

Fine Art / Wed, 4th September 2024 / Lot 43



LOT 43

Albert Namatjira - Australian Landscape with Ghost Gum Tree and Mountains, early/mid-20th century watercolour, signed, 35cm x 53cm, within a gilt composition frame. Provenance: purchased by vendor's father direct from the artist. Note: Albert Namatjira (1902-1959) was a pioneering Aboriginal Australian artist known for his distinctive watercolour landscapes that captured the beauty of the Australian outback. Born Elea Namatjira and raised in the Hermannsburg Lutheran Mission in the Northern Territory, he was educated in both Aboriginal traditions and Western customs. Namatjira discovered his talent for painting in his mid-30s after meeting the artist Rex Battarbee, who was touring Central Australia. Battarbee taught him the techniques of watercolor painting, and Namatjira quickly developed a unique style that combined Western techniques with his deep spiritual connection to the land. His works vividly portrayed the rugged and vibrant landscapes of Central Australia, especially the MacDonnell Ranges, using soft hues and detailed brushwork. His art gained widespread acclaim, and by the 1940s, Namatjira had become one of Australia's most celebrated artists. He was the first Aboriginal Australian to achieve commercial success in the Western art world, holding numerous exhibitions across Australia. His fame also brought attention to the cultural and political issues faced by Aboriginal people at the time. Despite his success, Namatjira's life was marked by the complexities of navigating two cultures. Although he was granted limited citizenship rights in 1957, he still faced significant legal and social discrimination, pressed home in 1958 by his imprisonment for supplying alcohol to an Aboriginal person. Namatjira's legacy endures as a trailblazer in Australian art. His work not only opened doors for future Aboriginal artists but also helped to change perceptions of Aboriginal culture in Australia. Provenance: Sir John Galvin (1908-1994), thence by family descent.

Estimate: £8,000 - £12,000

Condition Report

43. Generally in good condition. Possibly a little faded, but generally the colours are fine. Minor age toning. A few specks of dirt.

Modern mount has some soiling.

Frame has some loss of composition and gilt.

This work has not been examined out of the frame.

