



Berlin, 28 February 2019

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Kulturforum, Gemäldegalerie**

Matthäikirchplatz, 10785 Berlin

Tue, Wed, Fri 10 am–6 pm, Thur 10 am–8 pm, Sat+Sun 11 am–6 pm

**Bellini plus. Research and Restoration**

14 October 2018 – 21 July 2019

A special presentation of the Gemäldegalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

**The Gemäldegalerie is devoting a studio exhibition to a group of paintings by the father and son Jacopo and Giovanni Bellini, their workshop and followers, which have hardly ever been displayed before. These forgotten treasures, some of which have languished in the museum storeroom since the Second World War, will be shown along with the results of new research and restoration.**

Restoration and research are inseparably linked. Information about materials, techniques and structures, object histories and alterations form the basis, initially, for developing a conservation plan and then for making interpretations. The works going on show have experienced a variety of changes: some of them were originally part of a larger ensemble, an altarpiece or the decor of a room; some have been damaged or cut down to a smaller size; some have been reworked or their original coloration or surface texture altered by light, climatic conditions and other influences over time. Questions as to the best way to give the visitor an impression of the original whole, when only part remains, or how much reconstruction is necessary and justifiable to make a work readable, have to be negotiated afresh for every new restoration.

None of the paintings in the exhibition are still as they were when they left the artist's workshop 500 years ago. Thanks to radiodiagnostic examinations (x-ray, infrared reflectography) and other material analyses, along with stereo-microscopic examinations, it is now possible to find out a great deal about the processes involved in a picture's creation (down to the preparation of the support before painting even commenced) and thus to discover the artist's trade secrets. Sometimes when the image layers and the documentary evidence are analysed, extraordinary object histories come to light.

The exhibition is sponsored by the Kaiser Friedrich Museumsverein.

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Stauffenbergstraße 41  
10785 Berlin

**MECHTILD KRONENBERG**  
HEAD OF PRESS, COMMUNICATION,  
SPONSORSHIP

**MARKUS FARR**  
PRESS OFFICER

Tel.: +49 30 266 42 3402  
Mobile: +49 151 527 53 886

presse@smb.spk-berlin.de  
www.smb.museum/presse