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Patrick Collins HRHA (1910-1994)

DRUID'S MOON, 1981

oil on canvas

signed and dated lower left; with inscribed Arts Council exhibition label on reverse; also with typed Sligo Art Gallery exhibition label on reverse
32 by 38in. (81.28 by 96.52cm)

Provenance:

Collection of the artist

Exhibited:

'Patrick Collins: Retrospective Exhibition', Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, touring exhibition, Cork, Dublin and Belfast, 1982, catalogue no. 84 (loaned by the Artist); 'Patrick Collins', Sligo Art Gallery, 27 March - 21 April, 1985

Literature:

Frances Ruane, *Patrick Collins, An Chomhairle Ealaíon/The Arts Council, Dublin; The Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Belfast, 1982*, pp.92 (illustrated) pp.113 (listed)

After living in France for six years, Collins returned to Ireland in 1977 and produced some remarkable work for an exhibition in 1979. The canvasses increased in size, the colour became more complex and the gestures

became rounder and more active. After a brief period when personal and financial difficulties made it impossible for him to paint, he received assistance from the Arts Council and from friends in 1980 and was able to pick up where he left off.

The dynamism and sweeping movement typical of paintings done around this time can be seen in *Druid's Moon*. Collins pivots the composition around a central point, the paint is applied with gusto and the serenity of the 1960s and '70s has given way to a livelier, more ebullient mood. In *Druid's Moon* Collins returns to using a 'frame within a frame' device, the main body of the painting hovering within a rectangle. It has the effect of isolating the subject from the reality of its surroundings, a self-contained vignette abstracted from a specific moment and place. However, in this painting the rectangle is incomplete and, together with the head-like moon, it suggests a figure whose arms are open in a comforting embrace. Collins had certainly achieved some stability in his life around this time and, with a major retrospective of his work planned for the following year, had finally received institutional approbation. It is not surprising to find this sense of security reflected in paintings like this one.

Frances Ruane HRHA
April, 2012

€14,000-€16,000 (£11,475-£13,114 approx).