

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Yves Saint Laurent retrospective takes intimate look at designer's influence

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Portrait of Yves Saint Laurent by Jeanloup Sieff

By STAFF REPORTS

Fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent's 44-year career is the subject of an upcoming retrospective at the Seattle Art Museum.

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Opening Oct. 11, "Yves Saint Laurent: The Perfection of Style" paints a portrait of the designer's influence on fashion, his creative process and his vision with help from private collections and the archives of Fondation Pierre Berg Yves Saint Laurent. Some of the 110 ensembles on display have never been seen before by the public, making this a special opportunity to get into the head and world of the late creative genius.

Looking back

Seattle Art Museum's exhibit, curated by Florence Miller, is split into eight thematic chapters.

Starting with the designer's earliest work, the exhibit opens with **Saint Laurent's** "Paper Doll Couture House." This marks the first time the series of paper dolls and their wardrobes that he created as teenager will be showcased in the United States.

From there, the exhibit highlights important garments from his time as a young designer at Dior, including an evening dress from his 1958 Trapeze collection, as well as standouts from his work at his namesake brand, such as the peacoat, the tuxedo and the suit.

The exhibit also focuses on Mr. Saint Laurent's appreciation of art, a constant inspiration that appeared in a number of his designs. A dress recalls Mondrian's style of painting, while wooden beads on a silk dress are reminiscent of African art.

Shown along with the garments are photographs, sketches and production documents, giving an insider's view of Mr. Saint Laurent's process and personal life. Collection boards from each YSL couture line from 1960 to 2002 tell a story of the house's style trajectory through sketches and fabric swatches, while muslin mockups give an idea of garments' construction.

Nordstrom and Microsoft are presenting sponsors of the exhibit.

Tickets for the Seattle Art Museum exhibit go on sale Aug. 3. After the display closes on Jan. 8, the exhibit will travel to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, where it will be up from May 6 to Aug. 27, 2017.

A tribute to Mr. Saint Laurent's influence, his life and work have become popular topics for exhibits in the past couple of years. His legacy also inspired two recent films.

The designer was the subject of a retrospective that opened in the United Kingdom in July 2015.

The retrospective was a collaboration between the Bowes Museum and the Fondation Pierre Berg Yves Saint Laurent, which is run by the designer's former partner Pierre Berg and promotes his work internationally. It was the first exhibit of Saint Laurent's work in the U.K. and featured more than 50 of the designer's most iconic pieces, many of which had never before been shown outside of Paris, allowing new audiences to experience the brand's heritage ([see story](#)).

Yves Saint Laurent will be the subject of two museums, one in Paris and another in Marrakech, Morocco, cities in which the late fashion designer split his time.

Both the Paris and Marrakech museums are being organized by the Fondation Pierre Berg, founded in 2004 to preserve the fashion house and Mr. Saint Laurent's legacy. The Fondation Pierre Berg was established by Pierre Berg, Mr. Saint Laurent's longtime partner and co-founder of the Yves Saint Laurent Couture House, which gives a personal and authentic connection to the designer and subsequent museums ([see story](#)).

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