

GUCCI



The name Gucci is synonymous with everything elegant and glamorous about Italian design in the 20th Century. Always an iconic status symbol to the rich and famous, designing the “House of Gucci” was relatively straightforward as we were filming it exclusively in Italy, but also creating the world of Gucci in New York during the period 1975 to 1995 and doing it in Italy which was the bigger challenge. Fortunately, I was quite familiar with both these worlds.

As a student of architecture and design, Italian traditions were without a doubt the most influential for me personally and was to be the foundation of my work as a Production Designer. As a student of Art and Architecture, I began with the formal study of Ancient Rome and its classic monuments but at the same time was also being exposed to the very progressive ideas of International Modernism in art, fashion, and industrial design, which all had found their way across the Atlantic to my hometown - New York City. New York had always been a gateway to America for international movements in all the Arts. This was certainly the case in the 1960's when Italian influence on the American lifestyle was very strong. The influx of Italian cars, Neo-Realist films, Italian Pop Art and of course Fashion was pervasive, and America was becoming more and more absorbed by Italian culture.

The Gucci story was largely set in north of Italy, in Milan, in Tuscany and Lake Como where the actual settings for the Gucci story took place, and was a very different style architecturally from Rome, at least on the face of things. Rome is an ancient city with layers and layers of history to its layout and with many colliding architectural styles evolved over millennia. And consequently, much more inconsistent. Milan, on the other hand, has a much more consistent character, with mostly Renaissance and Art Deco style buildings mixed with a few very Modern era ones and in my opinion, a much more homogenous look generally. Milan does not have a very deep crew base for feature film work being more focused on fashion and TV commercial production. The more practical solution was generally thought to try to make the film in Rome for financial reasons and crew availability, while it was thought, at first, that most of the settings would be more easily found in Milan and not that many in Rome that would convincingly double for Milan. It was also considered that we were a mostly location film with no big set builds. Perhaps only one or two small sets might be needed such as a bathroom or a prison cell to make walls more easily moveable. As it turned out we did much more set construction than originally planned mostly on location and of all those, the ones which were set in New York were the most difficult and, in the end, the most enjoyable.





























