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University of NOTRE DAME

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition of Irish Art Opens at the Snite Museum

No Cross, No Crown: Prints by James Barry
On view January 24 through April 17, 2016

NOTRE DAME, IN –January 3, 2016–The Snite Museum of Art will present an exhibition of 28 monumental prints by James Barry, the eighteenth-century Irish provocateur whose work challenged the British art establishment and questioned the government’s policies. The exhibition *No Cross, No Crown: Prints by James Barry* will be on view from January 24 through April 17, 2016.



James Barry (1741–1806) was born in Cork, made his artistic debut in Dublin, and was awarded membership in the Royal Academy in London in 1773, although he was later expelled for his belligerence and acrimony. The series of six murals he painted to decorate the Great Room of the Royal Society of Arts in Adelphi from 1777 through 1783 is his claim to fame. Included in the exhibition is a complete set of the prints he made after these grand paintings, once referred to as Britain’s answer to Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel ceiling.

Barry’s prints are significant in the history of printmaking and eighteenth-century trans-Atlantic studies for their scale, their technical innovations, and the role they played in the artist’s creative process. These are not mere reproductive prints, but rather charts illustrating Barry’s evolving positions on hot political and artistic issues of the day. Peppering his religious and historical works with portraits of his contemporaries, such as the philosopher Edmund Burke and the politician William Pitt, the ensemble reads like a Who’s Who of British society in the late 1700s.

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The Snite Museum acquired the prints in 2015 from Nancy and William Pressly, the latter being the foremost scholar on James Barry and professor emeritus of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European art at the University of Maryland. Pressly said, "Over the years, as I looked and relooked at these prints, I was amazed at both the subtlety and richness of Barry's process, but he never pursued virtuosity for its own sake: all is in the service of his passion to transform his audience, a transformation, however, that places great demands on his viewer."

The acquisition of eighteen of the prints was made possible by a generous gift from the F. T. Stent Family of Atlanta with ten additional prints donated by the Presslys.

No Cross, No Crown: Prints by James Barry is made possible by the Snite Museum General Endowment.

Photo Caption: James Barry (Irish, 1741–1806), *A Grecian Harvest Home*, from the series *The Progress of Human Culture*, 1792, etching and engraving in black ink, 17 ½ x 20 15/16 inches. Snite Museum of Art: The William and Nancy Pressly Collection acquired with funds made available by the F. T. Stent Family, 2015.001.014

Programs:

Public reception Friday, February 12, 2016, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Gallery Talk at noon, date TBD, by Patrick Griffin, Madden-Hennebry Professor of History. All programs are free and open to the public.

The Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame

The Snite Museum of Art is located on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, near South Bend, Indiana. Museum hours are 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday; and noon–5:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Admission is free. Museum information is available at 574-631-5466 or at the Museum's website: sniteartmuseum.nd.edu. Driving directions and parking information are available at <http://nd.edu/visitors/directions/>. Find us at inthebend.com and facebook.com.

The Snite Museum of Art provides opportunities to enjoy, respond to, learn from, and be inspired by original works of art. As a department of the University of Notre Dame, the museum supports teaching and research, creates and shares knowledge, celebrates diversity through the visual arts, serves the local community and explores spiritual dimensions of art.

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