



# Inside Fashion

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## NEVER UNDERESTIMATE FANTASY

**"FASHION AS FANTASY,"** the exhibition that will open at the Rizzoli Gallery Dec. 3 with an invitation preview the night before, is a more ambitious project than Roberto Polo, the gallery's director, ever thought it would be.

An art prodigy who started his career at the age of 9, Cuban-born Polo is the son of Countess Celis de Maceda and Robert Polo. He studied at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, took his M.A. in art at Columbia and came into his present job almost three years ago. Since then, he has organized several exhibitions but has always dreamed of this one.

One thing Polo has learned since the invitations went out to some 50 top-name designers, photographers, sculptors, painters and illustrators is that definitions of fantasy can be as different as day and night. One man's definition can be as dull as bread and butter compared to another.

"Not everything in the show has shock value, and it's the variation that makes it good," is the way Polo puts it.

Rudi Gernreich's contribution to the show will probably be the most discussed.

A man whose thinking goes its own unique and honest way, Rudi will send a live male and female model dressed completely in bicycle parts.

The man will wear the handle bars around his pelvis, the leather bicycle seat as a fig leaf, chains as epaulets and a fender bent over his head. The lady will decorate her shoulders with handlebars and be almost completely concealed by bicycle chains from neck to floor.

Painter Andy Warhol's fantasy will be a dress made of preserved apricots, the pieces all fastened to a vinyl lining, ready to be bitten off. The model who shows it will also have a necklace made of rock candy.

Karl Lagerfeld, the French ready-to-wear designer with a reputation for far ahead thinking, is sending two complete environments from Paris.

In one of them, a mannekin poses in front of a smallish box on a table covered in a quilted cloth. Everything she wears can be put away in the drawers of the box.

London designer Zandra Rhodes has compressed one of her dresses between two pieces of glass and framed the whole thing.

Geoffrey Beene, a photography buff,



Post Photo By Richard Gummere

Roberto Polo

has hung part of his collection on a rack and blown up the print to giant size.

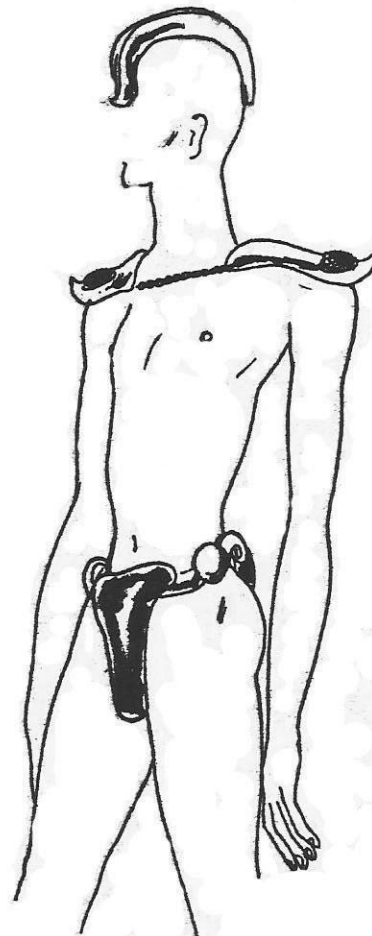
Lowell Nesbitt has sent drawings of nude figures covered with flowers like tattoos. "Most of the painters idea of fantasy is a costume," Polo says.

Giorgio di Sant'Angelo has been working on six designs, one of which doesn't have to be worn but just hangs from the ceiling looking like an angel.

Jonathan Hitchcock has designed a dress that suggests a butterfly emerging from a cocoon, the body made of copper sequins and a hood and sleeves of chiffon.

Charles James' famous sofa that follows the body contours as if alive will be on view again.

Yves Saint Laurent will send draw-



Rudi Gernreich will dress a man in bicycle parts for "Fashion as Fantasy," an exhibition that opens December 3 at the Rizzoli Gallery.

ings, but Valentino is flying over an entourage with a plaster replica of his own fashion runway and mannekins parading on it.

Diane von Furstenberg has simply sent one of her dresses. "Factual, like the Campbell's tomato soup can," says Polo.

At the opening, Roberto Polo will receive guests along with his pretty wife, Rosa, who loves clothes.

Never underestimate fantasy exhibitions.

Twenty-five years ago, everyone laughed when Sophie Gimbel showed a ruffled white evening shirt for men at a forecast show in the Metropolitan Museum and look what happened.

Ten years from now clothes may be so expensive that women will just hang their fashions from the ceiling and settle for admiring them.