

€4.98 Million for Georg Kolbe – Grisebach’s Summer Auctions Achieve €19 Million World Records, Seven-Figure Lots and Strong International Participation – An Outstanding Summer Season in Berlin



Georg Kolbe. "Tänzerinnen-Brunnen". Detail. 1922. Sold for €4,980,000 (incl. premium). Photo: © Christian Kain

With a world record for **Georg Kolbe**, a second work by Emil Nolde selling for over a million euros, and lots reaching up to twenty times their estimate, the 2026 Grisebach Summer Auctions achieved a total of 19 million euros – far exceeding expectations. Several works were acquired by international museums and institutional collections.

The undisputed highlight of the evening was Georg Kolbe’s monumental **"Tänzerinnen-Brunnen" (1922)**. The work, which came to market following an amicable agreement between the Georg Kolbe Foundation and the heirs of Heinrich and Jenny Stahl, achieved a total of €4,980,000 after intense bidding between numerous highly enthusiastic bidders in the room and on the phones. The lower estimate of 1 million euros was increased fivefold, setting a new world record for Georg Kolbe. Accompanied by sustained applause in the room, the fountain was sold to a private collection in the USA.

The "Tänzerinnen-Brunnen" is one of the sculptor’s most significant works. The life-size figure was created in 1922 on commission from the Berlin entrepreneur Heinrich Stahl for his villa in Berlin-Dahlem. At the same time, the work is closely linked to the fate of the Jewish Stahl family, who were persecuted and dispossessed during the Nazi era. Following the recent restitution to the heirs, Grisebach was authorised

to offer the work on behalf of the descendants. Members of the family had travelled specially from the United States to witness this historic event.

With a final result of €1,032,000, **Emil Nolde's** painting "Astern" (1919) broke the million-euro barrier to become the second lot of the evening to reach that milestone. The oil painting found its way into a private collection in northern Germany.

Eugen Schönebeck's imposing "Figur mit Vogel I" (1963/64), one of the key works in his oeuvre comprising just 52 paintings, attracted great interest. The last auction of a comparable work took place 15 years ago. Following intense bidding between four telephone bidders and one bidder in the room, the painting achieved €645,000, more than three times the estimate – a world record for Eugen Schönebeck. The work went to a museum in the USA.

Another highlight of the evening was **Paula Modersohn-Becker's** "Selbstbildnis mit Landschaft vor Bäumen" (1903), which also set a new world record for a drawing by the artist. Starting with an estimate of 25,000 to 35,000 euros, it fetched 503,100 euros after a bidding war lasting several minutes – twenty times the upper estimate. The audience in the packed room acknowledged the sale with applause. The drawing went to a private collection in southern Germany.

International contemporary art delivered impressive results. **Antony Gormley's** monumental iron sculpture "Bearing II" (1995), a striking example of his exploration of the human body, fetched €541,800. The work was acquired by a European private collection and significantly exceeded its estimate.

Edvard Munch's iconic lithograph "Madonna" (1895) was also the subject of fierce bidding. Following bids from three telephone bidders, it sold for €451,500 – more than double the upper estimate – and went to a private buyer from northern Germany.

No less interest was shown in **Otto Dix's** painting "Straße der Bordelle" (1914), described as the "earliest homage to the world of prostitution". This significant early work eventually sold for €309,600 and was acquired by a private collection in Berlin.

Another world record was set with **Katharina Fritsch's** life-size sculpture "Doktor" (1997/99), which forms part of a central group of works within her oeuvre and is also one of the artist's most significant works ever to have been offered at auction. The work was sold for €258,000 and went to a major European private collection.

Finally, **Ewald Mataré's** rare and wonderfully expressive bronze "Stehende Kuh 'Windkuh'" (1923) nearly quadrupled its estimate of €60,000–80,000 and, following bids by telephone and in the room, was sold for €245,100 to a German private collection.

The Contemporary Art auction held the following day, with a sell-through rate of 80 per cent, confirmed that Grisebach is not only successful with modern classics. Works by **Gotthard Graubner**, **Dóra Maurer** and **Marwan** attracted particular interest. All six works by **Gerhard Richter** on offer found new owners.

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Daniel von Schacky, Managing Director of Grisebach, sums up:

“The world record achieved for Georg Kolbe’s ‘Tänzerinnen-Brunnen’ is undoubtedly one of the standout moments in Grisebach’s forty-year history. We experienced an evening characterised by extraordinary dynamism, intense bidding wars and international participation. A result that far exceeded our expectations. The strong presence of institutional buyers from Europe and the USA underlines Grisebach’s appeal and the enduring attractiveness of significant works of Classical Modernism and contemporary art.”

With a total turnover of €18.97 million – around 65 per cent above the pre-sale low estimate – Grisebach concludes its 2026 Summer Auctions with a strong result. Grisebach is now accepting consignments for the Winter Auctions in November.

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Emil Nolde. "Astern". 1919
Sold for €1,032,000 (incl. premium)



Eugen Schönebeck. "Figur mit Vogel I". 1963/64
Sold for €645,000 (incl. premium)



Paula Modersohn-Becker. "Selbstbildnis mit Landschaft vor Bäumen".
1903. Sold for €503,100 (incl. premium)



Antony Gormley. "Bearing II". 1995
Sold for €541,800 (incl. premium)



Edvard Munch. "Madonna". 1895
Sold for €451,500 (incl. premium)



Katharina Fritsch. "Doktor". 1997/99
Sold for €258,000 (incl. premium)

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