

PRESS RELEASE

## Bertelsmann Brings Pinar Atalay to the ‘Blue Sofa Gütersloh’

- RTL presenter and author Pinar Atalay talks about her book “*Schwimmen muss man selbst – Wie ich als Arbeiterkind den Weg ins deutsche Fernsehen fand*” at Theater Gütersloh.
- Tickets for the event on November 6, 2022 are now available

Gütersloh, October 21, 2022 – Bertelsmann, the international media company, is bringing the well-known presenter, journalist and author Pinar Atalay to the “Blue Sofa Gütersloh” at the city’s theater on November 6, 2022. This time, the literary format makes a guest appearance in the theater’s Skylobby as part of the “Lesestadt Gütersloh” event series, a series of around 30 readings throughout the city over several days. Pinar Atalay will discuss her highly acclaimed book “*Schwimmen muss man selbst - Wie ich als Arbeiterkind den Weg ins deutsche Fernsehen fand*” (No One Can Swim It For You – How I Made My Way from the Working Class into German TV) with Thorsten Jantschek (Deutschlandfunk Kultur). The book is published by Bertelsmann’s Penguin imprint. Tickets for the event are available from the Theater Gütersloh website and from Gütersloh Marketing GmbH.

Karin Schlautmann, Bertelsmann’s Executive VP Corporate Communications, says: “We are thrilled that Pinar Atalay has accepted our invitation to the ‘Blue Sofa Gütersloh’ to present her latest book. Pinar is an outstanding journalist at RTL, and she looks back on an impressive biography, which, incidentally, began right here in East Westphalia-Lippe. Her story is one of educational advancement and equal opportunities, and shows how success is possible. By hosting such a top-class visitor, Bertelsmann once again makes a contribution to cultural diversity in the region.”

This is the eighth “Blue Sofa Gütersloh” event since the series was launched. Pinar Atalay is the latest in a lineup of bestselling authors who have inspired the Gütersloh audience; past guests include Dörte Hansen, Wladimir Kaminer, Elke Heidenreich and, most recently, Roland Kaiser.

### About Pinar Atalay

Pinar Atalay, 44, was born into a working-class family in Extertal in the East Westphalia-Lippe region of Germany. She is well known for anchoring the main news program on NDR television, and hosting the political talk show “phoenix Runde” and ARD’s business magazine show “plusminus.” She was also the first woman with Turkish roots to anchor ARD’s “tagesthemen.” Since August 2021, Pinar Atalay has been a top journalist and presenter at RTL, where she is formative in designing the broadcaster’s news programs and political coverage. Among other things, she hosted the first truel between Germany’s chancellor candidates.

## **About the book “*Schwimmen muss man selbst - Wie ich als Arbeiterkind den Weg ins deutsche Fernsehen fand*”, Penguin**

“I’m often asked how I ‘made it’, what was different about me. How a working-class child with Turkish roots, who grew up in an East Westphalian-Lippe village, became the journalist and presenter who says good evening to the Germans at peak primetime.” Based on her own biography, Pinar Atalay knows that it is not the immigrant background itself that prevents many from advancing, but the fact that they hail from the ‘working class’. Children from non-academic families need to be encouraged to realize their potential, to look beyond their parents’ horizons in their careers. This requires encouragement and policy changes - but also the self-confidence and will to forge one’s own path. Using the example of her own story and through interviews with personalities such as Germany’s “First Lady” Elke Bündenbender, actress Sibel Kekilli, and the Minister President of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Manuela Schwesig, Pinar Atalay shows how success becomes possible.

## **About Thorsten Jantschek (Moderator)**

Thorsten Jantschek, 56, is a philosophy graduate. He was initially in charge of the “Religion and Society” desk at NDR, then at Radio Bremen, simultaneously working for several years as an adjunct lecturer at the University of Bremen’s Institute of Philosophy. Since 2013, he has worked for Deutschlandfunk Kultur - first as an editor in “Aktuelle Kultur” (Contemporary Culture), then in the nonfiction and philosophy department. Since 2016, he has headed the station’s “Current Culture and Politics” department.

Bertelsmann has been engaged in a variety of cultural initiatives for many years— locally, across Germany, and internationally. Its “Culture@Bertelsmann” activities comprise exhibitions, readings and concerts, the “Blue Sofa” literary format created with several partners, as well as a commitment to preserving Europe’s cultural heritage. The “Blue Sofa Gütersloh” is made possible by Bertelsmann as part of its cultural sponsorship activities in the city.

## **The Event at a Glance**

The “Blue Sofa Gütersloh” featuring Pinar Atalay

Sunday, November 6, 2022, 7:30 PM  
Theater Gütersloh, Skylobby  
Hans-Werner-Henze-Platz 1, 33330 Gütersloh  
Phone: +49 5241 864 244

Tickets available at [www.theater-gt.de](http://www.theater-gt.de)  
and at Gütersloh Marketing GmbH  
Berliner Strasse 63, 33330 Gütersloh  
Phone: +49 5241 2113636

Admission: €12

### **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 145,000 employees and generated revenues of €18.7 billion in the 2021 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.

### **About the Blue Sofa**

The Blue Sofa is the authors' forum jointly hosted by Bertelsmann, ZDF, Deutschlandfunk Kultur, and 3sat. It has become an institution at the book fairs in Frankfurt and Leipzig. The Blue Sofa Berlin celebrated its premiere in 2005. In 2011, Frankfurt's Open Books reading festival opened with a Blue Sofa authors' gala for the first time. Since the Leipzig Book Fair in 2000, the Blue Sofa has provided the setting for more than 3,100 conversations with authors including Nobel Prize laureates Svetlana Alexievich, Mikhail Gorbachev, Günter Grass, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Herta Müller, Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard, Orhan Pamuk, Joseph Stiglitz, Olga Tokarczuk, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Mo Yan. The Blue Sofa has also made regular appearances in Gütersloh since 2017.

### **Bertelsmann online**



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