



**Edward Maguire, Portrait of Michael Hartnett, 1971,**  
oil on linen, 76 x 61cm,

Joint purchase with Friends of the National Collections Ireland, FNCI & LCCC 2022

## 100 Years of Giving – an exhibition to mark the centenary of the founding of *The Friends of the National Collections of Ireland, (FNCI)*

**16<sup>th</sup> February – 7<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

A new exhibition at Limerick City Gallery of Art celebrates over 750 artworks donated to the public collections of Ireland by the country's oldest arts charity, which marks its centenary this year.

Works by some of Ireland's most historically significant artists can be viewed by the public this spring as The Friends of the National Collections of Ireland (FNCI) celebrates 100 years of giving.

The FNCI acquires works of art and objects of historical importance that it donates to public institutions or provides grants to assist them in making their own acquisitions. The FNCI is an all-Ireland voluntary body entirely dependent on the annual subscriptions of its members and an occasional modest gift or bequest.

Founded in 1924 by Sarah Purser (1848-1943), a prominent painter and a major figure in Dublin's cultural revival in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, together with a group of philanthropists, who were passionate about the need to develop and support public collections in Ireland. The original aim of the FNCI remains its ongoing purpose to date. From 1925 onwards, the FNCI stepped in to enrich early museum collections across the island with ca. 750 works distributed to public institutions. The works include objects of early Irish history to the present time including, paintings, sculptures, furniture, textiles, ceramics and manuscripts.

Carnegie Building, Pery Square, Limerick, Ireland.

**FREE ADMISSION**

Tel: +353(0)61 310633; F:+353(0)61 310228; Email: [artgallery@limerick.ie](mailto:artgallery@limerick.ie); Web [www.gallery.limerick.ie](http://www.gallery.limerick.ie)

Opening Hours: Monday - Saturday 10-5pm; Sunday 12-5pm

**LAST ENTRY 15 minutes before closing**

**Closed on Public & Bank Holidays.**



The assistance provided by the FNCI over the past century has enhanced the collections of 82 Irish cultural institutions, amongst whom are Limerick City Gallery of Art (LCGA) and Crawford Art Gallery, Cork.

To mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, LCGA and Crawford Art Gallery have collaborated to exhibit works acquired through the FNCI from their respective collections. Among those acquired by both institutions are works by James Barry, Mainie Jellett, Daniel Maclise, and Norah McGuinness. LCGA's contribution also includes the important portrait of the poet Michael Hartnett by Edward McGuire, acquired with financial support from the FNCI along with 15 works from LCGA's collection, including Henri Hayden, Evie Hone, David Nash, Mervyn Peake, Martyn Ferenc, Mary Swanzy and Thomas Ryan.

A total of 26 works from Crawford Art Gallery's collection will feature in the exhibition, including: *Abstract Composition* (c.1935), a fine example of Mainie Jellett's disciplined form of Cubism; Sylvia Cooke-Collis's *Cahirmee Fair*, a vivid depiction of a horse fair in the North Cork town of Buttevant; as well as James Barry's neoclassical *Portraits of Barry and Burke in the Characters of Ulysses and his Companion Fleeing from the Cave of Polyphemus* (c.1776).

Crawford Art Gallery director Mary McCarthy said she was delighted that works from their collection, acquired with the assistance of FNCI, would be included in the centenary exhibition.

"The Friends of the National Collections of Ireland (FNCI) has been providing invaluable support directly to Crawford Art Gallery for almost 70 years, ever since the Friends presented a number of works by Daniel Maclise, including *The Falconer*, to Crawford Art Gallery in 1955," McCarthy said.

"The following year in 1956, the Friends presented Crawford with *Portraits of Barry and Burke in the Characters of Ulysses and his Companion fleeing from the Cave of Polyphemus*."

"It's very satisfying for Crawford Art Gallery to be able to offer support to the exhibition in the form of the loan of these exquisite and important works, alongside 26 others from the Crawford collection that FNCI have so kindly donated down through the years."

"As well as practical support, the whole team here at Crawford extend gratitude and warm wishes to FNCI on the occasion of their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This exhibition is an important representation of the enormous contribution that FNCI has made to the National Collection."

FNCI - <http://www.fnci.ie>

For further information [artgallery@limerick.ie](mailto:artgallery@limerick.ie)



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