

## Scottish Paintings & Sculpture (482)

Thu, 8th Dec 2016, Edinburgh

### Lot 72

**Estimate:** £7000 - £10000 + Fees

§ **STANLEY CURSITER C.B.E., R.S.A., R.S.W. (SCOTTISH 1887-1976) SKIPPIGEO, BIRSAY**

Signed, oil on canvas

71cm x 91cm (28in x 36in)

**Note:** Stanley Cursiter was one of the most important figures of British art during the twentieth century. As Director of the National Galleries of Scotland, Cursiter introduced modernism to the country by bringing Roger Fry's seminal exhibition *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* to the capital in 1913, showing works of the Post-Impressionists and the Futurists to the country for the first time. He was also a keen supporter of the development of modern Scottish art and played an instrumental role in the creation of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art.

Born in Orkney in 1887, Cursiter moved to Edinburgh in 1904 to become an architect. However, drawing and painting was where he excelled and he soon completed his studies at the Edinburgh College of Art. After the First World War, his services in which resulted in him being awarded an O.B.E., Cursiter worked as an artist and completed numerous canvases from his luxurious apartment at 11 Royal Circus in Edinburgh.

In 1930 Cursiter took on the role of Director of the National Gallery of Scotland and remained in the position until 1948 when he returned to his native Orkney with his wife Phyllis Hourston. In the same year, Cursiter was appointed as the King's Painter and Limner- a role which he possessed until his death in 1976. Cursiter was immensely proud of his homeland and painted its landscapes with great passion and admiration.

The Orcadian landscapes offered here, such as the 1954 canvas *An Island Farm, Oddness, Stronsay*, demonstrate both his profound emotional attachment to the area and the influence of the French avant-garde on his work. In particular, this piece displays an appreciation of the work of Cézanne in the use of broken brushstrokes. Cursiter employs Cézanne's ground-breaking technique to suggest the texture of the rocks in the foreground, which emphasises the warm middle-ground that recedes into the colder colours surrounding it, and allows Cursiter the opportunity to show his immense artistic talent.

