

Melbourne 9 July 2018

John Keats 03 9508 9900 | 0412 132 520  
John.Keats@sothebysaustralia.com.au

# Treasures of Australian Design feature at Sotheby's Australia

AUCTION IN SYDNEY 18 JULY 2018



A rare Australian silver and malachite ink stand, Julius Schomburgk (1819-1893),  
retailed by Joachim Matthias Wendt, Adelaide, circa 1870. Estimate \$30,000-40,000.

Geoffrey Smith commented: 'In the past 200 years Australia has witnessed some exceptional designers and craftsmen who have imagined and forged objects that have defined Australian style. Sotheby's Australia is pleased to present several outstanding examples detailing this evolution in our forthcoming *Fine Asian, Australian & European Arts & Design* sale to be held in Sydney on 18 July. From the Victorian era is a rare inkstand by Julius Schomburgk that retailed though Joachim Matthias Wendt, a highly regarded watchmaker, jeweller and silversmith of Adelaide. Robert Prentzel and Walter Burley Griffin are regarded as integral contributors to the 'Arts & Crafts' and 'Art Deco' styles in the first decades of the 20th century and are represented by exceptional examples. These items emerging for auction present both experienced and new collectors an opportunity to acquire exceptional pieces of Australian style.'

1 | Sotheby's Australia is a trade mark used under licence from Sotheby's. Second East Auction Holdings Pty Ltd is independent of the Sotheby's Group. The Sotheby's Group is not responsible for the acts or omissions of Second East Auction Holdings Pty Ltd

### Rare Australian silver debuts for auction

Held in a private family collection for over 60 years is a rare Australian silver and malachite ink stand designed by Julius Schomburgk (1819-1893), which retailed through Joachim Matthias Wendt, Adelaide, circa 1870 (estimate \$30,000-40,000, lot 188, pictured previous). Only a few examples of Schomburgk's works are known to bear his maker's mark, the exceptional quality of the execution of his designs, his naturalistic style and his use of malachite, are regarded as hallmarks of his workmanship. Schomburgk's commissions for Wendt were some of the finest and most expensive pieces in the retailers inventory and an inkstand of similar design is held in the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide.



Robert Prenzel (1866-1941), a relief carved panel depicting a kookaburra perched on a leafy eucalyptus branch, circa 1912. Estimate \$15,000-20,000.

### Quintessentially Australian

Robert Prenzel (1866-1941) was the most important member of a group of professional and amateur carvers who worked in a distinctly Australian style in the first quarter of the 20th century. He became a champion of Australian motifs and the relief carved panel from circa 1912 depicting a kookaburra perched on a leafy eucalyptus branch is a fine example of his unmistakable style (estimate \$15,000-20,000, lot 183 pictured). The largest public collection of Prenzel's work is held in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne and he is represented in numerous Australian public galleries and museums.

### Chair for higher learning

The sale includes an icon of Australian 20th century design – an oak side chair designed by Walter Burley Griffin for Newman College, University of Melbourne, circa 1916 (estimate \$3,500-4,500, lot 186, pictured). Burley Griffin (1876-1937) and his wife Marion Mahoney Griffin (1871-1961) are widely known for the design of the Australian national capital Canberra. Café Australia in Melbourne was the Griffins' first architectural and interior design commission in Australia including plasterwork, stained glass and tables and chairs with highly distinctive decorative elements. For Newman College, the Griffins again designed distinctive lighting, chairs and desks, this time in a functional, angular Arts & Crafts style. Sotheby's Australia sold a Café Australia chair designed by Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahoney Griffin in 2015 for an auction record of \$26,840 to the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.



An oak side chair, designed by Walter Burley Griffin for Newman College, University of Melbourne, circa 1916. Estimate \$3,500-4,500.

**AT A GLANCE**

Fine Asian, Australian & European Arts & Design  
Total sale estimate AUD\$1,361,100-1,928,100 | 352 lots

Auction in Sydney, 18 July 2018, 6 pm  
The Hughenden, 14 Queen Street, Woollahra

Exhibition in Sydney 12-18 July, 10 am to 5 pm  
30 & 34 Queen Street, Woollahra

---

**For More News on Sotheby's Australia**

VISIT [sothebysaustralia.com.au/articles/press](http://sothebysaustralia.com.au/articles/press)

FOLLOW [twitter.com/sothebysAUST](https://twitter.com/sothebysAUST)

JOIN [facebook.com/sothebysaustralia](https://facebook.com/sothebysaustralia)

---

*\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium and prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

Images are available upon request

All catalogues are available online at [sothebysaustralia.com.au](http://sothebysaustralia.com.au)

Copyright in the image(s) supplied shall remain vested in Sotheby's Australia. Please note that image(s) may depict subject matter which is itself protected by separate copyright. Sotheby's Australia makes no representations as to whether the underlying subject matter is subject to its own copyright, or as to who might hold such copyright. It is the borrower's responsibility to obtain any relevant permissions from the holder(s) of any applicable copyright and Sotheby's Australia supplies the image(s) expressly subject to this responsibility. Note that the image(s) provided is/are for a one-time use only and no permission is granted to alter the image(s) in any way.