

Views of the Earth & the Written World: Book Gems from Eight Centuries

PRESS RELEASE | Hamburg, May 06, 2025

The upcoming Rare Book auction on May 26, 2025, in Hamburg showcases extraordinary documents of our cultural history, among them a magnificent Bible, a fascinating collection of documents depicting views of the world and cultural portraits, as well as rare medieval manuscripts, some from the Islamic cultural sphere of West Asia. A diverse collection of works that exemplify the dynamic interplay between literature, art, and intellectual history.



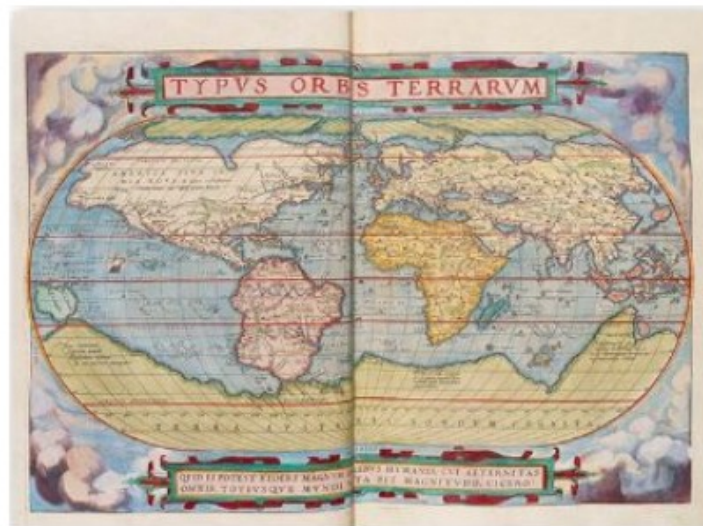
The magnificent pearl script bible "**Biblia latina**," created around 1250, is an outstanding example of medieval book art. This famous Parisian pocket Bible, crafted on fine vellum, impresses with its filigree initials, including figurative representations such as the splendid Genesis initial by an Italian illuminator. Another special feature of this work is its extremely rare Venetian leather binding in Oriental style from the 16th century.

(Lot 1, Estimate: €70,000)



A complete series of the first edition of **Thomas L. McKenney's** and **James Hall's "History of the Indian Tribes of North America"** (Philadelphia, 1836–1844) is equally spectacular – it is an important cultural and historical document from the early days of the United States. The three magnificent folio volumes contain 120 richly colored lithographs, primarily based on drawings by Charles B. King, depicting impressive portraits of indigenous chiefs, warriors, women, and children. Created during a period of political upheaval and cultural repression, the work provides a visual record of those tribes whose original portraits were largely lost in the fire at the Smithsonian Institute in 1865.

(Lot 29, Estimate: €50,000)



With its combination of geographical precision, artistic design, and systematic structure, **Abraham Ortelius's "Theatrum orbis terrarum"** (1574) is a fundamental work in the mapping of the modern world—a milestone in cartography. The atlas contains an oval world map, four maps of the continents, 59 maps of European countries, 17 maps of Germany, and 10 maps of Asia and North Africa. The illustrations are richly decorated with cartouches, ships, and mythical sea creatures.

(Lot 21, Estimate: €50,000)



The bibliophile edition of Clemens Brentano's fairy tale "**Fanferlieschen Schönefüßchen**," published in 1924 by Fr. Gurlitt, is one of the rare gems in **Max Beckmann's** graphic oeuvre. This copy comes from the limited edition of only 30 numbered copies and includes an extra Beckmann etching—a treasure that was only available in this deluxe edition.

According to Beckmann expert Hofmaier, only four copies worldwide can be traced today. Art historian Ralph Jentsch adds: "Except for a few copies, they were either lost in a fire or accidentally destroyed in some way." It is therefore one of the rarest surviving book art editions of Modernism. (Lot 62, Estimate: €10,000)

An array of fine manuscripts is also particularly noteworthy. Six "**Quranic sheets**" from around 1100 in early Kufi script on parchment and an excellent state of preservation make for an extremely rare document of Arabic calligraphy. The pages contain excerpts from the Sura Al-Ahzab (33), including verses on social, legal, and spiritual issues in early Islam.

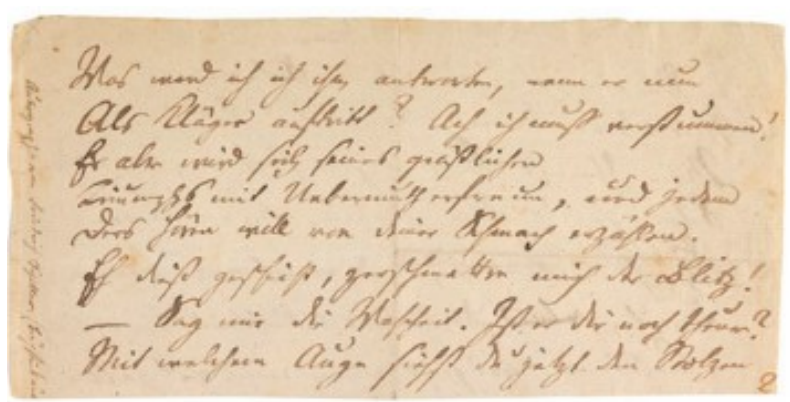
(Lot 5, Estimate: €25,000)





An early complete “**Quran manuscript**” (16th century) from the Saadian period, written on unusually strong, smoothed paper, provides a rare insight into Islamic book art in western North Africa. While the Quran is written in the characteristic Maghreb script, it is supplemented by an Iraqi-Arabic colophon embedded in decorative cartouches from the 17th/18th century.

(Lot 6, Estimate: €10,000)



This rare “**Manuscript Fragment**” by **Friedrich Schiller**, originating in Weimar and dated between 1804 and 1805, is another auction highlight. Throughout his life, Schiller destroyed most of the manuscripts of his dramas and treatises, as he believed that only the final work could serve as a valid testimony to his artistic intent. The present fragment from the last years of his life is, therefore, a particularly rare piece by the German poet.

(Lot 44, Estimate: €22,000)

Please find all works online here.

AUCTION IN HAMBURG

May 26, 2025

1:00 p.m. Rare Books – Day Sale. Lot 100 – 373

5:00 p.m. Rare Books – Evening Sale. Lot 1 – 75

Rare Books Preview, Ketterer Kunst, Holstenwall 5, 20355 Hamburg

May 19, 2025, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

May 20, 2025, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

May 21, 2025, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

May 22, 2025, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

May 23, 2025, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

May 25, 2025, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Auctions in Munich

June 6 Evening Sale - Contemporary Art / Modern Art / 19th Century Art

June 7 Day Sale - Contemporary Art / Modern Art / 19th Century Art

Preview of selected works from the auctions on June 6/7, 2025

Cologne – Ketterer Kunst, Gertrudenstraße 24 - 28, 50667 Cologne

May 15, 2025, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. (reception from 5:30 p.m.)

May 16, 2025, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

May 17, 2025, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Frankfurt – Bernhard Knaus Fine Art, Niddastraße 84, 60329 Frankfurt am Main

May 19, 2025, 4–9 p.m. (reception from 5:30 p.m.)

May 20, 2025, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Hamburg – Galerie Tom Reichstein, Stockmeyerstr. 41 – 43, Halle 4 J, 20457 Hamburg

May 22, 2025 11 a.m. - 8:30 p.m. (reception from 5:30 p.m.)

May 23, 2025 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Berlin – Ketterer Kunst, Fasanenstr. 70, 10719 Berlin

June 25, 2025 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. (reception from 5 p.m.)

June 26, 2025 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

June 27, 2025 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

June 28, 2025, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

June 29, 2025, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

June 30, 2025, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Munich – Ketterer Kunst, Joseph-Wild-Str. 18, 81829 Munich (all works)

June 1, 2025, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

June 2, 2025, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

June 3, 2025, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

June 4, 2025, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

June 5, 2025, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

June 6, 2025, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

KETTERER KUNST

Ketterer Kunst, based in Munich with branches in Hamburg, Cologne, and Berlin, as well as a worldwide network of experts, was founded in 1954. Robert Ketterer is the second generation to run the family business. The auction house focuses on Contemporary, Modern, and 19th Century Art, as well as on Rare Books from five centuries. In its market segment, Ketterer Kunst has ranked number one in the German language region for the sixth year in a row and is also among among the top 10 highest-grossing art auction houses worldwide, with numerous record results (Artnet Analytics, Auction Houses by Total Sales Value for Fine Art Works Created after 1800).

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