

arts beat



SIR MICHAEL SMURFIT

'The Fighter,' an oil on canvas by Daniel Macdonald.

Irish hunger museum celebrates noted artist

Ireland's Great Hunger Museum at Quinnipiac University in Hamden will present a new exhibition, "In the Lion's Den: Daniel Macdonald, Ireland and Empire," from Jan. 20 to April 17.

This exhibition, the first of its kind in the United States and the most comprehensive ever mounted, will re-evaluate the 19th-century Irish artist, Daniel Macdonald (1820-1853).

"Macdonald holds the distinction of having produced the only known painting of the Great Hunger," said Grace Brady, executive director of the museum.

The centerpiece of the exhibition, Macdonald's "An Irish Peasant Family Discovering the Blight of their Store" (1847), is crossing the Atlantic for the first time, according to Niamh O'Sullivan, the museum's curator.

Macdonald produced an impressive number of works of striking originality, insight and skill. The exhibition will consist of 21 paintings and sketches borrowed from museums and institutions in Ireland, as well as private collectors, in addition to two works that are part of the museum's permanent collection.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a book by O'Sullivan, which presents exciting new research on Macdonald.

The museum, at 3011 Whitney Ave., is open Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursdays, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sundays, 1-5 p.m. Admission is free. For information, visit www.ighm.org or call 203-582-6500.