

World records, fierce bidding wars and remarkable sales: highlights from the Winter Auctions in Berlin



Photo: Stefanie Loos

This year's Winter Auctions opened to great interest with the sale of the Walter Bauer Collection, a group of works that had remained out of public view for decades and was recently entrusted to Grisebach from the collector's estate (press release dated 15 September 2025). And what a spectacular opening it was! The work by **Paula Modersohn-Becker** sold for €1,270,000 – setting a new world record and launching the auction week on Fasanenstraße with a remarkable highlight. The museum-worthy "Selbstbildnis nach halblinks" from 1906 attracted considerable international interest and significantly exceeded the estimate of €250,000/350,000. With tension mounting and bids rising, a European private collector ultimately placed the winning bid, which was met with loud applause.

This record hammer price is a powerful testament to the emphatic recognition of Paula Modersohn-Becker's work. It underscores the growing interest in female modernist artists, which is increasingly reflected in market valuations. Widely acknowledged as one of the most important early female representatives of modernism, Paula Modersohn-Becker reasserts her pioneering significance with this exceptional and very personal self-portrait.

GRISEBACH

Top prices were also achieved by **Ernst Barlach's** wooden sculpture "Der Wartende", created in 1924, which changed hands for a significantly higher amount than its estimate (€250,000/350,000) at €482,600, and **Emil Nolde's** oil painting "Stilleben P (Grüner Hintergrund, Hirsch, Kopf)", which sold for €355,600 – also exceeding its estimate (€250,000/350,000).

Adolph Menzel's 1853 watercolour "Gruft der Liebfrauenkirche in Halberstadt" is another work that attracted strong international attention. In a lengthy and riveting bidding battle – both on the phones and in the saleroom – the price rocketed from €40,000 to an impressive €355,600.

The bidding was equally intense for **Caspar David Friedrich's** early, sketch-like drawing "Landschaft mit Felsgipfel" (circa 1799). Starting at a reserve price of €80,000, the drawing went to a German collection for €228,600.

Käthe Kollwitz's touching and very early drawing "Selbstbildnis, vor einem Stuhl kniend" was another sought-after work that attracting strong bidding activity. Several bidders pushed up the asking price from €30,000 to €215,900, with the winning bid ultimately placed by a private collection in North Rhine-Westphalia.

With total proceeds of €5.7 million and nearly 90 per cent of lots sold, the Walter Bauer Collection fetched almost twice the expected €3 million, sending a remarkably strong signal at the start of our Winter Auctions.

The successful opening auction was followed by the "**Selected Works**" evening sale, which maintained the momentum, delivered additional highlights and attracted a high level of international bids.

Georg Kolbe's sculpture "Stehende Frau" from 1915/16 was one of the outstanding lots. Valued at €250,000/€350,000, the bids climbed steadily to an impressive €1,416,400, setting a new world record for the artist and delighting the German private collection owner who secured the winning bid.

Another sought-after piece was "Weißer Wind", a characteristic major work by **Günther Uecker** created in 1986. With an asking price of €600,000, the large-format, relief-like nail painting sold for €1,016,000 to a private collection in Switzerland.

The fact that unwavering demand continues to exist for masterpieces and exceptional works was confirmed by three other icons of modern art: Interest for **Lyonel Feininger's** museum-worthy landscape painting "Dune, Ray of Light I" from 1933, consigned from an American collection, far exceeded its estimate of €350,000/450,000, finally selling for €736,600 to a Swiss collector.

Emil Nolde's expressive and vibrantly-coloured flower painting "Zinnien und Sonnenblumen" originating from 1940, was also sold to Switzerland for €698,500, where it will be added to a private collection.

There was also considerable interest in **Rudolf Schlichter's** watercolour "Hausvogteiplatz" dated 1926. The socially critical narrative, estimated at €200,000/300,000, was sold to a private collection in the USA for almost double its estimate at €495,300. This represents another world

GRISEBACH

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

record for the artist at a Grisebach auction, this time for a colourful work on paper, following the €600,000 bid for the portrait of Helene Weigel in 2017 (now in the Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus).

Eduard Gaertner's 1856 Berlin painting "Die Lange-Brücke von den Mühlen aus gesehen", lost for nearly 170 years, also enjoyed remarkable success at the auction. Estimated at €200,000–300,000, this impressive view, which is inspiring in terms of both architecture and urban history, triggered a bidding frenzy between three telephone bidders and was finally sold to a private collection in southern Germany for €469,900.

The big international names in contemporary art were no less coveted: **Per Kirkeby's** monumental and vividly nuanced "Første Sommer", produced in 1987 and estimated at €200,000/300,000, achieved a top price of €469,900 and it will be displayed as part of a private collection in southern Germany going forward.

Georg Baselitz's pivotal 1967 work "Ein Werktätiger" was sold to a US collector for €469,900 after vigorous bidding.

"Fuji" by **Gerhard Richter** from 1996 also impressed bidders, selling for €444,500.

Finally, **Andy Warhol's** 1985 portrait "Marie-Chantal Miller" made a powerful statement. Estimated at €250,000–350,000, the lot sold in the auction room for €406,400 to a private collector from Berlin who outpaced competing bids from the United States.

Daniel von Schacky, management spokesperson and partner: *"The exceptionally strong results underscore Berlin's vibrancy and cosmopolitan appeal as a leading auction hub. The high clearance rate, world records for Paula Modersohn-Becker and Georg Kolbe, and the top hammer price for Uecker's 'Weißer Wind' underscore the quality of our offerings. We appreciate this vote of confidence from our clients and collectors and are now channelling our energy into planning our 2026 anniversary auctions to mark Grisebach's 40th year."*

With annual sales of €47 million to date, another successful year of auctions is coming to a close for Grisebach.

* All results incl. premium

Press contact:

sarah.buschor@grisebach.com / +49 176 725 19 666

GRISEBACH

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



Georg Kolbe. "Stehende Frau". 1915/16.
Sold for €1,416,400 (incl. premium)



Paula Modersohn-Becker. "Selbstbildnis nach halblinks". 1906
Sold for €1,270,000 (incl. premium)



Günther Uecker. "Weißer Wind". 1986.
Sold for €1,016,000 (incl. premium)



Rudolf Schlichter. Hausvogteiplatz. 1926.
Sold for €495,300 (incl. premium)



Ernst Barlach. "Der Wartende". 1924.
Sold for €482,600 (incl. premium)



Eduard Gaertner. "Die Lange-Brücke von den Mühlen aus gesehen" (Berlin). 1856.
Sold for €469,900 (incl. premium)

GRISEBACH