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Australian Masterpieces for Auction

Important Australian Art | Auction in Sydney 31 August 2016



ARTHUR STREETON 1867-1943, *Sydney Harbour* 1907. Estimate \$1,500,000-2,000,000

Strong buyer interest is anticipated to generate auction records at Sotheby's Australia's August sale of ***Important Australian Art*** to be held at the InterContinental Sydney on **31 August**. Surveying major stylistic developments, the auction offers rare and prestigious examples of Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Modernism, and Abstraction, along with ground-breaking paintings, sculptures and works on paper by the most influential artistic innovators of historical, modern and contemporary Australian art. With 69 works of art on offer, the total sale estimate is \$6.8 million to \$9.1 million.

One of **Sir Arthur Streeton's** most significant paintings remaining in private ownership is generating strong interest prior to auction. ***Sydney Harbour 1907*** is the second largest and most spectacular composition from the artist's renowned series that celebrated the intoxicating beauty of one of the world's iconic cities (estimate \$1,500,000-2,000,000, lot 31, pictured).

Streeton created images of Sydney from the 1890s and revisited the city in 1907. The majority of these works were painted on elongated wooden draper's panels. In addition to these, in 1907 Streeton produced two large-scale, career-defining images of Sydney Harbour: the present work and *Sydney Harbour* (1907, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne). Both were painted from Mosman looking towards and over the headland of Cremorne to the city of Sydney beyond.

'Arthur Streeton's *Sydney Harbour* remains an enduring masterpiece of Australian Art and Australian Impressionism as well as illustrating the genius of an artist who created images of intoxicating beauty that continue to astound, exhilarate and inspire' said Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia, who is currently preparing a catalogue raisonné of the artist's oil paintings.

One of **Howard Arkley's** finest interior subjects and the most significant ever offered for auction is poised to create a new auction record. Arkley's unique and explosive critique and celebration of the Great Australian Dream is refined in **Mod Style 1992** (estimate \$400,000-500,000, lot 39, pictured). Howard Arkley was renowned for his lurid Popist images of eastern suburbs houses, which took on an iconic status as they embraced identifiable middle class taste and environment.



HOWARD ARKLEY 1951-1999, *Mod Style* 1992. Estimate \$400,000-500,000

The largest and most significant work by **Albert Namatjira** ever offered for auction is set to create a new world record price. **Finke River Mission and Mount Hermannsburg (1951)** (estimate \$80,000-100,000, lot 21, pictured below) is one of only a handful of works in his productive career known to depict the whitewashed sandstone buildings of the Finke River Mission and, due to its scale, remains unique. In 2006 Sotheby's Australia achieved the current auction record of \$96,000 for the artist.



ALBERT NAMATJIRA 1902-1959, *Finke River Mission and Mount Hermannsburg* (1951). Estimate \$80,000-100,000

Emma Minnie Boyd remains one of the most well-known yet least prolific of all Australian artists practicing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. **A Lassie Yet 1888** (estimate \$30,000-50,000, lot 24) remains one of Boyd's most significant oil paintings in private ownership and will certainly attract strong attention at the auction with comparable works by the artist held in the Bendigo Art Gallery, Art Gallery of South Australia and National Gallery of Victoria.

Other sale highlights include:

- **Charles Blackman's *Tryst 1959*** (estimate \$200,000-300,000, lot 7) is offered for auction for the first time. The work is simultaneously majestic, tender and mysterious and possesses all the sensitivity and poetry of the artist's finest creations.
- ***Explorer and Bird 1968*** (estimate \$250,000-350,000, lot 16) is one of **Albert Tucker's** most powerful and compelling subjects from his explorer series and the most significant example to appear for auction in almost two decades.
- **Brett Whiteley's *The Robin and The Moon 1981*** (estimate \$600,000-800,000, lot 8). Unlike earlier avian compositions where the subject was placed against an anonymous or generic background, here Whiteley places the warbling, red-breasted robin in a Moreton Bay Fig tree on the shores of Lavender Bay where he lived and worked.



EMMA MINNIE BOYD 1858-1936, *A Lassie Yet* 1888. Estimate \$30,000-50,000

Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia commented: 'We are currently witnessing a renewed confidence in the Australian Art Market. The calibre of works of art Sotheby's Australia continues to source from Australian and international collections are exemplary, many of which have never been offered for public auction and others tightly held for several decades.'

AT A GLANCE

Important Australian Art

Auction in Sydney, 31 August 2016, 6.30 pm

InterContinental Sydney, 117 Macquarie Street, Sydney

Estimate range: \$6,789,000-9,102,000 | Lots on offer: 69

Exhibition in Sydney 25-31 August, 10 am to 5 pm, 30 & 34 Queen Street, Woollahra

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