

JACK RUTBERG FINE ARTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Major Art Exhibition
Opens September 13, 2002

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PATRICK GRAHAM, CITED AS IRELAND'S MOST IMPORTANT CONTEMPORARY ARTIST, SUBJECT OF RARE SURVEY EXHIBITION AT JACK RUTBERG FINE ARTS IN LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles, CA - In a rare opportunity to view the works of - arguably - Ireland's most important contemporary artist, Jack Rutberg Fine Arts gallery is exhibiting "**Patrick Graham: Looking Back to Now.**" This major survey of paintings and drawings opens September 13 with an opening reception with the artist in attendance. The exhibition extends through November 30.

"**Patrick Graham: Looking Back to Now**" includes the artist's most recent works, along with selected paintings and drawings spanning more than 20 years.

Graham has been credited by art historians with changing the face of Irish painting, bringing it into the 20th century, and has been recognized by Ireland as a "living national treasure" through election to its Aosdana Society.

Art critic **Donald Kuspit** has declared: "*Patrick Graham's paintings are masterpieces...on a grand physical, emotional and intellectual scale...they are among the most complicated, salient reflections on modern existence that have been made in the last decade*" . . . And critic **Peter Frank** has observed: "*In Graham, Ireland finally has a painter-draughtsman to match its writers.*"

Graham's psychologically-charged work explores journeys into revelation and transcendence. His powerful expressionist paintings evoke the near-mystical qualities of Irish earth and water; spatial and spiritual passages.

Graham's painterly images commonly contain symbolic forms and scripted phrases that resonate like fragments of traditional song and lyrical poetry which spring from a unique historical consciousness, exploring both personal and Irish history, repression, paganism, religion, and sexuality. Graham's works depict the artist's reflections on the power of the sublime found in paintings by old masters. He often, for example, speaks of his debt to Della Francesca, among others.

In his new work, Graham's expressive self-portraits extend the continuum of major works on the subject evoking Rembrandt to Egon Schiele. Also, Graham's poignant expressions of tenderness and vulnerability are implicit in his Odalisque series, which echoes Ingres' most famous work.

In this current exhibition, "**Patrick Graham: Looking Back to Now,**" the universality of Graham's works are underscored and prove prescient, as the exhibition includes numbers of works from the late 1990s titled "**Somewhere Jerusalem**", in which Graham evokes his own and humankind's yearning for homecoming.

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While deeply rooted in personal and Irish experience, Graham's works have met with tremendous response, and has strongly impacted other artists in previous exhibitions in the U.S., particularly in Los Angeles, where his works were last exhibited in 1997.

His work has also been the subject of exhibitions and symposiums internationally, including the National Gallery of Ireland, the Berkeley Art Museum, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Trinity College, Walker Art Gallery in England, the Hokkaido Museum in Japan, the University of Michigan, Northeastern University, and Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

"It's hard to assemble an exhibition of this depth of Patrick's work," observes Jack Rutberg, "because there is such a demand for it across the Atlantic. So we're very excited that we've brought over some large canvases that he's recently completed, along with some remarkable mixed media drawings. Not only that, we've prevailed upon Patrick, who's famously private and hates to travel, to actually grace us with his presence in L.A. for the opening and a talk to be given some nights following. If you haven't heard this wonderfully articulate Irish artist speak, you're in for a rare privilege indeed."

"Patrick Graham: Looking Back to Now," opens September 13, extending through November 30. Jack Rutberg Fine Arts is located at 357 N. La Brea Avenue. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Friday 10 am - 6 pm, and Saturday 10 am - 5 pm. For additional information, please telephone 323-938-5222.

A related educational program on Thursday, September 19, will feature **A Conversation with Patrick Graham**, at 7:30 p.m. Admission is free.

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Images from the exhibition for press purposes available upon request