

# Sotheby's Australia to Auction The Anthony Knight OAM & Beverly Knight Collection of Early Papunya Art

MELBOURNE 28 MAY 2013



OLD TUTUMA TJAPANGATI, CIRCA 1915-1987, *ONE OLD MAN'S DREAMING* (1971)

In May 2013, Sotheby's Australia will offer for auction early Papunya works of art from The Anthony Knight OAM & Beverly Knight Collection. This renowned Collection of major works dating from circa 1971-1975, is testimony to the Knights' integral and unwavering support of and commitment to Indigenous Australian art.

The history of several paintings bear the distinguished provenance of Geoffrey Bardon, regarded as the founder of the contemporary art from Papunya and Margaret Carnegie AO, a pioneering collector of contemporary Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian art, both becoming close and valued friends and with whom the Knights shared their interests in Australian art and culture. With their two restaurants at Alcaston House, 2 Collins Street, Melbourne from 1983, the Knights found an ideal location to also display the site-specific paintings from the 1980s period of art and a means to support Papunya Tula artists. At that time, the National Gallery of Victoria did not have a permanent display of Aboriginal Art and international visitors frequented Alcaston House to see the art of Australia's Indigenous people. Anthony & Beverly Knight also lived at Alcaston House, and this was where their extensive collection was housed. In 1989 they opened Alcaston House Gallery at 2 Collins Street to commercially represent the artists they had befriended.



The Knight Collection of early Papunya works of art is comprised of 46 items from Central Australia, sourced through their long-standing relationships with Papunya Tula artists and coordinators, Geoffrey Bardon and Pat Hogan. The works were collected at a time when mainstream collectors had little regard for 'dot' paintings by Aboriginal artists. The Knight Collection has been meticulously maintained and documented, providing a rich and insightful understanding of the founding of Australia's Indigenous Art movement.

Highlights from The Knight Collection include works painted on board during the early 1970s by masters such as Johnny Warangkula Tjupurrula, Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa, Old Tutuma Tjapangati, Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri, Uta Uta Tjangala and Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri. Works from this formidable Collection have been loaned to many national exhibitions and associated publications promoting aspects of Indigenous art and culture. The most recent pivotal exhibition *Tjukurrjtjanu: Origins of Western Desert Art* hosted by the National Gallery of Victoria and subsequently shown at Musée du quai Branly, Paris, featured 11 works from The Knight Collection.

KAAPA MBITJANA TJAMPITJINPA 1920-1980,  
CORROBOREE AND BODY DECORATION (1972),  
ESTIMATE \$70,000-90,000

Old Tutuma Tjapangati's *One Man's Dreaming* (1971) (estimate \$120,000-180,000, pictured, page 1) is a bold and graphic composition, with strong iconographical forms. It is one of the artist's earliest paintings, with a sense of immediacy and ritual purpose. The painting has been exhibited nationally and internationally and featured in *Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney in 2000, and most recently in the Melbourne and Paris viewings of *Tjukurrjanu: Origins of Western Desert Art* in 2012-2013. This particular work was a centrepiece for this important exhibition and became a gathering point for patrons to intermingle and interact.

Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa, who was a 'larrikin' in the early settlement of Papunya would become one of the strongest leaders and champions of the local Indigenous Art community and the first Chairman of Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd. *Corroboree and Body Decoration* (1972) (estimate \$70,000-90,000, pictured, previous) represents a highpoint in Kaapa's early exploration and pictorial development of his totemic designs. The design elements represent the body paint of a single ceremonial performer, with the colours also depicting the elements of body, earth and *wumulu* a fragrant daisy mixed with pipe clay and worn during ceremony.

'Sotheby's Australia is honoured to be entrusted with the sale of such a significant and renowned collection of Aboriginal Art' said Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia. 'Anthony and Beverly Knight are eminent and long-standing advocates of Indigenous Australian culture and have contributed greatly to a more enlightened understanding of both Aboriginal art and the broader social issues that confront Indigenous Australians. It is through their meticulous care that we can appreciate and enjoy the works from those pioneering artists at Papunya.'

A dedicated catalogue will be published by Sotheby's Australia featuring this Important Collection of Early Papunya Art. The collection has been extensively researched and will feature significant essays by John Kean on many of the works, providing an insightful appreciation. This important collection will be auctioned by Sotheby's Australia at 4 Collins Street, Melbourne in the building right next door to where the collection was first assembled by the Knights and housed in the 1980s.

## AT A GLANCE

THE ANTHONY KNIGHT OAM & BEVERLY KNIGHT COLLECTION OF  
IMPORTANT EARLY PAPUNYA ART

28 MAY 2013 | 6.30 PM

### EXHIBITION IN SYDNEY

16-19 MAY 2013, 10 AM TO 5 PM

118-122 QUEEN STREET, WOOLLAHRA

### EXHIBITION IN MELBOURNE

23-27 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.**

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