

PRESS RELEASE

The Blue Sofa with Salman Rushdie: Book Premiere as Part of the Berlin International Literature Festival

- Bertelsmann brings Salman Rushdie to Berlin
- Thomas Rabe: “We are delighted to offer Salman Rushdie and his new book a stage”
- “Knife. Meditations After an Attempted Murder” will be published worldwide by Penguin Random House imprints on April 16, 2024

Berlin, April 16, 2024 – In his memoir “Knife. Meditations After an Attempted Murder,” Salman Rushdie describes, for the first time and in impressive detail, the traumatic consequences of the August 2022 assassination attempt on him. The book is being published worldwide today in various languages by Penguin Random House imprints. It is a gripping account of how the exceptional author survived the knife attack, 30 years after the fatwa was issued against him.

In cooperation with the Berlin International Literature Festival, the Deutsches Theater Berlin, and the Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels, Bertelsmann is staging the first and only public event in Germany to mark the publication of Rushdie’s new book. On May 16, the author will speak with Marie Kaiser and Thomas Böhm (both Radioeins rbb) about the attack and how he processed it in his book. Also featuring a reading by Ulrich Matthes, a member of the Deutsches Theater ensemble, the evening will be an impressive literary experience.

Bertelsmann Chairman & CEO Thomas Rabe says: “Sir Salman Rushdie has championed freedom of expression and the defense of free speech like few others. We are proud to have been the publishing home of his works for several decades now: His books are published by Penguin Random House in the English-, Spanish- and German-speaking world. And we are delighted to offer Salman Rushdie and his new book a stage in our Authors’ Forum. The way he responds to the attack on him and his values through his art of storytelling is deeply impressive.”

In August 2022, Salman Rushdie was attacked with a knife and seriously injured during an open stage reading. More than thirty years after the Iranian regime had issued a fatwa against him for his novel “The Satanic Verses,” the threat caught up with him. Salman Rushdie survived the attack. He has turned the act, which left the whole world in suspense, into a story about fear, gratitude, and the fight for freedom and self-determination.

For review copies of Salman Rushdie’s memoir “Knife,” please contact Frauke Müller at Penguin Verlag (frauke.mueller@penguinrandomhouse.de).

Royalty-free pictures of the author and the book cover are available [here](#).

All event information at a glance:

SALMAN RUSHDIE

Book premiere “Knife. Meditations After an Attempted Murder”

May 16, 2024

7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Deutsches Theater Berlin, Schumannstraße 13A, 10117 Berlin

The event will be held in German and English.

An event of the Berlin International Literature Festival in cooperation with: Deutsches Theater Berlin, Penguin Verlag, Bertelsmann Autorenforum Das Blaue Sofa, Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels

Please submit accreditation requests for members of the press to the Deutsches Theater. Please note that press seating is limited and no companion tickets are available.

Media photographers will probably have the opportunity to take part in a photo session with Salman Rushdie before the event. Please submit a separate registration for this to Deutsches Theater press department at presse@deutschestheater.de.

The event will be broadcast live on radioeins and radio3.

Main sponsor: Hauptstadtkulturfonds

With the kind support of: Berthold Leibinger Stiftung, Fondation Jan Michalski

About the Blue Sofa

The Blue Sofa is one of the longest-running and most successful literary formats in the German-speaking world. Since its debut in 2000, more than 3,100 authors have taken a seat on the famous piece of furniture to present their new books at book fairs and beyond. In the past, the format was jointly organized by Bertelsmann, ZDF, Deutschlandfunk Kultur, and 3sat; since 2023, the Blue Sofa has been under Bertelsmann's sole responsibility with a new concept. The most prominent guests to date have included Nobel Laureates Svetlana Alexievich, Mikhail Gorbachev, Günter Grass, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Herta Müller, Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard, Orhan Pamuk, Joseph Stiglitz, Olga Tokarczuk, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Mo Yan.

About Bertelsmann

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company with more than 80,000 employees that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the entertainment group RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato Group, Bertelsmann Marketing Services, the Bertelsmann Education Group, and Bertelsmann Investments, an international network of funds. The company generated revenues of €20.2 billion in the 2023 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world. Bertelsmann aspires to achieve climate neutrality by 2030.

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