

# Wanderlust

10.5. – 16.9.2018

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## PRESS RELEASE

### AN ENCOUNTER: GUSTAVE COURBET MEETS PAUL GAUGUIN IN THE WANDERLUST EXHIBITION AT THE ALTE NATIONALGALERIE, BERLIN

The exhibition "Wanderlust. From Caspar David Friedrich to Auguste Renoir" at the Alte Nationalgalerie features many "big names" and brings together for the first time two related paintings by two world-renowned artists.

Gustave Courbet, the perhaps most famous exponent of Realism in French painting, created a number of sensational paintings. Standing out among them is the work *The Meeting or Bonjour Monsieur Courbet* of 1854, in which Courbet shows himself out wandering, whereby he encounters his patron Alfred Bruyas and his servant. Bruyas supported Courbet and purchased the large-format painting. When it was exhibited at the Paris World Exhibition of 1855, the audacity of the painter, who presented himself with abundant self-confidence and in a much more favourable light than his patron, was not lost on spectators. One critic wrote: "Neither the gentleman nor his servant cast shadows, something that Monsieur Courbet has reserved for himself: He alone is capable of blocking the sun's rays." When, in 1868, Bruyas donated his collection of contemporary artworks to his hometown of Montpellier, he saw to it that *The Meeting* would be hung in the best place in the town's museum, allowing him to demonstrate for posterity his role as a supporter of progressive art.

Twenty years later, in 1888, Paul Gauguin and Vincent van Gogh travelled from Provence to Montpellier and visited Alfred Bruyas's famous collection at the Musée Fabre. *The Meeting or Bonjour Monsieur Courbet* made a profound impression on Gauguin. He formulated his first response, modest decorative work at an inn, and then developed an oil painting from it in 1889, titled *Bonjour Monsieur Gauguin* after Courbet's work. At the time Gauguin was experiencing financial difficulties, as the public was slow to appreciate his intense colours. Instead of emphasizing his autonomy from society as Courbet had, he showed himself as a misfit. His cap pulled down into his face, he approaches not a millionaire but a Breton farmer's wife who appears to be running away from him. Hoping to find better working conditions away from European society, which did not particularly value his work, Gauguin travelled to the Polynesian islands in 1891. *Bonjour Monsieur Gauguin* later made its way into the National Gallery of Prague.

Courbet painted himself as a wanderer in an encounter. Gauguin came across the painting, which inspired him to create his own self-portrait as a wanderer. The two paintings are coming together for the first time here in Berlin: They are shown side by side in the section Artist's Wanderings. Wandering first and foremost means movement, and so it is fitting that Gauguin's painting can only be on show for a short time and will travel on in early June to join an important Gauguin exhibition in the Breton town of Quimper.

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The exhibition is made possible by the Freunde der Nationalgalerie and supported by Volkswagen Aktiengesellschaft.

**VOLKSWAGEN**  
AKTIENGESELLSCHAFT



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**ALTE NATIONALGALERIE  
STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN  
Bodestraße 1-3  
10178 Berlin**

[www.wanderlustinberlin.de](http://www.wanderlustinberlin.de)  
[www.smb.museum/ang](http://www.smb.museum/ang)

**OPENING HOURS**  
Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun 10 am–6 pm  
Thu 10 am–8 pm  
Mon closed

**ADMISSION**  
12 Euro, reduced 6 Euro (incl. permanent collection)  
Free admission for children and young people up to the age of 18

**PRESS CONFERENCE**  
Tue 08.05.2018, 11 am

**OPENING**  
Wed 09.05.2018, 7 pm

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