

Official Inauguration - Celebration at Ketterer's new House for Art

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Munich, 26 May 2009, (kk) - "Today's art market demands, apart from high quality, the factors of rarity and market freshness," thus Robert Ketterer, auctioneer and owner of Ketterer Kunst. And he adds: "I'm very glad, especially at our grand Welcome Auctions on 19/20 June 2009 in our new Munich House, to be in a position to provide an extremely choice offering of over 320 objects that meet those requirements."

The Ernst Barlach bronze "Der Geistkämpfer" ["Spirit Fighter"] exemplifies this trend. According to the Ernst Barlach Lizenzverwaltung [licence administrators], this is probably one of only two casts made during the artist's lifetime, in 1937. The astringent beauty of this work, which, according to www.artnet.de, has not been seen on the market for more than a quarter of a century, is bound to make an impact on bidders. Made as a solitary figure from the monument warning against war in St Nicholas' in Kiel on a 1 : 4 scale, this bronze, which is nearly 120 cm high, occupies a special place in Barlach's oeuvre because of its history (estimate: € 150 000-250.000).

Along with an exhibition of works by Armin Mueller-Stahl (June/July), the House for Art will be inaugurated with the following four themed auctions:

1. Modern Art (1900-1945)
2. Bauhaus (special auction)
3. Post War/Contemporary Art
4. Old Masters /Art of the 19th Century

on 1: Modern Art (1900-1945)

Here Franz Radziwill shares the spotlight with Ernst Barlach. The 1929 Radziwill oil painting "Gespräch über einen Paragraphen" ["Conversation on a Paragraph"] sends an encrypted message. Originally entered by the artist in his own inventories as "Nackte Frauen" ["Naked Women"], it carries an estimate of € 150 000-250 000. In 1960, however, the artist embellished it with additional attributes, such as the hovering angel with the paragraph. This suggests that it refers to the debate that raged then about Paragraph 218, forbidding abortions in West Germany.

Other highlights of this auction are such masterpieces as the Pierre Auguste Renoir oil painting "Allée d'arbres (Allée à Cagnes)" and Alexei von Jawlensky's "Landschaft Genfer See" ["Landscape: Lake Geneva"], (estimates: € 100 000-150 000 each) and, carrying estimates of € 80 000-100 000 each, two watercolours: "Gartenhaus" ["Summer House"] by August

Macke and “Pfingstrosen in blauer Vase” [“Peonies in a Blue Vase”] by Emil Nolde.

Bound to cause a stir in the auction room are two exceptional bronzes by Ewald Mataré (“Grosse liegende Kuh” [“Large Cow, Lying Down”]; estimate € 50 000-70 000) and the only known exemplar of Fritz Klimsch’s “Elegie” (estimate: € 25. 000-35 000) as well as an oil painting by Hanns Bolz. After Bolz’s “Portrait of the Art Dealer Alfred Flechtheim” achieved € 77 000* in December 2008 (estimate: € 18 000-24 000), his “Dame mit Hut” [“Lady Wearing a Hat”] (estimate: € 20 000-30 000) is sure to leave bidders on tenterhooks. Many of Hanns Bolz’s (1887-1918) works are believed to be missing; hence it is more than a minor sensation that a second work by Bolz can be sold at auction. After all Bolz, who succeeded to Pablo Picasso’s Paris studio, laid down in his will shortly before his death that all his pictures were to be destroyed.

on 2: Bauhaus (special auction)

Celebrating the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Bauhaus by Walter Gropius, this special auction, which is to take place jointly with the Munich auction house Quittenbaum, will feature top-quality works such as László Moholy-Nagy’s “Landschaft mit Häusern” [“Landscape with Houses”]. Painted in 1919 in oils on hardboard, this work carries an estimate of € 180 000-240 000 and represents an important example of the transition from realistic representational painting to technical and geometric art. The range of media and genres covered by this special auction encompasses the applied and the visual arts, providing a diverse programme of paintings, works on paper and sculpture as well as furnishings and objets d’art, designer objects and the decorative arts.

Other highlights, apart from an oil painting on hardboard entitled “Study for Homage to the Square: High Pasture” by Josef Albers (estimate: € 180 000-220 000), include two portfolios: Bauhaus Prints - New European Graphic Art (First Portfolio: Masters of the State Bauhaus in Weimar; estimate: € 120 000-150 000 and Fourth Portfolio: Italian and Russian Artists; estimate: € 50 000-70 000).

on 3: Post War/Contemporary Art

Two works carrying estimates of € 70 000-90 000 each will lead off at this auction. In search of materiality, Emil Schumacher has provided his 1961 untitled oil painting with a crust of paint that thrusts up into the picture from below while Lucio Fontana’s “Concetto spaziale” (1960) dissolves boundaries in depth in his painting through a gash in the white canvas that seems to coalesce with the ground in all directions.

Carrying an estimate of € 40 000-60 000, the “Spatial Sculpture” measuring 60 x 64 x 50 cm by documenta artist Norbert Kricke, is an important work at this auction. Made of stainless steel, it consists of rods welded together and bundled at the centre so that they seem to be radiating out on all sides. However, since it measures 4 x 2.40 m, Andreu Alfaro’s “Homenatge als Constructivistes” is certainly more monumental in scale. This impressive sculpture enters the lists at an estimate of € 40 000-50 000.

Along with a Diego Giacometti table (estimate: € 50.000-70.000) and a very rare assemblage (1960) by Martial Raysse (estimate: € 12 000-15 000), which according to www.artnet.de has not been on the market in this attractive form for more than fifteen years, this division gives star billing to works by such luminaries as Stephan Balkenhol, Rupprecht Geiger, Keith Haring, Roman Opalka, Daniel Spoerri and Tom Wesselmann.

on 4: Old Masters and Art of the 19th Century

It hasn’t been seen on the art market for twenty-five years: an extraordinary “Große Gewitter-landschaft ...” (“Large Landscape with Thunderstorm ...”; estimate: € 10 000-15 000) by Wilhelm Busch. Together with the Adolph von Menzel gouache “Blindekuh” (“Blind-man’s Buff”); estimate: € 80 000-120 000) it will open the Welcome Auctions.

Part of this auction is devoted to a choice selection of prints by Albrecht Dürer and works by Adrien de Braekeleer, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, Jan Frans van Dael and Franz von Defregger, who will lead off for the Munich School, as well as a work by Louis Picard. Critical of the old regime, it is a portrayal of the Ukrainian national poet Taras Shevchenko and the internationally acclaimed actor Ira Aldridge, who played Othello as the only African American actor on the English stage during the 19th century.

Pre-sale viewing (selected works):

27-29 May, Ketterer Kunst, Am Meßberg 1, Hamburg
30 May - 6 June, Ketterer Kunst, Fasanenstrasse 70, Berlin
7-8 June, F. G. Conzen GmbH, Völklinger Strasse 24, Düsseldorf
9-10 June, Kunsthandel Michael Draheim, Taunusstrasse 9, Wiesbaden
11-18 June (all works), Ketterer Kunst, Joseph-Wild-Strasse 18, Munich-Messe

Auction dates:

19 June – Old Masters and Art of the 19th Century, followed by Modern Art
20 June – special auction Bauhaus jointly with Quittenbaum, followed by Post War/Contemporary Art
at Ketterer Kunst, Joseph-Wild-Str. 18, Munich-Messe

Since it was founded in 1954, Ketterer Kunst has been firmly established in the front ranks of auction houses dealing in art and rare books with headquarters in Munich and a branch in Hamburg. Gallery rooms in Berlin as well as representatives in Heidelberg, Krefeld and Ravensburg have contributed substantially to the company's success. Ketterer Kunst has further rounded off its portfolio by acquiring the prestigious Ernest Rathenau Verlag, New York/Munich. In addition, exhibitions, special themed auctions and benefit auctions for charity as well as online auctions are regular events at Ketterer Kunst.

Contact:

Ketterer Kunst
Joseph-Wild-Str. 18
81829 München

For press enquiries:

Michaela Derra M.A.
Telefon: +49-(0)89-55244-152 (Fax: -177)
E-Mail: m.derra@kettererkunst.de

For clients:

Miriam Krohne M.A.
Telefon: +49-(0)89-55244-149, Fax:-177
E-Mail: m.krohne@kettererkunst.de
Annegret Thoma M.A.
Telefon: +49-(0)89-55244-143, Fax:-177
E-Mail: a.thoma@kettererkunst.de
Julia Haußmann M.A.
Telefon: +49-(0)89-55244-245, Fax:-177
E-Mail: j.haussmann@kettererkunst.de

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