

# As little ham as necessary

By **News Editor** - 17 July 2022



*Humboldt-Forum Berlin im Berliner Stadtschloss, Blick von der Dachterasse auf Berlin, Werderscher Markt, Schinkelsche Bauakademie, Aussenministerium, Copyright: DAVIDS/Sven Darmer, 13.10.2021*

The red brick block in the center of Berlin was once considered revolutionary. The Schinkelsche Bauakademie stood for the dawn of modernity. As it was, so shall it be again. In order to develop the specifications for the new building project and the procedural rules for the upcoming international competition, the staff tableau for a "think tank competition" is now in the Federal Foundation of Building Academy. The names are exclusively available to the Tagesspiegel. The results of the work should provide the foundation board with a basis for decision-making at the start of the competition in spring 2023.

The Bauakademie foundation is based at the Federal Ministry for Housing, Urban Development and Building. She is the client of the academy building. Its founding director is Guido Spars, a graduate economist, doctorate in engineering, qualified urban and regional economist and professor at the University of Wuppertal, where he taught economics of planning and building until his appointment.

The federal government plans 62 million euros for the reconstruction. In September 2017, the federal government held the first competition for the Bauakademie under the motto "As much Schinkel as possible".

In the "think tank competition" the course is set for whether a reconstructed or a newly designed facade will be built, or whether there will be a "hybrid" solution. Ultimately, however, this should be decided in an open international realization competition. The Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, which wanted to be included in the planned Bauakademie in 2018, is only moderately pleased with the composition of the "Think Tanks Competition". The institutions of the foundation have the entire Schinkel estate and an important architectural collection, but are not represented here. It may be due to the fact that the foundation has always referred to the history of the building, which the Friends of the Bauakademie also sees as the central linchpin of the new cubature to be built: "A hybrid or modern building would be a falsification and therefore cannot be in the Schinkel's spirit lies," the club announced in May. As original as possible, as modern as necessary; the reestablishment of the Bauakademie must also be based on this.

The Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation referred to the connections to be made between the Bauakademie, the Museum Island and the new Humboldt Forum in the Berlin Palace.

Opened in 1836, the geometrically structured building in the historic center of Berlin is considered an icon of architectural history. It burned out after a bomb attack during the war and was later demolished for the GDR foreign ministry. Whether it should be recreated in the original, based on

the model of the Prussian court architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841), is one of the central questions faced by the "Think Tank Competition".

If the professional focus of the members is considered more closely, a modern building can be expected, preferably made of recycled materials, which – collected via the circular economy – form new sustainable connections with each other. If one wanted the reconstruction of a historical building, the appointment of the Adlon architects Patzschke would probably have been completely sufficient. Instead of them, there are now a large number of forward-looking architects and engineers:

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The Stiftung Bauakademie sees the "think tank competition" as an interdisciplinary committee of experts, which is to discuss the internal and external requirements for the building in relation to one another in up-to-date terms in workshops. It is also politically desirable for teams of scientists

to formulate sustainability goals such as energy efficiency, climate neutrality and resource conservation for the new building.

“The problem is that this topic is so broad,” says city architect Klaus Theo Brenner (Berlin) when asked. There is a risk that the conceptual and actual foundation of the new building will be divided into individual issues. “The result is a building whose stringency – with a view to the historic building – is called into question from the outset by the broad questioning.”

Above all, Harald Bodenschatz, the Schinkel expert Jan Mende and Berlin’s state curator Christoph Rauhut are responsible for the architectural-historical relevance of the old building and historical sensitivity.

A representative survey by the opinion research institute Forsa, which was commissioned by the associations Cityscape Germany, Gesellschaft Historisches Berlin and the Förderverein Bauakademie, showed that two thirds of the Germans surveyed would prefer a reconstruction of the historical facades during reconstruction.

The founding director of the Stiftung Bauakademie, Guido Spars, was delighted with the survey:

“I very much welcome this contribution to the forthcoming elaboration of the specifications for the realization competition. The survey results will enrich the discussions about the design of the building, which will take place in different formats over the next few months. The discussions will focus on the topic of the design of the building deal with many other demands on the building, such as questions of energy efficiency and climate neutrality, resource efficiency and cost-effectiveness. At the same time as the conferences of the “Competition” think tank scheduled for September, in which experts from the fields of planning, construction and politics will present recommendations for action will be developed, a “workshop” series will give the civic community the opportunity to contribute their ideas to the decision-making process.”

Anyone interested in taking part in the Workshop Bauakademie can contact [werkstatt@bundesstiftung-bauakademie.de](mailto:werkstatt@bundesstiftung-bauakademie.de) by August 5th. If there are a large number of registrations, the lot decides. The city and civil society are to be involved in the project via the workshop.

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