

Melbourne 21 February 2014

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Rare Colonial Vision of Sydney Harbour Emerges for Auction at Sotheby's Australia



Joseph Lycett 1755-1828, (*Eliza Point Showing Captain Piper's Naval Villa and Garden*) (circa 1820). Estimate 100,000-150,000

The last known watercolour of Sydney Harbour remaining in private ownership by the renowned colonial artist Joseph Lycett will be offered for sale with Sotheby's Australia in Sydney on 13 May 2014.

This scene captures the essence of early settler colonial Australia with the burgeoning township of Sydney visible in the middle distance. The vista is westward from the North Shore, near present day Hermit Point between Rose Bay and Vaucluse. Shark Island is in the foreground and the double

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hump of Clark Island in the centre. On the left rocky promontory of Eliza Point (now Point Piper) which features John Piper's 'naval villa' shown nestling below its curious cruciform fenced garden. This rare and exceptional work can be dated to circa 1820, from its close relationship to *Eliza Point, near Sydney, New South Wales, the Property of John Piper Esq* (1820, Mitchell Library, Sydney), as well as from stylistic evidence and combining the conventions of Picturesque composition (most notably the tall, thin eucalypt framing at left).

The present watercolour was acquired by the present owner at auction in 1973. For many years it formed part of the renowned art collection assembled by Sir Reginald Marcus Clark that was dispersed in 1954. In 2006 the work was included in the retrospective exhibition *Joseph Lycett: Convict Artist* which was shown at the Museum of Sydney, Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, and the National Library of Australia in Canberra. It featured in the book of the same title by John McPhee.

The Lycett watercolour will be a highlight of a dedicated selection of significant historical material included in Sotheby's Australia's sale of Important Australian Art.

AT A GLANCE

Joseph Lycett 1755-1828

(Eliza Point Showing Captain Piper's Naval Villa and Garden) (circa 1820)

Watercolour and gouache

40.6 x 54.7 cm

Estimate: \$100,000-150,000

Important Australian Art

Auction in Sydney 13 May 2014

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