

Strauss&co

Fine Art Auctioneers | Consultants



Important South African and International Art

Monday 4 June 2018
3 pm Session One
6 pm Session Two
8 pm Session Three

VENUE

The Wanderers Club
Ballroom, 21 North Street, Illovo, Johannesburg
GPS Co-ordinates: Latitude: S26 08.123 – Longitude: E28 03.454

PREVIEW

Friday 1 June to Sunday 3 June from 10 am to 5 pm

WALKABOUT

Saturday 2 June at 11 am and Sunday 3 June at 11 am

LECTURES

Saturday 2 June at 4 pm and Sunday 3 June at 4 pm

ENQUIRIES AND CATALOGUES

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ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE R220.00

ALL LOTS ARE SOLD SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS OF BUSINESS PRINTED AT THE BACK OF THIS CATALOGUE

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Sale Information

Auction

Monday 4 June 2018
3 pm (Lots 1–168)
6 pm (Lots 170–248)
8 pm (Lots 250–325)

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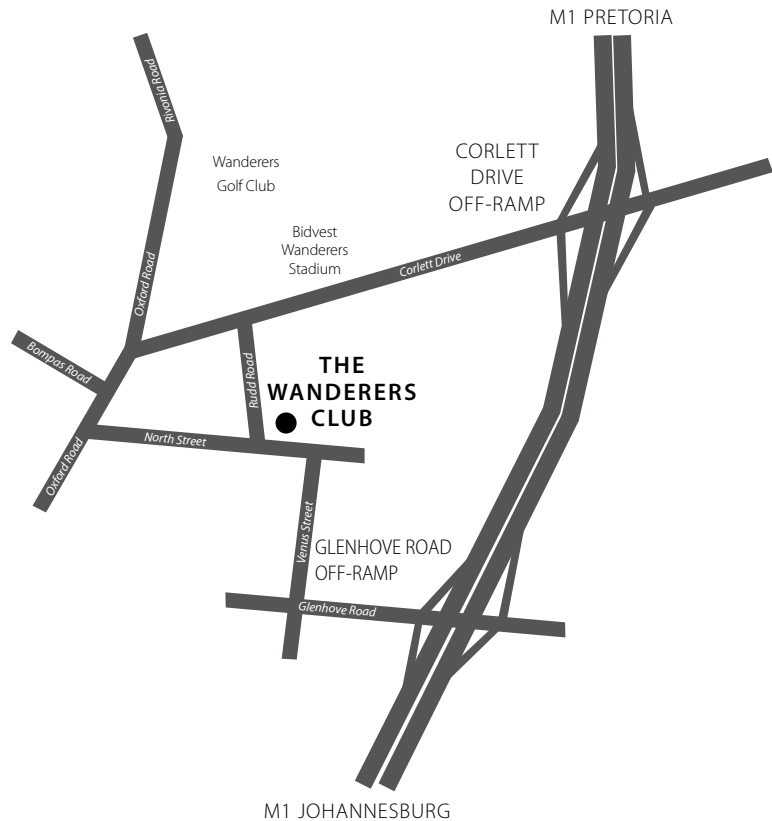
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Directions from Pretoria

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Directions from Johannesburg CBD

M1 North Pretoria, take Exit 19 for Glenhove off-ramp, left into Glenhove Road, right into Venus, at 3rd roundabout take 1st exit into North Street, the club entrance is on your right.



The Rosebank Station is a 5 minute drive from The Wanderers Club, and with the Wanderers Protea, Rudd Road bus stop (RB3 Illovo Route) literally on the door step, it provides a convenient, easy and safe travelling alternative from Pretoria, Midrand, Johannesburg CBD and OR Tambo International Airport.
www.gautrainschedule.co.za

Buying at Strauss & Co

A step-by-step guide to buying at auction

1. Browse upcoming sales

The sale can be viewed on our website:
www.straussart.co.za

Catalogues can be purchased from our offices or by subscription.

Cataloguing information

1. **Descriptions** include size, date, medium and attribution of the lot. Where possible, provenance, literature, exhibitions and additional notes are also included.
2. **Estimates** are given for all lots and are based on recent prices achieved for comparable property, taking into account quality, condition and provenance. Estimates are exclusive of Buyer's Premium and VAT.
3. **The reserve** is a confidential figure between Strauss & Co and the seller below which a lot may not be sold. It never exceeds the lower estimate.

The auction preview occurs prior to the auction, as listed at the front of the catalogue. You will have the opportunity to view the lots coming up for sale. Specialists are available at the preview to advise, discuss and help you with the lots you are interested in.

Condition Reports are available on request and are advisable if you are unable to attend the preview.

Saleroom notices amend the catalogue description of a lot after our catalogue has gone to press.

2. Create a Strauss & Co Account

Get in touch and share your details with us. Pre-registration is advised.

Registrations forms will be available at the Front Counter throughout the preview and on the day of the sale.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL BIDDERS

In accordance with the Consumer Protection Act 68 of 2008, prospective bidders are required to register before bidding. In order to register we require your full names, a copy of your identity document, proof of your physical address, postal address and telephone numbers. Prospective Bidders who have not previously registered with us are required to register at least 24 hours before the auction commences. We may require a R5 000 holding deposit.

3. Bid in the sale

If you are unable to attend an auction there are other ways to bid:

Telephone Bid

If you prefer to bid by phone, we will call you from the saleroom and bid on your behalf.

Absentee Bid

Submit your maximum bid and we will bid for you. We will confirm your bids by sms.

To arrange a Telephone or Absentee Bid please complete a bidding form and email: bids@straussart.co.za or contact our Client Services Departments: Cape Town 021 683 6560, Johannesburg 011 728 8246.

Remember to check our terms and conditions regarding charges, including buyer's premium which is added to the hammer price on each lot.

4. If your bid is successful ...

You will receive an invoice and payment instructions shortly after the sale. All the lots you purchase will be invoiced to the name and address that appear on the registration form. Please arrange payment and collection immediately after the sale.

How much will I pay (Live Auctions)?

If you are successful, you will pay the hammer price plus the buyer's premium on each lot as follows:

12% for lots selling over R10 000, 15% for lots selling at and below R10 000 + VAT on the buyer's premium on each lot.

Methods of payment

Payment may be made by:-

- a) Electronic Transfer (EFT)
- b) Cheque under R500 000 (by prior arrangement)
- c) Credit cards acceptable to Strauss & Co: Mastercard, Visa and Diners Club
- d) Direct Cash deposit into our Current Account

Strauss & Co
Standard Bank: Killarney
Bank code: 007205
Current Account No: 001670891
Swift address: SBZA ZA JJ

Insurance

Please note: Strauss & Co does not provide insurance on sold lots. It is advisable therefore to pay and collect immediately.

Collection of Purchases

1) The Wanderers Club, Illovo

Purchased lots can be collected during the auction and on the morning after from 9am to 1pm. No collections can be made from The Wanderers Club after this time.

The premises must be cleared by 2pm.

2) From Strauss & Co, Johannesburg

Uncollected lots will be removed to the Johannesburg office and will be available for collection from the Wednesday following the sale: 89 Central Street, Houghton. Tel: 011 728 8246.

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Door to Door Delivery Service

A representative from Airwings and Stuttaford will be available on the night and the day after the sale to give advice and to receive instructions from clients for the packing, delivery and forwarding of purchases. They will also provide quotations for delivery upon request.

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While the use of these terms and their definitions are based upon careful study and represent the opinion of specialists, Strauss & Co and the consignor assume no risk, liability and responsibility for the authenticity of authorship of any lot in this catalogue described by these terms.

'Name of the artist ...'

In Strauss & Co's opinion a work by the artist.

'Attributed to ...'

In Strauss & Co's opinion probably a work by the artist in whole or in part.

'Studio of ...'

In Strauss & Co's opinion a work executed in the artist's studio but not necessarily under his supervision.

'Circle of ...'

In Strauss & Co's opinion a work by an as yet unidentified hand, closely associated with the named artist and showing his influence.

'Follower of ...'

In Strauss & Co's opinion a work executed in the artist's style but not necessarily his pupil.

'Manner of ...'

In Strauss & Co's opinion a work executed in the artist's style and of a later date.

'After ...'

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'signed ..., dated ..., inscribed ...'

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In Strauss & Co's opinion the signature, date and/or inscription are by a hand other than that of the artist.

Titles given by Strauss & Co are descriptive, unless otherwise stated.

Sales Calendar 2018

Live Auctions

CAPE TOWN

**Important South African
and International Art,
Decorative Arts & Jewellery**

Monday 15 October 2018

Entries close approximately 10 weeks before the sale

JOHANNESBURG

**Important South African
and International Art**

Monday 12 November 2018

Entries close approximately 10 weeks before the sale

Online Auctions

Wednesday 6 June – Monday 11 June 2018

Monday 9 July – Monday 16 July 2018

Monday 13 August – Monday 20 August 2018

Monday 10 September – Monday 17 September 2018

Dates are subject to change.

Lot 288 Alexis Preller *Poseidon* (detail)



StraussOnline



Brett Murray, *Abstract* R3 000 – 5 000

Abstract Art

ONLINE-ONLY Auction Wednesday 6 June – Monday 11 June 2018

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from The Labia Family Trust

Strauss & CO



Irma Stern, *Dahlias*, oil on canvas, 96 by 84cm R8 000 000 – 12 000 000

Important South African and International Art, Decorative Arts and Jewellery

including Paintings from The Labia Family Trust, Cape Town, 15 October 2018

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Contemporary South African Art

Consensus is growing among scholars about the definition of Contemporary Art. Art historians, for example now date the advent of Contemporary Art unanimously to the year 1989.¹ It is the year in which profound changes occurred in the world. The Fall of the Berlin Wall, for example, hailed the end of the Cold War, the fall of Communism and the rise of neoliberalism and late-capitalism, as well as the opening of European borders. The massacre resulting from a clampdown on student protests on Tiananmen Square in Beijing, signalled gross infringements of basic human rights. The dawn of the Internet, or the World Wide Web, resulted in connectivity on a global scale. The unveiling of the research project on the Human Genome, determining the sequence of nucleotide pairs making up human DNA, knowledge useful in understanding diseases and developing medicine, was also announced in that year. And lastly, a major exhibition, *Magicians of the Earth* was mounted at Centre Pompidou, Paris, focusing on non-Western art from around the world and coining the phrase, Contemporary African Art.

These events impacted on art practice and production in a fundamental way, in terms of new media available to artists, (for example, net-art, digital art, virtual art, etc.), and in terms of subject matter. Contemporary artists reinvent the conventional, modernist portrait in a radical way, focusing on a multifaceted identity of the sitter. Says Grovier: 'From now on, the essence of identity would be as unfixed physically as it has always been philosophically.'² The contemporary portrait weaves together issues of politics, history, sexuality and religion and the manner in which portraits are contingent on these.

Artists nowadays depict contemporary struggles, uprisings and unrest, as well as rendering their take on the migration

crisis in Europe. They do not shy away from stretching the body as artistic medium. Time and history are put in new relations to each other. Science impacts on art, resulting in a new abstraction, a style sometimes resembling graphic models of DNA structures. Combining word and image, text and art, has become common practice for contemporary artists. The Op Art and Kinetic Art of the late-1960s have made way in contemporary art for the moving digital image. Documentary evidence and politics, mainstays of such movements as Feminist Art, give way to a group of counter-globalisation artists working with digital social platforms in their continued protest against neoliberalism and capitalism. Says Hito Steyerl, a contemporary German artist, listed as the top person in the art world in the *Power100* issue of the influential British magazine, *ArtReview*; 'Contemporary art is made possible by neoliberal capital, plus the internet, biennales, art fairs, parallel pop-up histories and growing income inequalities. Let's add asymmetrical warfare, real-estate speculation, tax evasion, money laundering and deregulated money market.'³ It appears as though much of the driving force of the subject matter used by Contemporary artists can be ascribed to the global political economy.

The contemporary offerings in the Strauss & Co winter sale in Johannesburg, provides the ideal opportunity for collectors to reflect on the contemporaneity of South African art. This is very evident in a work by Dan Halter, for example. Halter uses cut-up strips of plastic carrier bags from his native Zimbabwe to weave together again, only to reveal some Chinese script in the new picture plane he has created, signifying the Asian colonization of Africa. Esther Mahlangu's Ndebele Patterns could be seen as the very first contemporary South African art, as she was

included the *Magicians* exhibition mentioned above. Grappling with civil strife and restitution in a previous political dispensation and the effects it has on identity, is clearly illustrated in such works as Willem Boshoff's *Land Grab*, Anton Karstell's *Voortrekker Monument*, Brett Murray's *Policeman*, Penny Siopis's *Shame* series of etching, and Hentie van der Merwe's blurred photograph of a military dress uniform. Some contemporary South African artists address the issue of global terrorism, such as in the work of Hannatjie van der Wat, titled *Sept 9, 2011, New York*, and Peter Hugo's photograph dealing with religious and political strife in Nigeria.

¹ Alexander Alberro (2009). 'Periodising Contemporary Art'. In: Zoya Kocur & Simon Leung (eds) (2012). *Theory in Contemporary Art since 1985*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. Kelly Grovier (2015) *Art Since 1989*. London: Thames & Hudson. Maria Hlavajova & Simon Sheikh (2016) *Former West: Art and the Contemporary since 1989*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press. Terry Smith (2009) *What is Contemporary Art?* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

² Grovier, page 15

³ Hito Steyerl (2017). *Contemporary Art*, *Art Review*, November 2017, page 102.

Lots 170–248



Abstract South African Art

Abstract South African art can effectively be book-ended by the *Overseas Exhibition of South African Art* at the Tate Gallery in London in 1948, a veritable inventory of the local development of early modernism, and the *State of the Art in South Africa* conference at UCT in 1979, charting a perilous journey of the manner in which the arts could contribute to the demise of apartheid. South Africa was less isolated from the West in the immediate period after World War II (gaining official access to the Venice Biennale in 1952 and the Sao Paulo Biennale in 1957), and came into its own with such ventures as art magazines (*ArtCheck*, *ArtLook*), a flurry of new, avant garde galleries (for example, Goodman Gallery) and even its own art history (Esmé Berman's *Art and Artists of South Africa*, 1970).

Abstraction, the dominant artistic thrust in this era, encompasses such diverse stylistic tenets as Abstract Expressionism, Action Painting, Informalism, Hard Edge, Geometric Abstraction, and Colour Filed Painting. The dominance of abstraction is, however, complemented by, what Esmé Berman calls, 'an interest in humanistic figural expressionism', especially among Black artists, and notably that of the interest in 'primitivism' by the Amadlozi Group, spearheaded by Egon Guenther in 1963, a group that included such artists as Giuseppe Gattaneo, Cecily Sash, and Cecil Skotnes, and sculptors Sydney Kumalo and Edoardo Villa. These artists, although fiercely individualistic, all pursued in some way or another 'the spirit of the African forefathers'. On the other hand, a more subjective look at human relationships, given prominence by such artists as Kevin Atkinson, Nils Burwitz, Judith Mason and Helmut Starcke, by means of figural abstraction, provided a psychological dimension to the mystical spirit of Africa.

The combination of an emphasis on formalism/abstraction, and the interest in the human condition, inevitably led to the development of a social consciousness in the late-1970s when the South African art world had to articulate its political position in a troubled country. Essentially, the major forces that shaped the art of the early 50s include the Wits Group (Christo Coetzee, Nel Erasmus, Larry Scully, Cecil Skotnes, Gordon Vorster, and art historian, Esmé Berman); the influx of immigrant artists (Armando Baldinelli, Guiseppe Cattaneo, Pranas Domsaitis, John Dronsfield, Alfred Krenz, Maurice van Essche, Edoardo Villa, Jean Welz); returnee South African artists from Europe and the United Kingdom (Bette Cilliers-Barnard, Sydney Goldblatt, Georgina Ormiston, Douglas Portway); and such South African outliers in exile as Ernest Mancoba in Copenhagen, joining the CobrA group, and Gerard Sekoto in Paris.

In addition, the impact of such movements as Op Art (Cecily Sash and the revolution in art education at Wits she brought about in the late-1960s), and Conceptualism (under the auspices of the young Willem Boshoff at Wits Tech, together with Michael Goldberg, Wopko Jensma and Claude van Lingen) form part of this era.

The 70s, unfortunately, saw a renewed isolation from the West through a series of cultural boycotts of South African arts, and the rise of protest/resistance art (Norman Catherine, Dumile Feni, Gavin Jantjes, Paul Stopforth, Gavin Younge), but it did not diminish the internal dynamism of local art which explored other forms of expression, such as the use of photography as means of artistic expression, a notion rigorously debated at the Michaelis Art School at UCT, the first performance piece in South Africa, *Crying Earth*, staged by Shelley Sacks in Thibault

Square, Cape Town in 1975; and the criticism that accompanied the belated visit by Clement Greenberg, high-priest of formalism in the same year, purportedly to endorse the local versions of abstraction. Abstraction in South African art is best described by Hayden Proud when he called this period, a 'random collision of energy'¹

¹ Hayden Proud (2011). 'Formalism in Twentieth Century South African Art'. In: Mario Pissara (ed) (2011). *Visual Century: South African Art in Context Volume 3*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, page 128

Lots 67, 72–77, 79, 80, 85, 91, 93–95, 97, 104, 107, 108, 112–145, 147–162, 166, 167, 173, 175–177, 183–185, 190, 195, 200, 214, 223, 244, 245, 276, 297, 298, 299, 300, 306, 309, 324