

New Exhibit to Raise Discussion of Humanitarian Issues

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An exhibition creating psychologically charged environments that address humanitarian issues in several immersive installations just opened to the public at the San Diego Museum of Art.

Tim Shaw: Beyond Reason, touches on several major themes, including global terrorism, freedom of speech, abuse of power and the future of artificial intelligence. The exhibition will be open to the public from Oct. 20, 2018 through Feb. 24, 2019.

Tim Shaw, a celebrated Northern Irish sculptor, is known for his large-scale multi-sensory installations that create dialogue around controversial topics. The six installations featured in this exhibition are based on extraordinary personal experiences throughout the artist's life, but the topics are universal and timeless. Mother, The Air Is Blue, The Air Is Dangerous recreates a childhood memory of a bombing in a Belfast café in July 1972. Though it is not confirmed that it was one of the 22 bombs that exploded during Bloody Friday, the bombing that Shaw and his mother experienced was part of several explosions that occurred during this time. In this immersive installation, visitors wander through a blue fog, with tables and chairs upended and trays spinning through the air. The work goes beyond political views and beliefs, focusing more on innocent victims caught up in exogenous divisions, something that the public can relate to in the many conflicts across the world today.

"Tim Shaw: Beyond Reason is provocative and unlike any other contemporary exhibition the Museum has shown before," said Anita Feldman, Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs and Education at The San Diego Museum of Art. "In the daily lives of many of us, there is a sense that we are cocooned from global events. Mr. Shaw's work draws us closer to the reality of these conflicts, daring us to engage with them, challenging us to ask questions about society's role or silent complicity."

These themes also underlie another immersive installation, Soul Snatcher Possession, which guides visitors through a dimly lit room featuring eight life-size

figures in physical confrontation with one another and provoking the visitor to question their own role.

Although difficult to confront, this scene challenges the visitor to question abuses of power and the capability for depravity that lies within all. An additional installation, *The Birth of Breakdown Clown*, integrates sculpture with robotics and artificial intelligence (AI). Shaw's robotic artwork assisted by AI speaks directly to visitors about moral conflicts facing the world today and provides thought-provoking responses about what it means to be human.

"Tim Shaw's work elicits important questions regarding the civics of today. To create these dialogues is an essential role of art and its ability to propel individuals to achieve new levels of the human experience," said Roxana Velasquez, Executive Director of The San Diego Museum of Art.

Born in 1964, Shaw currently lives in rural Cornwall in England. He was elected to The Royal Academy of Arts, London, in 2013 and made a Fellow of The Royal British Society of Sculptors and a Fellow of Falmouth University the same year. Shaw has had a number of significant solo exhibitions throughout the United Kingdom and internationally. *Tim Shaw: Beyond Reason* is the first time the artist's work has been on view in the United States.

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