

Gianfranco Ferré Exhibition To Be Unveiled in Italy

The Fondazione Gianfranco Ferré will host an exhibit in the Italian city of Cremona, lining up over 100 sketches by the late designer.

By **Sandra Salibian** on March 13, 2017



 Gianfranco Ferré.
Courtesy Photo

The Fondazione Gianfranco Ferré will host an **exhibition** to celebrate the late designer's vision. Running from April 21 to June 18, the "Gianfranco Ferré. Moda, un racconto nei disegni," — or "Gianfranco Ferré. Fashion, a tale in drawings" — exhibit will showcase more than 100 **sketches** in the 15th-century Santa Maria della Pietà cultural center in the city of Cremona, located a 90-minute drive from Milan and home to Ferré's mother.

A former hospital for lepers, the venue's 530-foot-long hall and essential architecture will serve as a stage for modular panels showcasing the rectangular drawings, which will be divided into groups according to thematic or chromatic affinities rather than following a chronological order. A small section of large-scale sketches will stand out at the core of the exhibit, while some of the designer's fashion creations will also be included.

"There will be only a limited array of clothes because the whole focus of the **exhibition** is the drawings," said Fondazione Gianfranco Ferré's director **Rita Airaghi**, underscoring how such garments will be added to show the complete transposition of the designer's vision in three-dimensional shapes, volumes and textures.

In addition to retracing the history of Ferré's fashion collections, the exhibit aims to highlight the creativity and evolution of his way of conceiving and sketching the clothes. For the "Architect of fashion," as Ferré used to be called due to his background and his approach to the industry, drawing was a standard everyday exercise and a passion.



Gianfranco Ferré's sketch. Alta Moda, Fall 1987. Courtesy Photo

The young illustrator and designer Gianni Cinti, who worked for the designer at the beginning of his career, explained how the drawings were a key communicative moment for Ferré, usually developed in a two-step procedure, with two different sketches realized for each garment.

According to Cinti, Ferré's first sketch was "technical," conceived in a very simple and precise way and completed with explanatory captions, different sections and close-ups for details. "It was a simple approach, so that everybody [on the design team] could get his vision," Cinti said, underscoring Ferré's generosity in sharing his ideas.



Gianfranco Ferré's sketch. Alta Moda, fall 1988. Courtesy Photo

The second, final sketch was usually realized before the fashion shows to highlight the dynamism of the clothes. Using only three key elements of shoulders, waist and legs, Ferré gave life to his ideas with unconventional techniques, blending the colors by hand or mixing

different materials. "He once used the foil of a cigarette package to sketch the silver bustier of a dress," Cinti revealed.



Gianfranco Ferré's sketch. Alta Moda, fall 1988. Courtesy Photo

During the years, the designer's drawings evolved in a more essential direction, as Ferré abandoned realism in favor of abstract figures.



Gianfranco Ferré's sketch. Ready-to-wear, spring 1990. Courtesy Photo



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In addition to the exhibit, the city of Cremona will stage a lecture called “Gianfranco Ferré. Moda, un racconto nella musica” — or “Gianfranco Ferré. Fashion, a tale through music” — on May 18, concurrent with the 450th anniversary of the birth of Italian composer Claudio Monteverdi. The talk will focus on the role music played in Ferré’s work, retracing the most important soundtracks created for the designer’s fashion shows.