Culture
Bertelsmann

Literature
Film
Music
Art
History

Culture@Bertelsmann
Dear Readers,
Dear Friends of Bertelsmann,

For over 180 years, Bertelsmann has offered authors and artists the opportunity to produce creative content and make it accessible to a broad audience. This creativity entertains and inspires millions of people around the world, every day. For this reason, Bertelsmann works with creatives to promote numerous cultural projects in the fields of literature, film, music and the arts.

The preservation and protection of creative works has always been part of our own company history. So Bertelsmann supports, at various levels, historical and cultural projects that support this cause.

Culture@Bertelsmann is closely linked to Bertelsmann’s tradition and creative products, because creativity is an engine for diversity and innovation – in the company, as well as in society.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Rabe
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Books are part of Bertelsmann’s DNA – they are inextricably bound up with the company. What began as a small publishing house in 1835 is now Penguin Random House, the world's largest trade book publishing group. With more than 250 publishing houses on six continents, it publishes more than 15,000 new releases and sells 600 million books every year.

Literature is a high priority for the company. Bertelsmann presents its authors and their books at many literary events and readings. The company is regularly represented at book fairs in Frankfurt and Leipzig with the „Blue Sofa“. Promoting literacy and reading among children is also an important concern that is specifically supported by events and sponsorships.

www.bertelsmann.com/culture
The “Blue Sofa”

Anyone sitting on it has made it. To date, some 2,500 writers have taken a seat on the colorful couch to present their latest works at Germany’s major book fairs. “Blue Sofa” events are also held at other venues and on other occasions. The listeners experience the authors up close, immerse themselves in their works and get to know the personalities behind the books.

For 18 years now, the “Blue Sofa” partners Bertelsmann, Deutschlandfunk Kultur, ZDF, and 3Sat have presented influential authors and their books – among them the Nobel laureates Svetlana Alexijewitsch, Mikhail Gorbachev, Günter Grass, Herta Müller, Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard, Orhan Pamuk, Joseph Stiglitz, Mario Vargas Llosa and Mo Yan.

www.das-blaue-sofa.de
Reading is a key competence for acquiring knowledge and finding one’s bearings in a complex world of information. It has a great influence on the educational and development opportunities of children, young people, and adults and is formative in their social development.

As a media company, Bertelsmann therefore actively promotes literacy among children and contributes in the form of numerous events every year, including on “World Book Day” and Germany’s nationwide “Reading Aloud Day.” In addition, the company supports school libraries, daycare centers, and schools with books and regularly sponsors reading-related events and initiatives.

Promoting Childhood Literacy
cbj author Ingo Siegner at the City Library during “Reading City Gütersloh”

Stephan Schäfer, Uli Pleßmann and Larissa Fuchs present passages from „Der weite Raum der Zeit”

Guests at Bertelsmann’s liaison office in Brussels: (from left) Dirk Maxeiner, Henryk M. Broder, Michael Miersch

Bärbel Schäfer visits the emergency chaplaincy to share her book “Ist da oben jemand?” (Is there anyone up there?), published by Gütersloher Verlagshaus

“Reading City Gütersloh” – 30 readings at 20 locations in 10 days! Every two years, Gütersloh presents itself as a city that loves to read. Bertelsmann is the main sponsor.

Liz Mohn presenting a check to preserve nine school libraries, pictured here with Henning Schulz, Mayor of the City of Gütersloh; Joachim Martensmeier and Martin Fugmann

Olympic champion Matthias Steiner at “Reading City Gütersloh”

Crime Fiction Marathon: author Kai Magnus Sting with Henning Venske and Horst Evers on stage at Bertelsmann Unter den Linden 1 in Berlin
Film and television production has been an integral part of Bertelsmann since the 1960s. Since the 1980s, the company has had its own TV broadcaster in RTL. Today, RTL Group is one of the biggest and most successful private media groups in Europe. In Germany, France, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Hungary, Croatia, and Spain, it operates more than 60 television channels with an extensive news and entertainment offering. Many of the broadcast formats are produced within the group itself. The same is true for the growing number of online and social media offerings that are being created in cooperation with many creative partners around the world.

With the UFA Film Nights and the digitization of silent films, Bertelsmann creates a connection between its entrepreneurial heritage and today’s media trends.
The UFA Film Nights are an international success story. Since 2012, Bertelsmann and UFA have presented selected silent films with live musical accompaniment. Originally introduced in Berlin as UFA Filmnächte, the UFA Film Nights, as the silent film festival is called internationally, are now also held in Brussels, Paris, Madrid, and even New York.

The screenings of the silent films in unusual settings and as open-air events create a unique atmosphere that captivates thousands of viewers each year. Well-known musicians, renowned orchestras, and international DJs ensure unforgettable film experiences that effortlessly transcend language and age limits.

www.bertelsmann.com/ufafilmnights
Digitization of Silent Movies

During its heyday, the historic Ufa was one of the most important film production factories in the world and brought forth some of the greatest stars of German cinema. From Fritz Lang and Erich Pommer to Marlene Dietrich and Hildegard Knef: They all rose to success with unforgettable Ufa classics. The history of Ufa is German cultural history.

Ufa has been part of Bertelsmann since 1964. Its historical film stock was transferred to the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation in 1966. The Murnau Foundation works to preserve cinematic heritage and has already extensively restored various silent film classics. Bertelsmann provides significant support for their restoration and digitization. By organizing the UFA Film Nights, the company ensures that the films are once again made accessible to a wide audience.

www.bertelsmann.com/culture
The Metograph Theatre provided a spectacular backdrop for the silent film classic "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" in Manhattan’s Lower East Side.

An eerie atmosphere at the UFA Film Nights. Richard Dawald’s 1919 silent anthology film "Unheimliche Geschichten" (Uncanny Stories) was on the program.

Werner Krauß as Dr. Caligari; film still (1920)
Source: German Film Institute – DIF, Frankfurt am Main

Before the screening, some 400 guests attended a reception hosted by Bertelsmann at the Brussels Palace of Fine Arts (Bozar).

The new Philharmonie de Paris has only been open since January 2015.

Raphaël Marionneau, one of the most famous European chillout DJs, provided the musical accompaniment for the screening of the silent film "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" in Manhattan’s Lower East Side.

Thomas Rabe (Chairman and CEO of Bertelsmann), Ernst Szebedits (Chairman of Murnau Foundation), Monika Grütters (German Culture Minister) and Dieter Kosslick (Head of Berlinale) at the premiere of "Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari" in Berlin.

Working together for silent film (from left to right): Gottfried Langenstein (Vice President ARTE), conductor Frank Strobel, conservator Anke Wilkening, Rainer Rother (Director of the Berlinale Retrospective), Ernst Szebedits (Chairman Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation), composer Cornelius Schwehr, and Bertelsmann Chairman & CEO Thomas Rabe.
As long ago as 1956, Bertelsmann entered the music business with the “Schallplattenring.” The label “Ariola” was born: It gradually added great artists to its program, others were developed into stars. After selling its entire music business, Bertelsmann completely re-launched BMG in 2008 with rights management for artists and authors, with a focus on the creatives. After ten years, BMG is the world’s fourth-largest music company, with many well-known musicians and songwriters.

Music as a creative field is deeply anchored in Bertelsmann’s businesses. The company is involved in a wide range of cultural activities involving the archives of the music publisher Ricordi, musical sponsorship, and numerous music events.
Archivio Storico Ricordi

The Ricordi Archive is regarded as one of the most important music collections in the world. The archive contains the estate of the Ricordi publishing house, which was founded in Milan in 1808 and acquired by Bertelsmann in 1994. Its holdings include about 7,800 scores, more than 15,000 letters, 5,000 photographs, magazines, librettos, and documents on Ricordi’s corporate history. The focus of the collection of Casa Ricordi, the publisher in which the works of the “great five” composers of Italian opera – Giuseppe Verdi, Giacomo Puccini, Gioachino Rossini, Vincenzo Bellini and Gaetano Donizetti – were published, lies on the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Bertelsmann’s aim as the owner of the archive is to make the documents available to the general public in digital form. In addition, individual aspects of music history are repeatedly presented in exhibitions.

www.bertelsmann.com/ricordi
digital.archivioricordi.com
Music is something that should be experienced live or, better yet, something you make yourself. Bertelsmann supports and encourages numerous groups, schools and choirs in their musical efforts. The spectrum is wide – from playful first introduction to music, to the purchase of instruments, to professional choral music.

At the same time, Bertelsmann also strives to present its own artists – which is why the company regularly supports events featuring BMG musicians. Thus, Bertelsmann shows that music is part of the company’s identity.

**Music Sponsorship**

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The audience loved the Berlin premiere of Verdi's "Stiffelio" at the Konzerthaus Berlin.

"Passion, Power and Politics". Bertelsmann and Archivio Ricordi supported the major opera exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London as sponsors and lenders. © Victoria and Albert Museum.

"Raragramma," 1982; Autograph of the score from the Ricordi Archive.

Sylvano Bussotti, "Raragramma," 1982; Autograph of the score from the Ricordi Archive.

Jazz trumpeter and BMG artist Nils Wülker giving an exclusive concert in Gütersloh.

The Archivio Ricordi contributed valuable exhibits to the "Madama Butterfly" exhibition at the Scala in Milan (2016/17) © Teatro alla Scala.

Bertelsmann was the main sponsor of the performance of "Giovanna d'Arco," a rarely performed Verdi opera, by conductor Felix Krieger's Berliner Operngruppe.

BMG artist Y'akoto performing at Gütersloh's Dreiecksplatz during the "Week of Cabaret."
Creativity is a core component of Bertelsmann. Many of the company’s business activities are based on the creative work of employees, partners, and artists – which is why Bertelsmann is dedicated to creating stages for creative people and their works.

Bertelsmann makes culture visible, tangible and accessible for people with exhibitions, readings, and art events, by sponsoring theater and music performances.

Culture@Bertelsmann

Art & Culture

Thomas Rabe with Neal Preston: Photo exhibition “Neal Preston – In the Eye of the Rock ’n’ Roll Hurricane” at the Gütersloh Theater
Bertelsmann brought the extraordinary exhibition “Last Folio,” about the historical traces of Jewish culture in Slovakia, to Germany. Photographer Yuri Dojc and filmmaker Katya Krausova found places that had remained virtually untouched since the mass deportations of Slovak Jews in 1942. The result of their work are photographs of decaying books, abandoned buildings, and religious artefacts in a haunting aesthetic. They convey an idea of the destroyed Jewish world of Slovakia and remind us to draw lessons from the past and keep remembrance alive. Bertelsmann financed the exhibition, played a major role in its implementation and marketing, and supported a bilingual exhibition catalog published by Prestel (Random House publishing group).

With Bertelsmann’s support, “Last Folio” also traveled to South America for the first time – the exhibition was shown in São Paulo, Brazil.

www.bertelsmann.com/lastfolio
Photographer Neal Preston's pictures were taken over a period of 40 years. During this time, he captured the musicians’ attitude to life, and sometimes their suffering, on and off stage. The exhibition “Neal Preston - In the Eye of the Rock ‘n’ Roll Hurricane” had already been shown to great acclaim in Montreux, Las Vegas, Stockholm, and Frankfurt and made a month-long stop in Gütersloh as well.

Neal Preston portrayed many legendary musicians and bands with his camera: Carlos Santana, Alice Cooper, Bob Marley, Tina Turner, Aretha Franklin, David Bowie, Deep Purple, Roger Waters, Janis Joplin, Prince, Madonna, Frank Zappa, and many more.

The music rights of many of the artists portrayed by Preston are managed by Bertelsmann’s music subsidiary BMG, such as those of Mick Jagger and Keith Richards’ most important works, of Pink Floyd songwriter Roger Waters, Iggy Pop, and David Bowie. So supporting the exhibition made excellent sense and brought together different protagonists from the world of music.

www.bertelsmann.com/preston
Christopher Lehmpfuhl and Thomas Rabe in front of an art star, designed by Lehmpfuhl, which was auctioned to benefit the German Stroke Foundation.

Culture par excellence at the Gütersloh Theater: Celebrated pianist Lang Lang visited Gütersloh © "Die Glocke"/Steinecke

Johannes Jacob, head of C. Bertelsmann Verlag, with Christian Schäfer of the Gütersloh Theater: "The Centenarian Who Climbed Out of the Window and Vanished"—from bestselling novel to stage play.

Poetry Slam: High-school student Aaron Schmitt won a poetry contest initiated by Bertelsmann.

Original documents in a Dietrich Bonhoeffer exhibition as part of the music and literature festival "Wege durch das Land" at the Gütersloh Theater. Actor Klaus Maria Brandauer recited excerpts from Bonhoeffer's works, which were published by Gütersloher Verlagshaus.

"My pictures give insights into other layers of time and other imaginative spaces," says the artist/photographer Michael Wesely.

Exhibition of photos by Jim Rakete.

Thea Dorn and Denis Scheick visit Thomas Rabe.
In order to continue its success and growth story, Bertelsmann has kept embracing or even initiating changes and new developments. Founded in 1835, the company is now run with the involvement of the seventh generation of the Bertelsmann/Mohn family. At every stage of its history, Bertelsmann has successfully tackled new technological developments, changing user habits, and market upheavals. The company once revolutionized book distribution, significantly expanded commercial television in Germany, and introduced profit sharing for employees very early on. For decades, Bertelsmann was shaped and developed by Reinhard Mohn. He took over the Gütersloh plant, which had been destroyed in the Second World War, and turned it into a successful global media company.
Since its foundation in 2003, Bertelsmann’s corporate archive has been dedicated to documenting the Group’s history. It serves as the company’s memory. Historical exhibits from the Gütersloh Corporate Center and the Group’s units are collected in the archives. As the central point of contact for all historical matters within the company, the team searches for, secures, and documents sources that are relevant to the company’s history: files, correspondence, photos, presentations, posters, and much more. The oldest archived records are family papers from the 18th century.

The corporate archive is open to the public and offers students, doctoral candidates and scientists the opportunity to conduct research into the company’s history.

www.bertelsmann.com/corporate-archive
Digital History

A wealth of information and material on Bertelsmann’s history is now available online. Although our Corporate Archives deals with the past, they are state-of-the-art and highly digital.

The Bertelsmann Chronicle website presents the milestones in the company’s history: from the founding of the Protestant publishing house in the 19th century to the development of today’s modern media, services and education group.

history.bertelsmann.com

The ZeitRaum app takes users on a trip through the living rooms of past decades to discover the products and offerings that Bertelsmann was present with in these decades. All objects are presented with additional information, videos and photos.

The (iPad) app can be found under “ZeitRaum Bertelsmann” on iTunes.

The Bertelsmann Vinyl Collection website gives the public access to parts of the Bertelsmann Club’s collection of records, which were distributed over five decades. Thousands of record covers can be browsed online, and comprehensive information is available about the records’ performers and composers as well.

vinyl.bertelsmann.com
Covers (clockwise from top right):
1. Fritz Lang’s masterpiece “Der müde Tod” ("Destiny") at the UFA Film Nights
2. Actor Milan Peschel giving a scenic reading of “Der weite Raum der Zeit” in Berlin
3. Arrigo Boito, Mefistofele/Mephisto, 1881; Stage set design by Carlo Ferrario, from the Archivio Storico Ricordi
4. Bertelsmann’s premises at Unter den Linden 1 in Berlin

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