

## PRESS RELEASE

## UFA Film Nights Open with World Premiere of Restored Classic Silent Film

- Original-length version of **THE FIDDLER OF FLORENCE** with the legendary Elisabeth Bergner to be screened again for the first time
- Bertelsmann sponsors digital restoration by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation's experts
- Thousands of cinephiles expected on Berlin's Museum Island for the three evenings of the event
- Silent film classics **SUMURUN** and **APACHES OF PARIS** round off the lineup

Berlin, August 22, 2018 – Bertelsmann and UFA are delighted with the strong demand for tickets for this year's UFA Film Nights in Berlin. Only a few tickets are still available for each of the three evenings on which renowned silent films will be screened under the stars, accompanied by live music; remaining tickets for the first film are only available that evening at the door. The event kicks off today, Wednesday, with a world premiere: For the first time, the digitally restored version of Paul Czinner's silent film **THE FIDDLER OF FLORENCE** will be shown, against the historic backdrop of Berlin's Museum Island. Produced nearly a hundred years ago, the Ufa movie – a coming-of-age drama starring the legendary Elisabeth Bergner in a “cross-dressing” role – was for a long time only shown in a heavily cut U.S. version. In the course of the restoration funded by Bertelsmann and carried out by the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation based on an original negative, the missing scenes were reintegrated into the film, thus restoring the original narrative structure.

Bertelsmann Chairman & CEO Thomas Rabe said: “Silent movies still inspire filmmakers all over the world; all major film genres have their origins here. As a company with a long cinematic history of its own, our aim is to preserve the early masterpieces of cinema history for posterity and to ensure that they remain vibrant and well-established in public awareness. With ‘The Fiddler of Florence’, Bertelsmann has now, for the third time, partnered with the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation to save an important silent film from decay and oblivion. I am delighted that its premiere is taking place today as part of our UFA Film Nights.”

UFA CEO Nico Hofmann added: “With the UFA Film Nights, we have succeeded in establishing an outstanding film event as a fixture in Berlin's cultural calendar, and in giving a visible stage to our unique cinematic heritage from the 1920s. The audience's response shows that cinema of the Weimar years, on which Ufa had a formative influence at the time, retains a special charisma to this day.”

In **THE FIDDLER OF FLORENCE**, Elisabeth Bergner plays a young woman named Renée, who, after clashes with her stepmother, is sent away to boarding school. She runs away and travels through Italy dressed as a boy. A painter discovers Renée playing the violin on the street, and asks the supposed boy to model for him. When the painting "The Fiddler of Florence" becomes famous and Renée's father recognizes his beloved child in it, the charade is at an end. Renée and the painter eventually confess their love for each other, and plan a common future with her father's blessing. The 1925/1926 film, and above all Elisabeth Bergner's acting, generated a veritable storm of rapturous enthusiasm among critics of the day.

At the world premiere of the restored version, the **I solisti di Francoforte** ensemble will play a newly composed score by Uwe Dierksen, commissioned by ZDF/ARTE. Actress Maria Schrader will introduce the audience to the film's importance and the history of its restoration. For those who are unable to obtain a ticket, the opening evening can be watched live on the Facebook channels of ARTE Cinema, Bertelsmann, and UFA from around 9:00 pm. ARTE will also broadcast the restored silent film with its new music on TV on September 24, 2018.

Before the screening on Museum Island, Bertelsmann and UFA will host a reception at Bertelsmann Unter den Linden 1. They will welcome more than 300 guests, including renowned actors, cultural figures, and personages from politics and society. The governing mayor of Berlin, Michael Müller, the actors Sebastian Koch, Rufus Beck, Thomas Kretschmann, Hans-Werner Meyer, and Lisa Martinek, and the event's film patron Maria Schrader have confirmed their attendance. The writers Thea Dorn, Katja Eichinger, and Vladimir Kaminer, director Oliver Hirschbiegel, and singer Max Raabe also plan to be there on Wednesday evening.

On Thursday, the UFA Film Nights continue with Ernst Lubitsch's **SUMURUN** (1920) starring the great Pola Negri as a seductive dancer who turns the heads of a sheikh and his son. The music for the film is played by the **Trioglyzerin ensemble**. Here too, as on the following evening, Maria Schrader will act as the film's patron and give a brief introduction to the work.

On Friday evening, Nikolai Malikoff's **APACHES OF PARIS** is on the program, in which American puritans on a moralizing mission in the shabby districts of Paris find themselves exposed to all kinds of temptations. The music is provided by the internationally renowned Dutch composer and pianist **Maud Nelissen** and her band **The Sprockets**, also with a new composition.

Bertelsmann and UFA expect the three open-air evening events to attract about a thousand guests each.

The UFA Film Nights have become a cinematic-musical highlight of Berlin's cultural summer with a dedicated stage orchestra and big screen erected for the occasion in the Kolonnadenhof on Museum Island, a World Cultural Heritage site. The UFA Film Nights hosted by Bertelsmann und UFA are internationally popular as well. Much to the delight of cineastes, several UFA Film Nights have already been held in Brussels, Madrid, Paris and New York.

For many years, Bertelsmann has been engaged in a variety of cultural initiatives both in Germany and internationally. The Group's "Culture@Bertelsmann" activities comprise exhibitions, readings and concerts, the "Blue Sofa" literary format, as well as a commitment to preserving Europe's cultural heritage. For instance, Bertelsmann owns the Archivio Storico Ricordi in Milan, a music archive that contains a wealth of unique testimonies to Italian opera history. For years, Bertelsmann has also championed the restoration, digitization and screening of important silent films. Earlier, the group had already sponsored the digital restoration of the classic silent film "Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari" in 2014 and the equally comprehensive reworking of the Fritz Lang film "Destiny" in 2016.

**The Program at a Glance:**

**Wednesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018. Doors open at 8:30 p.m., screening starts at 9:00 p.m.**  
***DER GEIGER VON FLORENZ – THE FIDDLER OF FLORENCE, (1925/26),***

Director: Paul Czinner

With Elisabeth Bergner, Conrad Veidt, Nora Gregor, Grete Mosheim

Production: Ufa, Length: approx. 90 min.

Music: New composition by Uwe Dierksen, commissioned by ZDF/ARTE. The I solisti di Francoforte ensemble will perform the musical accompaniment.

**Thursday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018. Doors open at 8:30 p.m., screening starts at 9:00 p.m.**  
***SUMURUN, (1920),*** Director: Ernst Lubitsch

With Pola Negri, Jenny Hasselqvist, Paul Wegener, Harry Liedtke, Ernst Lubitsch

Production: Pagu (Ufa), Length: 103 min.

Music: New composition by Trioglyzerin

**Friday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Doors open at 8:30 p.m., screening starts at 9:00 p.m.**  
***DIE APACHEN VON PARIS – APACHES OF PARIS (1927),*** Director: Nikolai Malikoff

With Jaque Catelain, Lia Eibenschütz, Olga Limburg

Production: Alliance Cinématographique (for Ufa), Length: 108 min.

Music: New composition by Maud Nelissen. Performed by: Maud Nelissen & The Sprockets

This year's UFA Film Nights in Berlin are being held with the kind support of ARTE, the National Museums in Berlin (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin), the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation, Maz & Movie, and Gegenbauer Facility Management. Yorck Kinogruppe, Ströer, radio eins, and rbb Kulturradio are the event's media partners.

More information at [www.ufa-filmnaechte.de](http://www.ufa-filmnaechte.de) or on Twitter: [#UFAFilmnaechte](https://twitter.com/UFAFilmnaechte)

**A few tickets are still available for 15 EUR including advance booking charge:**

**online** at [www.ufa-filmnaechte.de](http://www.ufa-filmnaechte.de) or [www.ticketmaster.de](http://www.ticketmaster.de)

**or by calling:** 01806 999 0000 (0.20 €/call from German landlines / max. 0.60 €/call from German mobiles)

**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 music company BMG, the service provider Arvato, the Bertelsmann Printing Group, the Bertelsmann Education Group and Bertelsmann Investments, an international network of funds. The company has 119,000 employees and generated revenues of €17.2 billion in the 2017 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for entrepreneurship and creativity. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world.

**About UFA**

UFA celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2017, making it one of the oldest entertainment brands in the world. Today's UFA Group is a powerful creator of entertainment content, and has steadily expanded its market leadership as a film and television producer in Germany over the years. The company has evolved from a creator of programs and TV producer into a content specialist that delivers a range of solutions for digital and multimedia content exploitation - for all major broadcasters in Germany as well as for many other partners. The UFA FICTION, UFA SERIAL DRAMA and UFA SHOW & FACTUAL production units, as well as UFA X operate under the UFA umbrella. UFA is part of the global media and entertainment company FremantleMedia, which operates the worldwide production business of Bertelsmann-owned RTL Group.

For further questions, please contact:

**Bertelsmann SE & Co. KGaA**

Andreas Grafemeyer  
Senior Vice President Media Relations  
Phone: +49 5241 80-2466  
[andreas.grafemeyer@bertelsmann.de](mailto:andreas.grafemeyer@bertelsmann.de)

**UFA GmbH**

Anja Käumle  
Director PR  
Phone: +49 331 70 60 379  
[anja.kaeumle@ufa.de](mailto:anja.kaeumle@ufa.de)

**SteinbrennerMüller Kommunikation**

Kristian Müller  
Phone: +49 30 47 37 21 92  
[km@steinbrennermueller.de](mailto:km@steinbrennermueller.de)  
[www.steinbrennermueller.de](http://www.steinbrennermueller.de)