

Melbourne 21 October 2015

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

Australian Cultural Treasures

Fine Asian Australian & European Arts & Design
Auction in Sydney 27 October 2015



A historical cased set of L. Oertling and Co. brass scientific scales, owned by Sir Douglas Mawson, late 19th century. Estimate \$5,000-7,000.

A significant selection of Australiana forms part of Sotheby's Australia's sale of *Fine Asian, Australian & European Arts & Design* at the InterContinental Sydney.

SIR DOUGLAS MAWSON

Sotheby's Australia is honoured to be entrusted with the sale of a piece of equipment used during the British Antarctic Expedition 1907-1909. In 1907 Ernest Shackleton led his first expedition to Antarctica on the *Nimrod* accompanied by Australian geologist Douglas Mawson. The objectives were to reach the South Pole, whilst undertaking scientific research. One of the instruments taken on this journey was set of Oertling and Co. brass scientific scales (estimate \$5,000-7,000, lot 344, pictured). The beam balance was used for making precise measurements at Cape Royds.

At the conclusion of the British Antarctic Expedition Sir Ernest Shackleton gave the scales to Sir Douglas Mawson.

SAINT MARY OF THE CROSS MACKILLOP

Of saintly origins is a collection of letters with correspondence between Sister Mary of the Cross (now Saint Mary of the Cross Mackillop, Australia's first and only saint) and Joanna Barr Smith (estimate \$3,000-4,000, lot 347, pictured following). These letters are being sold to benefit the Jenny Barr Smith MNDRIA fund. Upon taking her vows in 1867 Sister Mary moved to Adelaide in the late 1860s, where she met Robert and Joanna Barr Smith. These letters cover personal matters concerning Joanna Barr Smith's spiritual and emotional states. Although not a Catholic, Joanna Barr Smith was a committed Christian and noted for her support of worthy causes, contributing funds to the Sisters of St Joseph and Mackillop's educational ventures.

WALTER BURLEY GRIFFIN & MARION MAHONEY GRIFFIN

The sale includes an icon of Australian 20th century design, a Café Australia dining chair designed by Marion Mahoney Griffin and Walter Burley Griffin (estimate \$3,000-4,000, lot 343, pictured right). Very little remains of Café Australia, which at the time was regarded a *tour de force* in interior architecture.

Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia commented: 'The sale comprises an exciting array of historically significant Australian cultural artefacts. The Douglas Mawson scales are an important relic of Australia's involvement in exploring Antarctica. The personal letters from Mary Mackillop, Australia's first and only saint are a significant personal record of her thoughts and council. The Café Australia dining chair provides a valuable insight into the burgeoning Australian modernist style created by one of Australia's greatest architectural and interior design teams.'

AT A GLANCE

Fine Asian, Australian & European Arts & Design

Auction at InterContinental Sydney
117 Macquarie Street, Sydney, 27 October 2015, 6 pm
Total lots 347 | Total estimate \$1,217,900 to \$1,750,150

Exhibition in Sydney, 30 & 34 Queen Street, Woollahra,
22-27 October, 10 am to 5 pm



A Café Australia dining chair, blackwood (Acacia melanoxylon), plywood and leather designed by Marion Mahoney Griffin and Walter Burley Griffin (1916). Estimate \$3,000-4,000



A collection of letters containing correspondence between Saint Mary of the Cross Mackillop and Joanna Bar Smith. Estimate \$3,000-6,000.

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*Estimates do not include buyer's premium and prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.

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