

Welcome Speech
Rotary Convention

Bucerius Kunst Forum, 4th June, 2019

First of all:

Let me extend a very warm welcome to all friends and especially to our friends from abroad and from overseas.

I have been member of Rotary now for almost 22 years and as a citizen of Hamburg I am very proud of the fact that Rotary International chose Hamburg for its 2019 convention. Proud, because it was Hamburg where the **first** German Rotary Club was founded in 1927. And as Rotary's basic idea is "service above self" you could not have found a better place. Why?

Well, service above self is also the guiding idea of all public benefit foundations in Germany and the state of Hamburg is the **capital** of foundations and charitable trusts in Germany. You find roundabout 1,450 charitable, public benefit foundations in this city and there is not another place in Germany where you would find more.

Thus, the old republican idea of how every citizen can contribute to public welfare, to the benefit of society, to the benefit of the city, this idea, this goal is deeply inscribed in the tradition of the city of Hamburg.

The foundation of which I am its CEO was founded almost 50 years ago by a wealthy media man, Gerd Bucerius, a lawyer, politician and publisher, the owner of DIE ZEIT, of Germany's "**Times**" and of many other magazines. He declared in the foundation's statutes that the ZEIT foundation among many other

things should support fine arts which lead us to establish the Bucerius Arts Forum in the year 2002. As you heard from my colleague Andreas Hoffmann we have now moved to this new location.

I am very happy that Hamburg's minister of Cultural Affairs, Senator Dr. Carsten Brosda, is here with us tonight. I would like to ask Dr. Brosda what is unique about arts and the cultural life in Hamburg?

I already mentioned the engagement of private individuals and of independent foundations for the city of Hamburg. Please, tell us frankly, is this private engagement ok with you or do you find it interfering in your own business, meddling in your job? Would you rather see more public means for the arts than private?

Hamburg invests around 320 million Euro, taxpayers' Euro, in the Arts in 2019. I am very satisfied with this as I think it really contributes to public benefit. What is your goal, your aim in doing that?

Berlin says of itself it is poor but sexy. This slogan has worked very well with the capital. Would you like to say: "We in Hamburg are a little less poor but all the more sexy?"

And my very last question: do you like video art?

Thank you Dr. Brosda. We are now about to really open the doors for the first time. As you already heard this exhibition is in part a provocation, it is a demand to start talks on what you see. The exhibition mirrors the world as it is: full of needs of improvement, of the necessity for change. It is up to us to make it a better world – and that is really what Rotary is about: service above self: to make this world a better place.