

Brian Maguire

The Clock Winds Down

3 March – 6 April 2023

In April 2022, Brian Maguire travelled to Brazil to investigate what war reporter Ed Vuillamy has described as “the war on the world” – the destruction of the Amazon rainforest. Visiting remote villages on the Abacaxis River by boat, the artist was able to witness first-hand the effects of deforestation and persistent neglect of its indigenous inhabitants. Meeting with local leaders and communities via listening sessions, Maguire learned about the issues facing the Maraguá people, including healthcare, education, the impact of mining companies on fishing grounds.

From these stories, so often excluded from the dominant narrative, Maguire has devised a series of new large-scale paintings drawing attention to the urgent social and ecological crisis unfolding in the Amazon. Maguire shows us the beauty of the rainforest in its natural state, the horror of its destruction, and the socio-economic impact of land clearance. It also looks towards Brazil’s recent election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva – who has pledged to protect the Amazon and its indigenous population – as a ray of hope in addressing the crisis. Beginning his works as acts of documentation, Maguire then uses painterly skill, surface and texture to transform these testimonies into blisteringly powerful works of art, restoring an ethical vision to the poetic imagination.

Maguire’s painting practice is driven by the struggle against inequality and violence, and the pursuit of justice. Working within the long tradition of artists compelled towards the raw realities of human conflict, from Goya and Delacroix to Nancy Spero and Marlene Dumas, Maguire approaches painting foremost as an act of solidarity, rehumanising his subjects and recentring the narratives of the disenfranchised. Social engagement plays a central role, leading him to work closely and interactively with refugees, survivors of warzones, incarcerated peoples, local newsrooms and, most recently, indigenous communities, spending time in locations including Sudan, Syria, São Paulo, Ciudad Juárez and Missoula. This approach requires negotiating an exchange, establishing a method of working that honours the dignity of its subjects.

Maguire has recently been the subject of solo exhibitions at Missoula Art Museum, Montana; Crawford Gallery, Cork; the Irish Museum of Modern Art; Void, Derry; Fergus McCaffrey, New York; Rhona Hoffman, Chicago and Galerie Christophe Gaillard, Paris. In 2023, Maguire has museum exhibitions in São Paulo, Portland and Kunsthall 3,14, Bergen, Norway. In 2024, he has solo exhibitions at Missoula Art Museum, Montana and Galerie Christophe Gaillard, Paris. In 2025, he has a solo exhibition at The Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin.



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Clockwise from desk:

The Rainforest, 2022

acrylic on canvas

290 x 320 cm

114.2 x 126 in

The Burning Amazon, 2022

acrylic on canvas

290 x 460 cm

114.2 x 181.1 in

Maraguá Land, 2023

acrylic on canvas

73 x 92 cm

28.7 x 36.2 in

The Clearcut Amazon, 2023

acrylic on canvas

290 x 320 cm

114.2 x 126 in

Child Living From the Waste Food on the

City Dump (São Paulo 2003), 2022

acrylic on canvas

290 x 460 cm

114.2 x 181.1 in



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