

Press Release

26 September 2022

SPURENSICHERUNG. Die Geschichte(n) hinter den Werken **PROVENANCE RESEARCH**

Exhibition: 29 October 2022 – 22 January 2023, Pariser Platz

Press Preview: 27 October 2022, 11 am

Presse- und
Öffentlichkeitsarbeit

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Over the past 20 years, provenance research has been increasingly discussed. Its social, cultural and political agenda is highly valued. One of the most challenging objectives of provenance research is to shed light on the buried and repressed histories of works of art and their owners – and to bring this information back into collective memory. Because changes in ownership have frequently been connected with war and repression, reconstructing an object's journey from its making to the time it enters an archive, library or museum is especially important for everyone concerned with it. More is at stake than clarifying the conditions of ownership and attempting to recognise historical injustices, which in the best-case scenarios lead to making amends. Provenance research enables us to gain new, more varied perspectives on well-known works.

The *PROVENANCE RESEARCH* exhibition, on view at the Pariser Platz venue starting on 29 October, uses selected examples to introduce a broad audience to the demanding detective work and methods involved in provenance research. The stories behind the works begin with the objects: Assessments can only be made with precise knowledge about each specific case. The show's underlying premise developed from surprising research findings about the ownership histories of artworks, books, objects and documents in the collections at the Akademie der Künste. Another main focus is how the Akademie deals with research findings and addresses the complex challenges of reaching appropriate decisions for objects with problematic provenances.

The exhibition addresses a plethora of aspects surrounding the history of ownership ranging from the identification of Nazi-looted art that is now part of the Akademie's holdings to the ongoing search for artworks from the collection of the Prussian Academy of Arts that were lost during the Second World War. The efforts of the GDR state apparatus to take possession of valuable art objects or entire collections is another subject, which is increasingly playing a role in provenance research. Among the work presented in the exhibition are manuscripts by the philosopher **Walter Benjamin**, art critic **Alfred Kerr**'s collection confiscated by the Gestapo, a sketchbook from **Max Liebermann**'s estate, oil sketches by **Carl Blechen** that were presumed lost, and the painter Otto Nagel's bequest and art collection that aroused greed within GDR cultural politics circles after the artist's death. Contemporary artist and filmmaker **Marianna Christofides** engages with the objects and topics of the exhibition in a mixed media installation.

Event programmes – including discussion panels, diverse educational offers – and a **publication** with in-depth essays and work biographies accompany the exhibition.

www.adk.de/spurensicherung

Exhibition Information

SPURENSICHERUNG. Die Geschichte(n) hinter den Werken

PROVENANCE RESEARCH

29 October 2022 – 22 January 2023

Opening: Friday, 28 October, 7 pm

Press Preview: Thursday, 27 October, 11 am

Akademie der Künste, Pariser Platz 4, 10117 Berlin, Tel. +49(0)30 200 57–10 00

Tue – Sun, 11 am – 7 pm

Admission € 9/6. Free admission for visitors under 19, on Tuesdays after 3 pm and the first Sunday of the month.

Press Contacts

on behalf of the Akademie der Künste

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