Gunn portrait up for auction in Edinburgh today

CHARMING PORTRAIT BY GLASGOW BORN SCOTTISH SOCIETY PAINTER JAMES GUNN AT BONHAMS SCOTTISH SALE

A charming informal portrait by the Glasgow born Scottish society painter, Sir James Gunn (1893-1964), is to be sold at Bonhams Annual Scottish Sale in Edinburgh today. It is estimated at £7,000-10,000.

The Green Necklace demonstrates Gunn's great gifts of elegance and precision even though he was famous for working at speed and rarely used under-painting preferring, as he put it himself, to "just bash it on."

The ninth of ten children, Gunn was encouraged in his ambitions to become a painter by his father, Richard, who took him to London and arranged a meeting with Sir Edward Poynter, the President of the Royal Academy. With Poynter's endorsement, Gunn then trained in Edinburgh before following in the footsteps of so many Scottish artists before him and moving to Paris.

He became one of the leading society portraitists of his day and was in great demand to paint establishment figures. His Conversation Piece of 1932 which depicts the three great men of letters of the time – Hilaire Belloc, G K Chesterton and Maurice Baring – was a great success. It is now housed in the Royal Lodge at Windsor and several of Gunn's portraits are in UK national collections.

Head of Pictures at Bonhams Scotland, Chris Brickley said,

"Sir James Gunn is famous for his official portraits but as The Green Necklace shows he was equally at home with less formal, more intimate subjects."

The Scottish Sale, which is now in its 15th year, has traditionally been held in the autumn but has now moved to its permanent new date of late Spring. All the major names in Scottish art are featured in the sale which also includes a huge range of objects related to Scotland from highland dress, to silver and glass; from books and furniture to whisky and ceramics.

The sale will take place at Bonhams Edinburgh saleroom, 22 Queen Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1JJ over two days, today and tomorrow 15-16 April 2014.