arizona)* paintings confront issues of migration, displacement, and the dangers forcing those to risk their lives to relocate.

Aleppo 5 is a commanding painting from Maguire's *The Aleppo Paintings* series. Depicting a crumbling and dilapidated building in Aleppo, Maguire first photographically documented the structure during a 2017 visit to Syria before replicating it in his studio. His interest in covering migrant crises through his art transcends specific locations to address the global and widespread issue of forced migration, made more pervasive now due to war, social upheaval, and climate change. The ongoing Syrian Civil War, which officially started in 2011, prompted millions of Syrians to seek refuge in Europe and other surrounding areas, resulting in a major humanitarian emergency. The desolate setting of *Aleppo 5* with an isolated passing figure is representative of the trauma inflicted on Syrians and their culture - architecture, infrastructure, art, and history.

Maguire's investment in social activism stems from his involvement in the civil rights movement of Northern Ireland in the 1970s. He remains committed to making artwork that responds to humanitarian catastrophes, hoping to promote dialogue and support for those afflicted.

Brian Maguire (b. 1951 Dublin, Ireland) lives and works in Dublin and Paris. Solo exhibitions have been mounted at institutions and venues such as The Missoula Art Museum (Montana); The Crawford Art Gallery (Cork, Ireland); The United Nations Headquarters (New York); The Rubin Center for the Visual Arts at Texas University (El Paso, TX); Museo de Arte de Ciudad Juárez (Mexico); and The Irish Museum of Modern Art (Dublin, Ireland).

His artwork is in the collections of The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas; Museo de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland; Dublin City The Hugh Lane, Dublin; Arts Council Collection, Dublin; Crawford Art Gallery, Cork, Ireland; Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Dublin; National Portrait Collection, Limerick Office of Public Works, Kilkenny Art Gallery Collection, Kilkenny, Ireland; Trim, Ireland; Openbaar Psychiatrisch Zorgcentrum, Geel, Belgium; Trinity College, Dublin; University College, Cork and Dublin; Wicklow County Council, Ireland; Tia Collection, Santa Fe, New Mexico; Gemeentemuseum, The Hague-Netherlands; Jyvaskyla Art Museum, Finland; Liverpool University, UK; and Wolverhampton Art Gallery, UK.