

Press Release

10 August 2018

Restoration of Oscar Begas' painting *The Destruction of Pompeii* funded by the Friends of the Cultural Foundation of the Federal States

The Destruction of Pompeii (*Der Untergang Pompejis*), one of the major works by Oscar Begas (1828-1883) in the art collection of the Akademie der Künste, which still bears the damage it suffered during the war, is finally to be restored thanks to a donation from the Friends of the Cultural Foundation of the Federal States.

Oscar Begas entered the coveted Rome Prize competition of the Academy of Arts in 1852 with the large-scale composition, *The Destruction of Pompeii*. His dramatic depiction of a family's escape from the lava-spewing Vesuvius won him a two-year scholarship and signified his breakthrough as an artist.

The Academy added the painting to its art collection and loaned it to the Berlin State Library in 1926. During the Second World War, the work was severely damaged by relocations and the impacts of war and, due to its state of conservation, was no longer fit to be exhibited. It eventually ended up in storage in the basement of the Alte Nationalgalerie (Old National Gallery). Just ten years ago, it was returned to the Academy's art collection—dirty, severely damaged and without its frame.

The unrestored work is currently on view for the first and only time at the Hamburger Kunsthalle as part of the exhibition "Nature Unleashed: The Image of Catastrophe since 1600", which is showing until 14 October. A whole 70 years after the war, museums still hold many such 'invalid' works that cannot be publicly exhibited. The painting serves as an example for the necessity of drawing attention to such fates.

With the financial support of the Friends of the Cultural Foundation of the Federal States in the context of the Kunst auf Lager Foundation, the Akademie der Künste is to restore and re-frame this significant work once the Hamburg exhibition has ended.

More at: www.adk.de, [News from the Archive](#)

Press photo on request at presse@adk.de or Tel. +49 (0)30 200 57-1514

Funded by:

K U L T U R
S T I F T U N G · D E R
I . Ä N D E R
F R E U N D E S K R E I S



Press and Public Relations

Pariser Platz 4
10117 Berlin
T +49 (0)30 200 57-15 14
F +49 (0)30 200 57-15 08
presse@adk.de www.adk.de

For inquiries:

Anna Schultz
Art Collection
Tel. +49 (0)30 200 57 4040
schultz@adk.de