

## **Emilio Pucci, King of Prints**

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### **Abstract**

Emilio Pucci's signature style and core values have translated well to a wide variety of American designers, retailers and price points. Pucci's bright hues, vivid colors and pop prints have inspired high-end designers like Anna Sui as well as the merchandisers at moderately priced retailer Macy's and mass marketer Target Stores. Marketing a line of attractively priced garments under the Mossimo label, Target has been able to maintain a commitment to style, fit and attention to detail that was at the heart of the original Pucci designs.

### **Emilio Pucci's Prints**

Throughout the 1960s and '70s, Italian designer Emilio Pucci revolutionized the way the world interpreted women's wear. His new approach to creating color palettes, his fresh take on bold geometric prints, and his focus on simple, unstructured silhouettes created his signature style full of vibrancy and life that transcends any time period. His classic creations are still in vogue and in high demand today.

"In fact, the label has never quite gone out of favor since it was launched by Italian playboy Emilio Pucci in 1948" (Larocca 23). Not only does the Pucci brand continue to pay homage to this one-of-a-kind designer by continuing his vision of print and color, Pucci is widely referenced as inspiration for modern designers throughout the world. "The patterns get knocked off by everyone from H&M to Versace" (Larocca 23).

In America as well, Pucci's influence is still seen at every price level of fashion from the upscale designer creations of New York's Anna Sui to the contemporary fast-fashion at department stores like Macy's and the mass merchandise line of Mossimo that retails at Target Stores. Through his innovative colors, prints and silhouettes, Pucci continues to live on in every level of the American apparel industry (Casadio 5).

### **Anna Sui: Reinterpreting Vintage Design**

When she first took New York's fashion scene by storm in the 1990s, Anna Sui was touted as one of the city's hottest designers. Her signature style has always focused on reinterpreting vintage fashion into fresh, modern collections using her own creative lens. "In her hands, sixties mod-istes...look au courant" (O'Dell). She is famous for referencing what she refers to as her "genius files" when creating new designs. These prized "files" are Sui's fashion clippings and magazine tear sheets that the designer has been collecting since she was a young girl. Throughout the past decade, Sui has done several collections, which she acknowledges were influenced by fashion of the 1960s and '70s (Kawachi). Many of these collections include striking ensembles clearly influenced by Pucci's use of color, prints and fluid structure (Pin).

Such inspiration becomes apparent when analyzing Sui's own designs for the Spring 2008 collection. Sui style makes use of fun and fanciful prints and colors - and her Spring 2008 collection was no different. The women's sportswear collection, while using more organic shapes in her prints, definitely drew from Pucci's taste and skill for creating interesting blends of color. Bright hues in analogous palettes were placed together to make a print pop and allow color to dominate the fabric. Sui also switched from a more structured vintage silhouette to more flowing, fluid shapes, draping over the body and allowing for movement, which Pucci believed was essential to correctly dressing the female form. Sui continues to draw upon the influence of designers past, including Emilio Pucci, and reinterprets his signature style into her own modern American bohemia (Casadio).

### **Pucci Inspiration at Macy's**

A veritable giant among American department stores for over a century, Macy's has continued to provide mainstream fashion to families throughout the country (macysinc.com). In Spring 2008, as dresses continued to dominate the landscape of women's sportswear, Macy's stocked their stores full of flowing baby doll and sheath dresses in materials that flutter and drape around the body.

The most popular trend for these dresses was bright, highly saturated colors like turquoise, cyan and magenta. Bold geometric prints served to combine all hues of these vibrant colors, blending primary, secondary and tertiary palettes into prints and using bold black as contrast for dramatic effect. The lines Macy's carried reflected the classic Pucci style and made them available at a contemporary price point (macys.com).

### **Mossimo and Target: Color and Style for All**

Mossimo Giannulli, a California designer who took the nation by storm in the 1990s when he introduced the country to his native So Cal style, has licensed his name to Target to design a line of moderately priced clothing named Mossimo: Design for All (Gilmore). As a mass merchandiser, Target has attracted attention over the past decade from the fashion world for its trend savvy and fashion forward approach at a conservative price point. Mossimo's line for women continues in this tradition, offering trendy sportswear at an affordable price nationwide.

The line offers a wide variety of clothing – from basics such as tee shirts, cardigan sweaters and khaki pants, to “top trends and basics that take you from work to weekend” (target.com). Most notable in the 2008 collection were dresses that echoed Pucci with psychedelic prints and vivid color choices. While the quality of the clothing may differ from authentic Pucci garments, Mossimo's line still embodied the principle of movement that Pucci ardently believed in. The Mossimo line brings the essence of Pucci's core fashion values to the masses and translates high fashion aesthetic to a discount price point.

Emilio Pucci's place in the fashion industry remains important and inspirational to today's American designers. “For Pucci, the essential aspects of modern clothing were simplicity, colour, style and finally, movement” (Casadio). His influence on Anna Sui and the lines at Macy's and Target are a vital part of the American fashion industry at every price point, from high end designer to contemporary to mass merchandiser. His designs and guiding philosophies translate to the vast American marketplace, making high style accessible to any shopper interested in fashion.

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