



Press Release

Contemporary art exhibition on the life and work of the Rev. Dr. John Roberts among Native Americans by noted Irish artist Brian Whelan

“Announcing a new contemporary art exhibition titled *WHITE ROBE: The Story of the Sacred Journey of the Rev. John Roberts among Native Americans*, featuring the work of the celebrated Irish artist Brian Whelan.”

The US Federal Indian boarding schools of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were established to enculturate and assimilate Native Americans into white American culture, resulting in the suppression of Indigenous culture and languages. As the tragedies of these schools are coming to light, the life and work of the Rev. Dr. John Roberts stands out as an exemplary model of doing the opposite, as he honored indigenous Native American spirituality and embraced their culture and languages. Beyond commemorating the extraordinary life, work and example of the Rev. John Roberts, the exhibition also draws attention to the importance of learning from the spirituality, culture and traditions of our Native American sisters and brothers.

The acclaimed Irish artist Brian Whelan was commissioned to produce 13 paintings about the remarkable life and work of the Rev. John Roberts, the renowned Welsh Anglican priest who served among Native Americans on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming for 66 years (1883–1949). The exhibition was commissioned by ArtSpirit, the arts initiative of the Episcopal Church in Wyoming, and is curated by Paul–Gordon Chandler.

WHITE ROBE premiered at the John Roberts Festival in Ft. Washakie, Wyoming on June 3, 2023, the 140th anniversary of the Rev. John Roberts’ arrival on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, in 1883, where he served among the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho tribes.

Following the premiere in Ft. Washakie, Wyoming, WHITE ROBE was first showcased at the Pioneer Museum in Lander, Wyoming, followed by at the American Heritage Center in Laramie, Wyoming, and then continues to other venues in Wyoming.

For more information and a virtual gallery, see: oncaravan.org/whiterobe

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CURATOR

Paul-Gordon Chandler grew up in Senegal, West Africa, and has lived and worked extensively around the world in senior leadership roles within publishing, the arts, relief and development and The Episcopal Church. An author, art curator, and social entrepreneur, he is passionate about using the arts to further our global quest for a more harmonious future, both with each other and with the earth. He is a bishop in the Episcopal Church/USA.

He is also the Founding President of CARAVAN, an international arts non-profit/NGO, recognized as a leader in using the arts to transform our world. He has organized and curated major art exhibitions around the world, in sacred spaces such as St. Paul's Cathedral in London and National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. and at notable art venues like the National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, Jordan, the American University Museum in Washington, D.C., Vanderbilt University Fine Arts Gallery, Museum of Modern Art in Cairo, Egypt, Wyoming State Museum, The Nicolaysen Art Museum, as well as at reverential memorial sites like Ground Zero in New York. For more information see: paulgordonchandler.com

WHITE ROBE is commissioned by



The Arts Initiative of the Episcopal Church in Wyoming