



SALVATORE FERRAGAMO

INSPIRATION AND VISION

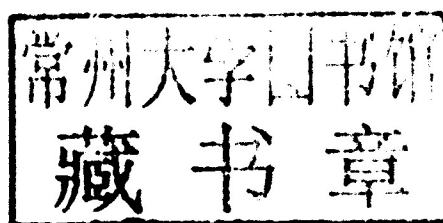
SKIRA

MUSEO
SALVATORE
FERRAGAMO

SALVATORE FERRAGAMO

**INSPIRATION
AND VISION**

edited by Stefania Ricci, Sergio Risaliti



SKIRA

Graphic Project
Studio Contri Toscano

Editing
Cinzia Morisco

Translations
Lucian Comoy, Christopher
Evans, Marco Migotto,
Leslie Ray for Language
Consulting Congressi, Milan
Steve Chaplin

Distributed in USA, Canada,
Central & South America
by Rizzoli International
Publications, Inc., 300 Park
Avenue South, New York, NY
10010, USA.

Distributed elsewhere in the
world by Thames and Hudson
Ltd., 181A High Holborn,
London WC1V 7QX, United
Kingdom.

First published in Italy in 2011
by Skira Editore S.p.A.
Palazzo Casati Stampa
via Torino 61
20123 Milano
Italy
www.skira.net

© 2011 Salvatore Ferragamo
S.p.A.
© 2011 Sergio Risaliti
for his text
© 2011 Skira editore, Milano
© L & M SERVICES B.V.
The Hague 20110308
Image © 2011 Bata Shoe
Museum, Toronto, Canada
© Andy Warhol Foundation for
the Visual Arts, by SIAE 2011
© Joseph Albers, Giacomo
Balla, Sonia Delaunay,
Fortunato Depero, Alberto
Magnelli, Gino Severini
by SIAE 2011
© Succession Marcel
Duchamp, by SIAE 2011
© Fondazione Lucio Fontana,
Milano, by SIAE 2011

All rights reserved under
international copyright
conventions. No part of this
book may be reproduced
or utilized in any form or
by any means, electronic
or mechanical, including
photocopying, recording, or any
information storage and retrieval
system, without permission in
writing from the publisher.

Printed and bound in Italy.
First edition

ISBN: 978-88-572-1133-6

Cover
Sonia Delaunay, illustrations
for the book *La prose du
Transsibérien et de la petite
Jehanne de France* (*Prose of
Trans-Siberian and of Little
Jehanne of France*) by Blaise
Cendrars, 1913. Florence,
Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale

CONTENTS

- Stefania Ricci
9 Introduction
- 11** Vision
- Sergio Risaliti
43 Reminiscence and Inspiration
in Salvatore Ferragamo
- 78** Inspiration
- Luca Scarlini
113 The Geometries of the Soul: Salvatore Ferragamo's
Triumphs of Fashion and Perception of the Elsewhere
- Cristina Morozzi
129 The Circularity of Ideas.
Parallels between the Creations of Salvatore
Ferragamo and Research in Design of his own Time
and Today
- Stefania Ricci
137 Inspiration and Creativity for Stephen Jones
- 154** The Future of Memory
- 156** List of Exhibition Works
- 167** Bibliography



SALVATORE FERRAGAMO

**INSPIRATION
AND VISION**

edited by Stefania Ricci, Sergio Risaliti

SKIRA

Graphic Project
Studio Contri Toscano

Editing
Cinzia Morisco

Translations
Lucian Comoy, Christopher
Evans, Marco Migotto,
Leslie Ray for Language
Consulting Congressi, Milan
Steve Chaplin

Distributed in USA, Canada,
Central & South America
by Rizzoli International
Publications, Inc., 300 Park
Avenue South, New York, NY
10010, USA.

Distributed elsewhere in the
world by Thames and Hudson
Ltd., 181A High Holborn,
London WC1V 7QX, United
Kingdom.

First published in Italy in 2011
by Skira Editore S.p.A.
Palazzo Casati Stampa
via Torino 61
20123 Milano
Italy
www.skira.net

© 2011 Salvatore Ferragamo
S.p.A.
© 2011 Sergio Risaliti
for his text
© 2011 Skira editore, Milano
© L & M SERVICES B.V.
The Hague 20110308
Image © 2011 Bata Shoe
Museum, Toronto, Canada
© Andy Warhol Foundation for
the Visual Arts, by SIAE 2011
© Joseph Albers, Giacomo
Balla, Sonia Delaunay,
Fortunato Depero, Alberto
Magnelli, Gino Severini
by SIAE 2011
© Succession Marcel
Duchamp, by SIAE 2011
© Fondazione Lucio Fontana,
Milano, by SIAE 2011

All rights reserved under
international copyright
conventions. No part of this
book may be reproduced
or utilized in any form or
by any means, electronic
or mechanical, including
photocopying, recording, or any
information storage and retrieval
system, without permission in
writing from the publisher.

Printed and bound in Italy.
First edition

ISBN: 978-88-572-1133-6

Cover
Sonia Delaunay, illustrations
for the book *La prose du
Transsibérien et de la petite
Jehanne de France* (*Prose of
Trans-Siberian and of Little
Jehanne of France*) by Blaise
Cendrars, 1913. Florence,
Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale

SALVATORE FERRAGAMO
**INSPIRATION
AND VISION**

Florence
Salvatore Ferragamo
Museum
Palazzo Spini Feroni
May 27th 2011 –
March 12th 2012

Under the Patronage of
Comune di Firenze

Exhibition promoted
and organised by
Salvatore Ferragamo
Museum

Catalogue edited by
Stefania Ricci
Sergio Risaliti

with the collaboration of
Stephen Jones

Graphic Project
Studio Contri Toscano

Photography
Antonio Quattrone

Exhibition curated by
Stefania Ricci
Sergio Risaliti

with the collaboration of
Stephen Jones

Organisational
Secretariat
Francesca Piani
Laura Buonocore

Layout Design
Silvia Cilembrini
Fabio Leoncini

Video Research
and Project
Daniele Tommaso



The exhibition curators
and authors of the catalogue
wish to thank

Ministero per i Beni e le
Attività Culturali
Soprintendenza per i Beni
Architettonici, Paesaggistici,
Storici, Artistici ed
Etnoantropologici per
le province di Firenze, Pistoia
e Prato
Soprintendenza Speciale per
il Patrimonio Storico, Artistico
ed Etnoantropologico
e per il Polo Museale
della Città di Firenze
Soprintendenza per i
Beni Storici, Artistici ed
Etnoantropologici per le
province di Venezia, Belluno,
Padova e Treviso

Archivio Centrale dello Stato,
Rome
Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale
di Firenze
'Gaio Cilnio Mecenate'
National Archaeological
Museum, Arezzo
Musée des Tissus de Lyon,
France
Museo Civico L. Bailo,
Treviso
Musei Provinciali di Gorizia
National Archaeological
Museum, Florence
Natural History Museum,
Anthropology and Ethnology
Section and "La Specola",
Zoology Section, Florence
Stibbert Museum, Florence

Renzo Arbore Collection,
Rome
Biagiotti Cigna Foundation,
Rome
Marta Bindi Grassi
Collection, Florence
CLM Seeber Collection,
Rome

Farsettiarte, Prato
Stephen Jones Millinery
Archive, London
Sandro Michahelles
Collection, Florence
Ottavio and Rosita Missoni
Collection, Milan
Claudio Monnini Collection,
Milan
Private Collection, Florence
Private Collection, Lucca
Private Collection, Rome
Luigino Rossi Private
Collection, Venice
Museo Richard-Ginori della
Manifattura di Doccia, Sesto
Fiorentino (Florence)
The Bata Shoe Museum,
Toronto, Canada
Tornabuoni Arte, Florence

In particular, we wish
to thank

Cristina Acidini, Antonio
Addari, Paolo Agnelli,
Giuseppe Anichini, Renzo
Arbore, Kirsten Aschengreen
Piacenti, Agostino
Attanasio, Filippo Bacci di
Capaci, Fausto Barbagli,
Mariarosaria Barbera, Sonja
Bata, Martina Becattini,
Laura Biagiotti, Lavinia
Biagiotti Cigna, Marta Bindi
Grassi, Alexandra Biondi,
Chiara Boracchi, Mario
Bracciali, Laura Brazzini,
Isabel Bretones, Susan
Brown, Marco Brusamolin,
Antonella Cacciani, Roberto
Casamonti, Chiara Casolo
Ginelli, Filippo Ceccolini,
Lucia Chimirri, Giuseppina
Carlotta Cianferoni, Sofia
Ciucchi, Francesco Civita,
Massimiliano Colacicchi,
Marcello Contrucci,
Simona De Marco, Daniela
De Palma, Cornelia
de Uphaug, Patrizia
Diani, Alvise di Canossa,
Maximilien Durand,
Garbine Eguia, Maria Eisl,
Carlo Esposito, Elisabetta
Farioli, Franco Farsetti,
Frediano Farsetti, Leonardo
Farsetti, Stefano Farsetti,
Stefano Frasconi, Simone
Frosecchi, Alessandro
Gazzotti, Cristina Gnani,
Paola Goldoni, Philippe
Grillot, Marie-Hélène
Guelton, Paola Gusella,
Cristina Intelisano, Stephen
Jones, Dorothée Lécivain,
Emanuele Lepri, Antonella
Maggiorelli, Alessandra
Marino, Alessandra Martina,
Audrey Mathieu, Marta
Mazza, Suzanne Mclean,
Sandro Michahelles,

Ottavio Missoni, Rosita
Missoni, Claire Morel,
Barbara Mucci, Carlo Nesi,
Rosella Nesi, Marco Pagni,
Cristina Panigada, Silvia
Petrioli, Daniela Porro,
Giovanni Pratesi, Elvira
Rainone, Lesley Robeson,
Giacomo Romano, Maria
Gloria Roselli, Luciano
Rosi Belliere, Federica
Rossi, Luigino Rossi, Oliva
Rucellai, Chiara Sainati,
Massimo Sanzani, Marie
Schoefer, Maria Letizia
Sebastiani, Elisabetta
Seeber Michahelles,
Raffaella Sgubin, Laura
Sini, Sebastiano Soldi,
Mara Spaggiari, Chiara
Stefani, Edoardo Testori,
Andrea Tremolada, Barbara
Vernocchi, Silvia Vilucchi,
Margherita Viola, Marco
Voena, Monica Zavattaro,
Alessandro Zuri

Special thanks to
Stefano Salvatici for having
contributed to the planning
of the section dedicated to
Stephen Jones and his hats.

Exhibition sponsors

AON

ARTERIA

Eurosicurezza
Crea e protegge il tuo spazio
Soluzioni e servizi a 360°

SOC. PALCHETTI
FLP
SISTEMI DI SICUREZZA
UNI EN ISO 9001

CONTENTS

- Stefania Ricci
9 Introduction
- 11** Vision
- Sergio Risaliti
43 Reminiscence and Inspiration
in Salvatore Ferragamo
- 78** Inspiration
- Luca Scarlini
113 The Geometries of the Soul: Salvatore Ferragamo's
Triumphs of Fashion and Perception of the Elsewhere
- Cristina Morozzi
129 The Circularity of Ideas.
Parallels between the Creations of Salvatore
Ferragamo and Research in Design of his own Time
and Today
- Stefania Ricci
137 Inspiration and Creativity for Stephen Jones
- 154** The Future of Memory
- 156** List of Exhibition Works
- 167** Bibliography

'We are all flowing with the eternal tide, and of the eternal tide only is there no end' SALVATORE FERRAGAMO

INTRODUCTION

STEFANIA RICCI

Does an artist always have a source of inspiration in developing a creative idea? Is it only a single, easily identifiable source or is it a number of things which are distant in time and space, mixed as in a cocktail and beyond the confines of knowledge? How does inspiration interact with an individual's personal history, culture, talent, technical experience, and emotions? How is it possible that multiple impressions lead to similar ideas produced analogously by different minds over the same span of time?

These many questions are the basis of this exhibition and were continuously asked as we travelled back in time through Salvatore Ferragamo's imagination; it was a journey in search of the sources of his creativity which over more than forty years of work produced countless models for footwear and four-hundred patents. In such an analysis, much can be taken into consideration, as is the case for every respected artist, but there are always key stages. In Ferragamo's case, we concentrated on two periods in his life where conditions encouraged inspiration and visions to flourish and which influenced the artist's later life: his move to California around 1915 and his return to Florence in 1927, which in the Twenties was the artistic and cultural heart of Italy.

Salvatore Ferragamo's experience in Hollywood, surrounded by the emerging cinematographic industry, led to the young Italian's fame and success as 'Shoemaker to the Stars,' but it was also an opportunity to meet extraordinary people, study endlessly and experiment. The discovery in 1922 of the funereal treasures of the Pharaoh Tutankhamon in Egypt—to mention only one well-known example greatly influencing the world of fashion generally—had a strong creative impact on film. Ferragamo quickly maximised the potential of this in the models and decoration of sandals which Cecil B. DeMille—the great silent film director who was fascinated by the Orient—ordered Salvatore to make for the lead actors of the film, *The Ten Commandments*. This was repeated a few years later when the Villa dei Misteri in Pompeii was discovered and became an inspiration to contemporary art and graphics; Salvatore took inspiration and created a line of shoes called *Pompeian*, and the *Coturno* sandal, which was laced at the ankle like a Roman sandal and hence evoked the classical world. It became the preferred image on the shoemaker's early advertising.

The Californian world and the culture of the territory were sources of continue inspiration for Ferragamo. Decoration on accessories and clothes used by the American Indians, the combination

of fabrics and colours of quilts made by Quaker communities, the richness of South American craftsmanship using the most extravagant materials, such as multicoloured bird feathers, are reflected in the models of those years and return decades later in his innovations like a signature style.

Ferragamo's decision to return to Italy in 1927 and stay in Florence came from the need to find the skills to produce hand-made shoes, and a desire to find authentic sources of inspiration in the local artisan and artistic culture. In Florence Ferragamo was impressed not only by the architecture so famous to international tourism, but also by the many public and private city collections which held extraordinary examples of the applied arts, to which Ferragamo by nature was attracted. Frederick Stibbert's eclectic and tasteful collection, for example, influenced Ferragamo in the shape of his shoes, the weaving of the upper soles, the design of embroideries, which was faithfully reproduced from clothes in the collection. Similar sensations were produced by the National Archaeological Museum and the Natural History Museum, which were limitless wellsprings of ideas, intuitions, and creative experiments, in the past as much as in the present.

Alongside an interest in tradition and historical finds, Ferragamo was also affected by experiments with material and colour carried out during that time by avant-garde artists, the Futurists in particular, for whom in the Twenties Florence itself was a first order cultural epicentre.

Ferragamo's innate ability to assimilate the spirit of the times continued throughout his life; this can be seen in influences and analogies with contemporary artists and designers who achieved aesthetic and technological outcomes similar to Ferragamo's but in different fields. For example, Jacobsen created his famous egg armchair the same year Ferragamo patented the leather 'shell-shaped sole,' a transposition in shoe form of the armchair's ergonomics, and Andy Warhol designed shoes in gold leaf in 1956, the same time Ferragamo created his sandal in 18-carat gold for the wife of a rich magnate. In his autobiography Ferragamo writes, 'How else can I explain my sense of design? I do not have to search for styles. When I need new ones, I select from those that present themselves to my mind, as I select an apple from the laden dish upon my table.'¹ With these words the creative Ferragamo seems to negate any inspiration or reference to what does not come from within. In another part of his autobiography he speaks more clearly about reminiscence and reincarnation, on the one hand re-echoing theosophical theories in vogue in certain Florentine circles of the Twenties and Thirties,

as suggested by Sergio Risaliti and Luca Scarlini in this catalogue, but also for the obvious difficulty of explaining creativity in words. In reality creativity cannot be defined, it can only be identified.

The topic is fascinating and complex, it is complex as reconstructing the approach that leads to the birth of certain flashes of inspiration which are at the root of everything and that intertwine with technical skill, personal culture, curiosity, intuitive ability and courage. In Ferragamo's case there are an almost infinite number of directions to take. The work of rebuilding some of the impressions that led to the creation of artisan products unique to the history of fashion, means omitting thousands of others that would have the same validity and weight. All of us who worked on this project are aware of this and we apologise if on looking the exhibition there is a feeling that certain details are missing and that key exemplars have been ignored. For this reason we wanted to end the show with a section dedicated to a contemporary creative artist, Stephen Jones, who works in fashion and with accessories, as Ferragamo did, but with hats and not shoes. The first time we met Stephen Jones was in Antwerp on the occasion of an exhibition of his work. From that moment several points of similarity with Salvatore Ferragamo's work emerged which justified his inclusion in this exhibition. Jones' creations are collector's items, as are Salvatore's shoes. There is a strong artisanship component requiring technical mastery and knowledge, and that is typical of haute couture. Jones' pieces demonstrate passion and obsessive and constant experimentation with several materials—often used for the first time in hats, as it was the case in Salvatore Ferragamo's shoes—and a great sensitivity to the world of art. Every day he wrestles with creativity in the creation of his hats, which are more works of art than accessories to wear, and so close to Ferragamo's models they seem inspired by them.

We asked Stephen Jones the same questions that obsessed us throughout this project: what is inspiration for an artist, what creativity really is, whether or not there are favourable conditions from which creative thoughts spring, and whether this is the result of creative DNA or there is a formula for becoming creative over time. Perhaps we can connect the subtle thread that brings together inspiration, intuition and new concept that is its final product only through the words of those who on a daily basis grapple with the nonstop creation of something new.

¹ S. Ferragamo, *Shoemaker of Dreams* (original edition London: George G. Harray & Co. Ltd, 1957, Livorno: Sillabe, 2006), p. 59.



etruscan abstractions

Etruscan Art, *Olla*, 7th century BC, pasted ceramic painted with geometrical pattern from Poggio Buco (GR), Florence, National Archaeological Museum
Salvatore Ferragamo, *Court shoe*, 1958–59, kid upper, Florence, Salvatore Ferragamo Museum

sandals or cothurni



Roman Art, *Couple of foot with statue fit*, imperial age, 1st-3rd century AD, bronze. Florence, National Archaeological Museum
Hellenistic Art, *Askos*, 3rd century BC, ceramic and black paint. Florence, National Archaeological Museum

Etruscan Art, *Crossed feet with sandals*, mid-2nd century BC, earthenware from temple in Catona (AR), Arezzo, 'Galo Clinio Mecenate' National Archaeological Museum
 Salvatore Ferragamo, *Sandal system with a means of tying ribbons or the like so as to wrap the foot as desired*, patent no. 292895, February 4th 1932, Rome, Archivio Centrale dello Stato
 Salvatore Ferragamo, *Sandal*, 1930, kid upper, Salvatore Ferragamo Museum

