



- 116 GRETTA BOWEN (1880-1981)
 Saturday in the Country (aka Sport's Day)
 Oil on board, 50.5 x 76cm (20 x 30")
 Signed

Exhibited: 'Gretta Bowen' exhibition, The Tom Caldwell Gallery, 1980, Catalogue No.22, under title 'Sport's Day';
 'Gretta Bowen' exhibition, The George Gallery, Feb. 1991, Catalogue No.8.

Mother of artists George and Arthur Campbell, Gretta Bowen began painting shortly before her seventieth birthday and held her first solo exhibition in Belfast in 1955 at the gallery run by the Council for Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA). In 1956 she held a solo exhibition with Victor Waddington in Dublin where her paintings attracted attention from the media for their innocence and colour effectiveness. Critics in the 1950's nicknamed her an Irish 'Grandma Moses' after the American folk artist Anna Mary Roberson (1860-1961) 'Grandma Moses' who began painting in her late seventies. Naïve in style, Bowen's crowded paintings usually depict gay memories of her childhood in Dublin. Children at play, a sports day, a fun fair or a procession represent her girlhood which are full of exuberance and delight.

Other solo exhibitions were held at the Richie Hendriks gallery, Dublin in 1961, the Bell Gallery, Belfast in 1965, Tom Caldwell, Belfast in 1970, 1976, and 1980. Although Gretta Bowen stopped painting in the 1970's, she represented Ireland at the first International Naïve exhibition in London in 1981.

Karen Reihill, August, 2016

€ 1,500 - 2,500