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Venetian Impression Emerges

IMPORTANT AUSTRALIAN ART

AUCTION IN MELBOURNE 26 NOVEMBER 2013



ARTHUR STREETON 1867-1943, *EVENING, VENICE* (1908). ESTIMATE \$180,000-220,000

A highly important and hitherto un-reproduced impressionist painting from Arthur Streeton's acclaimed Venetian series will be offered for sale at Sotheby's Australia's **Important Australian Art** auction in Melbourne on 26 November 2013. *Evening, Venice* (1908) (estimate \$180,000-220,000, lot 10, pictured) was painted the year Streeton married and travelled to the canal city for his honeymoon and represents a highpoint in the artist's career. Acquired by Oswald Syme, whose family members were proprietors of *The Age* newspaper, the painting has remained within the family for over 100 years. *Evening, Venice* will be reproduced for the first time in Sotheby's Australia's catalogue.

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The site of the painting can be precisely located, being based on an on-the-spot drawing in the artist's 'Venetian Studies' sketchbook (1908, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide). Unlike many of his Venice pictures, with their low, water-level eye-lines featuring strong, serpentine silhouettes of gondolas in the foreground – *Evening, Venice* is taken from an elevated vantage point, the top of the bridge over the Rio della Pietà.

Contemporary critics of Streeton's were enthralled with the artist's impressionist style in capturing the glittering effects of light on the water and distinct buildings. *The Observer* noted appreciatively how 'Mr Streeton has caught the opalescence and glitter of the Venetian canals and marble palaces in moments of bright sunshine as few artists have done before him.'

It was however *The Age's* critic that enthused the most in 1909 that 'the pictures give the idea of being painted rapidly on the spot, so that the beholder seems actually to feel the warmth and see the scene with the painter's eyes.' A noted art collector and supporter of contemporary Australian art, the proprietor of *The Age* subsequently acquired *Evening, Venice* for his personal collection.

Streeton's Venetian subjects are amongst his most highly sought after images and in May 2013 Sotheby's Australia offered *The Doge's Palace* (1908) which sold for \$317,200 against an estimate of \$180,000-220,000.

'*Evening, Venice* conveys the beguiling combination of beauty and romance that this magical city encapsulates that so perfectly suited Streeton's ebullient mood during his honeymoon' said Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia. 'We are honoured that Oswald Syme's descendants have entrusted the sales of this rare and remarkable painting to Sotheby's Australia that has remained hidden from public view for the past 100 years.'

AT A GLANCE

ARTHUR STREETON 1867-1943
EVENING, VENICE (1908)
OIL ON CANVAS
50 X 75.7CM
ESTIMATE \$180,000-220,000

IMPORTANT AUSTRALIAN ART, SOTHEBY'S AUSTRALIA
AUCTION IN MELBOURNE
ANZAC HOUSE, LEVEL 1, 4, COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE
26 NOVEMBER 2013 | 6.30 PM

EXHIBITION IN SYDNEY
14-17 NOVEMBER 2013, 10 AM TO 5 PM
118-122 QUEEN STREET, WOOLLAHRA

EXHIBITION IN MELBOURNE
21-26 NOVEMBER 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 Yumeko Leung.

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