

**Truchanas legacy stronger than ever, 50 years after his tragic death on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1972.**

50 years after his passing, the wilderness photography of Olegas Truchanas continues to inspire conservation in Tasmania and is central to the campaign to restore Lake Pedder.

Lithuanian born, Truchanas was a key campaigner fighting to save Lake Pedder throughout the 1960-70's, despite being an employee of the Hydro Election Commission. A pioneering bushman, Truchanas was the first European to kayak the Serpentine River and Gordon Splits and believed to be the first to summit Federation Peak, solo.

"Olegas loved Tasmania and saw its wild beauty through the eyes of someone escaping the ravages of war torn Europe. He captured its beauty in a way Tasmanians had not seen before. His emotive images of Lake Pedder and Tasmania's south-west are enduring sources of inspiration and motivation for all generations, to fight for the protection of Tasmania's remaining precious wild places", Tabatha Badger, Restore Pedder campaign coordinator, said.

"Few artists have the power to inspire conservation action as Olegas's images have done. He captured emotive photographs of the wildest parts of Tasmania unseen by most. He used these images to raise public awareness of Tasmania's unique and threatened wild places, particularly in the south-west. He was one of the first wilderness photographers to use his images for political environmental activism and his example inspired Peter Dombrovskis and several generations of wilderness photographers since.

His images of Lake Pedder were presented as a slide show "My Pedder" and shown in the Hobart Town Hall and in halls across Tasmania and the mainland to stir public action to prevent the initial flooding during the 1970's. Today Olegas's images motivate a generation, not old enough to have personally visited Pedder, to advocate for its restoration."

On the 6th of January 1972, Truchanas tragically drowned at the start of a trip down the Gordon-Franklin rivers, which he intended to photograph and use in the campaign to stop the construction of the Franklin Dam.

"50 years after Olegas's passing and the flooding of the original lake, Tasmania has a timely opportunity to restore Pedder and in doing so become a global leader in ecosystem restoration." Says Christine Milne AO, convenor of the Lake Pedder Restoration Incorporation and former Australian Greens leader.

All we have to do is to take up Olegas's challenge, "If we can revise our attitudes towards the land under our feet; if we can accept a role of steward and depart from the role of the conqueror, if we can accept that man and nature are inseparable parts

of the unified whole, then Tasmania can be a shining beacon in a dull, uniform and largely artificial world.”

“2021-2030 is the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the next Federal Government could catapult Tasmania onto the international stage by committing to Lake Pedder’s restoration and in doing so would see the Tasmania become the shining beacon, Olegas envisioned”

The Restore Lake Pedder campaign's fourth annual Paddle for Pedder, which is scheduled for the March long weekend, will be held in honour of Olegas, celebrating his enduring legacy.

For further comment please contact campaign coordinator Tabatha Badger on 0448812281 or email [lakepedder.org@gmail.com](mailto:lakepedder.org@gmail.com)

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