

PRESS RELEASE

Bertelsmann's Ricordi Archive Licenses Historical Illustrations from Operas to Dolce & Gabbana

- **Music archive signs its first license agreement with world-famous fashion label**
- **Dolce & Gabbana designs gowns and handbags based on original designs from Puccini operas**

Milan, February 8, 2016 – The Bertelsmann-owned Archivio Storico Ricordi has for the first time licensed historical illustrations from famous Italian operas to a leading fashion label: The Italian fashion group Dolce & Gabbana used ornamental and floral motifs from libretti of the four Puccini operas Turandot, Tosca, Fanciulla del West and Madama Butterfly in designing a collection of exclusive dresses and handbags.

Dolce & Gabbana recently unveiled the beautifully crafted robes to a select audience at a private fashion show at Milan's La Scala. The four unique items, which will not be sold in stores, were enthusiastically received and elicited much applause. The fashion house, which is one of the sponsors of the Teatro alla Scala, also designed four handbag models based on the motifs from the Ricordi Archive. These bags were presented to the guests of the Alta Moda show as giveaways.

Karin Schlautmann, Head of Bertelsmann Corporate Communications and responsible for the Ricordi Archive, said: "We see great potential for the archive's future in this cooperation, as it gives us another way to exploit the unique inventories for creative purposes and make them known to a wider audience. Any revenue that we generate from licensing agreements will be dedicated to the long-term preservation of the archive."

The Archivio Storico Ricordi contains documents and artifacts from 200 years of Italian opera history, and is one of the world's most valuable privately owned music collections. It has been part of Bertelsmann since 1994. The archive's holdings include 7,800 original scores from more than 600 operas – including valuable original manuscripts by Giuseppe Verdi and Giacomo Puccini – and around 10,000 libretti, 6,000 historical photographs, numerous costume drawings as well as the entire business correspondence of the Casa Ricordi publishing house, to which the archives once belonged, from 1888 to 1962. Bertelsmann is having the archival documents comprehensively indexed, digitized and in many cases, restored. For several years now, the treasures of the archive have been made available to a wider audience, e.g. with a traveling exhibition that toured Europe in Verdi Year 2013.

About Bertelsmann

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the broadcaster RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the magazine publisher Gruner + Jahr, the service provider Arvato, the Bertelsmann Printing Group, the music company BMG and the Bertelsmann Education Group. The company has more than 112,000 employees and generated revenues of €16.7 billion in financial year 2014. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination makes for first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world.

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