

Melbourne 17 November 2016

John Keats 03 9508 9900 | 0412 132 520
John.Keats@sothebysaustralia.com.au

A Wonderland of Australian Art at Sotheby's Australia

Important Australian Art | Auction in Sydney 23 November 2016



CHARLES BLACKMAN, born 1928, *The Game of Chess* 1956. Estimate \$1,000,000-1,200,000

Anticipate new auction record for Australian artist Charles Blackman

Arthur Streeton's poetic painting rediscovered in Tasmanian collection

TarraWarra Museum of Art sells Jeffrey Smart to establish Acquisition Fund

Award winning Wynne Prize landscape masterpieces for auction

The mystery painting of an unidentified woman continues

Sotheby's Australia's collection of 102 lots of **Important Australian Art** estimated at **\$6.7 million to \$9.2 million** is set to generate strong buyer interest and auction records on **23 November** at the InterContinental Sydney. **Charles Blackman's *The Game of Chess* 1956** (estimate \$1,000,000-1,200,000, lot 47, pictured) is anticipated to **achieve a new world auction record** previously set by Sotheby's Australia in 2006.

Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia commented: 'The paintings of Charles Blackman's 1956-1957 Alice in Wonderland series are amongst the most beloved and admired in twentieth century Australian Art. In *The Game of Chess*, Blackman blends highly personal and universal iconography and creates an image that is simultaneously literal, poetic, and illusory.'

'*And the Sunlight Clasps the Earth*' 1895 (estimate \$250,000-350,000, lot 15, pictured), a significant painting from Arthur Streeton's most revered series of Australian Impressionist subjects and **recently re-discovered** and identified by Sotheby's Australia in a private collection in Tasmania, has remained hidden from public view since it was acquired by the family of the present owners almost a century ago. 'After 120 years, the rediscovery of this picture re-affirms Streeton's command of the brush, which through his eye and hand extoll the poetic nature of Australia's landscape' said Geoffrey Smith.



ARTHUR STREETON 1867-1943, '*And the Sunlight Clasps the Earth*' 1895. Estimate \$250,000-350,000

Jeffrey Smart's *The Two-Up Game (Portrait of Ermes de Zan)* (2006) (estimate \$500,000-700,000, lot 48, pictured) is **consigned by TarraWarra Museum of Art**. The central placement of the figure, Smart's life partner Ermes de Zan, successfully expresses the feeling of social, even existential displacement that is so much a part of the culture of late capitalism. 'While we are saddened to let go of such a wonderful Jeffrey Smart painting, our **aim of establishing a fund for the future acquisition** of major works of modern and contemporary Australian art will provide the Museum with long term opportunities to enhance our outstanding collection of Australian art' said Victoria Lynn, Director of TarraWarra Museum of Art.



JEFFREY SMART 1921-2013, *The Two-Up Game (Portrait of Ermes de Zan)* (2006). Estimate \$500,000-700,000

Significant award winning Australian landscape paintings have been brought together for sale. **William Dobell's *Storm Approaching, Wangi* 1948** (estimate \$100,000-150,000, lot 3, pictured) and **Sali Herman's *The Red House* 1965** (estimate \$50,000-70,000, lot 29) were both awarded the Art Gallery of New South Wales' **Wynne Prize for the best Australian landscape painting**.



WILLIAM DOBELL 1899-1970, *Storm Approaching, Wangi* 1948. Estimate \$100,000-150,000



HERBERT BADHAM 1899-1961, *Botanical Gardens, Sydney* (circa 1936). Estimate \$80,000-100,000

One of **Herbert Badham's largest oil paintings, *Botanical Gardens, Sydney* (circa 1936)** (estimate \$80,000-100,000, lot 1, pictured) reveals the artist's interest in colour and form –including a reverie of sunlight upon the water, and people engaged in their favoured pastime in the Botanical Gardens. The reverse of the painting has revealed the **greatest mystery** – a portrait of an **unknown woman seated in front of Sydney Harbour**. Painted several years later, (*Portrait and Sydney Harbour*) (circa 1942) (pictured) was created by Badham whilst he was living in Neutral Bay during the Second World War.

Fred Williams' *Turnip Diggers* (1968) (estimate \$450,000-650,000, lot 7, pictured) was acquired by the present owners in 1972 and emerges for auction for the first time. In 1965 Fred Williams returned to Australia following nine months overseas on a Helena Rubinstein Travelling Scholarship, after-which he became self-supporting; dedicated to painting full-time. This professional 'luxury', together with his European art experiences produced a remarkable burst of creativity, generating the second You Yang series, the Lysterfield and Upwey landscapes, the generic Hillside, and finally culminating in the revered 'Australian Landscapes' and 'Silver and Grey' series. *Turnip Diggers* continues Williams exploration of the silver and grey theme, with shimmering, silvery metallic surfaces capturing the activity of a single paddock in the middle distance.



HERBERT BADHAM 1899-1961, (*Portrait and Sydney Harbour*) (circa 1942)



FRED WILLIAMS 1927-1982, *Turnip Diggers* (1968). Estimate \$450,000-650,000



BRETT WHITELEY 1939-1992, *Still Life with Cornflowers* 1976. Estimate \$350,000-550,000

Two significant still life compositions by **Brett Whiteley** are reunited for the first time since they left the artist's studio. Consigned from the United Kingdom, *Still Life with Cornflowers* 1976 (estimate \$350,000-550,000, lot 8, pictured previous) utilizes a reductive palette for the overall tableau, which is sharply contrasted by the intense deep ultramarine blue of the cornflowers and the lip of the bowl. *Milk* (1976) (estimate \$250,000-350,000, lot 31, pictured) uses a similar tonal palette, explores and articulates the technical and psychological complexities and tensions presented in the arrangement of utilitarian, everyday vessels.



BRETT WHITELEY 1939-1992, *Milk* (1976).
Estimate \$250,000-350,000

AT A GLANCE

Important Australian Art

Auction in Sydney, 23 November 2016, 6.30 pm

InterContinental Sydney, 117 Macquarie Street, Sydney

Total auction estimate \$6,699,000-9,265,000 | 102 lots

Exhibition in Sydney 17-23 November, 10 am to 5 pm, 30 & 34 Queen Street, Woollahra

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