

# DONALD ELLIS GALLERY

## PRESS RELEASE

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Ledger Drawing, attributed to Arapaho Artist B, Henderson Ledger Book (pg 73), Arapaho, ca. 1880, graphite and coloured pencil on linen paper, 5 ¼" H x 11 ¾" W

### ***KEEPING TIME: PLAINS INDIAN LEDGER DRAWINGS (1865 – 1900)***

In Collaboration with Galerie Gisela Capitain, 26 St. Aporn Strasse, Cologne, Germany  
26 St. Aporn Strasse, Cologne, Germany

**June 3 - July 16, 2016**

Donald Ellis Gallery is pleased to announce *Keeping Time: Plains Indian Ledger Drawings (1865 – 1900)*, in collaboration with Galerie Gisela Capitain. The exhibition will feature a remarkable group of approximately 70 drawings from the latter part of the 19th century.

Widely unknown but an extremely important aspect of American art history, 19th century Ledger Drawings were first brought to the attention of the art world in the seminal exhibition *Plains Indians Drawings 1865-1935: Pages from a Visual History* at The Drawing Centre in New York in 1996. The earliest prehistorical records of this visual language was the work of Plains Indian men who created petroglyphs

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and pictographic paintings on rock walls as a means of recording important historical events. This later evolved to keeping records on buffalo hides, tipis and some articles of clothing.

The term 'Ledger Art' derives from the lined accounting ledger notebooks that became widely available to Plains Indian peoples with increased contact with Euro Americans in the 1860's. In continuing the tradition that evolved over thousands of years, pages from these ledger books were adapted artistically by warriors to create narrative drawings that, in a culture with no written language, recorded events as well as acts of bravery and valour. In the drawing illustrated here we see the depiction of a courting scene, a much less common form of Ledger Art.

The exhibition will also feature a small group of works of art that both predate and conceptualize Ledger Drawings. This will include a beautifully rendered pictographic buffalo robe and model tipi, as well as an important pictorial muslin depicting a Sun Dance that was exhibited in the critically acclaimed exhibition *The Plains Indians: Artists of Earth and Sky* at the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris (April-July, 2014) and subsequently traveled to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (March – May 2015).

*Keeping Time: Plains Indian Ledger Drawings (1865 – 1900)* opens at Galerie Gisela Capitain in Cologne, Germany from June 3rd until July 16th,

## **About Donald Ellis Gallery**

Donald Ellis, president and founder of Donald Ellis Gallery Ltd. is widely considered the foremost dealer in the field of historical Native American art. Established in 1976, Donald Ellis Gallery has over 40 years of experience serving private collectors, corporations and museums in the United States, Canada and Europe. The gallery has participated annually in the prestigious New York Winter Antiques Show, Frieze Art Fair, and Armory Show, and curates special exhibitions in commercial gallery settings. Each year, the gallery publishes a highly anticipated and award-winning full-colour catalogue.

## **Media Contact**

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