

Press release

The Art of Protection –

Doors open for the Auctions of the Fantastic Collections of Karsten Klingbeil at Pierre Bergé & Associés in Brussels

An exceptional and encyclopaedic collection charting the development of arms and armour from the early Medieval period up to the Early Modern Age. Worldwide it is the most comprehensive private collection in this field that could ever come to the art market. This collection of antique arms and armour as well as a collection of crustaceans is proudly offered for sale by Pierre Bergé & associés in Brussels in conjunction with Hermann Historica oHG in Munich.

Brussels and Munich, 24. October 2011 – On 13 December 2011 the first part of the Fantastic Collections of Karsten Klingbeil will be offered at the auction house Pierre Bergé & associés in Brussels. As previously announced the private armoury or *Rüstkammer* of the renowned Berlin sculptor, philanthropist and former construction mogul will be presented in two parts. Following the auction in Brussels the second part of the collection will be offered in June 2012 by Hermann Historica oHG in Munich.

In Brussels the complete collection of one hundred lots of preserved crustaceans in conjunction with 240 of the total of 600 historically significant objects in the field of antique arms and armour will come under the hammer. Among this group there will be complete armours ranging in date from the 15th to the 17th century. Furthermore, a selection of helmets, hafted weapons, swords, daggers, shields and luxurious antique firearms with lavishly inlaid fruitwood shafts cover the historical span of 13 centuries.

The protective principles of the animal world and man's efforts to use their techniques for his own protection fascinated Karsten Klingbeil to an extraordinary extent. For fifty years and with great passion and expertise he has been gathering evidence for the convergence of the natural prototype and the man-made imitation, thus creating an absolutely unique collection.

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Just as in the animal world the evolution of armour for human beings was dominated by the constant conflict of providing optimal protection and at the same time the least possible handicap. Great weight and rigid armouring will hinder the wearer's strength and endurance, furthermore they obstruct his mobility and possibly also his field of vision in a threatening way. For special forms of armour such as those specifically made for tournaments the issues of weight and mobility played a minor part, at war, however, this could be decisive for survival.

How much man has learned for the production of his own armour by observing crustaceans becomes especially apparent when looking at the designs of leg and arm defences which each had to provide for maximal mobility. The further mechanical skills and technical knowledge advanced, the more the natural patterns, such as a movable composition of lames, could be realised.

With his fascinating collection, Karsten Klingbeil completely documents this evolution of the development of arms and armour from the early Medieval period to the Early Modern Age, which was always influenced by social fashion and technical innovations.

Crustaceans

With more than 40,000 breeds, crustacea are one of the most variant species. In the course of the millennia, its representatives had to adapt to diverse environments and changes of biosphere. The family of crustacean ranges from the Water flea with its one to four millimetres to the Spider crab with up to 2.50 metres in size. The collection of Karsten Klingbeil offers one hundred expertly preserved examples of those impressively adaptive animals for sale. The total presale estimate for these creatures amounts to 100,000 Euros.

Among them there is a Japanese Spider crab, "Macrocheira Kaempferi", the largest living crustacean with a span of up to three metres, and is furthermore also considered the largest living arthropod. This specimen on sale has a size of 1.80 metres and was evaluated at 15,000 – 18,000 Euros. A 45 centimetres long and extraordinary specimen of the Langouste "Palinurus sp." is estimated at 4,000 – 5,000 Euros. Lobsters usually grow as large as 70 centimetres, depending on the species. Karsten Klingbeil however, was able to find a huge "Homarus" with an extremely long tail and a total size of 0.90 metres. This specimen is estimated at 5,000 – 6,000 Euros. The estimate for an astonishingly large specimen of the "Birgus Latros" from the family of the Coconut crab, also known as Palm Thief, is calculated at 500 – 700 Euros.

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Armours

Many of the most famous rulers around 1600 owned beautiful armours from the widely known workshop of Pompeo della Cesa (1537 – 1610). The most sophisticated and ornamented armours from this master working at the Spanish court in Milan could be found in the armouries of royalty such as the King of Spain and Duke of Milan, Philip II; the Duke of Savoy, Emanuel Philibert; the Duke of Parma and Piacenza, Alessandro Farnese; the Duke of Mantua and Montferrat, Vincenzo I. Gonzaga and the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinando I. de Medici.

During the last quarter of the 16th century the demand for armours completely decorated from head to toe was established, originating from Northern Italy. Following the taste of that time, the works of Pompeo della Cesa are excellent examples for the craftsmanship of the contemporary armourers' workshops. The piece in the Klingbeil collection signed 'Pompe' is an armour that is finely etched and gilt over its entire surface, ornamented with tendrils and trophies, impressive in its unique quality and also its state of preservation. This very decorative and complete harness from circa 1585 – 1595 will be estimated at 250,000 to 300,000 Euros.

A sensationally rare tournament armour for the Italian tilt dates from the end of the 16th century. Whereas other forms of armour have been designed to protect the bearer and, at the same time, ensure mobility and convenience, tournament armours were built for a far more sturdy purpose. Their only function was the utmost protection for the participants of the jousting – without considering a wide field of vision, weight or mobility. The available piece weighs more than thirty kilograms, i.e. more than one and a half times more than a war armour. With the closed and specially reinforced, one-piece helmet this is a perfect representative of this extremely rare type and currently, the only known example of an Italian tournament armour in private possession worldwide. This rarity has its price, consequently the assessment amounts to 150,000 to 200,000 Euros.

A brilliantly fluted and shimmering armour of the so-called Maximilian type was crafted in a Nuremberg workshop during the period 1520 - 30. Lavishly fluted and very harmonious in shape, the form of this armour is closely oriented to male costume of the German Renaissance. The estimate for this complete armour with a one-piece, closed helmet is set at 100,000 – 150,000 Euros.

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Likewise the Innsbruck school of armourers were renowned for the excellence of their works. Thus the brothers Anton and Hans Hörburger (1556 – 1588) found recognition for their functionally robust yet elegant and precise works. While Hans Hörburger was working for the Zeughaus in Innsbruck, his brother Anton is recorded in 1570 to have applied to be armourer to the court for Archduke Ferdinand II. From 1561 to 1565, however, the brothers worked in partnership. During that time the present high-quality and very rare three-quarter armour has been manufactured. Bearing the armourers marks of both brothers it can clearly be attributed to the phase of their partnership. This impressively homogenous piece is evaluated at 60,000 – 80,000 Euros.

Helmets

Among the impressive objects offered in Brussels there is also a selection of forty helmets. One of them is a very rare etched Çiçak in the Turkish style from circa 1560 to 1580. This is a rare example of Ottoman loot from the Turkish-Hungarian War (1596 – 1605), this unusually designed skull bears the Nuremberg city mark as well as the inscription „Mohammed“. By means of this inscription this helmet can be recognised as having been acquired by an former Turkish arsenal. The construction of this helmet follows the Ottoman fashion quite closely and is a fine example of the popularity of would-be Turkish arms and armour that emerged among the forces of the Holy Roman Empire during the late 16th century. Their design was based on the model of the Ottoman Çiçak helmets and they were produced for the Polish and Hungarian light cavalry. Worldwide only few of these very unusual helmets are found in private ownership, hence the appraised value amounts to 30,000 – 40,000 Euros.

The estimate for a rare armet close helmet fitted with a reinforcing bevor over the chin is unsurprisingly set at to 40,000 – 50,000 Euros. This Italian closed visor helmet from circa 1490 – 1500 is a direct development of the 14th century bascinet and is characterised by he hinged cheek-pieces which open upwards when put on and taken off by the wearer.

An Italian sallet or so called barbata, the Italian developement of the earlier bascinet; this example in the Klingbeil collection dates from 1470 and is estimated at 10,000 – 15,000 Euros. The one-piece skull with its large face opening is immediately reminiscent of the form and character of the ancient Corinthian and Illyrian bronze helmets. These helmets provided excellent protection without considerably obstructing breathing and vision, and furthermore they completely corresponded with the predominant fashion of antiquity, they prevailed throughout the Italian cultural sphere.

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Another Italian work is a lavishly etched morion from the late 16th century. This open type helmet has its origins in the so-called kettle hat or war hat and is today still worn by the Swiss Papal Guard of the Vatican. High-quality morions such as the present example, valued in the range at 8,000 – 10,000 Euros, were forged in one piece and finely decorated.

Edged weapons

No less substantial and impressive is the selection of edged weapons offered at the auction in Brussels. For example, one outstanding rare parade sabre in exotic style that was manufactured according to the taste of the courts of the prince electors of Saxony. The hilt is made from fire-gilt copper and is decorated with inlays of red coral. To emphasise the exotic impression it is mounted with a Persian shamshir blade. This extraordinarily opulent weapon was probably made in either Nuremberg or Augsburg in circa 1610 – 1630, examples of this style can be found in the National Art Collection in Dresden. The estimate is 30.000 – 40.000 Euros.

Another beautiful object is a German chiselled iron rapier with fine silver inlays and swept hilt. The blade is 87.5 cm long and engraved on both sides with the name of the bladesmith, Clemens Stam. He was one of the leading bladesmiths working in Solingen and had also worked for the Spanish court within the end of 16th century. This sword has been exhibited at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 and was at that time included in the prestigious Zschiller collection of Berlin and Leipzig. It is estimated at 20,000 – 30,000 Euros.

A beautiful and striking cup-hilt rapier from Brescia from 1670 – 1680 has a slender, very long blade of 120.5 cm and an extraordinary total length of 133.5 cm. This rare edged weapon is estimated at 8,000 – 10,000 Euros. A comparable example is documented for the Stibbert Museum in Florence with the inventory number 939.

The same estimate applies to a rare sword from the Middle Ages. The blade of this weapon from the eleventh century is inscribed ‚Ulfberth‘ on both sides. This identification is found on numerous swords from all over Europe and is thought to be either the signature of a family of bladesmiths with a long-standing tradition or possibly a group of several workshops.

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Shields

Seventeen shields, some of them very sophisticated works, will be offered for sale at the first auction in December. Often manufactured from perishable wood and leather it is a sensation that they stood the test of time undamaged and over centuries. An extraordinarily beautiful object, a Venetian lacquered and gilt parade shield matching the Ottoman taste of circa 1580, was manufactured for the guard of the declared art patron, the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, Wolf Dietrich von Raitenau (1587 – 1612). The shield belongs to a relatively small series of which three slightly different versions are known; the estimate is 25,000 to 30,000 Euros.

Daggers

Among the 25 daggers now listed are rare pieces such as an Italian “Cinquedea” (so called because of the five fingers width of the top of the blade) with finely etched blade from a Ferrara workshop of circa 1500. This very broad bladed weapon, also called “Anelace”, has primarily been worn by civilians and is estimated at the noticeable sum of 15,000 – 20,000 Euros.

Hafted weapons

The section of hafted weapons with a total of twenty objects includes pieces that can hardly ever be found on the market. For example, a richly ornamented ceremonial glaive from 1605 – 1610 that can be attributed to the palace guard of Cardinal and founder of the Borghese art collection, Scipione Caffarelli-Borghese (1577 – 1633). The current valuation price is 20,000 – 30,000 Euros.

Firearms

The fantastic collection of Karsten Klingbeil includes magnificent old firearms with artfully ornamented fruitwood stocks. Extremely finely manufactured weapons such as a German or Bohemian wheellock rifle decorated with horn and ivory inlays from 1667, as well as an equally sophisticated Italian pair of wheellock pistols from 1640, are superb examples of the gunmakers art and the prevailing taste of the day. The rifle made in the manner of the workshop of the gunsmith Melchior Schuster in Vienna has been evaluated at 60,000 – 80,000 Euros. The pair of pistols from the leading Italian gunsmith of his time, Giovanni Antonio Gavacciolo of Brescia, is evaluated at 50,000 – 70,000 Euros.

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Auctions of the collections of Karsten Klingbeil – Due to the large number of both extremely rare and unique pieces it is necessary for two auctions to be held. As early as mid-December of this year, the first 240 lots of a total of 600 objects will be offered for sale in Brussels. In addition to this, the collection of rare crustaceans will also be offered at that time, comprising approximately 100 lots. In June 2012, the second auction focuses exclusively on armour and antique arms and will be held in Munich. Fully detailed and lavishly illustrated catalogues will be published one month prior to each auction.

Auction Brussels: Wednesday, 13 December 2011 at 3 pm
Preview: 07 December – 2 pm to 6 pm
08 to 12 December – 10 am to 6 pm
13 December – 10 am to 12 noon

Karsten Klingbeil – artist, collector, world designer. Born in Stettin in 1925, he grew up in Berlin, and soon he knew that he wanted to become a sculptor. His entire life he persistently pursued this goal but was not able to finally realise it until after selling his construction business in Berlin. With the same passion, unerringly and successfully as in his career, he built his collections of antique arms, orders, butterflies and beetles. He and his wife Ulla show great charitable commitment and since 1983 he has dedicated himself to his highly esteemed creative work.

Pierre Bergé & Associés, Brussels – in 2002 opened its doors in Paris. The auction house was founded by businessman Pierre Bergé who chose his team wisely, thus the auction house soon developed into an important force within the international art market. Just one year after its founding the auction house opened a branch in Geneva and expanded to Switzerland. Since 2006 the company has been constantly growing and has become the leading auction house in Belgium, furthermore it has been able to consolidate its position on the European market. The main focus of Pierre Bergé & Associés is on antique and modern art with a strong emphasis on design.

Hermann Historica oHG, Munich – one of the world's leading auction houses in the special areas of antique arms and armour, antiquities, orders, historical objects and military history as well as hunting weapons and trophies. Founded fifty years ago the company found recognition amongst international collectors and museums. Since 1982 and under the aegis of the present owners no less than two auctions are conducted each year for the more than 40,000 clients worldwide. Particularly sensational have been the sales of numerous objects from the former estates of royal and noble houses as well as the auctions dispersing important collections.

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Practical Information

Auction

Part 1 – 13th December 2011 at Pierre Bergé & associés Brussels

Part 2 – June 2012 at Hermann Historica in Munich

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Catalogue

Catalogue Part 1 is available on November 9th:

www.pba-auctions.com

www.hermann-historica.com

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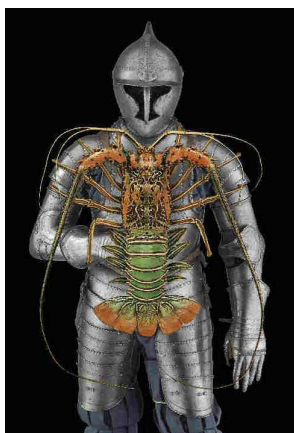
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A very rare etched Çiçak in the Turkish style from circa 1560 to 1580.



The Art of Protection - Fascinating convergence of the natural prototype and the man-made imitation.



Detail of an exceptional north Italian etched, blued and gilt full armour for the field, attributed to the workshop of Pompeo della Chiesa, ca. 1580-1600.



A German chiselled iron rapier with fine silver inlays and swept hilt from the end of 16th century.



A richly ornamented ceremonial glaive from 1605 – 1610 that can be attributed to the palace guard of Cardinal and founder of the Borghese art collection, Scipione Caffarelli-Borghese (1577 – 1633).



A German or Bohemian wheellock rifle decorated with horn and ivory inlays from 1667.