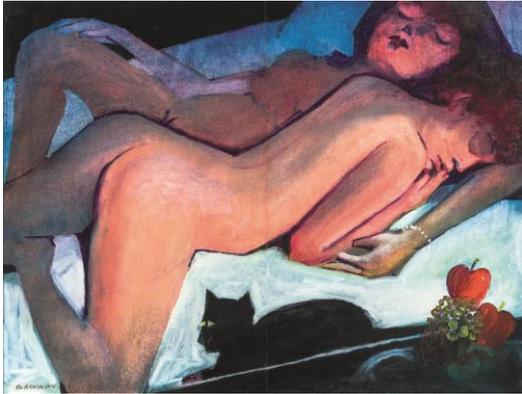


Herald Sun

News, Saturday 4 March 2017

UNDER THE HAMMER

By Alice Coster



[Facebook](#) Didn't Love Masterpiece CHARLES Blackman's painting, *Women Lovers*, has hung above the bed of art collectors **Tom** and Sylvia **Lowenstein** for the past 20 years.

The lovers' entwined bodies were inspired by Blackman's muse and lover, Genevieve De Couvreur, a 19-year-old art student he married when he was 50 and painted after moving to Queensland.

He called the steamy background of the rainforest in many of these paintings *The Garden of Eden*, and De Couvreur was his Eve.

The **Lowenstein** Collection is being sold by Mossgreen Auctions in Armadale on Tuesday, and it should set romantic hearts a-flutter.

It is an auction for lovers.

But [Facebook](#) wasn't in the mood this week when it banned Mossgreen from using the image to advertise its auction, declaring it violated the social network site's "adult content" ad policy.

Mossgreen took [Facebook](#) to task over its prudish decision and it had a change of heart (a bit of media interest can do that) — reversing its decision late on Thursday night.

"We are pleased [Facebook](#) has now approved use of the image, which follows media interest from around the world," Mossgreen director Paul Sumner said.

"However, we are still unclear as to what it was [Facebook](#) were opposed to in the painting, the nudity, or to the fact it represents two women, two same-sex figures, lying naked together." **Tom Lowenstein** isn't a normal tax accountant — he has collected all the great Australian painters.

Brett Whiteley's coupling lovers and Margaret Olley's still life has a reclining nude (after Manet) — just don't tell [Facebook](#).

The Blackman painting has an estimate of \$45,000 to \$50,000. **Tom Lowenstein** said he discussed it many years ago with his friend, saying: "Looking at the cat with its greedy green eyes the thought came to me that it is like a protector, protecting the girls. But then it also has a very voyeuristic look about it." The bohemian Blackman replied: '**Tom**, for an accountant, you're bloody perceptive!'