

BRASS MONKEY HILL 2003

Catalogue Description for 'Brass Monkey Hill. Oil on Linen. 710 x 1010 mm. 2003. Private Collection. Extract from International Art Centre Auction Catalogue 2025.



Dunedin born Grahame Sydney is acknowledged as one of New Zealand's leading artists. In 1969 Sydney graduated Bachelor of Arts from the University of Otago. After a period of teaching and travelling overseas he returned to New Zealand and life as a full-time painter, being awarded the Frances Hodgkins Fellowship at the University of Otago in 1978. His works were exhibited in Sydney and London with a major retrospective, *On The Road*, touring New Zealand public art galleries from 2000 to 2002.

The subject of several subsequent major exhibitions, Sydney's work is held in public institutions throughout New Zealand including the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and both the Auckland and Dunedin Public Art galleries, along with private collections in New Zealand and offshore. A presentation of his work [*'Moonrise on the Maniototo'*] was made to the late Nelson Mandela by the New Zealand Government.

An intimate knowledge of the Central Otago and southern New Zealand landscape underscores the power of his paintings, as stated by art critic Keith Stewart: 'you don't just see the land here, you feel it'. Sir Grahame Sydney is also well known for his exceedingly fine printmaking, particularly figure studies. He has worked in a wide variety of media including egg tempera, watercolours, oils, lithography and etchings. Major publications on his work, including *The Art of Grahame Sydney* and *Timeless Land*, have won prominent book awards.

In the, 2004 New Years Honours Sydney was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to painting and then knighted in 2021 for services to the Arts.

"I didn't want to be anything else but a seventeenth-century Dutch painter. No one would teach me that in the art schools, so I thought it would be a waste of time. And I sure as hell didn't want to spend a year doing ceramics. I just wanted to learn everything I could about what I thought was wonderful, Vermeer, say". Sir Grahame Sydney

International Art Centre Auction Catalogue, 2025.