

Figure 1. Gucci Cream Coat with Removable Fox Collar, ca. 2000s.
Ryerson FRC2009.01.374.



GUCCI: OVERVIEW OF READY TO WEAR DESIGN

By Olena Vivcharyuk
MA Fashion Student

December 2, 2019

Gucci is one of the most recognized brands in the world. With the revenue of +1 billion a year (Netwise Data), Gucci signature logo can be seen everywhere: traditional magazine campaigns, photos of influencers on social networks, on celebrities on the red carpet, in street style photos, on RnB artists in music videos and in Hollywood movies. Gucci has created a symbol of double-G monogram that is deeply integrated into our global culture and one of the most recognized trademarks in the world. How did the Gucci ready to wear design of women's coats evolve in the last three decades? To answer this question, I am going to look briefly at the brand's history, developments and highlights and using a Gucci coat from the Ryerson University Fashion Research Collection (see fig. 1). I will examine the brand's RTW collections and in particular, women's coats from the 1996, 2006 and 2016 runway shows.



Figure 2. Foley, Bridget. Tom Ford. New York, Rizzoli, 2004.

BRIEF HISTORY

Italian luxury brand and epitome of "Made in Italy", Gucci was founded in 1921 by Guccio Gucci started as a luggage manufacturer, producing travel goods for the wealthiest upper-classes (Jebreal 4). During that time Gucci grew as a family business located in Florence. Guccio's sons worked on the expansion of the business outside Florence and into the world (Jebreal 5). The brothers brought their own sons in the business as well. Trough '50s and '60s Gucci gained the success with the Jet Set and the Hollywood stars and celebrities of the time (Mover 17). It was a period when air travel became popular and it was glamorous event for every traveler. People dressed up and had their best luggage set with them. Gucci had gained an international popularity as a status symbol. After 70s' Gucci's declined proceeded up to early 90s' due to legal troubles in the family, scandals and drop in sales. In 1981 Gucci first RTW collection was presented in Florence where the historical floral print was the main design focus (Mover 20). In 1994 Tom Ford became a creative director for Gucci and designed RTW collection that became a first strong move towards the brand's renaissance and success (wwd.com).



Figure 3. Murphy, Caroline. Gucci, Fall RTW 1996. <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-1996-ready-to-wear/gucci>. Accessed 29 October, 2019.



Figure 4. Gucci Cream Coat with Removable Fox Collar, ca. 2000s. Ryerson FRC2009.01.374. Sleeve tab detail.



Figure 5. Gucci Cream Coat with Removable Fox Collar, ca. 2000s. Ryerson FRC2009.01.374. Notch collar detail.



Figure 6. Gucci Cream Coat with Removable Fox Collar, ca. 2000s. Ryerson FRC2009.01.374. Inside detail of lining and facing.

RTW 1990s

The Gucci Cream Coat with Fox Fur Removable collar (2009.01.374) from Ryerson University Fashion Research Collection was designed as part of Fall/Winter 1996. This was one of Tom Ford's "super sexy" collections for the brand. According to the Vogue's reporter Sarah Mower was "fashion equivalent of a one-night stand at Studio 54" (vogue.com). This coat was featured in 1997 magazine campaign (see fig. 2). I like it for its simple elegance and timeless look. The detachable red fox fur collar gives this coat a luxurious appearance as intended by Ford to bring glamour back associated with Gucci's successful past. The coat is made of medium-weight crisp wool fabric with the contrast horn buttons and lined with rayon lining (see fig.4). This coat with its classic cut has traditional details: two-piece sleeves, topstitching on seams, notch collar with classic shaped lapel, flaps on pockets, and tabs on sleeves (see fig. 4 & 5). The outer chest pockets' opening is vertical, which is an unusual detail for this type of coat because it gives a more sporty feel. From the print and runway images this coat's colour looks more off-white compared to the physical coat from the Ryerson collection. Even colour of thread and lining is still white (see fig. 4, 5 & 6). Analyzing the runway image (see fig. 3) where we can see the same detail of front facing joint to lining: both are of the same shade of white. Probably, the colour of the outer wool fabric has changed due to coat's age. This coat was a part of a new brand's direction under Ford: sleek, sexy and modern way of living on the edge (Jebreal 5). By the late 90's every Gucci line was sold out and the fashion "waiting list" was born (Foley 7). Tom Ford's design approach for Gucci was bold and brilliant creating a strong response and commercial success.



Figure 7. Madeira, Marcia. Gucci, Fall RTW 2006. <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2006-ready-to-wear/gucci>. Accessed 29 October, 2019.

RTW 2000's

A decade later, Gucci's 2006 Fall RTW collection was designed by Frida Gianini with very similar colours on the runway as 1996 collection. There were looks in off white, black, beige, gold, purple and maroon. Same as Tom Ford, Frida Gianini looked back into brand's historical archives for inspiration and referenced in particular Gucci 70's heritage in this collection (vogue.com). White floor length wool coat from this collection had very similar silhouette of semi-fitted around the body and arms with a cinched waist as 1996's coat (see fig. 7). The left lower pocket flap is the same size of about 7" by 2 1/4" as the pocket on coat from the Ryerson Collection. Similar as the coat from 1996 collection, front closure consists of three functional buttons. Collar breakpoint point starts on the same level on the bust for both coats. However, 2006 coat does not have a fur collar that would take from streamlined style of this coat. The 1/4" top stitching is the same on the white 2006 coat as 1996's coat pocket flaps and lapel. Fit and stylistic details in these two coats are very alike, but the latter is more refined and sophisticated in design. It looks like Frida Gianini brought sensuality, femininity and seductiveness into her creative approach for Gucci.



Figure 8. Vlamos, Yannis. Gucci, Fall RTW 2016. <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2016-ready-to-wear/gucci>. Accessed 29 October, 2019.

RTW 2010's

Fall 2016 RTW collection was inspired by "Catherine de' Medici and '70s sport". It had features of the "Renaissance biker feel with '80s Italian and French couture" designed by Alessandro Michele (vogue.com). Alessandro Michele became a new creative director at Gucci in 2015, and in 2017 the house reported 51 percent revenue increase, which was the record in the last twenty years (businessoffashion.com). Michele brought his unique sense of style and originality to design for Gucci. Fashion is "a bigger reflection of history and social change, and very powerful things..." said Michele in his interview for Vogue (Bowles, vogue.com). There were white, pink, bright red, green, yellow, fuchsia to name a few colours in 2016 collection. Lots of different patterns such as plaid, shevrone, floral, geometric, monogram, abstract prints and art from the 16th century. There were big puff sleeves, fur trimmed garments, ostrich feathers, sequines. Also there was a white mid-length double breasted with a self-fabric belt white coat! (see fig. 8) It had a classy fitted look with oversized notched collar and lapel. With two lower welt front pockets that open vertically as 1996's coat chest pockets. Size and construction look identical. Cropped two-piece sleeves are more fitted than sleeves from 2006 coat. In 2016 collection, Alessandro Michele used the cacophony of colours and diverse stylistic approaches with extraordinary success keeping in line with Gucci traditions. Different creative directors for Gucci over three decades have brought their artistic flare to design of the same white coat. There were few similar details in these coats but distinctive appearance and style.

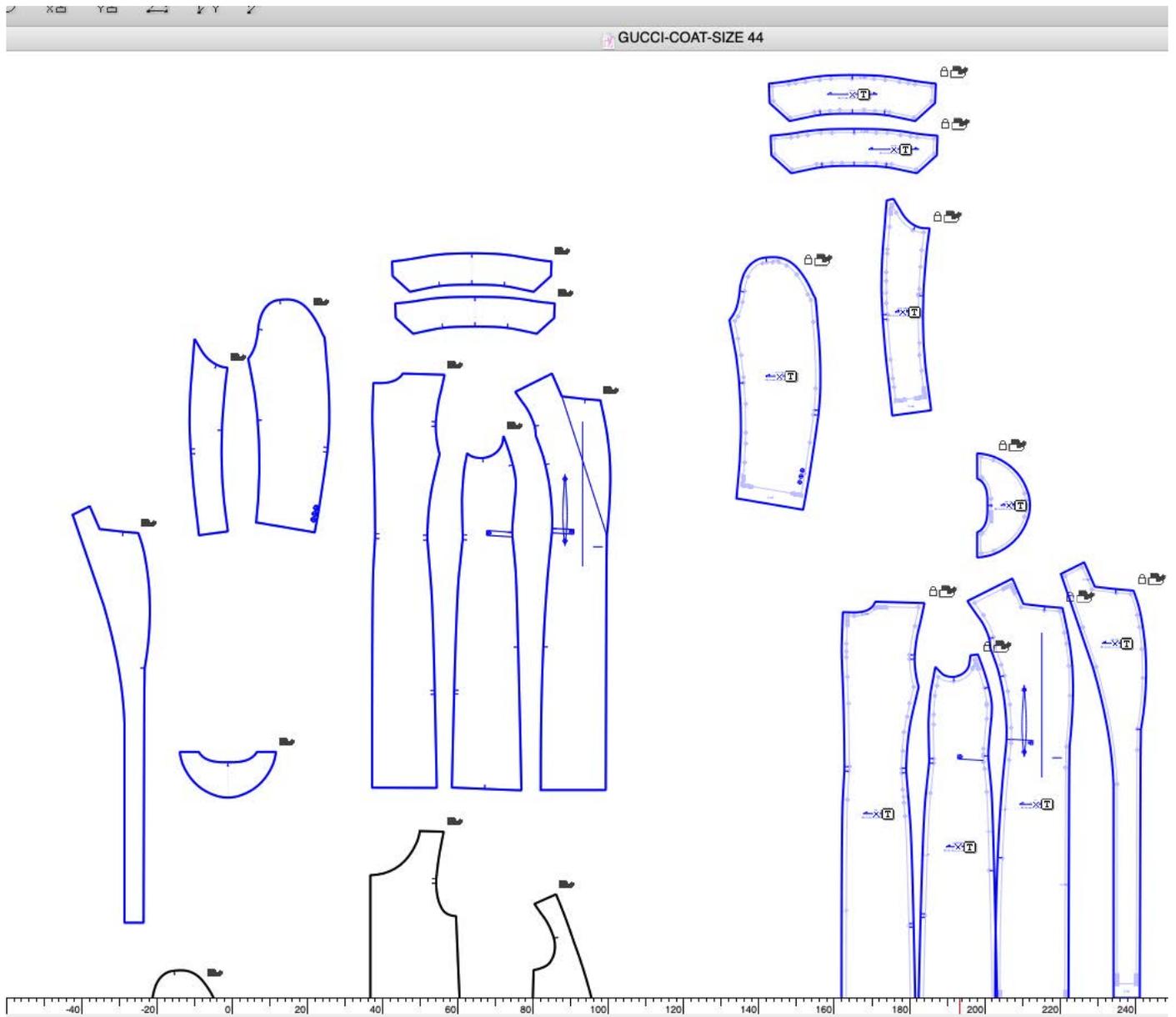


Figure 9. PAD Screenshot of digital pattern by Olena Vivcharyuk.

CREATIVE COMPONENT

Creative component is to draft digital pattern of Gucci 1996 coat from the Ryerson Collection that can be use to make an exact copy of the original. I took measurements of all the necessary points and details from the coat. When I had all this information, I drew a technical sketch indicating specific construction details, placement and key notes. Gucci coat from the Ryerson Collection is size 44 which is US size 12-14. I have drafted coat's pattern pieces using a computer aided pattern design software PAD and size 12 torso block (see fig. 9). A sample can be made later to check the fit and proportions compared to the original coat. However, I need to find similar fabric of the same weight, content and weave to make a prototype. Examining Gucci women's coats from three different collection, the similarities are noticeable, such as fit and design details. I can use the same 1996 coat pattern to create coat styles from 2016 and 2016 Gucci Fall RTW collections.

WORKS CITED

Bowles, Hamish. *Inside the Wild World of Gucci's Alessandro Michele*. [Vogue.com](https://www.vogue.com).

<https://www.vogue.com/article/gucci-alessandro-michele-interview-may-2019-issue>. Accessed 25 October, 2019.

Gucci: The Making of. New York, Rizzoli, c.2011.

Mover, Sarah. *Gucci by Gucci: 85 Years of Gucci*. New York, Vendome Press, 2006. P.14-27

Mover, Sarah. *Gucci Fall 996 Ready To Wear*. [Vogue.com](https://www.vogue.com)

Gucci Timeline. *Women's Wear Daily Archive*, vol. 187, is. 85, 2004, p. 8.

Gucci: A History Lesson. [WWD.com](https://www.wwd.com).

<https://www.wwd.com/fashion-news/designer-luxury/history-lesson-3512770>. Accessed 16 November, 2019.