

Cinderella

20th September - 22th November 1998
Palazzo Spini Feroni

The Exhibition

The Birth of an Idea

Salvatore Ferragamo was born on June 5, 1898. One hundred years later the Salvatore Ferragamo Museum is celebrating the birth of a show dedicated to *Cinderella*, one of the most famous fairy stories the world has known; the story hinges on a shoe which is lost and, not without some difficulty, is eventually returned to its rightful owner. The shoe is the most important symbolic element of the story, as well as being synonymous of the Ferragamo marque and of the museum dedicated to his work.

The idea came from the latest film on Cinderella produced by Twentieth Century Fox, directed by Andy Tennant and with a cast of international actors including Jeanne Moreau as the narrator, Anjelica Huston as the step-mother and Drew Barrymore as Cinderella. For this film, Ferragamo, following in the footsteps of its founder who owed his début and his success in the world of fashion to the cinema, made the famous shoe, a Renaissance-style sabot, like the costumes of the film, with a silk upper, hand-embroidered with a silver ribbon threaded with Venetian strass and pearls. The heel is made of plexiglass, decorated with silver-coloured filigree, following the most traditional and ancient Florentine craftsmanship.

Beginning with the screening of the film, scheduled for 1998, from the outset the aim has been to elaborate on the story of the fairy tale and its characters in every cultural sector where it has made an impact - literature, music and ballet, especially the cinema, through which the legend has become popular and known all over the world.

An essential item of clothing, a symbol of power, an instrument of seduction and a fetish, the shoe is one of the accessories that, more than any other, has inspired the world of cinema. Who can ever forget Judy Garland's little red shoes in the *Wizard of Oz*, a good luck omen and, more recently, the shoes in the film *Bianca* by Nanni Moretti, the mirror of the soul for whoever wears them.

There have been over fifty films about Cinderella; the first one came out in 1898, another reason to celebrate a centenary within the centenary.

The second edition of the Biennale della Moda di Firenze has made a contribution towards turning this project into reality, by deciding to analyse the complex relationship between the worlds of cinema and fashion, and adding this project to its programme.

Along the way, Twentieth Century Fox has joined Ferragamo and the Biennale della moda by offering its collaboration and screening the international première of the film at the opening of the Biennale and the exhibition, helping with the organisation of the Grand Opening Ball, focusing upon the imaginary ball of the fairy story.



The Salvatore Ferragamo Museum

Situated in Florence on the second floor of the medieval Palazzo Spini Feroni in Via Tornabuoni no. 2 - head quarter of the company since 1938 - the museum was opened to the public in May 1995 on the initiative of the Ferragamo family, who wanted to let the public know about Salvatore Ferragamo's artistic qualities and the important role he has played in the history of shoe design and international fashion.

The museum boasts a collection of over 10,000 models designed by Ferragamo in forty years' activity, from the 1920s until 1960, the year of his death. The shoes, displayed on a biennial rotation, are chosen each time according to specific themes that deal with new issues and allow for new fields of inquiry.

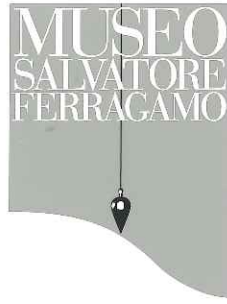
The shoes, works of refined craftsmanship, thanks to the manufacturing technique, the design and the materials used, unveil the mind of an artist who was always in harmony with the cultural mood of the time. Salvatore often sought for and found ideas, inspiration and collaboration from the leading artists of his day.

Similarly, the museum bearing his name arranges exhibitions of its own historical collections with the participation of contemporary artists, as in the case of the recent retrospective in Japan, which saw the involvement of Hiroshi Teshigahara for the installation and Ikko Tanaka for the graphic art direction.

But the museum also promotes and hosts exhibitions and events linked to contemporary art. In 1996 it sponsored the first Biennale della Moda di Firenze, with an exhibition on the works of the great American photographer Bruce Weber.

In October 1997, following a joint venture with Tanaka Ikko and the understanding that ensued, an exhibition of his works was promoted and organized at the Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea in Milan, the leading city in modern design.

The President of the Salvatore Ferragamo Museum is Fiamma di San Giuliano, Salvatore's eldest daughter.



Location: Palazzo Spini Feroni

Palazzo Spini Feroni is in Via Tornabuoni in the heart of Florence. Since 1938 it has been the head quarter of the Salvatore Ferragamo, and since 1995 has hosted the Salvatore Ferragamo Museum, situated on the second floor of the building. Built in 1289 by Geri Spini, Pope Boniface VIII's banker, the building has had many owners in the course of the centuries and has undergone countless transformations, as shown by the eighteenth century frescoes and the small chapel, a masterpiece by Bernardino Poccetti dating back to the first decade of the 17th century. In recent years, the building has been subjected to lengthy restoration work which has revived its ancient splendour, making it possible to properly view its successive architectonic transformations. The plinth of the building is one of its most interesting areas, where medieval evidence of its centuries old history is preserved. With one thousand square metres of cross-vaulted rooms and stone pillars, the building stages events and exhibitions. This is the ideal site for the Cinderella exhibition, providing us with a fascinating and enchanting itinerary.

The exhibition

Based around the shoe, the crucial element in the fairy story, the exhibition traces the history of Cinderella through literature, music and cinema. There have been three literary versions, the oldest of which was written in China in the 9th century, Basile's Neapolitan version dated 1636, and the best known one by the Frenchman Perrault dated 1697. That is without mentioning the Grimm brothers' 19th century version. There have been many musical transpositions, amongst which are Rossini's in 1817, Massenet's in 1899, Bontempelli's in 1942 and Prokofiev's famous ballet. But the story's success and worldwide fame are especially linked to the world of cinema, from the oldest examples of silent film to the modern cartoon versions. The earliest film worth mentioning is the one by Georges Méliès in 1899: a six-minute masterpiece with the first ever fade-out in the history of the cinema. The exhibition is divided into thirteen 'moments' - one for each of rooms specially set up in Palazzo Spini-Feroni, each one dealing with the main themes of the story (Cinderella in the kitchen; Cinderella confined to the cellars by her step-mother; the ball; the transformation) and providing multi-faceted interpretations for each scene, ranging from the historical to the psycho-analytical, with the help of the costumes from the latest film, the pictures, the music and the original documents, to the theatrical sketches, and the autographical music scores. An elaborate itinerary emerges, in which the visitor is not merely a spectator, but an active participant in the story. The crux of the exhibition, blending harmoniously with the Biennale di Firenze, is the involvement of several fashion designers, chosen for their artistry, and the spectacular nature or creative quality of their designs. The challenge the designers face is to interpret some of the characters from the fairy story through their garments, according to what these characters conjure up in their minds. Besides the shoe created for the film by Salvatore Ferragamo and a Fairy Godmother for the exhibition, we will have a wicked step-mother by Thierry Mugler faced by a Cinderella interpreted by Dolce and Gabbana. In the sumptuous ball scene, Emanuele Ungaro, Vivienne Westwood, John Galiano and Missoni have tried their hand at Cinderella's ball gown to appear opposite a Prince charming Paul Smith. Michael Howells and Jenny Beaven, the production and costume designers of the film *Everafter - A Cinderella Story*, were responsible for the exhibition design and scenery. Cinema effects are used to underscore the dramatic, magical and joyous moments of the fairy tale.



The Catalogue

The well-illustrated catalogue portrays the various sections of the exhibition and is the result of collective collaboration. It is published by Electa with an introductory essay by Gillo Dorfles on the symbolic significance of the fairy tale and by Wendy Goodman concerning the fashion designers.

The authors

The exhibition has been organized by Stefania Ricci with designs by Michael Howells and Jenny Beavan has contributed to the exhibition for the part *Selvaggia Velo* for the music and Daniele Tommaso for the cinema.

Stefania Ricci, costume and fashion historian, has been the director of the Salvatore Ferragamo Museum since 1995. She is the author of essays and catalogues on the history of costume and fashion as well as exhibition producer, including *The Twenties: The Birth of the Modern Dress*, held at the Costume Gallery at Palazzo Pitti in 1991; *White Room: The Birth of Italian Fashion*, held at Palazzo Strozzi in 1992; *Costume in the Times of Lorenzo il Magnifico*, held at the Civic Museum of Prato in 1992; *Fashion at the Medici's Court*, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, in 1993; *Emilio Pucci at Palazzo Pitti* for the first Biennale della moda in Florence in 1996. Since 1984 she has been working on the Ferragamo archive, for which she has prepared four shows held in 1985 at Palazzo Strozzi in Florence, in 1987 at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, in 1992 at the Los Angeles County Museum and in 1998 at the Sogetsu-kai Foundation in Tokyo.

Michael Howells started his career as art director in the film *Orlando* by Sally Potter and in some films by Peter Greenaway such as *Prospero's Books*, *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife, Her Lover* and *M for Mozart*.

As Production Designer, he recently designed Doug McGrath's *Emma* for Miramax Films, starring Gwyneth Paltrow; Charles Sturridge's *Fairytale - A True Story* (1997) for Paramount, starring Harvey Keitel and *Ever After - A Cinderella Story* by Andy Tennant for Twentieth Century Fox. Other film credits include *Second Best* by Chris Monges, *Princess Caraboo* by Michael Austin and *Talk of Angels* by Nick Hamm.

Other works of his in the field of cinema include films by Milfrid Eddis, like *The Shepard's Calendar*, *Restless in Thought* *Disturbed in mind*, and *To Mention But a Few*; films by Alejandro Agresti entitled *Everyone Wants to Help Ernest* and *Library Love*; Malcolm MacLaren's *The Ghosts of Oxford Street* and David Robinson's *Sophisticated Lady*. In 1995 Michael worked with the renowned Texan installation artist Robert Wilson in designing *HG* and in 1996 he designed the Fabergé Ball held at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia. Michael has also designed sets for many musicals including *The Ancient Mariner*, *Strange Fish* by David Hinton and *Enter Achilles*. Theatre credits include *Memoires de Montmartre* and *MSM*.

For the past two seasons Michael has worked with John Galliano designing both couture and pret-à-porter fashion shows for Christian Dior. His work has also appeared in *American Vogue*, *French Vogue*, *Haute Couture*, *French Elle* and *Harper's and Queen*. At the moment he is designing the set for Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, a film directed by Oliver Parker and later he will be designing the sets and costumes for the ballet *Der Dämon*, choreographed by Mark Baldwin for the Staatsoper Berlin.

Jenny Beavan, an Academy Award nomination candidate, won the Oscar and the British Academy Award as costume designer with John Bright for *A Room With A View*, as well as nominations for *The Bostonians* (1984), *Maurice* (1987), *Howard's End* (1993), *The Remains of the Day* (1994) - all films for Merchant Ivory productions, except for *Sense and Sensibility* (1996) for Columbia Pictures. Ms Beavan was born and raised in Lon-



don, England, where she graduated from the Central School of Art and Design in 1971, and has since then been working as costume designer and production designer for the theatre, ballet, opera, television and ballet.

Working independantly from her frequent collaborator John Bright, her film costume design credits include *Impromptu* (Sovereign Pictures), *A Summer Story* (ITC), *Jane Austin in Manhattan* (MIP), *Hullabaloo Over Bonnie and Georgie's Pictures* (MIP), *The Bridge* (Working Title), *Swing Kids* (Disney), *Black Beauty* (Warner Brothers) and *Jane Eyre* for Franco Zeffirelli for which she won the 'David di Donatello' award, the Italian Oscar equivalent. Recent film work includes *Metroland* directed by Phillip Saville and *Everafter*, a variant on the Cinderella theme directed by Andy Tennant for Twentieth Century Fox. She also received an Emmy Award nomination as costume designer for the television movie *Mountbatten - The Last Viceroy* (Brent Walker), and actually won the Emmy Award in 1997 for *Emma* produced by Sue Brithistle for Independent Television. Other joint film credits with John Bright include *The Deceivers* (Ismail Merchant Production) by Nicholas Meyer, *Mountains of the Moon* by Bob Rafelson (Carolco), *White Fang* by Randal Kreisler (Disney) and *Jefferson in Paris* (Ismail Merchant Production).

She is currently working on Franco Zeffirelli's film, *Tea with Mussolini*.

Gillo Dorfles, art critic and university professor of aesthetics, has written on issues concerning design, architecture and fashion. His works include *Fashion and Fashions* in 1984; *The Fashion of Fashion* in 1987; *Modern Architecture* in 1989; *Eulogy to Disharmony* in 1991; *Introduction to Industrial Design* in 1992; *Design, discorsi e trascorsi*, in 1996, translated into various European languages. He has been Full Professor of aesthetics at the Universities of Milan, Trieste and Cagliari, and visiting professor at the Western Reserve University of Cleveland, at New York University, and at the universities of Mexico and Buenos Aires. He is fellow of the World Academy of Art and Science, 'Patron' of the Design History Society, 'Academic' of the Mexican Design Academy.

Wendy Goodman is the Interior Design Editor for New York Magazine. She contributes to a number of publications including *Elle Décor*, *House Beautiful* and *Civilization*, and *Amica Magazine* in Italy. She began career as a fashion editor for *The New York Times Sunday Magazine* and *Harper's Bazaar*. She became the fashion Editor of *New York Magazine*, and went on to become the Style Editor of *HG magazine* and then Style Director for *Harper's Bazaar* and Editor at Large for *House Beautiful*.

Daniele Tommaso, director and producer, is the author of documentary films, art and image videos. He has worked for many of the big names in international fashion with his production company Videocast. The Salvatore Ferragamo Museum commisioned him to carry out video-documentary research as well as a video on the story of Salvatore Ferragamo drawn from his autobiography, *The Shoemaker of our Dreams*. Featuring among his works are a film, *The School of Wives*, the odyssey of European wives from the Second World War period as they tried to reach their American husbands across the ocean, broadcast by television networks all over the world.

Selvaggia Velo studied piano at the Fiesole School of Music and at the Jean Absil Académie de Musique in Brussels. She read drama and wrote a degree dissertation entitled *Fabula in musica. Un itinerario critico: la figura di Cenerentola nelle opere di G. Rossini, J. Massenet e M. Bontempelli* at the Drama, Arts, Music and Theatre faculty of Bologna University.