

# Smith&Singer

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LUMINOUS MASTERPIECE BY EUGENE VON GUÉRARD TO BE OFFERED IN  
APRIL AT SMITH & SINGER

*Delicate Scene Captures the Vivid Gloaming of the Western  
Victorian Wilderness*

*Last Exhibited Almost Half a Century Ago, the work is Offered from an  
Important Private Australian Collection*

*Reproduced Here for the First Time in More than  
One Hundred & Fifty Years*



EUGENE VON GUÉRARD 1811-1901

**Mount Shadwell from Mount Noorat** (circa 1857)

oil on board, 18.1 x 23.9 cm

frame: original, maker unknown, Melbourne

Estimate \$100,000–150,000

**MELBOURNE, 1 February 2021** – A remarkable composition by Eugene von Guérard – the most significant artist of his generation in Australia – will be offered within Smith & Singer’s first *Important Australian & International Art* auction of 2021. The painting emerges from an important private Australian collection and was last seen publicly 48 years ago. Von Guérard’s legacy remains vital to Australian history and our understanding of nineteenth-century settlers, and we are delighted to present this work to the public this April.

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The son of a court painter to Emperor Francis I of Austria, Eugene von Guérard spent his formative years studying in Europe. Having toured Italy with his father from the age of 15, at 20 he began studying at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in Germany. It was not until a decade later, when Von Guérard arrived in Australia, that he would begin to create a body of work that would define not only his career but also nineteenth-century landscape painting in Australia and New Zealand.

## EXPLORING THE SUBLIME WILDERNESS OF FRONTIER AUSTRALIA

Since arriving in Melbourne in December 1852, Von Guérard embarked on numerous expeditions, often to remote wilderness or inaccessible regions of the country. The exquisite *Mount Shadwell from Mount Noorat* (circa 1857) dates from the artist's third visit to the Western District of Victoria, which he had first encountered in 1855. The artist was drawn to the unique geography of The Grampians, with its ancient mountain ranges and lakes that appeared within the otherwise flat and expansive landscape.



Still in its original frame, **Mount Shadwell from Mount Noorat** (circa 1857) has not been seen in public in almost 50 years and is reproduced here for the first time.

Von Guérard returned to the region again in May 1856 for a seven-week journey, with the purpose of exploring and documenting the geology, flora, and fauna in closer detail. Mount Shadwell (the Indigenous name Boorook, meaning 'head mountain') and Mount Noorat (named by explorer Major Thomas Mitchell after a local Indigenous elder, Ngoora), were two of several extinct volcanoes in the area that provided Von Guérard with a compelling subject, their rugged wilderness extolling the notions of Romanticism key to his greatest works.

While renowned for the scientific accuracy of his depictions of native flora and fauna, there is much more to Von Guérard's painting than a devout fidelity to nature – as illustrated by the intangible sense of the Sublime of the present work. His harmony of colour, the placement of the waxing crescent moon and inclusion of two male figures in the lower left-hand side of the composition, warming their hands by the campfire, bring a deep sense of humanity to the scene. These atmospheric elements provide a narrative that is carefully controlled and comforting, suggesting a peaceful, tranquil, and ordered existence in the Natural World.

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*Geoffrey Smith, Chairman of Smith & Singer commented: 'We are particularly honoured to be entrusted with Eugene von Guérard's *Mount Shadwell from Mount Noorat* (circa 1857), a masterpiece of Australia's complex colonial past and a potent image of exploration in nineteenth-century Australia. One of the early masters of Australian art, Von Guérard's influence on contemporary and successive generations of painters in Australia was profound. With much of his work now hanging in national institutions, we greatly look forward to sharing this redolent composition with the public in our Melbourne and then Sydney exhibitions, before its auction on 28 April.'*

## SMITH & SINGER & EUGENE VON GUÉRARD



EUGENE VON GUÉRARD 1811-1901  
**Breakneck Gorge, Hepburn Springs**

1864

oil on canvas, 53.0 x 98.7 cm

Estimate \$1,000,000–1,200,000

Sold Sotheby's Australia (now trading as Smith & Singer), 3 May 2017 for

\$1,952,000

SECOND-HIGHEST PRICE ACHIEVED AT  
AUCTION FOR THE ARTIST



EUGENE VON GUÉRARD 1811-1901  
**View of the Granite Rocks at Cape  
Woolamai** 1872

oil on canvas, 65.8 x 114.6 cm

Estimate \$500,000–700,000

Sold Sotheby's Australia (now trading as Smith & Singer), 3 May 2017 for

\$976,000

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## AT A GLANCE

EUGENE VON GUÉRARD 1811-1901

*Mount Shadwell from Mount Noorat* (circa 1857)

oil on board

18.1 x 23.9 cm

frame: original, maker unknown, Melbourne

Estimate \$100,000–150,000

Important Australian & International Art

Auction, Sydney, 28 April 2021, 6.30 pm

National Council of Jewish Women of Australia, 111 Queen Street, Woollahra NSW 2025

**The health of our clients, employees and community is of paramount importance. We have implemented stringent protocols within our premises, including social distancing, frequent hand and area sanitising, and a maximum number of clients in each exhibition at any time. Full details are available upon request.**

**Viewings in Melbourne** 14-18 April 2021, 10 am to 5 pm

14-16 Collins Street, Melbourne

**Viewings in Sydney** 21-28 April, 10 am to 5 pm

30 Queen Street, Woollahra

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