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Rupert Bunny's Golden Summer

Important Australian Art | Auction in Sydney 24 November 2015



Rupert Bunny 1864-1947, *Hair Drying* (circa 1908). Estimate \$280,000-380,000

A private moment between mistress and maid is will be auctioned by Sotheby's Australia on 24 November at the InterContinental Sydney. Rupert Bunny's exquisite *Hair Drying* (circa 1908) (estimate \$280,000-380,000, lot 29, pictured) belongs to the artist's most highly acclaimed and revered group of paintings that depict women engaged in various leisurely pastimes. Bunny's subjects of solitary, coupled, or grouped female figures enabled him to explore the opposing visual, physical and psychological aspects of the interior and exterior world.

Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia commented: 'Rupert Bunny combined his fascination with the feminine form with an Impressionist style and his paintings capture the intimacy of daily life. In his renowned compositions, collectively titled 'Days of Nights of August', his women pose in summer sunshine or balmy evening, engaged in idle conversation, listening to music, in complete emotional and intellectual repose, or suspension. *Hair Drying* remains one of Rupert Bunny's most significant paintings from this series remaining in private hands.'

The most striking subjects of Bunny's were those that depicted the strong, warm sunlight filtering through the boldly striped blinds drawn to the edge of wooden balcony railing. A contemporary review in 1911 by *The Sydney Mail* singled out *Hair Drying*: 'Another splendid effect is produced in the study "The Hair Drying". A lady in a white dress and red morning gown is sitting on a white chair, against the back of which her head leans, whilst the maid ... is engaged in combing her mistress's hair. The balcony is shaded from the sun by a screen and by the red and white broadly-striped blind, which is frequently repeated through the artist's paintings. The whole effect is culminated in a few small brilliant rays piercing through and flickering on the lady's neck and dress.'

AT A GLANCE

RUPERT BUNNY 1867-1947

Hair Drying (circa 1908)

oil on canvas

65.1 x 81 cm

Estimate \$280,000-380,000

Important Australian Art

Auction at InterContinental Sydney, 117 Macquarie Street, Sydney, 24 November 2015, 6.30 pm

Total estimate \$7,635,000 to \$9,985,000 | Total lots 94

Exhibition in Melbourne, 41 Exhibition Street, Melbourne, 11-15 November, 10 am to 5 pm

Exhibition in Sydney, 30 & 34 Queen Street, Woollahra, 19-24 November, 10 am to 5 pm

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