

PRESS RELEASE



Thousands Visit Bertelsmann Exhibition ‘Opera Meets New Media’

- Bertelsmann Puccini exhibition inspires 10,000 visitors
- “Opera Meets New Media” in Milan from October 24

Gütersloh, May 22, 2024 – To commemorate the 100th anniversary of Giacomo Puccini’s death, Bertelsmann presented a multimedia exhibition of valuable original documents from Milan’s Archivio Storico Ricordi in Berlin until May 16. “Opera Meets New Media – Puccini, Ricordi and the Rise of the Modern Entertainment Industry” was officially opened on April 17 in the presence of more than 120 distinguished guests; since then, the exhibition has attracted 10,000 visitors to the international media, education, and services company’s premises in the German capital. The next stop for the exhibition is Milan.

Valuable exhibits from the Archivio Storico Ricordi, which has belonged to Bertelsmann since 1994, showed the interplay of opera and media at the beginning of the 20th century in a state-of-the-art exhibition, presented for the first time in innovative and audiovisual installations, including artistic AI@Bertelsmann animation.

Bertelsmann Chairman & CEO Thomas Rabe: “The Ricordi archive is home to thousands of valuable documents. They have been digitized according to the latest archival standards and made available to the public – online at any time and now once again in the form of an innovative exhibition. We are delighted that the exhibition has been so well received. It is also a contribution to the current debate about new media and their disruptive influence on the economy, culture and society, because 100 years ago, the music industry faced similar challenges to the entire media industry today, for example in the area of copyright protection.”

The Archivio Storico Ricordi is considered one of the most important music collections in the world. Today, its holdings include a wealth of unique testimonies to 200 years of Italian opera history. Bertelsmann is aware of the responsibility that comes with owning such a valuable cultural asset: As part of its “Culture@Bertelsmann” activities, which have been in place since 2012, the company is indexing the archive’s holdings according to the latest standards and making them accessible to the public.

Karin Schlautmann, Executive Vice President Corporate Communications at Bertelsmann and responsible for the Archivio Storico Ricordi, says: “Culture@Bertelsmann’ is part of our strategic communications work. The success of ‘Opera Meets New Media’ is an example of how communications and cultural work at Bertelsmann are intertwined, bringing the strategy to life, further charging the Bertelsmann brand and enriching it with new aspects. I am very pleased with the great and positive response to this innovative exhibition among visitors and in the media.”

The next stop for “Opera Meets New Media” is Milan: from October 24, 2024 to January 10, 2025, the exhibition will be shown in the Teatro alla Scala Museum. Further venues are currently being planned.

The exhibition is accompanied by a richly illustrated publication by Prestel (Penguin Random House), edited by chief curator Gabriele Dotto.

For more information and multimedia about the exhibition, please visit www.puccini2024.com; and about the Archivio Storico Ricordi, please visit www.archivioricordi.com.

Press releases, photos, TV footage, and a podcast about the exhibition are available at www.bertelsmann.com/puccini.

About Bertelsmann

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company with more than 80,000 employees that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the entertainment group RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato Group, Bertelsmann Marketing Services, the Bertelsmann Education Group and Bertelsmann Investments, an international network of funds. The company generated revenues of €20.2 billion in the 2023 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. www.bertelsmann.com

About Culture@Bertelsmann

As a creative content company with a nearly 190-year history, Bertelsmann is committed to cultural activities at various levels. Its “Culture@Bertelsmann” activities focus on preserving important cultural assets and making them accessible to a broad public, for example through digitization, exhibitions, and concerts. For many years, Bertelsmann has organized the UFA Film Nights, a popular silent film festival in Berlin, and has repeatedly acted as the main sponsor for the digital restoration of important silent films. The Group also owns the Archivio Storico Ricordi in Milan, which houses a wealth of unique testimonies from 200 years of Italian opera history. Bertelsmann is indexing the archive holdings according to the latest standards and making thousands of documents, set and costume designs, libretti, and pieces of business correspondence freely accessible online. For more than 20 years, Bertelsmann’s literary format “The Blue Sofa” has provided authors with a prominent stage for their latest works.

Bertelsmann online



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