



SUSTAINABLE THINKING

Museo Salvatore Ferragamo, Palazzo Spini Feroni, Firenze

12 April 2019 - 8 March 2020

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Premise

The term 'sustainability' according to the 1987 Brundtland Report still today defines "the human ability to satisfy the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". In other words, it represents a condition of development capable of ensuring in the future a quality of life that is not inferior to the current one.

This definition clearly shows how such "human ability" represents a global challenge, which can only be faced by means of profound actions, ones that are articulated and concerted across the board. Indeed, it is not a question of a vision that only concerns methods of production, for instance, greater attention to the environment as a whole, from the energy used to the amount of waste, from the choice of raw materials to the health of workers. Instead, it underpins the need for a holistic approach, in which anthropocentrism no longer jeopardizes the preservation of resources and the planet's ecological balance.

Nevertheless, as the point of view is inevitably a human one, said balance has to be re-established and maintained starting from the centrality of the person, considering the quality of life, work, and relations within a fragile and threatened ecosystem.

It thus seems more and more necessary, and urgent, to achieve a change in mentality at every level, a process that is generated first of all by a conscious and shared way of thinking, capable of elaborating new strategies of development and cohabitation.

The Exhibition Project

The exhibition Sustainable Thinking planned for April 2019 by the Museo Salvatore Ferragamo aims to offer food for thought on a theme that is highly important for the future, as well as to provide suggestions for a change in model, limited, in terms of research, to the world of fashion and art, the sectors this museum is specialized in.

Indeed, many artists have been looking in this direction for some time. Some of them have focused on restoring a more sensible relationship with nature, on the use of organic materials, on the need for the creative reuse of materials, so called 'upcycling', or on the relationship between nature and technology; others, on the importance of a collective commitment addressed to the regeneration of the social fabric as a whole.

The fashion industry, on its part, not only through the experimentation of a new generation of young designers, but also by means of innovative brands already consolidated on the market and situated in the luxury area, for several years now has been consciously facing the path of sustainability as a positive challenge capable of fulfilling needs, but also of offering new opportunities for responsible



innovation to its sophisticated international clientele. This research is leading to the development of new high-performance ecological materials, and to the honing of productive processes aimed at reducing the consumption of water and energy, the use of toxic substances, and the production of waste, which is very high in this industrial sector.

For the Salvatore Ferragamo brand, investing in sustainable development means believing that the use of innovative materials, the bond with the territory, the attention to the environment and to one's own people are the basic elements for success. It represents the best way to respect the values conveyed by the Founder, starting from the 1920s, who made experimenting with natural and unusual materials and his customer's physical and psychological well-being his philosophy. The exhibition thus falls within the multiple activities that place the Maison Ferragamo at the avant-garde among the luxury brands that have embraced transparency and ethics.

The Sustainable Thinking project does not seek to present an exhaustive acknowledgement of "sustainable practices", but rather to put forward some of the most significant contemporary artistic experiences in this sense, together with, in dialogue and resonance, the main research underway in the field of sustainable fashion design and research into materials.

Materials, artworks, and clothing, both recent and/or specifically made for the occasion, will be on display, the purpose being to exemplify and articulate the multiple and essential forms of an "ethics and aesthetics of sustainability" in a format that will be easy to understand for the different types of audience.

The artists and fashion designers invited – belonging to different generations and geographical areas – put forward a plurality of gazes that, notwithstanding their uniqueness, focus on alternative production processes, offering ideas for projects capable of valorizing differences, using new technologies without being submitted to them, declining the local with the global, safeguarding our ecosystem.

A utopia? Perhaps, but a very realistic one, because it is necessary and urgent, which calls for the mobilization of more creative forces in every field, and more than ever that laboratory of creativity that are the artistic and aesthetic practices of everyday life, in which fashion also takes an active part, in the belief that they can be a crucial agent in shaping a fairer and more sustainable world.

An invitation to care for the future starting from the present.

Thanks to a scientific committee consisting of professionals with a vast knowledge of the issues related to sustainability, the project envisions an exhibition that involves not only the Museo Salvatore Ferragamo of Florence, but other prestigious venues in the city as well: the Museo del Novecento and Palazzo Vecchio, which, in addition to being the headquarters of the City Administration represents one of the most important artistic buildings in the capital of Tuscany.

A contest will be organized for the most prestigious international fashion schools, which will be asked to create sustainable collections for the opening of the exhibition. These will then be shown to the public.



The Themes

The exhibition will deal with the following themes:

- **Environment and Sustainability;**
- **Salvatore Ferragamo and materials;**
- **Trasformation;**
- **Craftsmanship and science;**
- **Weaving;**
- **Social innovation;**
- **Innovation;**
- **Art, technology and science;**
- **Return to nature;**
- **The culture of diversity;**

The latter theme aims to emphasize a very important aspect in the development of future societies, companies, and their management, i.e. the set of practices and policies having to do with diversity within an environment, both working and non-working-whether this be diversity of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, culture, physical ability, and so on-supporting different lifestyles and responding to their different needs.

When it comes to a company, besides being important from an ethical point of view, integration and respect for diversities improves the image of the company on the outside and represents the strengths of the business; in an environment where everyone feels at ease and can express his or her own diversity, people are less stressed and work better. And not just that. The inclusion of diversities contributes to innovation and change because it provides a chance to exploit different points of view.

This part of the project involved the Ferragamo employees and involved the collaboration of two Dutch artists, Ari Versluis & Ellie Uyttenbroek, who for years have been working on the artistic project called Exactitudes. In it human diversity is exalted by the creation of a series of photographs, in which the correspondences, in a sort of dress code, derive not only from preferences in clothing and style, but from similar physical features, from facial expressions, and from attitudes as well.

If the aim of the exhibition is to contribute to the growth and the sharing of sustainable thinking, the first referent of the project is represented by those who work for Salvatore Ferragamo in the world each day. They were actively involved in a contest for the design of a sustainable capsule collection and for the invention of slogans on sustainability.