



1



2

- 1 Fotografie, Ernesto «Che» Guevara, Industrieministerium Havanna, Kuba, 1963, Modern Print: 2013, Fotografie: René Burri, Donation: René Burri. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK
- 2 Fotografie, Ernesto «Che» Guevara, Industrieministerium Havanna, Kuba, 1963, Modern Print: 2013, Fotografie: René Burri, Donation: René Burri. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK

Few photographs end up becoming etched into the collective memory of humankind. The Argentine-Cuban revolutionary Ernesto “Che” Guevara (1928–1967), photographed by René Burri (1933–2014), is one such image. In 1963, shortly after the Cuban Missile Crisis nearly plunged the world into a nuclear war, Burri met the young minister of industry in Havana. For its first publication in *Look* magazine, the photograph was severely cropped. It was only through the hippie and commune movements of the late 1960s that the image became an icon of youth culture.

This horizontal-format portrait of a cocky-looking Che Guevara is undoubtedly René Burri’s most famous image—an icon of twentieth-century photography that has circulated around the globe. The photo is part of a larger report on Cuba that the photographer produced (together with the Swedish journalist Laura Berquist) for the American illustrated magazine *Look* in January 1963. An interview appointment at Che Guevara’s Ministry of Industry in Havana provided the opportunity for a remarkable series of portraits, which also depict a pensive,

tired, laughing, or mischievous Guevara. But it was only the bust portrait of the proud revolutionary that made its way into our collective memory. First printed in *Look* on April 9, 1963, it was reproduced only in small format, severely cropped, and placed at the very end of the multipage report. Subsequently, posters, postcards, T-shirts, soap, wine labels, and even condoms and watches (only seldom in compliance with copyright) helped the image achieve global fame and become the ultimate “Che devotional object.” Alberto Korda, who also produced an iconic Che photograph, joked upon meeting René Burri, “I photographed the most famous portrait of Che.” Burri replied, “Yes, that’s true. But I took the best portrait of Che!” (Christian Brändle)

Fotografie, Ernesto «Che» Guevara, Industrieministerium Havanna, Kuba, 1963 (Modern Print 2013)
Fotografie: René Burri
Bildquelle: Magnum, Paris, FR
Auftrag: Magazin Look, Des Moines, US
Material/Technik: Fotopapier, s/w-Fotografie, Modern Print
23.2 × 34.8 cm
Donation: René Burri

Eigentum: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK

<https://www.eguide.ch/en/objekt/ernesto-che-guevara-industrieministerium-havana/>