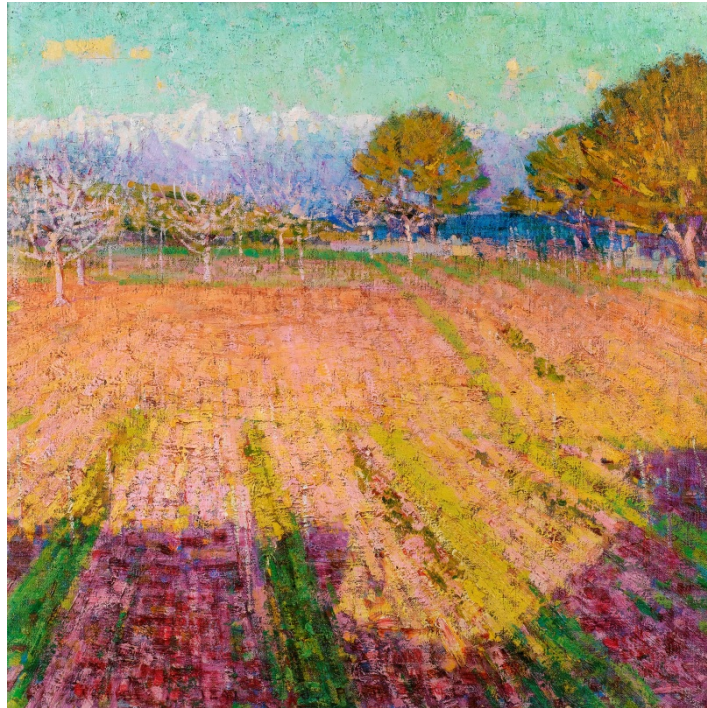

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'Lost' Painting by Australia's 'Lost' Impressionist for Auction

MELBOURNE 14 MAY 2013



JOHN RUSSELL 1858-1930, *IN THEAFTERNOON* 1891

On 14 May 2013, Sotheby's Australia will offer for auction an important 'lost' painting by John Russell, Australia's only true French Impressionist artist. Recently re-discovered in France, *In the Afternoon* 1891 has been repatriated to Australia through Sotheby's France for sale.

Born in Sydney, John Russell studied in Paris in the 1880s and befriended Vincent van Gogh, Claude Monet and other artistic luminaries. Together their radical technique of broken brushwork and use of vibrant colour to record the changing effects of light on the landscape transformed the history and development of art practice. Russell's *In the Afternoon* and its companion *In the Morning* (National Gallery of Australia, Canberra) were shown together at the New English Art Club in London in November 1891. Both paintings depict the Mediterranean coastline at Antibes and are crucial in Russell's development of the technique of French Impressionism which recorded aspects of the same landscape at different times of the day. Following its 1891 exhibition Russell's *In the Afternoon* disappeared from public view and was believed 'lost' by scholars until its recent rediscovery in a French private collection.



JOHN RUSSELL 1858-1930, *IN THE MORNING, ALPES MARITIMES FROM ANTIBES* 1890-1891
NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA, CANBERRA

The warm, opalescent palette of *In the Afternoon* with a rich layered surface is strongly reminiscent of contemporary paintings by Russell's occasional painting companion Claude Monet. Monet had a strong impact on Russell from the 1880s, and it is interesting to note that the pair had worked concurrently on the dramatic cliffscapes and turbulent seascapes of Belle Île as well as Antibes, the subject of the present painting. The painting has a particularly intense luminosity. Russell explored more of the colour spectrum than Monet traditionally did in his works. The broad central field of gold was produced with the intersection and over-painting of lemon-yellow and salmon-pink brushstrokes, which conveys the full Mediterranean 'blaze of sunlight' as John Russell described to his friend and fellow Australian artist Tom Roberts.

'For many decades the art of John Russell remained largely forgotten,' said Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia. 'When his art was rediscovered in the 1960s he was referred to as the 'Lost Impressionist'. *In the Afternoon* is one of Russell's rare publically exhibited works and crucial to our understanding of his artistic development. Its re-emergence is cause for celebration for both art historians and collectors.'

AT A GLANCE

JOHN RUSSELL

1958-1930

IN THE AFTERNOON 1891

OIL ON CANVAS

65 X 65CM

ESTIMATE \$200,000-300,000

AUCTION IN MELBOURNE

ANZAC HOUSE, LEVEL 1, 4 COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE

14 MAY 2013 | 6.30 PM

EXHIBITION IN MELBOURNE

10-13 MAY 2013, 10 AM TO 5 PM

ANZAC HOUSE, LEVEL 4, 4 COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE

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For high resolution images, further information or to arrange an interview with Geoffrey Smith, Chairman, please contact John Keats or Amy Crowe.

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**Pre-estimates do not include buyer's premium.