

# AUCTION TEAM BREKER

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## Technology auction winds up on a high note

Specialty Auction at Auction Team Breker, Cologne  
October 30 + 31, 2020

**PRESS RELEASE**

27 November 2020

From spy cameras to calculators and a cash register built for an international exhibition, Auction Team Breker's two-day sale offered tech aficionados a chance to stock up the collector's cabinet.

The novel coronavirus has changed the dynamic of auctions, turning busy salerooms into virtual experiences and increasing the allure of pocket-sized items that can be viewed on a screen and purchased with the click of a mouse. Gone are the sociable viewing days, the familiar faces and the friendly rivalry of the back row; when the gavel falls today, it falls in an empty room.

Auction Team Breker has been fortunate in being able to adapt to the new way of doing business, for the auctioneer a balancing act between maintaining customer contact and maintaining distance. The latter becomes easier when 85% of the bidders are located abroad. The specialist Cologne auction house has built up a loyal following in Europe, Russia, Japan and the United States and the excellent results from the latest round of sales show the strength of these markets, especially in niche areas such as **office antiques and calculating**.

Stylish designs and "firsts", for which Breker's catalogues are well known, included boxed examples of the Curta calculator designed by Viennese engineer Curt Herzstark, as well as the Caligraph No. 1 Typewriter of 1883 and the formative MITS Altair 8800 Computer.

Please click on the  
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Lot 321

Curta Type II Calculator,  
Curt Herzstark, Liechtenstein, 1971

Sold: 1.280 € / \$ 1,500



Lot 340

MITS Altair 8800 Computer, 1975

Sold: 3.980 € / \$ 4,655

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**Lot 448**

**“The Caligraph No. 1”, 1883**

**Sold: 12.830 € / \$ 15,010**

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More unusual was a remarkable automatic bookkeeping cash register, gold-prize winner at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of San Francisco in 1915, which tripled its pre-sale estimate after a bidding battle between the book, telephone and internet.



**Lot 332.1**

**Automatic Bookkeeping Register, exhibition model by Automatic Bookkeeping Register Co., Kansas City, Missouri, c. 1915**

**Sold: 17.965 € / \$ 21,000**

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Another category that added up to lively international interest was a collection of **Leica cameras, lenses and accessories**. Rarity and condition are the hallmarks of the camera collector’s cabinet, and yet the high-quality Leitz lenses , especially the “M” series, are also avidly sought-after by photographers on the secondary market.



**Lot 780**

**Leica M6 Titanium with matching Summilux 1.4 / 35 mm lens, 1994**

**Sold: 5.180 € / \$6,060**

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**Lot 790**

**Noctilux 1:1 / 50 mm lens, Type 11821, 1982**

**Sold: 6.160 € / \$7,200**

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Lot 792

Leica Tri-Elmar-M 4/ 28-35-50 mm  
ASPH lens, c. 1996

Sold: 2.820 € / \$3,300

Mint limited edition cameras produced for collecting and investment reached prices that recalled the boom days of the early 2000s. However, the top lot of the section was neither a camera nor a lens, but a spring-driven “MOOLY-C” motor made for wartime IIIc and III d models. Although the chrome version is not uncommon, the painted finish is hard to find, especially when it comes with an attractive patina and its original typed instructions sheet.



Lot 819

Leica Motor MOOLY-C, dark-grey  
version, 1940 onwards

Sold: 15.400 € / \$ 18,000



Lot 967

Stereo camera by George Hare,  
London, c. 1880

Sold: 3.150 € / \$ 3,680

Classic 19<sup>th</sup> century cameras gleamed discreetly, with a mahogany-and-brass stereo camera by London maker George Hare and a walnut Universal camera by Ernemann of Dresden garnering particular attention. **Optical toys and pre-cinema** are always a highlight of Breker's photographic sales and this outing offered two different versions of Emile Reynaud's 1879 Praxinoscope, magic lantern slides and ephemeral printed paper shadow theatres.



Lot 952

Ernemann Universal, Ernemann,  
Dresden, c. 1895–1896

Sold: 5.540 € / \$ 6,480



**Lot 1009**

**“Le Praxinoscope Théâtre d’Émile Reynaud”, Paris, 1879 onwards**

**Sold: 4.015 € / \$ 4,700**



**Lot 1019**

**“Le Praxinoscope d’Émile Reynaud”, Paris, rare battery-driven version, c. 1900**

**Sold: 3.150 € / \$ 3,685**



**Lot 1018**

**“Ombres Chinoises à Grand Effet”, Mauclair Dacier, Paris, c. 1900**

**Sold: 1.025 € / \$1,200**

The section of scientific instruments included devices for drafting, surveying and navigation as well as those with a more decorative purpose. Notable in the second category was a fine planetarium clock built by William Perkins for the Technical Institute of Cambridge in 1925.



**Lot 456**

**Planetarium clock by William Perkins for the Technical Institute of Cambridge, 1925**

**Sold: 12.600 € / \$ 14,740**

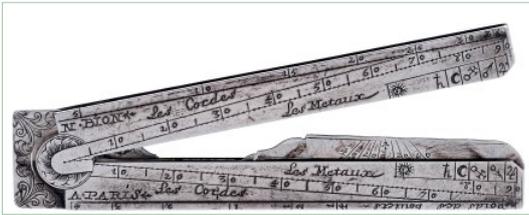


**Lot 463**

**Equinoctial Sundial by Johan  
Nepomuk Schrettegger, Augsburg,  
c. 1790**

**Sold: 2.260 € / \$ 2,645**

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**Lot 555**

**Silver sector by Nicolas Bion, Paris,  
c. 1690**

**Sold: 7.050 € / \$ 8,250**

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**Musical clocks** encompass both timekeeping and entertainment and paved the way for the growth of the mechanical music industry in the early 19th century. On offer at Breker's auction was an imposing hall clock with a pinned barrel and dulcimer in an architectural case associated with court clockmaker Christian Ernst Kleemeyer. The restrained complexity of the cabinet and movement contrasts with musical clocks produced during the French *fin de siècle*, such as the anthropomorphic monkey artist at work on a portrait, accompanied on the hour by a twisting glass waterfall and a Viennese musical movement.



**Lot 7**

**Musical clock with dulcimer accompaniment,  
Berlin, c. 1830**

**Sold: 7.770 € / \$ 9,090**

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**Lot 160**

**Monkey artist musical automaton with clock, possibly Bontems, c. 1885**

**Sold: 9.445 € / \$ 11,050**

Although **mechanical music instruments** might not be striking the same chord with the new East-Asian collectors that they did even a few years ago, the demand and the prices remain solid for unusual examples. An interchangeable movement by George Baker of Geneva in a custom-made French *secrétaire*, decorated with harvest scenes in the *Vernis Martin* technique raised a chorus of bids. A pair of Swiss ‘station’ musical boxes, built to while away the minutes in the waiting rooms of the Jura-Simplon railway during the golden age of steam travel, proved equally popular.



**Lot 146**

**Interchangeable forte-piano musical secrétaire by George Baker, c. 1890**

**Sold: 11.550 € / \$ 13,515**



**Lot 150**

**Station musical box by Henri Vidoudez, Ste. Croix, c. 1895**

**Sold: 14.245 € / \$ 16,670**



**Lot 153**

**Swiss station musical box with dancing dolls,  
drum and bells, c. 1890**

**Sold: 11.650 € / \$ 13,630**

Rounding off the auction on a playful note were hundreds of **toys and models**, including French automata, German steam-driven engines and a childhood collection of colourful post-war tinplate.



**Lot 173**

**Marquise automaton by  
Leopold Lambert, c. 1885**

**Sold: 3.980 € / \$ 4,655**



**Lot 278**

**Steam-driven toboggan run by Bing Werke,  
Nuremberg, c. 1910**

**Sold: 4.280 € / \$ 5,000**



**Lot 284**

**“Folk Art” steam fair by August Graff, 1930**

**Sold: 1.000 € / \$ 1,170**



**Lot 504**

**ESA Hermes Spaceplane and  
European Space Station (ESS)  
model, c. 1989**

**Sold: 16.000 € / \$ 18,720**

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Auction Team Breker's next specialist sales are planned for Spring 2021:

**Photographica & Film:** closing date 10 February 2021.

**Science, Technology & Toys:** closing date 1 March 2021.

Please visit [www.breker.com](http://www.breker.com) and [www.youtube.com/auctionteambreker](http://www.youtube.com/auctionteambreker).

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