

## PRESS RELEASE

### Exceptional Photo Exhibition ‘Last Folio’ Opens In Berlin

- **Berlin State Library and Bertelsmann present Yuri Dojc’s unique record of former Jewish life in Slovakia**
- **Numerous guests from culture, society and the media expected at opening ceremony**

Berlin, April 23, 2015 – The travelling exhibition “Last Folio – Textures of Jewish Life in Slovakia,” brought to Germany by Bertelsmann, opens on Thursday at the Berlin State Library (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin) in the presence of the artists and invited guests from culture, public life and the media. The exhibition shows unique pictures by photographer Yuri Dojc, who together with the filmmaker Katya Krausova spent years tracing perhaps the last remnants of historical Jewish culture in Slovakia and artistically recorded them: abandoned buildings, religious artifacts, and above all, books – books that were read from, taught from, and prayed from by generations until the mass deportations to the Nazi concentration and extermination camps. The programme includes a lecture by the renowned historian Professor Julius Schoeps and performances by an ensemble from the city’s symphony orchestra, the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin. “Last Folio” can be seen in Berlin until June 27. Admission is free.

Bertelsmann Chairman & CEO Thomas Rabe said: “I’m delighted that Bertelsmann has been able to help bring an exhibition of this quality and significance to Berlin, seventy years after the end of World War II. It’s also symbolic that it opens on World Book Day. Yuri Dojc’s pictures give an immediate, intense impression of what was destroyed, but also of the cultural richness of the formerly large Jewish communities in Slovakia.” Bertelsmann is supporting the exhibition both financially and in terms of content with the publication of a companion book by the art book publisher Prestel.

As the Director General of the Berlin State Library, Barbara Schneider-Kempf, pointed out: “The care and safekeeping of written records of the once vital German, European and global Jewish life is a priority for the Berlin State Library. Our collections of Jewish writings are continually being expanded and indexed, cared for and made available to the academic community. As such we feel deeply honored by this opportunity to draw attention to the necessity of handing down these very aspects of knowledge and culture through the generations.”

On behalf of the artists, the photographer Yuri Dojc said: “My work over the past two decades captures what is left of a culture and a people nearly destroyed by the Nazi ideology of the Berlin of the past. So it is also an homage to the ‘new Berlin’ – and it is of great personal significance to me that this project is now being presented at the Staatsbibliothek and in this city.”

Having emigrated from the former Czechoslovakia in 1968, Yuri Dojc and Katya Krausova eventually traveled back to their former homeland over several years, to meet Holocaust survivors and trace the histories of the Jews of Slovakia who were deported and later murdered. In their research, they discovered places where time stood still and things were left exactly as they had been in 1942 when the former inhabitants were deported. On these journeys, Dojc created photographs of outstanding aesthetic quality. For example, they show dilapidated books and documents that are almost representative of the people who never came back. From this work, 33 selected photographs are now being shown in Germany for the first time. They give an idea of the destroyed Jewish world in Slovakia and stand as a reminder, 70 years after the end of World War II, to draw lessons from what happened, and to keep the memories alive. A short documentary film by Katya Krausova records key scenes of the people encountered and the many journeys to Slovakia.

“Last Folio” has already received much international attention; to date, the exhibition has been seen in the U.S., Britain, Slovakia, Italy, Austria, Latvia, at the European Union in Brussels and most recently at the United Nations in New York. After Berlin, “Last Folio” will travel on to Moscow.

#### **Exhibition “Last Folio – Textures of Jewish Life in Slovakia”**

Opening ceremony: April 23, 2015, Duration: two months (April 24, to June 27, 2015)

Venue: Foyer of the Berlin State Library Cultural Forum, Potsdamer Strasse 33

Open: Monday to Friday 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM, Saturday 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM, free admission

#### **Last Folio - A photographic memory / Ein fotografisches Gedächtnis**

Yuri Dojc and Katya Krausova

Bilingual edition (English/German), 128 pages with 60 color illustrations

Clothbound hardcover with dust jacket, 29 x 31cm

€ 39.95 [D] / € 41.10 [A], CHF 53.90

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**More information, video and pictures** can be found on our website at:

<http://www.bertelsmann.com/news-and-media/specials/last-folio/>

#### **About Bertelsmann**

Bertelsmann is an international media company whose core divisions encompass television (RTL Group), book publishing (Penguin Random House), magazine publishing (Gruner + Jahr), services (Arvato), and printing (Be Printers) in some 50 countries. In 2013, the company’s businesses, with their more than 111,000 employees, generated revenues of €16.4 billion. Bertelsmann stands for a combination of creativity and entrepreneurship that empowers the creation of first-rate media, communications, and service offerings to inspire people around the world and to provide innovative solutions for customers.

For further questions, please contact:

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