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Dogs' Day at Waterloo



The 1886 South Australian Coursing Club Waterloo Cup, by Henry Steiner 1835-1914 Adelaide, circa 1882-1883. Estimate \$15,000-20,000

On 29 July 2014 Sotheby's Australia will auction the 1886 South Australian Coursing Club Waterloo Cup (circa 1882-1883) (estimate \$15,000-20,000, lot 33) in Melbourne at its Fine Asian, Australian & European Arts & Design sale. A rare colonial treasure, the Cup was awarded to the winner of the South Australian Coursing Club's principal greyhound race, the Waterloo Cup.

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Arguably one of the biggest and most anticipated Australian sporting events at the time, the Waterloo Cup attracted spectators from across the country, holding enormous significance to South Australia's social and sporting calendar. This particular trophy was given to the winner of the 1886 race by the South Australian Coursing Club's president Robert Barr Smith, a prominent Adelaide businessman and philanthropist. A keen sportsman, Barr Smith's own dog was defeated in the 1886 Waterloo Cup.

Consigned from The Estate of the Late Dr Jan Altmann, the Waterloo Cup is an excellent example of Australian silversmithing. It was made by one of Australia's most highly regarded colonial silversmiths, Henry Steiner, who trained in Germany and came to Adelaide during the gold rush in 1858. The Cup is simple in its design, bearing none of the usual decorative engravings typical of Victorian silver during that time. Local media noted the unique design and size of the 45oz trophy, with The South Australian Weekly Chronicle describing it as 'massive though of chaste proportions' on 1 May 1886. The Waterloo Cup has been exhibited at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne and the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra as a significant piece of early colonial silversmithing.

John and Jan Altmann were avid collectors of Australian Silver. Through the late 1970s, 1980s and 1990s the majority of The John and Jan Altmann Collection of Australian Silver was donated to the National Gallery of Victoria and transformed the gallery's holdings in this area. The Waterloo Cup was retained as part of their personal collection.

Although the Cup bears the mark of Henry Steiner, it was retailed by August Ludwig Brunkhorst, another well-known Adelaide German silversmith and former employee of Steiner. Ludwig Brunkhorst took over Steiner's business in 1844 when Steiner returned to Germany.

'Sotheby's Australia is delighted to be offering the Waterloo Cup in our forthcoming Arts & Design auction,' said Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia. 'The Cup is a reminder of Australia's colonial past, and we are honoured to be entrusted with such a valuable piece.'

AT A GLANCE

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circa 1882-1883
Estimate \$15,000-20,000

Fine Asian, Australian & European Arts & Design
Auction in Melbourne, 29 July 2014, 6 pm
Level 2, 41 Exhibition Street, Melbourne

Exhibition in Melbourne
24-29 July, 10 am to 5 pm
Level 9, 41 Exhibition Street, Melbourne

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