

**PRESS RELEASE****Bertelsmann and UFA Present:****UFA Film Nights Delight Live, Open-Air Audience on Berlin's Museum Island**

- **Digitally restored version of Ernst Lubitsch's CARMEN celebrated world premiere in sold-out Colonnade Courtyard**
- **Audience also feted the newly composed score by Tobias Schwencke**
- **Actor August Wittgenstein, as the film's presenter, provided background and context to Lubitsch's over 100-year-old work**
- **All three masterpieces of cinema history – CARMEN, THE LIGHT OF ASIA and NOSFERATU – are also available as free streams**

Berlin, August 26, 2021 – The UFA Film Nights 2021 hosted by Bertelsmann and UFA got off to a successful start yesterday in the completely sold-out Kolonnadenhof (Colonnade Courtyard) of Berlin's Museumsinsel (Museum Island), despite adverse weather conditions. The world premiere of the digitally restored version of Ernst Lubitsch's "Carmen" was shown to around 500 guests, for the first time in a largely completed cut again and with reconstructed coloring. The film was extensively restored by the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation with financial support from Bertelsmann. For Bertelsmann, this was the fourth restoration of an important silent film for which the media company provided significant funding, after "Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari" ("The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari"), "Der müde Tod" ("Destiny") and "Der Geiger von Florenz" ("The Fiddler of Florence").

Karin Schlautmann, Head of Corporate Communications at Bertelsmann, said "Even a century later, silent films still fascinate people. The quickly sold-out screenings of this year's UFA Film Nights and the enthusiasm of our guests at yesterday's event testify to this. With our long-standing efforts to support cultural heritage and German cinematic heritage in particular, we want to make it clear that we stand by the art and creative works of past generations. And we are determined to provide a stage for today's creative professionals and artists so that cultural life can pick up again after this difficult period brought about by the pandemic."

Ensemble KONTRASTE accompanied the opening movie "Carmen" with a new composition by Tobias Schwencke, commissioned by ZDF/Arte – likewise a world premiere. The audience, which included the Governing Mayor of Berlin, Michael Müller, and well-known actors such as Inka Friedrich and Burghart Klaußner, celebrated the film and music with long standing ovations.

In his capacity as presenter of the UFA Film Nights, actor August Wittgenstein gave the audience an introduction to the cinematic background to the film immediately before the screening and provided some context for the images from 1918.

All UFA Film Nights screenings take place outdoors against the spectacular backdrop of the Kolonnadenhof and the Alte Nationalgalerie on Berlin's historic Museum Island in Berlin-

Mitte. The 2021 edition marks the eleventh time that Bertelsmann and UFA have jointly hosted the UFA Film Nights.

The screenings of the two remaining evenings are also already sold out. However, silent film lovers won't have to miss out: All three films featured in the UFA Film Nights 2021 will be streamed on [ufa-filmnaechte.de](http://ufa-filmnaechte.de), on Bertelsmann's homepage and Facebook channel, and on [radioeins.de](http://radioeins.de).

The second evening, Thursday, August 26, will feature the oriental fairy tale DIE LEUCHTE ASIENS (THE LIGHT OF ASIA), directed by Franz Osten. The Silent Light Orchestra will enthrall audiences with oriental soundscapes.

The final evening, Friday, August 27, is dedicated to Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau's classic NOSFERATU. The "mother of all horror films" will be accompanied by the world-famous organist Cameron Carpenter.

Footage from the first evening of the UFA Film Nights 2021 can be found here: <https://www.bertelsmann.com/news-and-media/photographs/gallery/impressions-of-the-ufa-film-nights-2021-in-berlin.jsp>

UFA Film Nights partners: Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation, arte, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz (Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation) and Gegenbauer. radioeins and rbbKultur are the event's official media partners.

#### **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 around 130,000 employees and generated revenues of €17.3 billion in the 2020 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. In 2021, Bertelsmann commemorates the 100th birthday of Reinhard Mohn, the Group's late post-war founder and longtime Chairman and CEO.

#### **About UFA**

UFA is one of Germany's oldest and most distinguished entertainment brands, and today presents itself as a high-performance program creator that has continuously expanded its market leadership as a film and TV producer in Germany in recent years. In the process, the company has evolved from a program creator and TV producer into a content specialist offering solutions for digital and multimedia content exploitation - for all major broadcasters in Germany as well as for numerous other partners. The production units UFA Fiction, UFA Serial Drama, UFA Show & Factual and UFA Documentary operate under the UFA umbrella. UFA is part of the global media and entertainment company Fremantle, the worldwide production arm of RTL Group, part of Bertelsmann. The managing directors of UFA are Nico Hofmann (CEO) and Joachim Kosack.

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