

# PREVIEW

## GIANNI VERSACE - EXHIBITIONS IN COMO

Three exhibitions will be on view until 2nd October 1998:

- 1) Villa Olmo, I-22100 Como; tel: +39-2/76093811
- 2) Fondazione Antonio Ratti, Lungo Lario Trento 9
- 3) Villa Gallia

Loud, exaggerated, erotic and full of shameless opulence – that is the work of Gianni Versace.

Richard Martin, curator at the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, gathered together 120 items of clothing for an exhibition held at his museum from March 1998. They are now on view in the 18th century environment of Villa Olmo, Como: Baroque volutes and spotted furs; designs showing studs and straps; the 'little black dress'; metal gauze; surprising combinations, draperies and asymmetries; fine pinstripes; leather jackets; and 'Art and Dreams' – costumes for the theatre and ballet.

Comparable to an artist who gets to the heart of his idea by creating a collage of historic materials, mundane items and found objects, Versace combined elements of Rock'n'Roll, street wear and Haute Couture. Stylistic elements pertaining to neo-Baroque, new Rococo, classical antiquity, Twenties and Thirties fashion and Byzantine art are processed into garments suggestive of punk, Hollywood and pop, thus producing the new, original and exaggerated Versace style.

The Ratti Foundation building houses a show of materials and fabrics selected by Chiara Buss, curator at the Foundation's textile museum.

In the Eighties Versace used creative elements that were considered unacceptable in designer fashion at the time: leather, rubber, denim, loud prints, bandages and metal gauze. Thin leather strips overemphasised the decorative appearance of clothes; studs and coloured glass gems made patterns on leather as in a print. Some of his silk fabrics appeared like plastic after finishing in polyurethane. Velvets and satins were given a permanent crinkle finish while vinyl fabrics were decorated in Swarovsky glass gems and bead applique.

Finally four creations made by Versace for the opera and ballet will be on view at Villa Gallia.

The exhibitions were organised by the Antonio Ratti Foundation with support from the Como provincial government.

*(Based on a report by Renata Pompas, Milan)*

**For further information please contact:** 'Gianni Versace – Reinventing Material', Fondazione Antonio Ratti, Lungo Lario Trento 9, I-22100 Como; tel:+39-31/233411; fax:/233449

Gianni Versace, Dress, 1988, from the exhibition at Villa Olmo in Como

Photo: M. Listri



## FUKUMOTO AND DYRENFORTH

An exhibition featuring these two well-known batik artists will be on view in Japan at COM Studio, Kyoto, from 1–20 Oct. 1998 and Senbikiya Gallery, Tokyo, from 26–31 Oct. 1998.

**Left: Noel Dyrenforth/UK: 'Impetus', 60 x 50 cms, batik on silk**



Jürgen Lehl/Japan: Skirt and blouse, silk Photo: Marion Mennicken

## KOROMO - FABRICS BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

The Cologne Museum of Applied Art (An der Rechtschule, D-50667) will show fabric designs and fashion design by Jürgen Lehl in an exhibition scheduled from 25 Sept. – 29 Nov. 1998

Born in Poznan, Poland, in 1944, Jürgen Lehl has been living and working in his chosen home country, Japan, for more than 25 years, and is greatly appreciated there as one of the most important fashion and textile designers. Last year the Tokyo Journal honoured him by distinguishing him as a "textile magician".

The Cologne Museum of Applied Art has been in touch with the artist for some years, and Jürgen Lehl has donated 300 fabric designs and items of clothing to it. The museum thanked him for his generosity by hosting an unusual exhibition accompanied by a catalogue including many large-format photographs.

What makes Jürgen Lehl's fabrics special is their high quality of material and finishing as well as the uniqueness of his designs. Consistent with his purist ideas, his textiles resist all tendencies towards crude decoration, standing out in their elegant simplicity and strictness of design. Lehl uses natural fibres only, and his fabrics are largely woven, dyed and pattern-finished by hand. On the other hand, he also uses the latest fabric printing and decorating techniques, such as devoré printing and computer-aided jacquard looms, for producing his fabrics.

Jürgen Lehl deliberately avoids fashion shows so as to maintain the high quality standard of his fabrics, most of which are made in small factories dotted around East Asian countries. *(Press release by Dr. Isa Fleischmann)*

*(The Textile Forum Library offers 'Koromo – Jürgen Lehl's Fabrics', title no. 17, see p. 53)*