



PRESS RELEASE

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Horst: Photographer of Style

The NRW-Forum, Düsseldorf, is presenting comprehensive retrospective of Horst P. Horst. The exhibition *Horst: Photographer of Style* opens on February 12, 2016 and runs until May 22. German-born Horst was one of the leading photographers of the twentieth century and remains an important influence today. The exhibition is curated by the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London, and presents 250 photographic works spanning 60 years. It includes iconic images from his time as a *Vogue* photographer and lesser-known projects alongside rarely seen drawings, letters, films and couture gowns.

Horst was born Horst Paul Albert Bohrmann in 1906 in Weissenfels, Germany. He studied at Hamburg Kunstgewerbeschule before travelling to Paris in 1930 to work as an apprentice to the architect Le Corbusier. He began his career as a photographer under the guidance of George Hoyningen-Huene, working for *Vogue* from 1932 onwards. In 1939, Horst moved to New York and in 1943 he became an American citizen, joined the United States Army and changed his surname from Bohrmann to Horst. After the war, he built a house in Long Island, New York and remained in America for the rest of his life. He died in Florida in 1999, at the age of 93.

King of Fashion Photography

Horst creatively traversed the worlds of photography, art, fashion, design, theatre and high society. The exhibition explores his collaborations and friendships with leading couturiers such as Coco Chanel and Elsa Schiaparelli in 1930s Paris; film stars including Marlene Dietrich and Rita Hayworth; and artists and designers such as Salvador Dalí and Jean-Michel Frank. Horst found inspiration from many sources, including Classical architecture, the Bauhaus ideals of modern design, and Surrealist art. His elegant black and white studies from the 1930s show his mastery of light and shade. The creative process behind some of his most famous photographs, such as the *Mainbocher Corset*, is revealed through the inclusion of original contact sheets, sketches and cameras.

Expressive Color Photographs

The advent of color film enabled a fresh approach and Horst went on to create more than 90 *Vogue* covers and countless pages in vivid color. A selection of 25 large color photographs, newly printed from the original transparencies from the Condé Nast Archive, demonstrate Horst's exceptional skill as a colorist. These prints feature Horst's favourite models from the 1940s and 50s, such as Carmen Dell'Orefice, Muriel Maxwell and Dorian Leigh, and are shown together with his preparatory sketches, which have never previously been exhibited.

Rarely Seen Images

The exhibition also reveals little-known aspects of Horst's work: nude studies, travel photographs from the Middle East and patterns created from natural forms. Horst's second book, *Patterns from Nature* (1946), and the series of photographs from which it originated, stand out as a surprising diversion from the high glamour of his fashion and celebrity photographs. These close-up images of plants, shells and minerals were taken at the New York Botanical Garden, in the forests of New England, in Mexico, and along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. This personal project was partly inspired by Karl Blossfeldt's (1865-1932) photographs of plants.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Horst photographed some of the world's most beautiful and luxurious homes for *House and Garden* and *Vogue* under the editorship of his friend Diana Vreeland. A three-sided projection and interactive screens present these colourful studies. Among the most memorable are the Art Deco apartment of Karl Lagerfeld, the three lavish dwellings of Yves Saint Laurent and the Roman palazzo of artist Cy Twombly.

In the latter years of Horst's life, his early aesthetic experienced a renaissance. The period also witnessed a flurry of new books, exhibitions, and television documentaries celebrating his work. Horst produced new, lavish prints in platinum-palladium for museums and the collector's market, selecting emblematic works from every decade of his career. These prints are showcased as the finale to the exhibition.



Only Exhibition Venue in Germany

Susanna Brown, Curator of Photographs at the V&A, commented: 'We are delighted that this major V&A exhibition will be presented in Horst's home country of Germany. The city of Düsseldorf contains such fantastic museums and galleries and continues to be a world leader in the field of fine art photography. It provides the perfect context in which to appreciate Horst's role as an arbiter of style and elegance.'

Exhibition Publication

To accompany the exhibition, the V&A has published *HORST: Photographer of Style* (edited by Susanna Brown), with a Foreword by Editor in Chief of *Vogue* Anna Wintour and essays by a team of international contributors. A German edition of the book will be available in February 2016, published by Knesebeck.

Exhibition organized by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Horst: Photographer of Style

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Opening: 11/02/2016 on the occasion of „Duesseldorf Photo Weekend 2016“



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