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## LAURINE · DIGGINS · FINE · ART



### **FREDERICK McCUBBIN 1855 - 1917**

*(View of the Yarra River towards Richmond from below McCubbin's House, Kensington Road)* 1910  
(also known as *The Pool, Heidelberg*)

oil on canvas

49.5 x 75 cm

signed lower right:: F McCubbin 1910

#### ***Provenance:***

Leonard Joel, Melbourne, 26 July 1989, lot 76, as *The Pool, Heidelberg*

private collection, Melbourne

Lauraine Diggins Fine Art, Melbourne, 1996

private collection, Sydney

#### ***Exhibited:***

*A Happy Life: Frederick McCubbin's Small Paintings & Oil Sketches,*

cat. no. 30, as *The Pool, Heidelberg*, National Gallery of Victoria, touring, 1991-1992, City of Ballarat Fine Art Gallery; City of Hamilton Art Gallery; Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston; Benalla Art Gallery; Mornington Peninsula Arts Centre, Mornington; La Trobe Valley Arts Centre, Morwell until 31 October 1992

*19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Century Australian Painting Sculpture and Decorative Arts*, Lauraine Diggins Fine Art, Melbourne, 1 May-7 June 1996, cat. no. 10, as *(View of the Yarra River towards Richmond from below McCubbin's House, Kensington Road)*, 1910

*40 Australian Paintings for Sale*, Savill Galleries, Sydney, March 2016, cat. no. 17, as *The Pool, Heidelberg*

#### ***Literature:***

Clark, J., *A Happy Life: Frederick McCubbin's Small Paintings & Oil Sketches*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1991, pp. 6, 20 & illus. p. 22

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The vintage years that followed Frederick McCubbin's visit to England in 1907 witnessed some of the finest paintings of his entire oeuvre. Related major canvases featuring the Yarra River from the heights of South Yarra included *Moonrise* 1909 in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, and *Golden Sunlight* 1912, gifted to the Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum by Dame Nellie Melba in 1923. Crowded between are numerous masterpieces –*Hauling Timber, Macedon Heights* 1911, private collection, and *Afterglow (Summer Evening)* 1912 and *Flood Waters* 1913, both from the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, to mention but a few. Each in its different way reveals McCubbin's love of the panoramic view touched by the intimate, contrasting the distant with the close up view. To this he adds lyrical golden touches to the poetic moments of the day. This is highlighted in *(View of the Yarra River towards Richmond from below McCubbin's House, Kensington Road)* 1910, where McCubbin achieved a singular harmony between the enchanting distant view and captivating intimacy of the foreground by engaging the Corot-esque touch of the framing device of trees. Viewed from a high vantage point, the river bend and city beyond is enveloped in an atmosphere that excites the imagination and invites the viewer to be drawn into a spectacle of wondrous delight. The painting has that effervescence one usually associates with J. M. W. Turner's pictures of Venice and the sparkle of light on water. As the master of the intimate in the Australian landscape, McCubbin carried this sparkle into the foreground foliage, tree trunks and bush through the deft application of paint with brilliant strokes of the brush and palette knife. The painting becomes a visual translation of joy celebrating the promised land, the loved place where he lived and in all its dreamlike beauty. It flows as a theme throughout his art, followed that same year in *Oliver's Hill, Frankston (Summer Idyll)* 1910 in the Kerry Stokes Collection.

The McCubbin family had moved to 'Carlsberg' in Kensington Road, in Melbourne's South Yarra in 1907. The view from McCubbin's home provided the inspiration for these paintings looking across the River Yarra to the distant city, in this case the suburb of Richmond. In December 1907 he wrote to his old friend Tom Roberts, 'This is the loveliest place I have ever lived. A charming old colonial house... perched right over the Yarra with three acres of garden and trees ... The winding stream, gums, osiers and wattle; interspersed. The night effects; sunrise, moonrise, we can see every way'.<sup>1</sup>

David Thomas

1. McCubbin to Roberts, December 1907, *Letters to Tom Roberts*, vol. II, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney