

CRISTIN TIERNEY

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Media Contact: Sarah Comegno, sarah@crisintierney.com



Maureen O'Leary

Both/And

April 22 – May 27, 2022

Opening Reception: April 22, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

219 Bowery, Floor 2
New York, NY 10002

Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to announce *Both/And*, an exhibition of new paintings by **Maureen O'Leary**. This is O'Leary's first solo exhibition with the gallery. *Both/And* opens the evening of Friday, April 22nd, with a reception from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. The artist will be present.

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In *Both/And*, Maureen O’Leary takes a boldly sumptuous approach to painting that is full of historical references. Her use of bright pigments and energetic brushstrokes recalls the Fauvist strategies employed by Matisse. The haunting mood of the works and their off-kilter spirit suggest a kinship with Symbolism’s interest in the metaphorical. Josef Albers’s book *Interaction of Color* inspired the artist to experiment with expressive and lurid colors, coalescing into recognizable forms and scenes. *Both/And* represents O’Leary’s deft synthesis of these quotations into her vision of the world.

Ficus, Santa Monica, is a prime example of the artist’s use of color to flatten space and manipulate perspective. Her strong, gestural strokes coupled with vivid hues create forms of unmodulated color. Sidewalks and streetways are pink and blue, shadows magenta and purple. The glowing orange ficus tree extends across the canvas, its roots spilling about the pavement, dwarfing the house and car in the background.

O’Leary’s expressive approach to the landscape reinforces the moody undercurrents of her paintings. The ficus tree stands large and immobile against an eerie yellow sky empty of clouds with thin purple shadows stretching long behind other trees. The scene is airless and nearly lifeless, aside from the ficus whose roots snake forward toward the viewer, crawling off the canvas.

O’Leary’s paintings of memories, domestic scenes, natural landscapes and intimate moments marry the sublime with the psychological. They immortalize the everyday while encoding small glitches in their layers of paint. As suggested by the exhibition’s title, the artist is always seeking “contrast without conflict”; things can be both romantic and sad, both beautiful and unsettling. Landscapes are flattened and unnaturally hued and still feel realistic. This new group of works embraces this spectrum of values and their absolute mutability.

Through June 17th the artist has an exhibition of paintings on view at New York University Kimmel Windows Gallery titled *Portraits of Ireland's Easter Rising Leaders*. Located in Schwartz Plaza on the corner of Washington Square East and West 4th Street, *Portraits of Ireland's Easter Rising Leaders* is visible 24 hours a day. The exhibition is in collaboration with Glucksman Ireland House, NYU’s center for the study of Ireland and its diaspora. The series consists of portraits O’Leary created from source photographs of the leaders of the Easter Rising, an armed insurrection in support of Ireland’s independence that took place during Easter week of 1917 in Dublin.

Maureen O’Leary’s (b. 1965) 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 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 two books: *Record* (2021, Midwest Center for Photography) and *Belle*

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Mort (2013, Paper Chase Press). Her work is held in the collections of the Fondation des États-Unis, The JPMorgan Chase Art Collection, Fidelity Investments Corporate Art Collection, and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University.

Founded in 2010, **Cristin Tierney Gallery** is a contemporary art gallery located on The Bowery with a deep commitment to the presentation, development, and support of a roster of both established and emerging artists. Its program emphasizes artists engaged with critical theory and art history, with an emphasis on conceptual, video, and performance art. Education and audience engagement is central to our mission.

Cristin Tierney Gallery is a member of the ADAA (Art Dealers Association of America).

Image

Maureen O'Leary, *Commuter Platform with Dogwood (My Mother)*, 2022. oil on linen. 60 x 48 inches (152.4 x 121.9 cm).

Inquiries

Sarah Comegno, sarah@crisintierney.com or 212.594.0550