

Ron Galella . Paparazzo Extraordinaire!

Photographs

From **December 10, 2011 to February 26, 2012**, **C/O Berlin**, International Forum For Visual Dialogues, will present the exhibition **Paparazzo Extraordinaire!** by the US photographer **Ron Galella**. The **opening** will be held on Friday, December 9, 2011 at 7pm in the Postfuhramt in the Oranienburger Straße 35/36, Berlin-Mitte.

"If someone says "no photos!" then I try not to take any more. However, before he says that I take as many as I can. That's the game". Ron Galella

A paparazzo hunt is cunning, harsh and frequently ends painfully. In the worst case bloodily—including broken jaws and lost teeth. For Ron Galella and his undercover activities, no effort or risk was too great. He proceeded like a detective in order to catch the celebrities in the right moment, patient, persistent, shifty. Whether it was Jacqueline Kennedy, Marlon Brando, Greta Garbo, Andy Warhol, Sean Penn, Robert Red-ford, Muhammad Ali, Madonna, Mick Jagger or Audrey Hepburn—he managed to get them all in front of his lens. His pictures are snapshots rather than portraits. Spontaneous, not staged, and as a result extremely authentic.

Ron Galella is a pioneer of Paparazzi photography. As opposed to the other representatives of his profession, the stars look good in his photos. Regardless of this, he is interested in their mysterious side, behind the pose and make-up. What is hidden behind their glamorous lives? What are these people like close-up? Who are they? In fact his photographs do provide answers: the celebrities are nothing special. Anyone can be a star because it is only the media that creates icons, beauty and immortality with their images. With the immediacy of his Paparazzi photographs, Ron Galella creates carefully composed images and at the same time provides new material to feed the constant craving for sensationalism by the press.

In the mass media industry, the focus is always on appeal and directing attention—every news item, every picture is important for the stars' publicity, society's modern nobility. This exploitation logic leads to a direct complicity between the paparazzi and celebrities. The silent agreement made between the object and subject to achieve the appropriate popularity is called "give and take". Both enter into an ambivalent game between authenticity and staging, implication and evidence, aggressiveness and appeasement. This symbiotic relationship prompts the question as to whether and to what extent Paparazzi photographs are calculated. Now however, in the era of mobile phone cameras and the Internet, this classic collaboration is no longer really lucrative because everyone can become a paparazzo and can market their pictures. As a result, this photojournalist genre is rarely able to produce well-known photographers such as Ron Galella now—hence his works could be perceived even more as unique, historical documents.

On the occasion of the Berlinale, C/O Berlin will show approximately 140 black/white photographs by Ron Galella.

Ron Galella, born in 1931 in the Bronx in New York City, began his career as a photographer in the air force. In his early twenties he moved to Los Angeles and trained as a photo journalist. In his free time he photographed the stars arriving at film premieres and sold his photos to the National Enquirer and Fotoplay. In addition to physical assaults, his photographic approach also caused him to be sued—by Jacqueline Kennedy for example. Following legal proceedings in 1972 he was not permitted to go within 25 feet of her. Because he breached this legal restraint four times, he was convicted a second time in 1982 This time he had to promise not to photograph her again as long as he lived. Andy Warhol on the other hand adored the photographer and Liz Taylor used his photographs in her biography. In addition to his spontaneous Paparazzi photographs, Galella also took staged photographs, commissioned by numerous magazines such as Time, Rolling Stone, VOGUE or Vanity Fair. His photographs have been shown in exhibitions worldwide and also published in books.

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Exhibition December 10, 2011 to February, 26, 2012

Opening Friday, December 9, 2011 . 7 pm

Ron Galella will attend

Press conference Friday, December 9, 2011 . 11 am

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Opening hours daily . 11 am to 8 pm

Admission 10 Euro . reduced 5 Euro

Organizer C/O Berlin

International Forum For Visual Dialogues

Location C/O Berlin im Postfuhramt

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