

## **SOTHEBY'S SOUTH TO SELL PAINTINGS GIVEN IN LIEU OF A BAR BILL**

### ***Two circular paintings by John Emms to be sold in the second International Sale at Sotheby's South***

TWO IMPOSING paintings given to a publican in lieu of an outstanding bar bill by the artist, who painted them are to be sold at Sotheby's South, Billingshurst, West Sussex on Wednesday, July 21, 1999.

The two oil paintings are circular in shape and were painted by John Emms(1843-1912). They depict two groups of sporting dogs - otterhounds, foxhounds and hunt terriers, whose names - Sally, Graff...., Gorgius, Rockwood, Bell, Saladin, Witchcraft, Champion, Stately, Ladye and Dusty are inscribed on the reverse. The pictures, which measure almost one metre in diameter, are expected to fetch £10,000-15,000 and £20,000-30,000 respectively in Sotheby's annual sale of Sporting and Equestrian Art [Lots 839 and 840].

Emms was an avid whisky drinker and gave the pictures, dated 1880, to the publican of the Stag Hotel, Lyndhurst, Hampshire as he was unable to pay his bar bill. The arrangement between the publican and the artist was highlighted in an edition of Horse and Hound on October 15, 1992. The article reads: ' Pain and the lack of occupation drove Emms to the Stag Public House, still in business in Lyndhurst, where he whiled away his days with old forest friends, more often than not having to barter old paintings and sketches from his studio to pay the proprietor for the whisky he consumed in ever increasing quantities.'

The publican, Ernest Harris, amassed more than 150 early paintings by Emms over the years. They were inherited by his son who took many of the paintings to Australia in the 1960s, and had a small exhibition of them in his home there. They were dispersed in a sale in Australia in the 1980s. The paintings to be sold at Sotheby's South were bequeathed to the publican's granddaughter, who has decided to sell them because they are too big for her present home.

John Emms is considered to be one of the greatest painters of dogs and horses. Born in Norfolk, the son of a plumber and glazier, he first came to Lyndhurst in the New Forest in about 1870 as an assistant to Lord Leighton, who was painting a fresco in Lyndhurst Church. After marrying a local girl in 1880 and living in Chelsea for a while, Emms moved back to Lyndhurst to build a house 'The Firs' on the edge of the village. There, Emms, became a prolific painter of horses, hounds and various breeds of dogs and was patronised by the Dukes of Bedford, Rutland and Newcastle, but by the end of his life, Emms was virtually penniless, and his house had to be sold.

The two paintings were discovered by Dendy Easton, head of the paintings department at Sotheby's South, who described them as: "among the best and largest dog pictures by John Emms I have ever seen."

Mr Easton had first known of their existence in 1975 when he visited Lyndhurst but was told that they had been taken to Australia by the publican's son. He subsequently visited Sydney on other business and was again told about the pictures, but never saw them.

"I was amazed when our Salisbury representative, Colin Thompson, phoned to tell me they were back in England and had been brought into an antiques valuation day in his office. I immediately drove to Salisbury and was delighted to be able to give the owner the good news."

The paintings will be sold in the second International Sale to be held at Sotheby's South - the inaugural sale in May saw almost 1,000 lots sell for £1,505,110 - which will also include ceramics, paintings, furniture, works of art, clocks, barometers, silver and vertu and will take place four times a year. The three-day sale opens with Ceramics and Glass on Tuesday, July 20, 1999 and comprise examples by both English and Continental factories such as Royal Crown Derby, Wedgwood, George Jones, Minton, Coalport, Belleek, Royal Worcester, Spode, Holdcroft, Herend, Meissen and Royal Dux.

A large collection of early 20th century Soviet porcelain comprising 25 pieces from the Dimitrov factory includes models of figure groups dressed in traditional Russian costume. A group of Georgians seated around a hollow tree with one holding a stringed instrument is estimated at £1,800-2,200, as is another of a Kirghiz man and woman in Ikhat robes, each wearing elaborately coloured costumes [Lots 48-71].

Works of Art will be sold on the same day and include notably a significant collection of Blue John, a type of mineral

that can be found only in the Derbyshire Peak District. The Romans first used Blue-John for decorative purposes, and it is believed the most likely origin of the name is from the French 'bleu-jaune' which describes the yellow and blue veins found in the mineral. The collection of 36 pieces dating from the late 18th century onwards includes vases, bowls, a mounted obelisk, a two-handled tazza and urns. Estimates range from £300-500 for a pair of bowls to £1,200-1,800 for an early 19th century vase on stand [Lots 193-202].

Elsewhere, a Venetian 16th century mottled marble figure of a reclining lion, seated and looking back over its right shoulder, believed to be part of a larger statue, is expected to fetch £4,000-6,000 [Lot 203], while a large pair of French late 19th century gilt bronze ewers on pedestals measuring almost seven foot high, and decorated in relief with putti, goats, birds, rams and dogs is expected to fetch £5,000-7,000 [lot 207].

The sale of almost 300 lots of Select English and Continental Furniture follows and is led by a set of 12 Regency mahogany and inlaid dining chairs including four armchairs which is estimated at £12,000-18,000 [Lot 338]. A George III mahogany and inlaid bureau bookcase is estimated at £10,000-15,000 [Lot 306], while two bureaux of note include a Dutch walnut and marquetry example dating from 1780 and reputedly purchased from Osbourne House on the Isle of Wight in 1905 (estimate: £6,000-8,000) [Lot 293], and a small walnut and feather-banded bureau dating from the reign of George I, measuring 3½ feet in height, which is estimated at £5,000-8,000 [Lot 273].

The core of the sale on the morning of Wednesday, July 21, entitled 'Animals in Art' is a single-owner collection of bronze and ceramic pet dogs. Elsewhere, other pets, dogs and cats include pieces from the Staffordshire and Meissen factories, French and Austrian bronzes, dog kennels, ink wells and stick stands. The final sale of the series will include more than 200 lots of clock and barometers, which will be sold on Thursday, July 22 and consist of English and Continental examples of skeleton, lantern, bracket, table, carriage, wall and longcase clocks as well as examples of wheel and stick barometers.

NOTES TO THE EDITOR:-Transparencies available.

From: Sotheby's South Summers Place  
Billingshurst  
West Sussex  
RH14 9AD  
Tel: 01403 833500

For further press information only, please contact:  
Rachel Aked  
Tel: 01403 833521  
Fax: 01403 833695