

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

Published on 29 Aug 2025 | By IFI Correspondent



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.