July 1, 2026
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Media Contacts: Mauricio Garcia-Miro Jeri, mauricio@cristintierney.com or 212.594.0550;
Kristin Sancken, kristin@sanckenprojects.com or 706.830.5850

Maureen O'Leary

The Linden Trees

October 31 – December 19, 2026
Opening Reception: Friday, November 13, 6:00 to 8:00 pm

49 Walker Street
New York, NY 10013

Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to present ***The Linden Trees***, a solo exhibition of recent paintings and writings by **Maureen O'Leary**. This is the artist's second solo show with the gallery. The exhibition opens Saturday, October 31st, and will be on view through Saturday, December 19th. An opening reception with the artist will be held during the inaugural **Art Week NYC**, on Friday, November 13th, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Coinciding with the exhibition, the artist will release an animated film and a publication with the same title. The gallery will also present new paintings by O'Leary at the **ADAA Fair** from November 12th through 16th.

The Linden Trees is O'Leary's first narrative painting installation. Composed of thirty-four oil paintings and thirty-five text panels written by the artist, the work gives new life to two female characters from 19th-century Russian literature: Natasha Rostova from Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and Princess Polina from Alexander Pushkin's unfinished story *Roslavlev*. O'Leary reimagines what might have been possible for these women had their artistic ambitions not been constrained, diminished, or left unresolved by the narratives that first contained them.

O'Leary describes *The Linden Trees* as an "answer song." The convention borrows from the tradition of early twentieth-century American blues music, in which one song is written in response to an earlier one. Here, she uses painting and text to answer back to literary history. Set in Napoleonic-era Russia and told through the eyes of Tolstoy's Prince Andrei, the story brings Natasha and Polina together in a new tale about the friendship of women, the creative process, love, and artistic independence. Historical figures and political currents from the period, including Decembrism, deepen the work's meditation on failed revolutions, feminist aspiration, and the long struggle for change. Further, *The Linden Trees* explores how literature can both reflect and reinforce social structures that confine women's creative and personal autonomy.

The paintings depict interiors, gardens, roads, battlefields, Paris ballrooms, and Moscow salons, translating O'Leary's narrative into vivid, compressed scenes. Saturated color, flattened space, and fluid handling of form produce compositions that hover between figuration and abstraction, giving each episode the charge of a remembered image or dream. Motifs of plants, moons, weapons and horse carriages, written letters, and rooms recur throughout the installation, carrying the viewer between intimate scenes and a larger narrative shaped by war, displacement, artistic ambition, and political change. Bringing reading into the physical space of painting, O'Leary invites viewers to move between image and text, fragment and sequence, past and possibility. What emerges is not an illustration of Tolstoy or Pushkin, but the artist's own painterly story of women artists imagined beyond the limits of the books—and the social hierarchies—that made them.

The presentation at the gallery follows *The Linden Tree*'s debut at the Fondation des États-Unis in Paris in late 2025.

Maureen O'Leary's (b. 1965, Washington, DC) paintings hover between figuration and abstraction. Her mundane scenes become substrates for experimentation with the application of paint and the evolving notion of what is real. O'Leary's work has been exhibited at the Custom House in Westport, Ireland, Fondation des États-Unis, Ely Center of Contemporary Art, Art Lab Tokyo, Midwest Center for Photography, Artspace, Power Plant Gallery at Duke University, Valdosta State University Fine Arts Gallery, Staten Island Museum, Meadows Gallery - University of

Texas at Tyler, and more. She is the recipient of the Brooklyn Arts Council - Brooklyn Arts Fund Grant and the Harriet Hale Woolley Fellowship from the Fondation des États-Unis.

O'Leary has published six books: *The Linden Trees* (2026), *ROMA* (2024), *By The Same Sea, Homes of The Irish Diaspora* (2023), *Record* (2021), *Belle Mort* (2013, Paper Chase Press) and *Look/Listen* (2010, Look/Listen Press). Her work has been written about in *Galerie Magazine*, *Hyperallergic*, *FAD Magazine*, *Whitehot Magazine*, and *Hypebeast*, among others. O'Leary's work is held in the collections of the Fondation des États-Unis, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, Fidelity Investments Corporate Art Collection, and JP Morgan Chase Art Collection. She has studios in Long Island, NY, and Puerto Rico.

Founded in 2010, Cristin Tierney Gallery is a contemporary art gallery with a deep commitment to the presentation, development, and support of a roster of both established and emerging artists. Our program emphasizes artists engaged with critical theory and art history, with an emphasis on conceptual, video, and performance art. Education and audience engagement are central to our mission. Cristin Tierney Gallery is a member of the ADAA (Art Dealers Association of America).

Images (Left and Right)
Maureen O'Leary, *Rome of Madame de Staël's novels*, 2023. Oil on linen. 20 x 14 inches (50.8 x 35.6 cm).
Maureen O'Leary, *Residents fled in carts and on foot*, 2023. Oil on linen. 20 x 14 inches (50.8 x 35.6 cm).
Maureen O'Leary in her studio. 2024. Photograph by Elizabeth Bernstein.

Inquiries
Mauricio Garcia-Miro Jeri, mauricio@cristintierney.com or 212.594.0550