

PRESS RELEASE
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CHRISTIE'S BACK TO THE FUTURE WITH \$1 MILLION CONTEMPORARY AUCTION IN SYDNEY ON 24 MAY

Melbourne, Australia – It is with great excitement that Christie's returns to a stand-alone auction of Contemporary Art, the company's first since 2002. To be held on 24 May in Sydney at our purpose-built and much admired new Edgecliff rooms, this auction will provide for the contemporary collector a diverse range of works by important artists working since the mid-1970s.

Christie's Chairman and Managing Director, **Roger McIlroy** comments: "*Christie's global pre-eminence is particularly evident in the contemporary art sector, delivering a world-wide trend of enormous success in the work of late twentieth century artists at Christie's contemporary art auctions. It is wonderful that Christie's in Australia can follow this ever-growing international trend and offer to our clients works of great importance by both Australian and International contemporary artists.*"

Christie's **Annette Larkin**, Associate Director and Head of Contemporary Art, Australia said "*The embracing of our contemporary art auctions in Australia has been very gratifying. Within this auction we have consigned seminal works by contemporary masters – Rosalie Gascoigne, Juan Davila, Tracey Moffatt, Bill Henson, Imants Tillers and Susan Norrie, along with some of our finest, younger funky artists – Ricky Swallow, Tim Silver, David Jolly, Mikala Dwyer and Adam Cullen. Over the last five years contemporary art has become a popular area for collecting, for both its visual enjoyment and as a sound investment.*"

Instantly recognisable as a signature work by **Rosalie Gascoigne**, *Beaten Track* was first exhibited in 1992 at the pivotal show at the Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery in Sydney. Made from her material of sawn Schweppes crates, the cut-up letters are a mesmerising play of both visual and literary games. An intrinsic part of Gascoigne's eye and art was to see beauty in the old and weathered, value in the discarded and the potential transformation into art from commercial debris. This work will be offered with an estimate of **SA200,000-300,000**.

One of the established stars of Australian contemporary art, **Tracey Moffatt** has commanded in excess of \$200,000 at auction with her highly acclaimed series *Something More*. Included in this auction, the rare *Self-Portrait* (produced in a tiny edition of ten) captures the glamorous artist in a Technicolour set, turning the reality of Moffatt as photographic artist into a dream-like, carefully constructed image in which fiction and reality collide. An estimate of **SA18,000-25,000** is upon this work.

Australia's representative at this years *Venice Biennale*, **Ricky Swallow** has been the leader of realistic sculpture in Australia, a style that has been manifested in many of his peers over the last decade. The work *Digital Derby*, (estimate of **SA12,000-15,000**), was exhibited in Swallow's first solo exhibition *Repo Man* held at Darren Knight Gallery in 1998. As Justin Paton notes "The work in *Repo Man* was something else. Hunkered on low grey plinths were some of the quietest sound-systems ever built. Working with a Stanley knife, compass cutter, steel ruler and sheet after sheet of grey binder's board, Swallow had fashioned 1:1 models of the video games and tape decks that time forgot."

Two works by veteran post-modernist **Imants Tillers** will be predictably sought after. An early work from 1986 titled *Iris Field* (estimate of **\$A48,000-60,000**) and a work *Atelier* from 2001 (estimate of **\$A18,000-25,000**) appropriates Emily Kngwarreye's *Big Yam Dreaming*, the much-admired work held in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.

Our greatest conceptual artist, who was acknowledged with a retrospective seen at both the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney is Brisbane-based artist **Robert Macpherson**. Rarely appearing at auction, this work *Black-White (Vindex) for E* from 1975, shows the artists' minimal exploration into the simple qualities of black and white paint. With an estimate of \$80,000-120,000, this work will be acquired by the very considered collector.

After an immensely successful survey exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney and presently on show at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, the images of **Bill Henson** are instantly recognisable for their darkness, vulnerability and pictorial beauty. Six works by Henson will be offered in this auction, including the large and breathtaking cut-screen work *Untitled 1987-88*, (estimate of \$40,000-60,000). The image is of a New York emergency serviceman, not in a courageous, brave moment, but instead captured in a vulnerable stance with a look of utter disillusionment. As Henson himself notes: "the critical thing in photography is to be able to create an experience that is intensely intimate, proximate and tender."

The auction also includes important works by painters Tim Maguire, Susan Norrie, Peter Atkins, Mike Parr, Louise Hearman, Cherry Hood and Marion Borgelt. Sculptural works by Bronwyn Oliver, Kate Rohde, Hilarie Mais and Simeon Nelson and photographic works by Deborah Paauwe, Paul Smith, Richard Goodwin and Darren Sylvester.

Selected highlights of the Contemporary Art auction will be on view in **Melbourne** at **45 Downstairs**
45 Flinders Lane
Thursday 12 to Sunday 15 May
11.00 am to 5.00 pm daily.

The entire collection will be on view in Sydney at **Christie's**
287 New South Head Road, Edgecliff
Friday 20 May to Monday 23 May
11.00 am to 5.00 pm daily
prior to the auction on **Tuesday 24 May at 7.00 pm.**

Catalogues are available from 6 May at Christie's offices.

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Images available on request
Visit Christie's website at
www.christies.com