

Press release

From Georg Kolbe to Cindy Sherman: highlights of modern and contemporary art take centre stage at Grisebach's summer auctions



Georg Kolbe. "Tänzerinnen-Brunnen". 1922. Bronze and limestone. 310 cm. EUR 1,000,000–1,500,000
Photo: © Christian Kain

At the evening auction on 4 June, Grisebach will present a wide-ranging selection spanning from classical modernism to the contemporary era, the scale of which is rarely seen. The centrepiece is Georg Kolbe's 'Tänzerinnen-Brunnen' – a work of great artistic and historical significance. The auction combines art-historical quality, exceptional provenance and strong market momentum. Further highlights include works by Paula Modersohn-Becker, Cindy Sherman, Emil Nolde and Daniel Richter. A total of 280 works, with a combined lower estimate of around 11.6 million euros, will be offered for sale in the summer auctions.

Georg Kolbe's Restored "Tänzerinnen-Brunnen" as the Highlight of the Summer Auctions

Georg Kolbe's 'Tänzerinnen-Brunnen' from 1922 marks the arrival of one of the most impressive and, at the same time, moving works of classical modernism on the international auction market. It combines artistic mastery, an iconic design language and a deeply moving history. The monumental fountain, crafted from bronze and travertine, will be offered at the Grisebach Evening

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Auction on 4 June with an estimate of EUR 1,000,000 to 1,500,000, following an amicable agreement between the Georg Kolbe Foundation and the heirs of Heinrich and Jenny Stahl. Last year, Grisebach achieved a world record price of EUR 1,416,000 for a work by Kolbe – the highest price ever paid for a sculpture by the artist. (Press release dated 12 April 2026).

Masterpieces of Modern Art

Emil Nolde's painting 'Astern', created in 1919, is undoubtedly one of Expressionism's most outstanding floral works and represents another highlight of the forthcoming auction. In an intense riot of colour—red, pink, purple and yellow—Nolde distils the natural motif into a dynamic, almost boundless pictorial composition. This museum-quality work captivates with its unrestrained play of light and colour, as well as its outstanding provenance and early exhibition history. The flower paintings remain – to this day – one of the artist's most important and popular groups of works, embodying his magnificent artistic maturity (EUR 600,000/800,000).

Max Beckmann's 'Springbrunnen in Baden-Baden' impressively illustrates the artistic quality of his late landscapes, created shortly before his emigration and counted among the significant works of Modernism. This museum-quality painting from 1936 depicts a feigned idyll – the park scene is disrupted by a subtly emerging sense of confinement and stagnation. Masterfully modulated shades of green – the colour Beckmann found particularly soothing – lend the work that painterly intensity so characteristic of the artist (EUR 400,000/600,000).

Icons of Modern Print

In the field of modern graphic art, no fewer than four outstanding works are up for auction: **Edvard Munch's** 'Madonna' (1895) ranks among his graphic masterpieces and is regarded as an iconic depiction of femininity that elevates ecstasy and sensuality to an existential dimension. As early as the early 20th century, these prints were among the most sought-after and valuable of their time – and to this day, the "Madonna" has lost none of its seductive allure (EUR 150,000/200,000).

The etching 'The Kiss' (1895), by contrast, distils a series of motifs developed over many years into a radically reduced, intimate depiction of a couple fused together – an exceptionally provocative and candid visual composition for its time (EUR 70,000/90,000).

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's colour woodcut 'Toilette' (1921) is one of the rarest works in his entire oeuvre, with only five known prints – and this particular version, with its unique colour scheme, holds a special place amongst them. Inspired by the dancer Nina Hard, the artist distils an intimate moment into a powerful, biographically charged visual composition (EUR 180,000/240,000). 'Drei Akte im Wald', meanwhile, ranks among the most colourful prints from Kirchner's late work and is regarded as an impressive example of his so-called late style. The artist explored the motif

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in almost every technique at his disposal, not least in two paintings (EUR 50,000/70,000).

In honour of her 150th birthday: Paula Modersohn-Becker in the spotlight

Two exceptional works by this outstanding artist are available in the year marking the 150th anniversary of **Paula Modersohn-Becker's** birth:

The 'Brustbild Elsbeth mit Margeriten im Haar' (1901) is one of the most striking portraits of children from her early career. In her depiction of her stepdaughter Elsbeth, Modersohn-Becker draws on her personal closeness to develop a reduced, two-dimensional formal language that characterises one of her most significant groups of works (EUR 150,000–250,000).

The charcoal drawing 'Selbstbildnis mit Landschaft vor Bäumen' (1903) marks the beginning of another intense phase and captivates with its powerful combination of self-reflection and dynamic nature. Created from close up and with sweeping lines, the work presents a powerful image of inner and outer perception (EUR 25,000/35,000).

Influential artists of post-war modernism

Konrad Klapheck's 'Doppelhochzeit' (1956) is one of the key early works in his oeuvre (catalogue raisonné no. 4) and marks the first depiction of the shoe-stretcher motif, which was central to his work. In juxtaposing two pairs, Klapheck once again distils everyday objects into a precise yet poetic symbol of human relationships. Having been in a private collection for 70 years, it is being offered on the art market for the very first time (EUR 200,000/300,000).

The gouache 'Personnage des 'Légendes' (1962) by **Jean Dubuffet** is a characteristic work by the artist and captivates with its expressive gesture. As one of the most influential figures of post-war modernism and the initiator of Art Brut, Dubuffet developed a visual language that was deliberately direct yet unconventional (EUR 180,000/240,000).

Eugen Schönebeck ranks among the most significant German painters of the post-war period. Together with Georg Baselitz, he developed a radical new figurative style around 1960, thereby formulating a decisive antidote to the dominant abstract movements of his time. The large-format painting 'Figur mit Vogel I' (1963/64) is one of the major works in his oeuvre, comprising just 52 paintings, and is returning to the market for the first time in over 40 years (EUR 150,000–200,000).

Contemporary works of international renown

Daniel Richter's monumental painting 'Die Verschaffung des Guten' (2003) is a key work from his early 2000s, a period in which he developed a new visual language inspired by history painting and powerfully condensed themes such as power, violence and social dynamics. Large-format

paintings from this phase are among the most sought-after works in his oeuvre internationally and underline Richter's significance as one of the most important German painters of his generation (EUR 300,000/400,000).

The life-size sculpture 'Doktor' (1997/1999) forms part of a central group of works within **Katharina Fritsch's** oeuvre and is also key to understanding her artistic approach. Fritsch was honoured with the Goslar Kaiserring in 2025 for her work – this rare sculpture is one of the artist's most significant works ever to appear on the auction market (EUR 200,000/300,000).

Keith Haring's 'Totem' (1988), carved from plywood, is one of the iconic sculptural works in his oeuvre and impressively translates his distinctive visual language into three-dimensional space (184 × 56 × 5 cm). With its vibrant colours, the figure explores central themes such as community, rhythm and collective energy (EUR 180,000/240,000).

The large-scale sculpture 'Bearing II' (1995) by the English sculptor **Antony Gormley** is a striking example of his sculptural practice, which conceives of the human body as a site of experience, perception and existence. In the composition of interlocking bodies, existential questions of identity, transformation and relationship are expressed in a powerful, spatially tangible form (EUR 250,000/350,000).

Finally, the work 'Untitled #415' (2004), a large-format C-print from **Cindy Sherman's** 'Clown' series, marks a decisive expansion of the visual language of this master of transformation through digital backgrounds and staged, partly surreal pictorial spaces. The internationally sought-after series is represented in major museum collections and is very rarely available on the market (EUR 160,000/200,000).

Over 280 works with a total estimate of around EUR 11.6 million on 4 and 5 June 2026

In total, over 280 works of art with a low estimate of around 11.6 million euros will be auctioned across three sales during the summer auctions on 4 and 5 June. With a selection of significant individual works and rare items, the auction once again underlines Grisebach's international standing.

The preview of all works in Berlin at two locations on Fasanenstraße (25 and 27) will take place from 28 May to 3 June.

Press contact

Sarah Buschor

sarah.buschor@grisebach.com

+49 30 885 915 85

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Georg Kolbe. 'Tänzerinnen-Brunnen'. 1922
Bronze and limestone. 310 cm. EUR 1,000,000–1,500,000



Emil Nolde. 'Asteren'. 1919
Oil on canvas. 74 × 88.5 cm. EUR 600,000–800,000



Max Beckmann. 'Springbrunnen in Baden-Baden'. 1936
Oil on canvas. 65 × 95 cm. EUR 400,000–600,000



Konrad Klapheck. 'Doppelhochzeit'. 1956
Oil on canvas. 68 × 80 cm. EUR 200,000–300,000



Daniel Richter. 'Die Verschaffung des Guten'. 2003
Oil on canvas. 242 × 270 cm. EUR 300,000–400,000



Keith Haring. 'Totem'. 1988
Carved plywood, painted in colour. 184 × 56 × 5 cm
EUR 180,000–240,000

GRISEBACH

Fasanenstraße 25, 10719 Berlin
T +49 30 885915 0, F +49 30 88241 45, auktionen@grisebach.com
grisebach.com