

PRESS DOSSIER

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YVES SAINT LAURENT

6 OCTOBER 2011 – 8 January 2010



“I would like everyone to be aware of the respect that this profession deserves, which is not so much about creating art as the artist’s need to exist.” YSL

FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE, in collaboration with the FONDATION PIERRE BERGÉ-YVES SAINT LAURENT, has the honour of presenting the exhibition **Yves Saint Laurent**. This major exhibition, which was first shown at the Petit Palais in Paris in 2010, is the first retrospective on this great artist and designer to be held in Spain, offering a complete survey of a career that spanned forty years of creativity.

The exhibition is organised thematically into eleven sections that present a selection of around 150 examples of haute couture and prêt-à-porter, as well as more than 80 drawings, photographs and films.

The installation of the works on display has been conceived as a theatrical progression that runs from the start of YSL’s career as a designer at Dior with his famous “Trapeze Line” collection (1958) and concludes with the splendour of his evening gowns.

The formulation of Yves Saint Laurent’s style and the basic principles of his work are explained through the historical context, which is illustrated with drawings (basement

level), photographs and films. The different areas of the exhibition reveal the artistic and cultural influences on a designer whose desire to dress ordinary people was not at odds with the creation of exclusive models for the woman of his dreams. The exhibition closes with an explosion of colours and creations that locate his work in the present day.



Valse, short evening dress from the "Trapeze Line" haute couture collection, Spring-summer 1958 / © Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent / Photo A. Guirkingier

Haute Couture ambitions

In 1955 Yves Saint Laurent started to work for Christian Dior, succeeding him two years later as principal designer for that house after Dior's death. Saint Laurent moved away from an antiquated type of haute couture to become the creator of the "reign of style" with his celebrated "Trapeze Line". These dresses liberated the female figure and anticipated the freedom characteristic of the 1960s.

The imaginary studio / the real atelier

The imaginary studio is the shadowy place where the imagination and aesthetic references (artists, musicians, writers, etc) came together to constitute the creative sources of Yves Saint Laurent's designs. The real atelier, which evokes the workshop on rue Marceau, is the place where those creations came to life.



Short cocktail dress. Haute couture collection, Spring-summer 1966 / © Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent / Photo A. Guirkingner

The gender revolution

The blouson jacket, the safari jacket, the tailored trouser suit, the peasant blouse, the smock and the jumpsuit were among the new garments that Saint Laurent offered his clients. This was a wardrobe intended to act as a mirror to reflect a new way of life and a new image of femininity. Within this context Saint Laurent created a new aesthetic midway between the masculine and the feminine in which the genders fused together, through materials – wool and muslin – and through the shirt and trouser suit that he now proposed for women.

Yves Saint Laurent and women

For Saint Laurent, dressing a woman meant helping her to live her everyday life in a world in constant transformation. He replaced the “total look” with a wardrobe in which each woman found her own style. His dresses became so popular that Lauren Bacall, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Jacqueline, Countess of Ribes, Betty Catroux, and Loulou de la Falaise became clients, among many others.

His most iconic line, *Saint Laurent Rive Gauche*, launched in 1966, was a milestone in the history of fashion. A pioneer in luxury prêt-à-porter, its enormous success prefigured that of



Short cocktail dress. Haute couture collection, Spring-summer 1964 / © Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent / Photo A. Guirkingner

contemporary international brand names. Saint Laurent’s style thus became accessible to large numbers of women and set the standard across the world through hundreds of boutiques.



Full-length evening gown. Haute couture collection, Spring-summer 1985 / © Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent / Photo A. Guirkingner

Belle de Jour, Catherine Deneuve

“I always found her extraordinary. I dressed her after *Belle de Jour*, 1967, Luis Buñuel’s film. She is an enchanting woman with a great heart.” Yves Saint Laurent (*Paris Match*, 1992)

This room features some of the most important pieces worn by Catherine Deneuve, one of Saint Laurent’s principal muses. They range from the dusty dress of black and ivory satin designed for *Belle de Jour* (1967) to a long evening gown in bright red silk crêpe (1977).

1971, a scandalous collection

In the summer of 1971 Saint Laurent presented a collection inspired by the 1940s. The result was consternation in the fashion salons. It was not so much the evocation of the years of war and occupation that proved so provocative, as the type of woman that he evoked. The press reaction was negative and hostile but the collection was a triumph and young women adopted the designer’s ideas immediately as they identified with this retro style.

Nonetheless, the nudity of some of the models, whose bodies were clearly visible through the blouses and dresses, was considered scandalous in more conservative circles.



Short evening coat. Haute couture collection, Spring-summer 1971 / © Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent / Photo A. Guirkingner

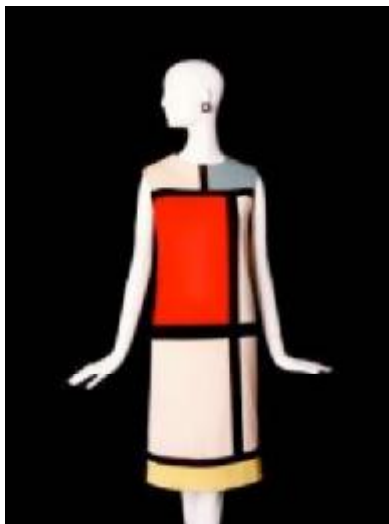


Bullfighting ensemble. Haute couture collection, Autumn-winter 1979 / © Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent / Photo A. Guirkingier

Fairground of the exotic

“I used my imagination to travel to countries I did not know. I hate travelling. If I read a book with photographs about Indians or about Egypt, where I have never been, I am transported there by my imagination. My most wonderful trips have been of this kind.” YSL (interview with Catherine Deneuve, *Globe*, 1 May 1986).

Many of YSL’s creations were inspired by real or imaginary journeys that brought the designer into contact with distant cultures that he assimilated and incorporated into his own artistic discourse. They are cultures and aesthetics that reach us through his imagination and China, Japan, Russia, Morocco but above all Europe are present in this section of the exhibition.



Homage to Piet Mondrian, haute couture collection, Autumn-winter 1965 / © Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent / Photo A. Guirkingier

Homages: dialogue with artists and writers

“Mondrian means purity, one cannot go further within the field of painting. The 20th-century masterpiece is a Mondrian.” YSL

In 1965 Saint Laurent launched a collection based on Mondrian. Magazines worldwide praised these designs, which went beyond the limits that traditionally separated the artistic genres, adapting a language devised for the visual arts to the field of fashion.

From that point onwards, Saint Laurent established a dialogue with a range of artists and writers of different sensibilities: Mondrian, Wesselman, Poliakoff, Van Gogh, Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Léger, Apollinaire, Aragon, Cocteau, Lalanne and others.



Evening gown. Haute couture collection, Autumn-winter 1978 / © Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent / Photo A. Guirkinger

The last dance

“I adore Visconti and turbulent periods in history, such as we see in *Senso*. Decadence seduces me, it heralds a new world and in my opinion the struggle between a society trapped between life and death is a marvellous thing to contemplate.” YSL

Yves Saint Laurent was the architect of the everyday but he was also the sorcerer of the night. He adored the atmosphere of parties and the night as a space of time and reality. In the “The last dance” the visitor will see haute couture dresses that express a nostalgia for this splendour.

The “smoking”

Always the same but always different: over the course of forty years Saint Laurent produced more than 100 models of the tailored trouser suits known as the “smoking”, the result of his imagination and his desire to champion the legitimacy of a suit with which to conquer the world, making it a key expression of his particular style.



Tailored trouser suit. Haute couture collection, Autumn-winter 1966 / © Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent / Photo A. Guirkinger

The colours of Yves Saint Laurent

“I adore gold, a magical colour in the way it reflects a woman, it is the colour of the sun. I adore red, aggressive and wild. The powerful colours of the desert.” Yves Saint Laurent

In the last section in the exhibition visitors will experience Yves Saint Laurent's world of colours. The draped muslin ensembles of his last collection from 2002 are displayed as if suspended in space, between walls from which hang hundreds of samples of textiles of every possible colour and which reveal YSL's chromatic skills.

The exhibition is completed with 81 original sketches that explain the great designer's working methods, from the original concept to the production of the final garment. Also on display are various series of photographs such as those taken in 1971 by Jeanloup Sieff for the promotion of the launch of Saint Laurent's first fragrance for men, *Rive Gauche*. This incredibly daring image has now acquired iconic status.

NOTES FOR THE EDITOR

Exhibition:	Yves Saint Laurent
Inauguration:	4 October 2011 from 5pm to 9pm
Press conference:	4 October 2011 at 12.30pm
Dates:	6 October 2011 to 8 January 2012
Venue:	FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE. Instituto de Cultura. Paseo de Recoletos, 23
Curator:	Florence Müller
Website	www.exposicionesmapfrearte.com/ysl
Facebook	www.facebook.com/fundacionmapfreultura

For more information, please contact the Office of Press and Communications at the MAPFRE (Alejandra Fernández. Tel: 91 581 84 64 or alejandra@mapfre.com)

The Instituto de Cultura of FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE is pleased to invite you to the press conference to announce the exhibition **Yves Saint Laurent**, organised in collaboration with the *FONDATION PIERRE BERGÉ-YVES SAINT LAURENT*. It will be held on 4 October at **12.30pm** in the **AUDITORIUM of FUNDACION MAPFRE (Paseo de Recoletos, 23)**. Among those present will be Alberto Manzano Martos, President of the Instituto de Cultura of FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE, Pablo Jiménez Burillo, Director General of the Instituto de Cultura of FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE, Pierre Bergé, President of the *Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent*, and Florence Müller, the exhibition's curator.

THE CATALOGUE

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue on the life and work of Yves Saint Laurent. It will include reproductions of all the works on display as well as introductory texts by Pierre Bergé, the exhibition's curator Florence Müller and prestigious experts such as Estrella de Diego.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

In conjunction with the exhibition YVES SAINT LAURENT, the Instituto de Cultura FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE is once again offering workshop-visits aimed at schools and families.

Educational activities:

Workshop-visits for schools, aimed at Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary and Sixth-form students and other educational categories.

Workshop-visits for families, aimed at children aged between 4 and 16 accompanied by their parents or other family members. Painting and writing workshops.

“FASHION WORKSHOP” (Fashion design workshop) Children aged 4 to 6

Create your own fashion design after discovering with us the Yves Saint Laurent exhibition. Using a simple pattern, participants will make cut-outs from their own designs.

Saturdays and Sundays from 10am to 12 noon

Sala Recoletos. Paseo de Recoletos, 23. 28004 Madrid

“PAPER DRESSES. THE CATWALK” (Fashion design workshop) Children aged 6 to 12

“The only thing I regret is not having invented jeans” Saint Laurent once said. This activity will focus on his great innovations in fashion. Participants will learn how he was the inventor of the “smoking” or woman's trouser suit, the safari jacket and the jumpsuit. Using a simple pattern, children will create their own, life-size fashion designs on paper.

Saturdays and Sundays from 4.30pm to 6.30pm

Sala Recoletos. Paseo de Recoletos, 23. 28004 Madrid

“YVES SAINT LAURENT. THE CATWALK” (Fashion design workshop) Children aged 12 to 16

This activity will immerse participants in the world of fashion designers through teaching them to design their own clothes. Yves Saint Laurent was a great art collector and this passion encouraged him to pay homage to artists such as Mondrian, Picasso and Braque in the form of dresses decorated with motifs from their work. In the workshop, participants will create a design on a mannequin taking a famous work of art as their starting point.

Saturdays, 22 October, 19 November and 17 December from 4.30pm to 6.30pm

Sala Recoletos. Paseo de Recoletos, 23. 28004 Madrid

Price: 4 Euros per participant

For the Workshop-Visits for children aged 4 to 6 and 6 to 12, children must be accompanied by their parents or other family members.

For more information and bookings, please tel: 91 323 28 72 / 655 199 223

AUDIOGUIDES

For this exhibition, FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE will be offering:

Audioguides in Spanish and English

Audioguides with audio-description, with a script and design specially aimed at visually impaired users.

Signguides, a portable, multi-media device with a screen that shows a video explaining selected works in the exhibition through sign language and sub-titles.

THE WEBSITE

With the aim of offering further information on the exhibition and of making it accessible to the widest possible public, FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE has created a special website on this event: www.exposicionesmapfrearte.com/ysl Users will be able to discover the key artistic concepts behind the exhibition and see the most important works on display as well as enjoying a high quality, virtual tour of all the rooms.