



33

**Seán Keating PRHA HRA HRSA (1889-1977)**

ARAN WOMAN (also known as THE MATRIARCH), c.1952-1955

pastel and conté on tinted paper

signed lower right; with Victor Waddington Galleries label preserved on reverse; also with BOI collection number [2945] on reverse

17 by 14in. (43.18 by 35.56cm)

*Provenance:*

The Collection of the Bank of Ireland;

Their sale, Adam's, 24 November 2010, lot 5;

Private collection

Although the identity of this Aran woman is unknown, Seán Keating did at least three paintings or drawings of her between 1952 and 1955, all of which were based on a black and white photograph. He was fascinated by the ageing process, and by the wisdom of old age. As a young child growing up in Limerick, Keating's paternal grandfather, Michael, lived in the family home in Newenham Street, where he gave guidance and inspiration to his grandchildren until his death at the age of ninety four. Michael's son, Joseph, was Keating's father. In later years, Joseph Keating lived with his grown up children in Windsor Road, Rathmines. He too, was a source of encouragement and advice to his children, and later, his grandchildren, until he passed away at the age of ninety two. Indeed, the artist himself lived to be eighty eight years of age, having raised two sons, given grandfatherly reassurance to five grandchildren and documented his own aging process in a series of extraordinary self-portraits. Given his personal experience, it is not at all surprising that Keating was so concerned to recognise and to pay tribute to the hard-won intuition that is so acutely evident in this fine example of his work. He has portrayed the old woman in a calm and meditative mood that seems to mirror her acceptance of life from the perspective of her years. When she was a young woman she worried about life, but according to this image, she knows that there is no point in such troubles. The drawing is an excellent example of Keating's intuitive perception of the dignity of old age.

Dr Éimear O'Connor HRHA

Research Associate

TRIARC-Irish Art Research Centre, TCD.

Eimear O'Connor's book, *Seán Keating: Art, Politics and Building the Nation*, is published in full colour by Irish Academic Press (April 2013) and is available in soft back, hard back (signed limited edition) and slip case (signed limited edition).

€3,000-€5,000 (£2,520-£4,200 approx.)



34

**Seán Keating PRHA HRA HRSA (1889-1977)**

WOMAN WITH HEADSCARF, c. late 1950s

pastel and pencil on buff-coloured paper

signed lower right; with David Hendriks Gallery labels on reverse

11.50 by 9.50in. (29.21 by 24.13cm)

*Provenance:*

David Hendriks Gallery, Dublin;

Private collection

€2,000-€3,000 (£1,680-£2,520 approx.)