

Versace's Iconic Silk Shirts Shine in UK's Largest Retrospective

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Versace's Legacy: From Bold Dresses to Iconic Silk Shirts

When one thinks of **Gianni Versace**, visions of daring safety-pinned dresses and bondage-inspired party frocks usually come to mind. But beyond the red-carpet spectacle, the late Italian designer left another unforgettable mark on fashion — his **majestic silk shirts** of the 1990s.

These lavish creations, often adorned with Versace's signature **Barocco prints**, were more than just clothing; they were wearable art. **Sir Elton John**, one of Versace's closest friends, famously collected dozens of them. "I never wore half of them," he admitted in a Christie's promotional video. "I just wanted to hang them. It was like an art installation with shirts — so beautiful."

Now, these legendary shirts are back in the spotlight. They form part of the **largest retrospective of Gianni Versace in the UK**, showcasing over **450 original garments, accessories, sketches, and photographs** at **Arches London Bridge**, running through March 2026.

The exhibition includes pieces worn by **Princess Diana, Kate Moss, George Michael, Naomi Campbell, and Elton John**, reflecting how Versace blurred the lines between fashion, celebrity, and pop culture.

Dutch-Swedish supermodel **Marcus Schenkenberg**, who fronted a couture campaign for the brand in 1993, recalled his first Versace piece: a bold green-and-yellow silk shirt. "It was one of my favorites," he shared, underscoring the shirt's status as a symbol of the era's flamboyance.

Curators **Saskia Lubnow** and **Karl von der Ahe** describe the shirts as an homage — to Versace, Elton John, and London itself. One standout display even features an entire wall covered in these vibrant silk masterpieces, reminding the world that **Versace didn't just design clothes — he designed culture**.

As the retrospective continues its journey through Europe, it reaffirms Gianni Versace's timeless influence: glamorous, audacious, and forever alive in the threads of fashion history.