

**For Immediate Release**  
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Press Release

**CHRISTIE'S**

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## **CHRISTIE'S LONDON TO STAGE SECOND MODERN + CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN ART AUCTION**



Frederick McCubbin (1855-1917)  
*The Yarra from Kensington Road, South Yarra, 1911*  
Estimate: £400,000-600,000

### **Modern + Contemporary Australian and South African Art 16 December 2008 at 10.30am Christie's King Street**

**London** - Following the successful inaugural London sale in December 2007, Christie's is delighted to announce the second sale of *Modern and Contemporary Australian and South African Art* on Tuesday, 16 December 2008; the sale brings the best artworks from Australia and South Africa to the London marketplace.

Many of the works offered have not been seen in their homelands for a generation or more, with little known works by Frederick McCubbin (*illustrated above*), Irma Stern and others coming to auction for the first time. Artists range from the Australian impressionists such as McCubbin and Streeton, through to modernists such as Grace Cossington Smith and Roy de Maistre, and the great post-war generation of Nolan, Boyd and Olsen, many of whom made their reputation in the vibrant London art scene in the late 1950s and 1960s. The sale culminates in a selection of contemporary works by such leading artists as Paddy Bedford, Howard Arkley and Tim Maguire in Australia and Dylan Lewis in South Africa.

### **Australian Modern and Contemporary Art Highlights**



Leading this section is a single-owner collection of nine pictures by the pioneering Australian modern artist **Grace Cossington Smith**, including *Wattle* (estimate: £20,000-30,000), *illustrated left*. The property of the artist's sister Mabel, the suite of pictures features five fine still lifes dating from the 1920s to the 1940s. Cossington Smith was one of the first Australian artists, along with de Maistre and Wakelin, to take an interest in colour. She developed her own individual technique and her works demonstrate the influence of the impressionist and post-impressionist revolution on Australian art. Painting in single

dabs of pure colour, Cossington Smith created a language which was completely new in Australian art at the time and which placed her work in the vanguard of modernist art in 1930s Sydney.

Moving forwards by almost a century, the sale will include six flower pieces dating from 1993-94 and 2007-08 by the contemporary Australian artist **Tim Maguire**. Maguire's work resonates with that of Cossington Smith, as he too explores the nature of pure colour, this time in the digital age. In his latest work Maguire's dots of magenta, cyan and yellow, mixed in a computer, generate a uniquely new and intense fluorescence. One of a group of early still lifes from 1993-4 to be offered is the powerful *Untitled 94U09* (estimate: £35,000-45,000) *illustrated right*. Maguire's extravagantly enlarged images of flowers, blown up from digital DNA - derived from photographed details of those intensely observed 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch and Flemish still lifes, and more recently from the artist's own photographs of flowers – might be viewed as the 21<sup>st</sup> century cousins of Cossington Smith's vibrant flowerpieces.



### South African Modern + Contemporary Art Highlights



2007 saw significant demand for South African art, with the sale at Christie's of Irma Stern's stunning *Congolese Woman* for £569,300 (ZAR7.7m.), setting a new auction record for the artist. The select group of South African art offered in the upcoming sale is led by two further beautiful **Irma Stern** canvases from 1944: *Roses in a vase* (estimate £250,000-350,000), and *Malay Girl with Hibiscus* (estimate £250,000-350,000) *illustrated left*. The two works date to the highpoint of Stern's career in the mid-1940s when she produced some of her most powerful and accomplished work. In a flurry of activity, stimulated and inspired by her travels to Zanzibar and Congo, Stern emerged as a great colourist and the present works show her on virtuoso form. These two paintings, one of a vase of red roses on a sumptuous golden ground, and the other of a richly exotic Cape Malay woman, embellished with the accent of a tropical red hibiscus flower, on a thickly palette-knifed jade ground, powerfully convey the artist's legendary *joie de vivre*.

After being commissioned to sculpt a leopard for Johann Rupert's *Leopard Creek* golf course, South African sculptor **Dylan Lewis** developed the project into a series of 18 leopard studies. This project allowed him, as he commented in 2007, 'to explore the leopard form in a progression of different attitudes (from a state of repose through to awakening, hunting, stalking and killing)'. The sale will include four of these breathtaking, life-size, bronzes of leopards, including *Sitting Leopard*, 1996 (estimate: £40,000-60,000) *illustrated right*, plus a maquette for *Running cheetabs, no 2* (estimate: £10,000-15,000). Lewis's single-owner sale at Christie's in June 2007 set records for the artist and showed the new levels of international interest that Lewis and his fellow South African artists now attract.



Further highlights include a rare canvas by **Pieter Wenning**, *Cottages at Claremont*, (estimate: £40,000-60,000), and a fine veldt landscape by **Jacob Hendrik Pierneef**, *Landscape*, (estimate: £60,000-80,000) both works originally from the collection of R. P. Gain, Cape Town.

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Images available on request

[www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)

**Notes to editors:**

**Viewing:** Christie's London, 8 King Street, St. James's, London, SW1Y 6QT

Friday 12 December: 9am - 4.30pm

Sunday 14 December: 2pm - 5pm

Monday 15 December: 9.30am - 4.30pm

**Auction:** 10.30am, Tuesday, 16 December 2008, Christie's London

**About Christie's**

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global art sales in 2007 that totalled £3.1 billion/\$6.3 billion. This marks the highest total in company and in art auction history. For the first half of 2008, art sales totalled £1.8 billion / \$3.5 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 600 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$80 million. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai, Hong Kong and Zurich. Most recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai. \*Estimates do not include buyer's premium