

Melbourne 9 November 2015

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Arthur Streeton's Unique Impression of St Kilda for Auction

Important Australian Art, Auction in Sydney 24 November 2015



ARTHUR STREETON 1867-1943, *St Kilda Pier* (1907). Estimate \$50,000-70,000

A rare painting of St Kilda Pier by Sir Arthur Streeton will be offered for auction for the first time in almost 100 years by Sotheby's Australia on the 24 November 2015. Held in the same private collection since 1919, *St Kilda Pier* (1907) was originally acquired directly from the artist by Sir Walter Baldwin Spencer – Streeton's greatest patron. Last offered for auction in 1919 it was purchased by the present owner's ancestors for 22 gns. *St Kilda Pier*'s pre-sale estimate is \$50,000-70,000 (lot 28, pictured).

Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia commented: '*St Kilda Pier* is a unique image in the artist's career and has not been seen in public for almost half a century. Included in the Sir Arthur Streeton Survey exhibition at the Adelaide Festival of Arts in March 1968, it was simply titled *The Pier*, its exact location unidentified. Through my research for the *Arthur Streeton 1867-1943 Catalogue Raisonné*, I was able to reinstate the painting with its original title, as well as full provenance and exhibition history.'

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Painted in 1907, *St Kilda Pier* is a highly impressionistic composition which perfectly captures the sunlight and breezy scene of ocean, shoreline and sailing boats, together with the men, women and children as they promenade on the pier. The colours are bright and fresh, a celebration of Streeton's re-acquaintance with the Australian light after a period of living in Europe the previous decade.

One of Australia's greatest collectors and patrons, Sir Walter Baldwin Spencer is best known for his considerable legacy to Australian anthropology; however, he traversed several disciplines of art, ethnography and science. He was a trustee of the combined National Gallery of Victoria, Museum Victoria and State Library of Victoria from 1884-1928, and actively promoted the acquisition of historical and contemporary Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian Art into Australia's repositories. As a passionate collector of Australian contemporary art, Spencer was Arthur Streeton's greatest patron, at one time owning 41 works by the artist. In August 2015 Sotheby's Australia sold 4 works from the Spencer Collection that achieved exceptional results, including *Unloading Bricks, Kew* (1905) for \$122,000 against an estimate of \$30,000-40,000.

AT A GLANCE

ARTHUR STREETON 1867-1943

St Kilda Pier (1907)

oil on wood panel

18.5 x 24 cm

Estimate \$50,000-70,000

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 Queen Street, Woollahra, 19-24 November, 10 am to 5 pm

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