

PRESS RELEASE

World Premiere in the Puccini Year: Bertelsmann Presents Multimedia Exhibition in Berlin

- **“Opera Meets New Media – Puccini, Ricordi, and the Rise of the Modern Entertainment Industry” on the interaction between opera and media in the 20th century**
- **Original documents from Bertelsmann-owned Archivio Storico Ricordi travel to Germany for the first time**
- **Thomas Rabe: “An exhibition about how technological innovations disrupt conventional art forms and create new ones.”**
- **The exhibition can be seen daily at Bertelsmann Unter den Linden 1 from April 18 to May 16**

Gütersloh, March 13, 2024 – La Bohème, Tosca, Madame Butterfly, Turandot: To this day, Giacomo Puccini (1858 - 1924) is counted among the world’s greatest opera composers. His name and his successes are inextricably linked with Casa Ricordi, the renowned Milan-based music publisher whose important archive has been part of Bertelsmann since 1994. On the 100th anniversary of his death, Bertelsmann is dedicating an exhibition in Berlin to the Italian opera genius. After 2013’s “Enterprise of Opera” exhibition, shown in Europe and the U.S. to mark the bicentenary of Verdi’s birth, unique testimonies to Italian opera history will once again be on display in Germany.

Bertelsmann Chairman & CEO Thomas Rabe says: “The Archivio Storico Ricordi has been part of Bertelsmann since 1994. Then as now, we wish to preserve it as a world heritage of classical music and make it accessible to scholars and the general public. Be it digitally or, as now, in the visual experience of an exhibition with invaluable exhibits and contemporary installations. ‘Opera Meets New Media’ is an exhibition about how technological innovations can disrupt traditional art forms and create new ones. This kind of innovative access to the Archivio Storico Ricordi enables us to use its holdings as a source of inspiration and knowledge.”

“Opera Meets New Media” shines a new light on the Puccini era: The exhibition focuses not only on the role of the Ricordi publishers in the composer’s career and work - its distribution, marketing and exploitation - but also on the influence of new media and technical innovations on music theater at the time: The development of new entertainment technology, first and foremost film and sound recordings, which soon became widely available, represented a revolution for artists, society and the musical culture of the early 20th century that fundamentally challenged the traditional business model of music theater.

The Archivio Storico Ricordi was acquired by Bertelsmann with its purchase of Casa Ricordi in 1994, and remained with the international media, services and education company even after the sale of its then music rights division in 2006. It is regarded as one of the most important music collections in the world: Its current holdings comprise a wealth of unique testimonies from 200 years of Italian opera history, including 7,800 manuscript scores, more than 31,000 letters, 6,000 photographs, magazines, 10,000 libretti, and many other documents. Bertelsmann is aware of the responsibility that comes with owning these

valuable cultural assets. The company indexes the archive holdings according to the latest standards and has made thousands of documents, stage and costume designs, libretti and business correspondence available online.

The exhibition “Opera Meets New Media - Puccini, Ricordi and the Rise of the Modern Entertainment Industry” can be seen from April 18 to May 16, 2024 at Bertelsmann Unter den Linden 1 in Berlin. Admission is free

“OPERA MEETS NEW MEDIA - Puccini, Ricordi and the Rise of the Modern Entertainment Industry”

April 18 – May 16, 2024, daily 11 AM – 6 PM
Bertelsmann
Unter den Linden 1
10117 Berlin

For more information about the exhibition, please visit www.puccini2024.com.

For more information about the Ricordi archive, please visit www.archivioricordi.com.

About Bertelsmann

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company with 85.000 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 2022 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.

www.bertelsmann.com

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