

Melbourne 20 August 2014

John Keats 03 9508 9900  
John.Keats@sothebysaustralia.com.au

Sarah Carroll 03 8416 5999  
SCarroll@3dm.com.au

## The Man with the Golden Ape Ian Fleming's Sidney Nolan for auction



Sidney Nolan 1917-1992, *Ape* (1963) Estimate \$40,000-60,000

For literary aficionados, Sotheby's Australia is delighted to have consigned Sidney Nolan's *Ape* (1963) (estimate \$40,000-60,000, lot 83), acquired by the celebrated author Ian Fleming from its initial exhibition in London, to its sale of Important Australian & International Art on 26 August 2014. Fleming's tenth James Bond novel *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* had been released on 1 April 1963, just a few weeks prior to Nolan's show; with 60,000 copies of the book sold in the month following publication, he could certainly have justified the mild extravagance of a painting purchase.

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In the northern autumn of 1962 Sidney and Cynthia Nolan travelled to Africa. Returning to London he began to work on an important series of paintings of African wildlife; 34 works were shown in the Marlborough Galleries exhibition *African Journey*, amongst them *Ape*. The exhibition was a commercial and critical success with numerous high profile collectors securing works, including Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Second.

Nolan's African paintings have their own strange anthropomorphic resonance, a kind of animal existentialism. In reviewing the exhibition *The Times* critic referred to the works as 'where the terror and strangeness and beauty of wild Africa have been suddenly captured whole'.

'Sotheby's Australia is honoured to offer this painting with such an interesting literary provenance', said Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia. 'Ian Fleming wrote some of the most well-known novels of modern times, and it is affirmation of Sidney Nolan's international reputation that this painting piqued Fleming's interest as an art collector.'

#### **AT A GLANCE**

Important Australian & International Art  
Auction in Sydney, 26 August 2014, 6.30 pm  
InterContinental Sydney, Fort Macquarie Room  
117 Macquarie Street, Sydney

Exhibition in Sydney  
21-26 August, 10 am to 5 pm  
30 Queen Street, Woollahra, Sydney

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