



Model Ina Balke, 1960.

Courtesy of the Rico Puhlmann estate.

Rico Puhlmann: Forty Years of Fashion Art

The Museum at FIT, February 8, 2005 through April 9, 2005

Rico Puhlmann: A Fashion Legacy, 1955-1996, the first major retrospective of the 40-year career of the fashion photographer and illustrator, features more than 200 photographs, drawings, sketches, magazine covers, and films from the collection of Puhlmann's estate. Puhlmann's images of garments, portraits, and cityscapes offer a perspective on 20th-century fashion in America and Europe.

The primary photographer at *Harper's Bazaar* for 20 years, Puhlmann (1934-1996) not only knew fashion, he worked quickly and efficiently, a skill mastered as a fashion illustrator. "[He] knew how to make clothes appear entirely natural on a woman's body, and preferred to show garments where they might actually be worn: in a corner café, a neighborhood restaurant, or his own living room," says fashion historian William A. Ewing, the curator of the exhibition. "He photographed faces beautifully, so he had hundreds of cover assignments. Rico also had a profound color sensibility and was a skilled art director."

After a career as a child film star, the Berlin-born Puhlmann became a fashion illustrator, and later a photographer. German fashion magazines of the mid- to late-1950s were filled with his drawings and photographs. French *Vogue* first published his work in 1958. In the early '70s, Puhlmann moved to New York, where *Harper's Bazaar*, *Fashions of the Times*, *Glamour*, *Gentleman's Quarterly*, and *American Vogue* were his principal clients, while German, Swiss, and Italian magazines continued to publish his work. The exhibition includes simple yet glamorous portraits of models and other celebrities, such as Isabella Rossellini, Gore Vidal, and Calvin Klein. Many rare European magazines, newspapers, and fashion catalogues from the '50s and '60s are also on view.



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