



The Glamour of Italian Fashion 1945-2014

Sponsored by Bulgari

5 April – 27 July 2014

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The V&A's spring exhibition, *The Glamour of Italian Fashion 1945-2014*, will be the first major show to examine Italy's rich and influential contribution to fashion from the end of the Second World War to the present. It will draw out the defining factors unique to the Italian fashion industry – the use of luxurious materials; expert textile production; specialist, regional manufacturing; and its strength as a source of both dynamic menswear and glamorous womenswear.

The exhibition draws upon original research undertaken within Italian archives. The story of Italian fashion will be explored through the pivotal individuals and organisations that have contributed to its reputation for quality and style, within the prevailing social and political context. On display will be around 100 ensembles and accessories by leading Italian fashion houses including Dolce & Gabbana, Giorgio Armani, Fendi, Gianfranco Ferré, Gucci, Missoni, Prada, Pucci and Versace, through to the next generation of talent including couture by Giambattista Valli, bold ready-to-wear from Fausto Puglisi and work from Valentino's new designers duo Maria Grazia Chiuri and Pier Paolo Piccioli. It will also highlight the creativity of influential but less remembered figures such as post-war couturiers Sorelle Fontana (Fontana sisters) and Mila Schön and design innovators such as Walter Albini.

The exhibition will chart the shifting international perception of Italian style from the landmark 'Sala Bianca' catwalk shows held in Florence from the early 1950s, which propelled Italian fashion onto the world stage. Organised by Giovanni Battista Giorgini, these events presented the country's finest designs, which offered a viable alternative to Paris. It will also examine the impact of the many Hollywood films that were shot on location in Italy during the 1950s and 1960s. During this period, stars like Audrey Hepburn and Elizabeth Taylor became style ambassadors for Italian fashion, fuelling a keen international appetite for luxurious clothing made in Italy.

The Glamour of Italian Fashion will highlight the exceptional quality of techniques, materials and expertise for which Italy has become renowned. Its status as manufacturer and exporter of some of the world's most stylish and well-made fashion and textiles is linked to the strength of its traditional industries including spinning, dyeing, weaving, cutting and stitching; some of these traditions have been practised in regions around Italy for hundreds of years. A digital map will visualise the networks of mills, workshops and the clusters of related industries seen across the Italian landscape.

The exhibition will consider how Italy's fashion designers, manufacturers, press and related industries are navigating the current shift towards overseas production, fast-fashion, internet retail and digital communication. It will conclude with a series of filmed interviews with key protagonists across the design, manufacturing and media sectors discussing the challenges and trends that will impact on and shape the future of Italian fashion.

Martin Roth, Director of the V&A said: *"I am thrilled to be celebrating Italy's immense contribution to the international fashion world in this first major exhibition on the subject. The V&A has a long tradition of working with Italian designers and this comprehensive exhibition will chronicle the development of the legendary Italian style, not only focusing on the familiar but, importantly casting light on the less well known designers and stories as well as considering the significant contribution made to the economy by its fashion and textile industries."*

The objects will be drawn from the V&A's leading Italian fashion collections and from international lenders. These include private foundations, fashion houses and archives such as the Fondazione Emilio Pucci, Foto Locchi, Missoni Archive and Museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) and Galleria del Costume (Florence).

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NOTES TO EDITORS

- The V&A is open daily from 10.00 – 17.45 and until 22.00 every Friday
- Tickets £12 (concessions available). For advance bookings visit www.vam.ac.uk (booking fee applies) or call 020 7420 9736
- The exhibition curator is Sonnet Stanfill, curator of 20th century and contemporary fashion at the V&A
- The exhibition designers are Urban Salon
- The V&A's fashion collection is designated as the UK's National Collection and is one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of dress in the world

Support for the V&A is more vital than ever. Please help us by acknowledging the exhibition lead sponsor, Bulgari.

Exhibition Sponsors:

About Bulgari

Since 1884, Bulgari jewels have been an emblem of Italian creativity and craftsmanship. Bulgari is a global luxury brand, renowned for its distinctively Italian style, blending classicism and modernity. The Bulgari store at 10 Via Condotti in Rome opened in 1905 and has long been a favourite meeting place for an international elite of artists, writers and actors. During the 1960s and 70s when the new generation of the Bulgari family took over its management, Bulgari jewels became known for their innovative use of coloured gems within harmonious and fluid

designs. When Rome became a destination for Hollywood filmmakers from the 1950s onwards, many stars including Elizabeth Taylor, Grace Kelly, Audrey Hepburn and Ingrid Bergman wore Bulgari jewels. Bulgari has been part of the LVMH Group since 2011.

About Nespresso

Nespresso is the pioneer and reference for highest-quality premium portioned coffee and operates in almost 60 countries with a global network of over 300 exclusive boutiques. Nespresso is dedicated to offering its Club Members the ultimate coffee experience as well as exclusive luxury and design-led cultural experiences through individually handpicked events. Nespresso is proud to be a supporter of the exhibition, to celebrate and share excellence in design and art with their Club Member community.

About the Blavatnik Family Foundation

The Blavatnik Family Foundation is an active supporter of leading educational, scientific, cultural and charitable institutions in the United States, the United Kingdom and throughout the world. It is headed by Len Blavatnik, the founder and Chairman of Access Industries, a privately-held U.S. industrial group.

Exhibition Publication and Merchandise

To accompany the exhibition the V&A will publish *The Glamour of Italian Fashion: Since 1945* (edited by Sonnet Stanfill), which will be published in March 2014 at £35 in hardback.

A range of exclusive product inspired by the exhibition will be available to purchase from the V&A Shop in store and online from March 2014.

For further PRESS information about the book or merchandise accompanying the exhibition please contact Julie Chan on 020 7942 2701 or email j.chan@vam.ac.uk

For further PRESS information about the exhibition, contact Zoë Franklin or Lucy Hawes on 020 7942 2497 / 2500 or z.franklin@vam.ac.uk / l.hawes@vam.ac.uk

A selection of high resolution images are available to download at pressimages.vam.ac.uk

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