

ART FOR LIFE CHGO

Kieran McGonnell



Our IN MEMORIUM artist for 2018 is Kieran McGonnell.

We are **honored** and **grateful** to his partner Gregg Driben who is donating several pieces to DIFFA/Chicago. His very generous gift ensures DIFFA/Chicago continues to achieve its goals and helps with all our many worthwhile causes.

Born James Kieran McGonnell in Cork City, Ireland, on August 13, 1967, the artist came to the United States to study Studio Art and Art History at Hunter College in New York City.

Kieran McGonnell, one of the foremost contemporary Irish-born artists died suddenly on January 11, 2011. McGonnell was residing in Chicago, IL, where he had moved recently from Brooklyn, NY. In an article in the Irish Echo entitled 'Top 40 under 40,' McGonnell had been selected as one of the top Irish success stories living in the U.S.

McGonnell's innovative artwork was characterized by bold and vivid use of color, incorporating everything from oil paint, watercolors and air brush spray paint, and featured a cavalcade of dazzling imagery from history, mythology, literature and architecture to popular culture and politics.

In an interview with Irish Connections magazine, McGonnell described his disciplined approach to creating his art work: "Once I decided that painting was the career for me, life became simpler. Painting became part of my daily discipline and structure. **Every day is a new start**, it's a commitment. If you aren't starting every day, it is time to put down the brush. While I try to express a timeless quality in my work, the reality is that each day's work is unique, the paintings represent an encapsulated slice of time."

McGonnell did not work in a single style or medium, and he drew on a range of influences and subjects, from the war on terror to transportation to American politics to Celtic mythology and imagery. Fortunately, in his art work, McGonnell is keenly alive and his **passionate intensity** and originality inextinguishable.

Please join us in celebrating the passionate artwork and sensational life of artist Kieran McGonnell at the 2018 DIFFA/Chicago Art For Life exhibit and auction at Venue West on October 18th.