

Wolfgang Schöddert

General von Einem, Kniende, Stehende

Georg Kolbe with Ferdinand
Möller and Three Works on
Consignment from 1938



1 Ferdinand Möller, ca. 1928; in the background on the desk is the small sculpture *Sitzende* (Seated Woman) by Georg Kolbe, historical photograph

In 1938, the gallerist Ferdinand Möller became a dealer in “degenerate” art (fig. 1).¹ By 1941, he had received eighty-nine paintings, ten sculptures, and nearly 700 works on paper from the holdings of the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, most of them by artists he had represented as a gallerist since the 1910s and continued to do so.² He did not take on the only work confiscated by Georg Kolbe as “degenerate,” a print from the portfolio *Siebzehn Steinzeichnungen* (Seventeen Lithographs) published by the Freie Secession in 1921 in an edition of a hundred.³ Having previously been involved in the publication of the portfolio, he already owned the print. Möller is known for his involvement in the “exploitation” of “degenerate art.” In fact, before and during the 1940s, several thousand works from other contexts passed through his hands. Among them were sculptures by Kolbe in the mid two-digit range. Their number cannot yet be quantified more precisely, since titles, motifs, and editions of his casts are not clearly known. In 1938, Möller had possession of works with the titles *General von Einem, Kniende* (Kneeling Woman), and *Stehende* (Standing Woman). These were consignments from a deaccessioned stock of the art collections of the City of Düsseldorf, from the collection of a Jewish family, and from the possession of an air force officer.⁴ Business-wise, Möller and Kolbe went their separate ways at this time. Even before 1933, the sculptor coordinated the direct sale of his freshly cast sculptures with other dealers. An examination

of the three consignments cannot, therefore, add a new facet to the artist's attitude toward National Socialism. Instead, it sketches the contemporary day-to-day business of the gallery and the politically conditioned redistribution processes of Kolbe's small sculptures in the late 1930s. Both point to broader tasks. They concern the difficult clarification of the identity of Kolbe's figures. Especially for the period between 1933 and 1945, it is only possible to a limited extent to determine who owned or had possession of the casts, exhibited them, or offered them for sale. The Georg Kolbe Museum is working on these questions in the course of the inventory of Kolbe's sculptural works. Provenance and art-market research can support this mission and should share its results with the museum.

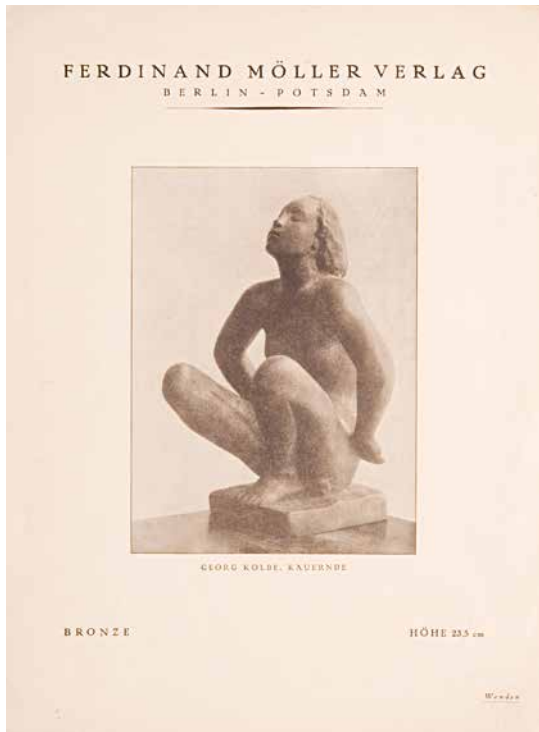
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In 1949, the contemporary witness Paul Ortwin Rave reported that "degenerate" art had been traded here and there along "secret and hidden paths."⁵ As a result of the reappraisal of the so-called "Schwabing Art Trove" from the apartment of Hildebrand Gurlitt's son, this report is now attributed to post-war strategies of exoneration.⁶ At the same time, recent art-market research no longer assumes that even works of a moderate Expressionism were traded "under the counter" from the second half of the 1930s at the latest.⁷ Despite all the state and ideological interventions in the art business, paintings, sculptures, and graphic works by "ostracized" artists were in demand, offered in writing, sent for viewing, and subsequently sold, even beyond the "Degenerate Art" campaign.⁸ Potentially, the entire production created up to that time was available, and the ongoing provenance research on NS-confiscated cultural property, which requires examining every work of art created before 1945, is particularly aware of this material dimension.⁹

Georg Kolbe's oeuvre includes about 1,000 sculptures.¹⁰ Beginning in the late 1890s, he worked with renowned art salons and galleries, participated in the sales exhibitions of the important artists' associations, and sold works directly from his studio.¹¹ The number of casts he put into circulation by the late 1930s is unknown. The frequency with which they returned to the market from the possession of the first buyers and were offered there again is also unknown. From the late 1920s onward, his works appeared continuously at auctions, where they were offered until the end of 1943, when trade was restricted due to the war.¹² After 1933, when owners of artworks wanted to or were able to avoid public sale through an auction house, the results of which were difficult to predict, they relied on the assistance of gallerists who were still accessible and active in this field.

The Time Together

In 1913, Möller began working at Galerie Ernst Arnold in Dresden and, after a short period of training, managed the Breslau (now Wrocław, Poland) branch of the long-established art dealer. Möller may have met Georg Kolbe in 1916, when he exhibited at



2 Brochure for the small sculpture *Kauernde* (Crouching Woman) by Georg Kolbe, Galerie Ferdinand Möller, 1919



3 Georg Kolbe, *Maria Möller-Garny*, 1921, bronze, h. 36 cm, Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin

the main gallery in Dresden.¹³ It is possible that a first business contact took place there. After Möller opened his own gallery in Breslau in 1917, where he wanted to “put myself, in particular, in the service of local art,”¹⁴ the Freie Secession in Berlin was interested in collaborating with him and appointed him as its managing director in 1918. Möller moved his gallery to Potsdamer Strasse in Berlin, one of the capital’s early art centers, and quickly established himself there as a respected dealer and publisher of modern German art. His work for the Freie Secession intensified his contact with Kolbe, who had exhibited with the association since 1914 and served on its executive board from 1919 to 1921. The fact that, in the year of his appointment, Kolbe granted him the right to distribute an edition, initially limited to fifteen casts, of the small sculpture *Kauernde* (Squatting Female Figure), which he had designed in 1917, is evidence of his initially good relationship with the young dealer (fig. 2).¹⁵ In 1921, he created a portrait of Möller’s wife, the painter Maria Möller-Garny, which was cast in bronze immediately afterwards (fig. 3).¹⁶ In June of that year, the portrait was exhibited as *Kopf M. M.* (Head of M. M.), along with a selection of his figures, in the exhibition *Potsdamer Kunstsommer* (Potsdam Art Summer), conceived by Möller and the painter and art writer Erich Hancke in the Orangerie in Park Sanssouci.¹⁷ Möller-Garny shared Kolbe’s interest in modern dance, and a cast of the 1919 figure



4 Georg Kolbe, *Tänzer Nijinsky* (The Dancer Nijinsky), 1919, bronze, h. 65 cm, historical photograph

Tänzer Nijinsky (The Dancer Nijinsky), installed in the courtyard of the Möller family's spacious home in Potsdam, underscored this connection (fig. 4).¹⁸

With the *Potsdamer Kunstsommer*, Möller had already positioned himself as an exhibition organizer beyond his ongoing gallery work, and the following year he also proved to be an internationally oriented organizer. In 1922, together with the art historian Wilhelm Reinhold Valentiner, who was already well connected in the United States, he began preparing the exhibition *A Collection of Modern German Art*. The Anderson Galleries in New York were chosen as the venue. The show was announced to the invited artists as the first "representative exhibition of new German art in America."¹⁹ Kolbe, to whom Valentiner had dedicated the most important publication on his work to date in 1922, was to participate. In March 1923, he participated in the exhibition *Kreis der Brücke* (Circle of Die Brücke), which was important to Möller and during its run granted him the right to distribute another small sculpture, the newly created small *Sitzende* (Seated Woman), which, like the *Kauernde* before it, was initially to be cast in an edition of fifteen.²⁰

The exhibition opened in New York in October 1923. In addition to Kolbe, the sculptors Herbert Garbe, Emy Roeder, Milly Steger, Richard Scheibe, and Renée Sintenis, as well as the painters Maria Caspar-Filser, Heinrich Campendonck, Lyonel Feininger, Heinrich Nauen, Emil Nolde, and Max Pechstein took part.²¹ In total, the invited artists submitted more than 270 paintings, sculptures, and works on paper. Kolbe sent the sculptures

Assunta, *Klage* (Lament), and *Meerweib* (Mermaid), as well as several drawings.²² With this selection, he achieved a good success. Although Valentiner particularly emphasized *Assunta*, it remained unsold and was ordered back to Berlin in January 1924.²³ *Klage* and *Meerweib*, on the other hand, found new owners after only a short time.²⁴ The response to the new German art was generally good, but the sales of The Anderson Galleries did not generate the expected income for the artists. They had assumed that they would be able to achieve the same prices in the American market as they had in Germany. This proved to be a false conclusion, since not only was the price level of French art, which had long been established there, lower, but so was that of contemporary American movements. Moreover, because the rapidly rising inflation in Germany made it difficult to convert the value of the German mark into dollars according to the daily exchange rate, The Anderson Galleries, while maintaining their commission, ended up selling at prices that did not yield the net proceeds the artists had expected. When Möller arrived in New York after the opening, he organized a follow-up exhibition in the rooms of the book dealer Erhard Weyhe. He hoped to achieve better results under his own direction, but soon realized that the artists' price expectations made it impossible for him to work economically in New York and cover his own expenses.²⁵ He therefore came to the conclusion:

“that the market for German art can only be won if we are at least not more expensive than the well-known talented young American artists [...]. The German artists, who demand such high prices today, assume that people are waiting here for their works. This is a misconception!”²⁶

Meanwhile, the monthly rent of the Berlin gallery had risen to 71,250,000,000 [!] marks.²⁷ There were disagreements among the members of the Freie Secession about future exhibitions; the association's assets were losing value, and Möller was criticized for his absence.²⁸ Finally, the idea was floated that Alfred Flechtheim should replace him as managing director.²⁹ Upon his return to Berlin in January 1924, Möller resigned from the Freie Secession. Since his business opportunities had collapsed as a result of inflation, he also closed the gallery a short time later. He retired to his home in Potsdam and continued to run the business there in the style of a salon. Kolbe remained present with sculptures but was apparently no longer available for closer collaboration. When Möller reopened his gallery in Berlin in 1927 under improved economic conditions, works by the sculptor could still be seen sporadically in group exhibitions. However, after the controversial exhibition *30 deutsche Künstler* (30 German Artists) in the summer of 1933, which contributed to the heated discussion about modernism in National Socialism and provided a stage for National Socialist students oriented toward Expressionism, these participations also ceased. Kolbe opted for representation by other dealers.³⁰

“I only produce large figures...”

In 1937, the newly founded Buchholz Gallery Curt Valentin in New York offered Georg Kolbe a new perspective for the American market. With his henceforth regular participation in the *Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung* (Great German Art Exhibition), he appeared at the same time alongside the leading illustrators of the National Socialist worldview. His sculptures could be seen in public spaces, and with the photographs by his assistant Margrit Schwartzkopff, more recent figures were “repeatedly paraded as prime examples of the Aryan race” in the politically conformist press.³¹ Kolbe was an established artist; and in November 1938, he also modeled the portrait of the Spanish General Francisco Franco. The year before, when his large bronze *Genius der Verkündung* (*Große Verkündung*) [Genius of the Proclamation (Large Proclamation), 1937] was presented in the tower hall of the German pavilion of the Exposition Internationale des Arts et des Techniques dans la Vie Moderne in Paris, the Spanish Republic exhibited in its pavilion Pablo Picasso’s impressively accusatory painting of the bombing of the city of Guernica. And while prominent German exiles showed solidarity with the Republic, Kolbe agreed to portray the fascist dictator on behalf of the head of the *Compañía Hispano-Marroquí de Transportes Limitada* (HISMA), which handled arms and raw materials transactions between Spain and the German Reich. Unlike Kolbe, who was gaining recognition and received commissions, Möller found the art political climate turning against him in 1937, threatening the existence of his gallery. He had been a strong advocate of German art since 1917, and after the “seizure of power,” he had initially seen himself in harmony with active National Socialists who shared his interest in modern art. In March 1937, however, Wolfgang Willrich listed him among the leading art dealers and publishers of the “Red System” in his diatribe *Säuberung des Kunsttempels* (Purging the Temple of Art).³² Beginning in July 1937, the “Entartete Kunst” (Degenerate Art) campaign discredited the artists most important to him, and his previously regular exhibitions were declared “undesirable.”³³ When the exhibition *Entartete Kunst* came to Berlin in February 1938, the press wrote:

“It [the exhibition] aims to demonstrate the common root of political and cultural anarchy, to expose the decay and degeneration of art as cultural Bolshevism in the fullest sense.”³⁴

In August 1937, Möller initially assumed that there was no longer any possibility of selling certain works “at the moment.”³⁵ However, despite the fact that the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts was monitoring the gallery, he continued to deal with consignments almost without interruption, and in November 1937, for example, he sold works by Emil Nolde, Erich Heckel, and Paul Klee.³⁶ With the beginning of the “exploitation” of “degenerate art,” his first viewing of confiscated works in December 1938 at the latest, and a larger deal he successfully initiated, it became clear that Möller would be involved in further sales. This cemented his position as a dealer in modern art. If his work could previously be seen as promoting “cultural Bolshevism,” after his involvement in the “exploitation” of “degenerate



5 Advertisement of Galerie Ferdinand Möller in the magazine *Die Weltkunst* XII, no. 50, December 11, 1938

art” it could also be seen as supporting National Socialist policies. With Kolbe, it seems, he hoped to return to an exhibition business that was no longer “undesirable” to the leaders of the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts. The sculptor Günter von Scheven, who had accompanied Kolbe on his visit to Franco and had exhibited with Möller as late as 1936, probably encouraged him to submit a request to this effect in early December. In this request, Möller referred to the portrait of the dictator, but Kolbe’s reaction was brief and dismissive:

“thank you very much for your kind letter and the offer of an exhibition. – What Scheven had in mind for new works, however, is not clear to me. I only produce large figures—no small sculptures were made—and I have already promised the Franco head to the upcoming academy exhibition. However, I would be pleased to welcome you at any time.”³⁷

After this rejection, Möller did not continue his earlier exhibition activities and concentrated his business on the already advertised buying and selling of nineteenth- and twentieth-century masterpieces (fig. 5). In April 1939, he once again moved into a new gallery space not far from the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts. It is not known how he presented his offer there. According to his account books, a *Kniende*—which he sold to the Berlin banker and diplomat Heinz von Böttinger for RM 2,500 on December 24, 1940—was the only work that he again settled directly with Kolbe until the end of the NS era.³⁸

General von Einem

Despite his mention in Willrich’s diatribe, Möller was to sell works from the art collections of the City of Düsseldorf that were to be deaccessioned beginning in March 1937.³⁹ The deaccessions concerned the holdings of the Galerie der Neuzeit, which had only opened in 1935. The building had been established as a museum of twentieth-century art but was closed again only one day later because visitors found the works on display too progressive.⁴⁰ After it proved difficult to make a compliant selection, it was decided to transform the institution into the Rheinisch-Westfälische Galerie. According to the name, only works by native Rhinelanders and Westphalians were to be shown there, and works



6 Georg Kolbe, *Karl von Einem*, 1915, iron, h. 34.5 cm, historical photograph

by all other artists were to be deaccessioned. Among other modern painters and sculptors, Otto Dix, Paula Modersohn-Becker, Edvard Munch, Max Pechstein, and Emil Nolde were affected.⁴¹ The decision to sell the works had already been made in December 1936,⁴² but its implementation continued beyond the “Entartete Kunst” campaign. The temporal proximity to the confiscation campaign suggests that the works from the Galerie der Neuzeit should be classified as “degenerate” and that the sales should be seen as anticipatory obedience in the “purging” of the Düsseldorf collections. There is no doubt that their sale was a reaction to the political rejection of modernism, but the ultimate reason for the intended sales from this collection was the lack of affiliation of the artists concerned with the Rhine-Westphalian region. This explains why not only was the stylistically and thematically unsuspicious portrait *General von Einem* (1915, fig. 6) by the Saxon-born Kolbe discarded, but another of his formerly three sculptures in the collection, *Badende* (Bather, 1919), was sold without an intermediary to Annelies von Ribbentrop, the wife of Joachim von Ribbentrop, Reich Minister of Foreign Affairs.⁴³

Möller received the portrait *General von Einem* on April 27, 1938, along with works by Renée Sintenis, Karl Albiker, Ernesto de Fiori, and Hermann Haller (fig. 7).⁴⁴ The portrait had been modeled in 1915 at the general’s headquarters in the French Ardennes. As early as 1916, it had already been exhibited as a lead cast at the Freie Secession in Berlin, as well as at Galerie Ernst Arnold in Dresden, so that Möller was probably familiar with it.⁴⁵ Düsseldorf acquired the cast on April 15, 1933, and Kolbe learned on May 6, 1933,

1735 17. IV	Kaufausweisungen des Stadt Düsseldorf	Altehrer, Sialanka	1 Lo.	750.-	1735
1736	do.	de Siori Jell-Hild	1. {	480.-	1736
1737	do.	Keller, Neuwand	1 -	400.-	1737
1738	do.	Keller, Kopfmann	1 -	300.-	1738
1739	do.	Kolbe, General v.	1 -	600.-	1739
1740	do.	Kauker, Jell-Hild	1 -	500.-	1740
1741	Nicht Kleiner, Meckler, Kuter des Kindes	General v. Kolbe	1 -		1741
1741 19. IV	H. E. K. Koll, Königsallee-Teumark.	Kaufmann, Koll	1 -	1000.-	1741

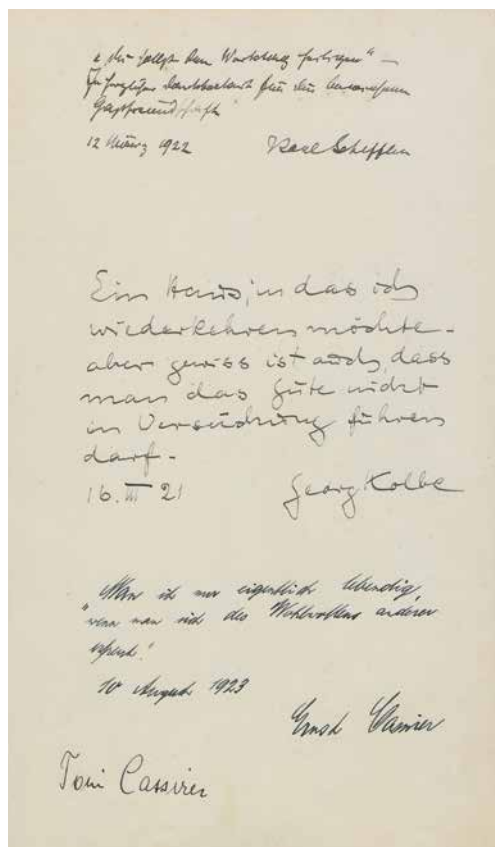
7 Goods receipt ledger of Galerie Ferdinand Möller, entry dated April 27, 1938, regarding the receipt of the portrait *General von Einem* by Georg Kolbe

in a letter from Curt Valentin on the letterhead of Galerie Alfred Flechtheim, “that the Einem head was purchased in Düsseldorf at the price of RM 400.”⁴⁶ Valentin concealed the actual circumstances of the acquisition. Contrary to what he wrote, the portrait had been accepted as a partial payment for a loan from the City of Düsseldorf to Alfred Flechtheim.⁴⁷ According to correspondence at the time, the sculpture was an iron casting that was inventoried as an “anonymous gift.”⁴⁸ In 1938, however, Möller did not receive an iron casting but, according to the transfer list, a bronze.⁴⁹ He was able to sell some of the works that had come to the gallery along with the portrait *General von Einem*; he sent the rest back in two crates in April 1939.⁵⁰ It is possible that one of the crates also contained the portrait, since *General von Einem* can still be found in the art collections under the inventory number 0.1952.55. Not in iron or bronze, but as a lead casting.⁵¹

Kniende

In 1937, the Reich Chamber of Fine Arts noted that Möller had a “conspicuously high proportion of Jewish visitors.”⁵² This presumably included quite a few of his long-time customers, who were forced to sell under increasing persecution and deprivation of rights. Among them were members of the family of the Breslau-based textile manufacturer Carl Lewin. During the First World War, Lewin produced uniform fabrics for the German army. Max Liebermann painted portraits of him and other members of the family; and by 1921 at the latest, Kolbe was also a guest of the Lewin family (fig. 8).⁵³ In 1925, he created a portrait of the entrepreneur (fig. 9).⁵⁴ Portraits of other family members are also known. Lewin’s children and their partners shared their father’s interest in art. His son Leo Lewin was one of Möller’s early and important collectors. From Georg Kolbe, he acquired casts of the figures *Kauernde*, *Victoria*, *Capriccio*, and *Kniende II*.⁵⁵ Further purchases can be assumed. On March 6, 1933, his wife Helene Lewin wrote to Kolbe:

“As you will probably know, our financial situation has changed a great deal. We were forced to give up our house and also have to sell our art objects. Since we



8 Page from the guest book of the Breslau-based textile industrialist Carl Lewin, at whose home Kolbe was a guest in 1922, Georg Kolbe Museum Archive, Berlin



9 Georg Kolbe, *Carl Lewin*, 1925/26, bronze, h. 34.5 cm, Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin

do not know the current value of your sculptures and do not wish to sell the objects below value, I would like to ask you to let me know what you think the large kneeling dancer is now worth.⁵⁶

Contrary to what Mrs. Lewin probably expected due to the long-standing connection, it was not Kolbe himself who replied, but rather Margrit Schwartzkopff, who had apparently been unknown to her until then. She remained noncommittal and without empathy with regard to the collector's fate, held out the prospect of a sales price of approximately RM 2,500 in the "current economic situation," and kept the photos of the sculpture that had been sent along with the letter.⁵⁷

On December 8, 1938, Lewin's sister-in-law, Susanne Lewin, approached Möller and handed over to him a *Kniende* from her collection.⁵⁸ It was a bronze for which Möller noted no net proceeds to her. In doing so, he was possibly responding to Article IV of the "Ordinance on the Use of Jewish Property" of December 3, 1938, which prohibited Jewish citizens from freely selling jewels, precious metals, and works of art worth more

than RM 1,000.⁵⁹ According to the information that Margrit Schwartzkopff gave Helene Lewin in 1933 about the *Kniende Tänzerin* (Kneeling Dancer) and the RM 2,500 paid by Heinz von Böttinger for his *Kniende* in 1940, Susanne Lewin's *Kniende* would have fallen within the scope of the ordinance. Möller was unable to sell the sculpture and returned it to Mrs. Lewin on February 13, 1939. Shortly thereafter, Jewish citizens were required, under threat of punishment, to surrender objects covered by the ordinance to the state purchasing offices by March 31, 1939. Susanne Lewin and her husband were able to emigrate. Part of the family collection was saved.

Stehende

Erwin Braumüller lived in the Berlin district of Lichtenfelde. On December 3, 1937, Möller received from him a *Stehende* by Georg Kolbe.⁶⁰ Braumüller was an officer in the German Air Force.⁶¹ He rose to the rank of major general in a short time, was active in the armaments business, and was probably as familiar with the business activities of HISMA as he was with the role and operations of the German Air Force in the Spanish Civil War.⁶² Möller's account books suggest that on February 17, 1938, he sold the *Stehende* from the Braumüller collection, along with watercolors by Franz Marc, Erich Heckel, and Christian Rohlf, to the Jewish collector Alfred Rose, Hannover.⁶³ Rose also acquired a "portrait" by Anton Graff on February 16 and a "landscape" by Gustave Courbet on February 19.⁶⁴ Rose had been a customer of the gallery since the 1920s and, like Möller, had supported the artists' group *Blaue Vier* (Blue Four), founded by Lyonel Feininger, Alexej Jawlensky, Wassily Kandinsky, and Paul Klee.⁶⁵ On December 17, 1937, he consigned the paintings *Lote zur Welle* (Plummet to the Wave, 1928) by Klee and *Aufleuchten* (Luminosity, 1927) by Kandinsky to Möller.⁶⁶ On the same day, Möller offered *Lote zur Welle* to the Jewish painter and architect Heinrich Tischler in Breslau "as a particularly beautiful and typical work."⁶⁷ The offer included a number of other works, including Georg Kolbe's "*Stehende Frau* [Standing Woman], bronze statuette, height 45 cm, one of the artist's most charming small works."⁶⁸ Tischler probably did not purchase the works offered to him. In 1938, he was arrested and sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp. He died on December 16, 1938, from injuries sustained there.⁶⁹ Rose managed to escape to England in February 1939, traveling on to Boston in 1941 and finally to New York in 1942.⁷⁰ He was able to export at least some of his art. *Lote zur Welle*, possibly still in his possession, was included in a Klee exhibition at Nierendorf Gallery in New York in 1941. What further path the *Stehende* took is uncertain.

Consolidating Traces

The events described are "snapshots" of the art trade in the late 1930s. Each of them could be explored in greater depth. The protagonists involved could be better profiled

and the works contextualized in their respective ownerships. In the best case, the various castings could be clearly identified and their further paths traced. It remains to be seen whether Alfred Flechtheim owned an iron casting of the portrait *General von Einem*, whether Möller took on a bronze casting, and what happened to the lead casting exhibited at Galerie Ernst Arnold in 1916. The *Kniende* that Möller sold to Heinz von Böttinger in 1940 may have been a 1926 casting of the *Kniende* from 1926. This figure was one of Kolbe's most popular sculptures at the time, and about sixty casts of the sculpture are known to have existed.⁷¹ Thanks to the research of Ursel Berger, we have the information that Böttinger's *Kniende* was a "kneeling girl figure with outstretched arms," and thus probably the 1923 work entitled *Victoria*.⁷² But which *Kniende* was still in the possession of the Lewin family in 1938, and which *Stehende* was acquired by Alfred Rose? Was he able to export his casting, and did he eventually have to sell it in New York, perhaps through Valentin? Did it stay with his family or remain behind in Germany? After 1933, Kolbe's figurative sculptures encountered a society in which respect for people became a rarity. At the same time, countless of his early figures were the subject of politically motivated redistribution processes. None of his sculptures were confiscated as "degenerate" art, but an as yet unspecified number became NS looted art and flight assets. The commendable reconstruction of the paths of his sculptures began decades ago. Tracing these also in the art trade during National Socialism was once almost impossible. Until recently, the contemporary market and its players had hardly been researched.⁷³ Both have since become the subject of art history, but the provision of clarifying sources still falls short of today's possibilities. If the relevant business records are structured and digitally indexed, provenance and object-related art market research can efficiently deepen the view of individual works and transactions and complement previous research results. Georg Kolbe's sculptures *General von Einem*, *Kniende*, and *Stehende* reveal connections of his oeuvre to persecuted Jews. If further traces of this context could be uncovered and condensed in a targeted manner, research on Georg Kolbe under National Socialism would be significantly and multifacetedly expanded.

Notes

- 1 Möller became proactively involved in the “exploitation” of the confiscated works. For the chronology of his involvement, see: Wolfgang Schöddert, “Vom Geist der Kunst und dem Ungeist der Zeit. Spuren der Galerie Ferdinand Möller aus den Jahren 1937 bis 1945,” in: Maike Steinkamp and Ute Haug (eds.), *Werke und Werte. Über das Handeln und Sammeln von Kunst im Nationalsozialismus* [Schriften der Forschungsstelle “Entartete Kunst,” vol. 5] (Berlin 2010), pp. 61–81, here pp. 69–71.
- 2 These figures are based on research by the “Degenerate Art” Research Center at the Freie Universität Berlin. See the Database “Entartete Kunst”: https://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/en/e/db_entart_kunst/datenbank/index.html [last accessed June 19, 2023].
- 3 See: *ibid.*: NS Inventar EK-Nr. 1539, <http://emuseum.campus.fu-berlin.de/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&lang=en> [last accessed June 19, 2023]. In 1990, Ursel Berger quoted the state of research at that time: Ursel Berger, *Georg Kolbe – Leben und Werk, mit dem Katalog der Kolbe-Plastiken im Georg-Kolbe-Museum* (Berlin 1990), p. 131, note 79. At that time, the lithograph EK 1539 was still considered by scholars to be a drawing. The *Stürzende* (Foundering Man), as mentioned by Berger, cannot be identified among the works confiscated in Kassel noted in the second volume (*Orte Göttingen bis Zwickau*) of the inventory of the “Degenerate Art” campaign (“Fischer List”), which only became public in 1996, and was not included in the database of the “Degenerate Art” research center as of 2003. For the works from Düsseldorf mentioned by Berger, see the section on *General von Einem* in this essay.
- 4 See the gallery’s goods receipt ledger “Wareneingangsbuch [Geschäftsbuch der Galerie Ferdinand Möller],” 1935–1939, Documentary Estate of Ferdinand Möller, Berlinische Galerie, no. 1739 *General von Einem* and no. 1874 *Kniende*. The *Stehende* already came to the gallery on December 3, 1937, and was registered as no. 1551; BG-KA-N/F.Möller-81-B9, <https://sammlung-online.berlinischegalerie.de/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&lang=en> [last accessed June 19, 2023].
- 5 Paul Ortwin Rave, *Kunstdiktatur im Dritten Reich* (Hamburg 1949), p. 66 [translated].
- 6 See: Nikola Doll, Uwe Fleckner, and Gesa Jeuthe Vietzen: “Die entlastende Moderne. Hildebrand Gurlitt und der Nachkriegsmythos vom inneren Widerstand,” in: *idem* (eds.), *Kunst, Konflikt, Kollab-*
oration. Hildebrand Gurlitt und die Moderne [Schriften der Forschungsstelle “Entartete Kunst,” vol. 14] (Berlin 2023), pp. 1–17, here pp. 5–8.
- 7 For more on the premises and results of recent research, see: Anja Tiedemann (ed.), *Die Kammer schreibt schon wieder! Das Reglement für den Handel mit moderner Kunst im Nationalsozialismus* [Schriften der Forschungsstelle “Entartete Kunst,” vol. 10] (Berlin 2016). Meanwhile, the narrative of under the counter sales persists. See: Uwe Fleckner, “Der Wert wertloser Kunst. Ideological Contradictions in the Trade in ‘Degenerate’ Modernism,” in: *Die Zerrissene Moderne. Die Basler Ankäufe “entarteter” Kunst*, exh. cat. Kunstmuseum Basel (Berlin and Basel 2022), pp. 55–66, here pp. 58f.
- 8 Möller traded in Berlin until the closure of his gallery in November 1943 due to the war. See the gallery’s sales ledger “Verkaufsbuch V [Verkaufsbuch der Galerie Ferdinand Möller],” 1937–1943. BG-KA-N/F.Möller-74-B2, <https://sammlung-online.berlinischegalerie.de/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=223620&viewType=detailView> [last accessed June 19, 2023]. For written inquiries to Möller, cf. postcard from Dr. Wilhelm Moufang to Ferdinand Möller, February 9, 1945, BG-GFM-CII 2,202.
- 9 Catalogs of works document the scope of individual artistic production. One example is the oeuvre of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. On his death in 1938, he left behind approximately 1,000 paintings. See: Donald E. Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner. Mit einem kritischen Katalog sämtlicher Gemälde* (Munich 1968). Only fifty-two of his paintings were confiscated as “degenerate art.”
- 10 See: <https://sammlung.georg-kolbe-museum.de/de/ueber-die-online-sammlung> [last accessed June 19, 2023].
- 11 For more on Kolbe’s connections to the trade, see the essay by Jan Giebel in this volume, pp. 164–189.
- 12 See the mentions of Georg Kolbe’s works in the digitized auction catalogs of the years 1901–45 from the cooperative projects “German Sales” I and II; <https://www.arthistoricum.net/en/subjects/thematic-portals/german-sales/getty-provenance-indexr> [last accessed June 19, 2023].
- 13 See: *Der Cicerone: Halbmonatsschrift für die Interessen des Kunstforschers & Sammlers*, vol. VIII, nos. 15/16, 1916, <https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.26378#0359> [last accessed June 19, 2023].
- 14 Invitation to the opening of Galerie Ferdinand Möller, Museumsplatz 13, Breslau, on April 29,

- 1917, in: "Ausstellungsdokumentation der Galerie Ferdinand Möller in den Breslauer Jahren," BG-GFM-C, IV, I 1,1 [translated].
- 15 See: Ferdinand Möller Verlag, announcement regarding the small sculpture *Kauernde* by Georg Kolbe, Berlin, 1919, BG-GFM-C, I 25; text accompanying the "Kauernde," inv. no. P9, GKM Collection, <https://sammlung.georg-kolbe-museum.de/de/objekte/kauernde/62856?term=m%C3%B6ller&start=24&position=25> [last accessed June 19, 2023]. See also Berger 1990 [see note 3], pp. 238–239.
- 16 *Porträt Maria Möller-Garny*, inv. no. P285, GKM Collection, <https://sammlung.georg-kolbe-museum.de/de/objekte/portraet-maria-moeller-garny/63052?term=m%C3%B6ller%20garny&position=0> [last accessed June 19, 2023].
- 17 In addition to the portrait of Maria Möller-Garny, the bronzes *Tänzerin* (Dancer), *Scherzo*, and *Auferstehung* (Resurrection) and the models *Liegende* (Woman Reclining) and *Jüngling* (Youth) were exhibited; see: Kunst-Verein Potsdam (ed.), *Potsdamer Kunstsommer 1921. Kunstausstellung in der Orangerie des Parkes von Sanssouci*, Potsdam, 1921, p. 31, <https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.48743#0033> [last accessed June 19, 2023]. For more on the exhibition, see: Jutta Götzmann, "Potsdamer Kunstsommer 1921," in: *Von Otto Mueller bis Max Kaus. Graphische Einzeldrucke und Mappenwerke aus dem Ferdinand Möller Verlag*, exh. cat. Potsdam Museum – Forum für Kunst und Geschichte and Potsdamer Kunstverein (Berlin 2010), pp. 30–39.
- 18 See: *Tänzer Nijinsky*, inv. no. P188, GKM Collection, <https://sammlung.georg-kolbe-museum.de/de/objekte/taenzer-nijinsky/63120?term=nijinsky&position=0> [last accessed June 19, 2023]. The casting in the Georg Kolbe Museum is a bronze from the collection of Bruno Adriani, who worked in the Prussian Ministry of Culture until 1930. Adriani was a frequent guest of the Möller family in Potsdam and was familiar with the cast there.
- 19 See: letter from Ferdinand Möller to Maria Caspar-Filser, October 3, 1922, without a signature, in the holdings BG-GFM-D I [translated].
- 20 Receipt of Galerie Ferdinand Möller for Georg Kolbe, April 7, 1923, MvT Estate, GKM Archive, Berlin.
- 21 See: The Anderson Galleries (ed.), *A Collection of Modern German Art: To Be Exhibited from October First to Twentieth*, exh. cat. The Anderson Galleries, New York, 1923, with an introduction by Wilhelm Reinhold Valentiner pp. 2–9, https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/anderson_galleries1923_10_01/0001/image,info,thumbs [last accessed June 19, 2023].
- 22 See: "Anmeldung zur Ausstellung einer Gruppe deutscher Künstler in den Anderson Art Galleries in New York, Januar 1922," filled in by Georg Kolbe and dated November 23, 1922 [sic], in: "Ausstellungsanmeldungen Amerika," BG-GFM-D I,86. The titles *Assunta* and *Klage* can be identified via Kolbe Online. *Meerweib* is probably identical with the sculpture *Meerweibchen* (Little Mermaid) from 1921; cf. inv. no. P303, GKM Collection, <https://sammlung.georg-kolbe-museum.de/index.php/de/objekte/meerweibchen/63127?term=Meerweibchen&position=0> [last accessed June 19, 2023]. In the exhibition catalog, *Klage* and *Meerweib* were titled *Complaint* and *Mermaid* in English; see: Anderson Galleries 2023 (see note 21), p. 12, nos. 110 and 111.
- 23 See: radiogram from Moellergalerie to Moellerart NY, January 10, 1924, BG-GFM-D I,80.
- 24 Works by Nauen, Pechstein, Scheibe, and Sintenis also sold quickly. See the copy of a press release, undated, BG-GFM-D I,42.
- 25 As late as mid-November, Möller was considering opening a branch in New York and staying there provisionally. See: letter from Ferdinand Möller to Emil Nolde, November 13, 1923, BG-GFM-D I,1317.
- 26 Draft of a letter from Ferdinand Möller to William [Wilhelm] Valentiner, November 29, 1923, not mailed, BG-GFM-D I,61 [translated].
- 27 Letter from Erna Casper to Ferdinand Möller, December 4, 1923, BG-GFM-D I,66.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 See the essay by Jan Giebel in this volume, pp. 164–189.
- 31 Berger 1990 (see note 3), p. 134 [translated].
- 32 Wolfgang Willrich, *Säuberung des Kunsttempels. Eine kunstpolitische Kampfschrift zur Gesundung deutscher Kunst im Geiste nordischer Art* (Munich and Berlin 1937), pp. 171–172. Willrich saw in Kolbe a "healthy" and "important" artist; *ibid.*, p. 172 [translated].
- 33 See the questionnaire of the Military Government of Germany regarding denazification, filled in by Ferdinand Möller and dated August 18, 1945, BG-KA-N/F.Möller-61-M61,177 [translated].
- 34 Quoted in: Katrin Engelhardt, "Die Ausstellung 'Entartete Kunst' in Berlin 1938. Rekonstruktion und Analyse," in: Uwe Fleckner (ed.), *Angriff auf die Avantgarde. Kunst und Kunstpolitik im Nationalsozialismus* [Schriften der Forschungsstelle "Entartete Kunst,"

- vol. 1] (Berlin 2007), pp. 89–158, here p. 103 [translated].
- 35 With this in mind, he returned works, for example, by Heinrich Campendonk and George Minne to their owners. See: letter from Ferdinand Möller to Dr. Erich Raemisch, August 20, 1937, BG-GFM-C,II 1,735, <https://sammlung-online.berlinischegalerie.de:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=213128&viewType=detailView> [last accessed June 19, 2023] [translated].
 - 36 For more on the monitoring of the gallery, see the note in the personal file of Josef Nierendorf, LArch Berlin, A Rep. 243-04 no. 6306; cf. note 52 in this essay. For more on the sales in November 1937, see: Verkaufsbuch V 1937–1943 (see note 8), pp. 60–62.
 - 37 Letter from Georg Kolbe to Ferdinand Möller, December 13, 1938, BG-GFM-C,III 1,1106 [translated].
 - 38 Heinz von Böttinger was the brother-in-law of Lotte von Böttinger, who was portrayed by Kolbe in 1921. Since the family was acquainted with Kolbe, the sale via Möller is surprising. In the Kolbe Estate, there is no documentation of this sale.
 - 39 Letter from Hans Wilhelm Hupp, Kunstsammlungen der Stadt Düsseldorf, to Ferdinand Möller, March 19, 1937, BG-GFM-C, II 1,601.
 - 40 See: Katrin DuBois: "... fast alle führenden Meister dieser Zeit sind eben heute umstritten." Die Düsseldorfer 'Galerie der Neuzeit' 1934–1937 und die Gegenwartskunst im Nationalsozialismus," in: Düsseldorfer Geschichtsverein (ed.), *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Niederrheins [Düsseldorfer Jahrbuch, vol. 89]* (Essen 2019), pp. 297–320.
 - 41 Undated list, Stadtarchiv Düsseldorf, Galerie der Neuzeit, Verschiedenes. Bestand: 0-1-4 Stadtverwaltung Düsseldorf von 1933–2000 (formerly: Bestand IV), shelf no. 3937.0000, sheet 145, https://dfg-viewer.de/show?tx_dlf%5Bdouble%5D=0&tx_dlf%5Bid%5D=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.duesseldorf.de%2F%2Fstadtarchiv%2Farchivenrw%2F0%2F1%2F4%2FVz_9BD47EC5-E63A-4D3D-BCC9-7989300BA4B5_mets_actapro.xml&tx_dlf%5Bpage%5D=145&cHash=adddf68032d7d8677df03d047f6ede9 [last accessed June 19, 2023].
 - 42 Letter from [Hans Wilhelm Hupp], Kunstsammlungen der Stadt Düsseldorf, to Fred Kocks, December 28, 1936, Stadtarchiv Düsseldorf (see note 41), sheet 141, https://dfg-viewer.de/show?tx_dlf%5Bdouble%5D=0&tx_dlf%5Bid%5D=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.duesseldorf.de%2F%2Fstadtarchiv%2Farchivenrw%2F0%2F1%2F4%2FVz_9BD47EC5-E63A-4D3D-BCC9-7989300BA4B5_mets_actapro.xml&tx_dlf%5Bpage%5D=141&cHash=c808678e60bb-3faa87e2af048450c179 [last accessed June 19, 2023].
 - 43 List dated September 28, 1937. A third sculpture was sold through Galerie Bammann, Düsseldorf to a private collector. Stadtarchiv Düsseldorf (see note 41), sheet 219, https://dfg-viewer.de/show?id=9&tx_dlf%5Bid%5D=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.duesseldorf.de%2F%2Fstadtarchiv%2Farchivenrw%2F0%2F1%2F4%2FVz_9BD47EC5-E63A-4D3D-BCC9-7989300BA4B5_mets_actapro.xml&tx_dlf%5Bpage%5D=219 [last accessed June 19, 2023].
 - 44 See: Wareneingangsbuch 1935–1939 (see note 4).
 - 45 Cf. *Porträt Karl von Einem*, inv. No. P130, GKM Collection, <https://sammlung.georg-kolbe-museum.de/de/objekte/portraet-karl-von-einem/63162?term=Einem&position=0> [last accessed June 19, 2023].
 - 46 Letter from Curt Valentin to Georg Kolbe, May 6, 1933, GK Estate, GKM Archive, Berlin, inv. no. GK.456.1, <https://sammlung.georg-kolbe-museum.de/index.php/de/korrespondenzen/briefe-von-curt-valentin-galerie-alfred-flechtheim-berlin-und-von-der-bildgiesserei-hermann-noack-berlin-an-georg-kolbe/69055> [last accessed June 19, 2023] [translated].
 - 47 For more on the economic situation of Galerie Alfred Flechtheim in 1933, see the essay by Gesa Jeuthe Vietzen in this volume, pp. 208–225.
 - 48 The iron casting by Kolbe and the bronze *Singender Mann* (Singing Man) by Ernst Barlach were available for sale as of March 8, 1933. See the letter from the Städtisches Kunstmuseum, March 8, 1933, Stadtarchiv Düsseldorf (see note 41), sheet 381, https://dfg-viewer.de/show?tx_dlf%5Bdouble%5D=0&tx_dlf%5Bid%5D=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.duesseldorf.de%2F%2Fstadtarchiv%2Farchivenrw%2F0%2F1%2F4%2FVz_4B9EED11-F9FC-4548-93FB-647EC2706978_mets_actapro.xml&tx_dlf%5Bpage%5D=381&cHash=7b6570c152d31d9fa0a59c3889be4c18. For more on the inventorying, see the letter from the Städtisches Kunstmuseum to the mayor of Düsseldorf, April 19, 1933, Stadtarchiv Düsseldorf (see note 41), sheet 423, https://dfg-viewer.de/show?id=9&tx_dlf%5Bid%5D=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.duesseldorf.de%2F%2Fstadtarchiv%2Farchivenrw%2F0%2F1%2F4%2FVz_4B9EED11-F9FC-4548-93FB-647EC2706978_mets_actapro.xml&tx_dlf%5Bpage%5D=423 [both sites last accessed June 19, 2023].
 - 49 List of Galerie Ferdinand Möller, April 27, 1938, Stadtarchiv Düsseldorf 0-1-4-3776, sheet 701.

I thank Christiane Jungklaus, Kunstpalast Düsseldorf, for this reference.

- 50 Letter from Ferdinand Möller to Hans Hupp, April 6, 1939, Stadtarchiv Düsseldorf 0-1-4-3779, 6.4.1939, p. 683, with thanks to Christiane Jungklaus, Kunstpalast Düsseldorf.
- 51 The Kunstpalast Düsseldorf is involved in clarifying the provenance of this casting. For earlier research by the Georg Kolbe Museum, see the hanging file folder “von Einem,” GKM Archive, Berlin. I thank Elisa Tamaschke and Thomas Pavel, Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin, for making this available to me.
- 52 This was also determined for the galleries von der Heyde, Nierendorf, Gurlitt, and Fritze. Personal file of Josef Nierendorf (see note 36).
- 53 See the page from Lewin’s guestbook, GK Estate, GKM Archive, Berlin, inv. no. GK.608, Archiv GKM.
- 54 *Porträt Carl Lewin*, inv. no. P125, GKM Collection, <https://sammlung.georg-kolbe-museum.de/de/objekte/ewinit-carl-lewin/62146?term=ewin&position=1> [last accessed June 19, 2023]. The portrait was acquired from the family of the Carl Lewin in 1971. Berger 1990 (see note 3), cat. 86, p. 288.
- 55 Cf. inv. nos. P9, P209, P22, GKM Collection.
- 56 Letter from Helene Lewin to Georg Kolbe, March 6, 1933, MvT Estate, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated]. I thank Elisa Tamaschke for making this available to me.
- 57 Letter from Margrit Schwartzkopff to Helene Lewin, March 16, 1933, MvT Estate, GKM Archive, Berlin [translated], with thanks to Elisa Tamaschke.
- 58 See: Wareneingangsbuch 1935–1939 (see note 4), no. 1874. The entry in the goods receipt ledger names Mrs. Salo Lewin, without an address, as the owner. The following indications speak for her identity as Helene Lewin’s sister-in-law: On December 2, 1938, Cäcilie Markus, who is proved to be the daughter of Carl Lewin, was the last customer before Mrs. Salo Lewin (see: Wareneingangsbuch, no. 1870). Salo Lewin himself can still be traced on March 28, 1938 to the address Wittelsbacherstr. 26 in Berlin (see: Wareneingangsbuch, no. 1712). The index of the files of the Chief Finance President of Berlin-Brandenburg in the Brandenburg State Archives in Potsdam also assigns this address to his wife Susanne, née Gottstein. A surviving obituary for Carl Lewin identifies Salo Lewin’s wife as “née Gottstein.” After 1945, Susanne and Salo Lewin filed applications for restitution. The contents of the procedural files preserved in the Berlin State Archives were not evaluated for this essay. The inspection would be part of a more extensive provenance research.
- 59 See: “Verordnung über den Einsatz des jüdischen Vermögens” of December 3, 1938, *Reichsgesetzblatt Teil 1938*, pp. 1709–1711, article IV, § 14.
- 60 See: Wareneingangsbuch 1935–1939 (see note 4), no. 1551. Handed over at the same time were works by Otto Mueller, Alfred Partikel, Richard Scheibe, and August Gaul; *ibid.*, nos. 1548, 1549, 1550, 1552, 1553, 1554.
- 61 Braumüller’s listings in the Berlin address books document his affiliation with the army and his rise from major to general starting in 1937.
- 62 For further information on his activities, see: “Personalunterlagen von Angehörigen der Reichswehr und Wehrmacht,” German Federal Archives, Freiburg, BArch PERS 6/1130.
- 63 Verkaufsbuch V 1937–1943 (see note 8), p. 82.
- 64 *Ibid.*
- 65 See: Annette Baumann, “Scouts der künstlerischen Avantgarde im Norden – Herbert von Garvens und Otto Ralfs als Sammler und Händler der Künstler Baumeister, Ensor, Jawlensky und Klee,” in: Christopher M. Galler and Jochen Meiners (eds.), *Regionaler Kunsthandel. Eine Herausforderung für die Provenienzforschung?* (Heidelberg 2022), pp. 372–443, here pp. 413–417, URL: <https://doi.org/10.11588/arthistoricum.978.c13774> [last accessed June 19, 2023]. For further information on the Rose family, see: Sabine Paehr, “Verfolgung während der NS-Zeit – Strukturen und Schicksale in den vormals selbständigen Gemeinden der Wedemark,” in: Gemeinde Wedemark (ed.), *Verfolgung und Zwangsarbeit in der NS-Zeit. Die Geschichte der Wedemark von 1930 bis 1950*, vol. 1 (Hannover 2016), pp. 13–64, here pp. 13–53.
- 66 See: Wareneingangsbuch 1935–1939 (see note 4), no. 1585 *Aufleuchten* and no. 1586 *Lote zur Welle*.
- 67 Letter from Ferdinand Möller to Heinrich Tischler, December 17, 1937, BG-GFM-C, II 1, 856, with attached list of works on offer, <https://sammlung-online.berlinischegalerie.de:443/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=213408&viewType=detailView> [last accessed June 19, 2023] [translated].
- 68 *Ibid.* [translated].
- 69 See: Joseph Walk (ed.), *Kurzbiographien zur Geschichte der Juden 1918–1945* (Munich 1988), p. 366.
- 70 See: Baumann 2022 (see note 65).
- 71 According to information kindly provided by Thomas Pavel, Georg Kolbe Museum, Berlin.

- 72** Letter from Petra Schlemme to Ursel Berger, March 20, 2018, hanging file folder "von Böttinger," GKM Archive, Berlin [translated].
- 73** See: Angelika Enderlein, *Der Berliner Kunsthandel in der Weimarer Republik und im NS-Staat* (Berlin 2006), p. 74.