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Sotheby's London Head of Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art Visits Australia



A rare gilt bronze figure of Shyama Tara, Ming Dynasty, early 15th century, with later Qianlong mark. Estimate £100,000-150,000 Sold for £662,500 November 2013

Robert Bradlow, London's Chinese ceramics and works of art specialist, will visit Sydney and Melbourne in early February to seek consignments for Sotheby's Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art auction, which will be held in London on 14 May.

Sotheby's achieved global sales of US\$362 million for Chinese ceramics and works of art in 2013, which was an extremely successful result. One outstanding result was at the 40th anniversary sales in Hong Kong on 8 October, where a very large early 15th century gilt bronze figure of Buddha sold for HK\$236 million (US\$30 million). This is just one example that illustrates the enormous growth of the Chinese market in recent years, which is a reflection of the ongoing economic growth of mainland China.

Mr Bradlow, the Director and Head of Sotheby's London Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art department, is setting his sights on Chinese works of art in Australia's private collections.

'Last year saw strong results for Imperial Ming and Qing porcelain, figurative gilt bronzes, 18th century jade, scholars objects and huanghuali furniture, demonstrating the continued high demand for Chinese art globally' said Robert Bradlow. 'Chinese works of art have been long held in Australian collections since early settlement. Collectors can often overlook the significance of an item that has long been in a family collection and the Sotheby's local and international network can therefore help Australian residents achieve the strongest possible international results.'

One of Sotheby's most recent stand-out successes was in London's November 2013 sale, when a rare gilt bronze figure of Shyama Tara, Ming Dynasty, early 15th century, with later Qianlong mark sold for £662,500 against a presale estimate of £100,000-150,000 (lot 118, pictured left).

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A fine and rare underglaze-blue polychrome enamel 'phoenix' vase, fanghu, Qianlong seal mark and period.
Estimate £80,000-120,000
Sold for £602,500 May 2013

Robert Bradlow will be working with Sotheby's Australia's Ann Roberts, Specialist in Asian Arts, in appraising items for both London and Sydney sales. Sotheby's Australia has seen some remarkable results in Asian works of art with an impressive 'famille-rose' 'hundred boys' vase from the Qing Dynasty, Jiaqing period selling in Melbourne for \$480,000 against a presale estimate of \$15,000-20,000 in April 2011.

More recently in June 2013 a pair of Wucai 'dragon and phoenix' bowls with marks and period of Kangxi sold in Melbourne for \$195,200 nearly quadrupling the high estimate of \$50,000. With Australia's proximity to Asia and population migration it is forecast that there will be continued growth in Australia for Asian works of art.

Robert Bradlow joined Sotheby's in 2000 and is the Senior Auctioneer of the Chinese Ceramics & Works of Art department in London. Mr Bradlow has been in the auctioneering business for over 25 years. He began his career at Sotheby's as Head of the Decorative Arts department in Australia, where he was responsible for the Asian Art sales. Prior to joining the company, he worked at Phillips International Auctioneers as a Chinese Works of Art Specialist and established their Melbourne office in 1992.

Robert Bradlow has written articles and given lectures on various areas of the Decorative Arts. Mr Bradlow has also worked as a Specialist in 20th century applied arts, sporting memorabilia and scientific instruments.

Sotheby's Australia has announced it will offer three sales of Fine Asian, Australian & European Arts & Design in 2014. In 2013 the department averaged clearance rates of 70% by volume and 117% by value.

AT A GLANCE

Robert Bradlow, Director, Head of Department Chinese Ceramics & Works of Art, London

Visit to Sydney
6-7 February 2014
30 Queen Street
Woollahra NSW

Visit to Melbourne
10-11 February 2014
ANZAC House, 4 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC

Fine Asian, Australian & European Arts & Design
Auction in Sydney 15 April 2014

Fine Chinese Ceramics & Works of Art
Auction in London 14 May 2014

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