

Melbourne 26 April 2016

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# Western District Masterpiece Tipped to Establish New Record

Important Australian & International Art | Auction in Sydney 11 May 2016



Nicholas Chevalier 1828-1902, *Mount Abrupt* 1864. Estimate \$200,000-300,000

Held for 152 years in private collections, a painting by *Nicholas Chevalier* will be auctioned for the first time by Sotheby's Australia at the InterContinental Sydney on Wednesday 11 May 2016. ***Mount Abrupt 1864*** is one of Chevalier's finest compositions that resulted from his expedition to the Grampians in western Victoria in early 1862. Estimated at \$200,000-300,000 it is anticipated that *Mount Abrupt* could break the current artist auction record of \$300,000 established in 2013 with *Mount Abrupt and the Grampians* 1863.

**Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia** commented: '*Mount Abrupt* is one of three oil paintings of a similar subject and scale by Chevalier that remain extant and the only version that is recorded as being signed and dated by the artist. With remarkable clarity and fidelity, Chevalier records the distant typography of the mountain range, undulating foothills, boulders, foliage and above all, the atmospheric effects of the light particular to the Grampians region. It is an honour to be entrusted with the sale of this highly significant colonial masterpiece.'

Forming part of Georg von Neumayer's scientific expedition, the party travelled firstly to Cape Otway before progressing to Dunkeld. Their journey encompassed Australian scenery that had been largely untouched by European settlers. *Mount Abrupt* records a transition from remote wilderness to pastoral utopia. Numerous grazing cattle are discernible on the open slopes in the distance, with an idealised representation of the Chapwarrung Aboriginal people in the foreground. The suggestion of a harmonious co-existence between European/Indigenous peoples would appear somewhat remote as by the time of Chevalier's visit to the area, its Aboriginal inhabitants had been driven from their land by European settlers.

## AT A GLANCE

NICHOLAS CHEVALIER 1828-1902

*Mount Abrupt* 1864

oil on canvas

43.2 x 61 cm

Estimate \$200,000-300,000

Important Australian & International Art

Auction in Sydney, 11 May 2016, 6.30 pm, InterContinental Sydney, 117 Macquarie Street, Sydney

Estimate range: \$7,493,000-10,058,000

Lots on offer: 75

Exhibition in Melbourne 28 April – 1 May, 10 am to 5 pm, 41 Exhibition Street, Melbourne

Exhibition in Sydney 5-11 May, 10 am to 5 pm, Paddington Town Hall, 249 Oxford Street, Paddington

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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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