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Art Deco Dancer Who Became Royalty

Fine Asian, Australian & European Arts & Design

Auction in Sydney 24 October 2017

Sotheby's Australia to auction Rare Art Deco figurine by Demétre Chiparus

Artist inspired by a Spanish dancer who became the Maharani of Kapurthala

Sculpture held by a distinguished South Australian Family for almost a century



Demétre H. Chiparus (1886-1947), *Dancer of Kapurthala*, circa 1925.
Estimate \$80,000-100,000

Sotheby's Australia will auction a rare figurine by Demétre Chiparus, *Dancer of Kapurthala*, circa 1925 in Sydney on 24 October 2017. Held in the distinguished South Australian Angas family collection for over 90 years, the figurine was purportedly purchased new by Ronald Fife Angas in the late 1920s. The Angas family has a long history in South Australia with the town Angaston named after the colony's founding father George Fife Angas. Chiparus's *Dancer of Kapurthala* (estimate \$80,000-100,000) is an alluringly slender figure whose movement is captured succinctly as she is poised on pointed toe with arms raised.

At the height of the Art Deco period, Demétre Chiparus continuously sought inspiration from the ancient and exotic, with a particular fascination with the arts and decorations of Asia and Egypt, however his catalyst for creation was often contemporary. The direct source of inspiration for *Dancer of Kapurthala* appears to be Anita Delgado, a Spanish flamenco dancer, who captivated the heart of the Maharaja of Kapurthala. During his visit to attend the wedding of Spanish King Alfonso XIII, the Maharaja of Kapurthala, Jagatjit Singh Bahadur, became infatuated

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with Delgado after witnessing her perform. Initially refusing the Maharaja's advances, Delgado would later marry him in a Sikh wedding in India, and became the Maharani of Kapurthala, Prem Kaur.

Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Sotheby's Australia commented: 'Demétre Chiparus was at the forefront of the art deco style and his detailed and refined sculptures epitomise the dynamism, elegance and glamour of the period. *Dancer of Kapurthala* possesses a particularly distinguished Australian provenance and is one of the finest to be offered for auction in Australia.'

The international top auction results for Demétre Chiparus are;

- *Les Girls* circa 1928, sold for AUD \$997,496 (hammer), New York 2007
- *Les Girls* circa 1928, sold for AUD \$686,887 (hammer), Paris 2012
- *Civa* circa 1928, sold for AUD \$486,279 (hammer), New York 2007
- *The Finale* circa 1925, sold for AUD \$391,176 (hammer), London 2013
- *The Dolly Sisters* circa 1925, sold for AUD \$374,877 (hammer), London 2012

Sotheby's Australia sold *Antinea* circa 1925 for AUD \$95,000 (hammer) in 2017

AT A GLANCE

DEMÉTRE H. CHIPARUS 1886-1947

Dancer of Kapurthala (circa 1925)

cast and carved in cold painted bronze and ivory with an onyx base

57.5 cm high

Estimate \$80,000-100,000

Fine Asian, Australian & European Arts & Design

Auction at The Hughenden, 14 Queen Street, Woollahra, Tuesday 24 October 2017, 6 pm

Exhibition in Sydney, 30 & 34 Queen Street, Woollahra

19-24 October, 10 am to 5 pm

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