

**45 Years of PUMA SUEDE**

**Q & A WITH HELMUT FISCHER**

There is no other person who knows PUMA history, can speak about PUMA product with great passion, house an archive of icons and continue to rock a PUMA T7 tracksuit like that of Helmut Fischer. The chief archivist talks about his first encounter with the PUMA Suede and how he still gets giddy when he remembers the beginnings of this classic sneaker.

**Hello! Please introduce yourself and tell us what is it that you do?**

**Helmut Fischer (HF):** Hi, I’m Helmut! Today I am mainly working as a consultant for PUMA Germany and additionally I am taking care of our PUMA archive, in which we keep all the existing treasures from the company’s past. We’ve already organised a few exhibitions outside of Germany, one even in Japan. I started to work for PUMA in 1978 and during my time in the company I worked in various roles. Besides building an advertising and marketing department I worked most of the time as the Head of Sport Marketing in Germany.

**Please tell us about your first PUMA Suede encounter.**

**Helmut Fischer (HF):** My first memory of the PUMA Suede dates back to 1970, when I wasn’t even working for PUMA. At the local football club we once received a pair of the ‘Pele-Brasil’, which was the name of the Suede back then. Together with a matching tracksuit in yellow…it was an amazing Christmas present back then!

**What’s your favourite pair so far?**

**Helmut Fischer (HF):** The green-yellow, Pele-Brasil’ pair I just mentioned is my all time favourite. Since then, I have loved these Suede shoes.

**What was the best year or decade between the years of 1968 – 2012 in the history of street culture and why?**

**Helmut Fischer (HF):** In my opinion the 90s were the best years in the history of street culture. Since that time, the PUMA Suede has become an integral part of the sneaker world and by now the shoes have been re-produced in about 1,000 different colours. In France alone, back then, PUMA offered nearly 50 different colourways of the Suede. It was a sensation amongst the consumers!

**The PUMA Suede is turning 45 years old - what’s your birthday wish?**

**Helmut Fischer (HF):** I am hoping that the real comeback of the Suede still lies in the future and that the shoe will establish itself as an even stronger sneaker icon. The Suede simply represents what we at PUMA stand for as a brand: a former performance shoe developed into a fashion item, which makes it a symbol of ‘sportlifestyle.’

**If you were to design a pair of PUMA Suede’s, releasing 45 years from now, what would they look like?**

**Helmut Fischer (HF):** The PUMA Suede is a real design classic, so of course I would not change anything. However, I would get it produced in one of my favourite colours - red or blue. These colours just add to the timeless look of the shoe and match every outfit (and T7 tracksuit I own)!