



STIFTUNG
PREUSSISCHE SCHLÖSSER UND GÄRTEN
BERLIN-BRANDENBURG

O-TON TRANSCRIPTION

HELMUT BÖRSCH-SUPAN, RECORDED IN THE WHITE HALL AT CHARLOTTENBURG PALACE, 22 JUNE 2020

When it came to finding a solution for the ceiling here, we said to ourselves, well, where do Berlin's strengths lie? In quality. So it was clear to us that what went up there had to be in colour. As I only found out later, the conservationist [Kurt Seeleke] had when in Braunschweig indeed shown himself capable of standing up for himself, and both during and after the war had done respectable work. But when he came to Berlin Now, what was I saying about the Kammergericht? Well, perhaps this is the right moment to note that it was thanks to Seeleke that the Kammergericht was finally saved. But the Senator for Construction [Rolf Schwedler] always wanted weak conservationists under him and as a result it was always the people who wanted new buildings who had the final say. And Seeleke, to a certain extent, was willing to conform to the role Schwedler imposed on him. Now, Seeleke was extremely annoyed that he didn't get the most spectacular conservation project of all, namely Charlottenburg, where Margarete Kühn was in charge and had a lot of important people behind her – that really rankled with him. In order to resist us in some way, he initially came up with the somewhat absurd idea of approaching Pablo Picasso, an undisputed authority in contemporary art, and have Picasso paint the ceiling here. It really was an absurd idea, because Picasso would have permitted himself some joke and the Berliners would have gone down on their knees before him: Oh how wonderful, they would have said, now we have such a great work by Picasso.