

# ACMI Presents: Focus on Dante Ferretti

Focus on Dante Ferretti  
20 February - 1 March, 2009  
Australian Centre for the  
Moving Image (ACMI)  
Federation Square,  
Melbourne  
Admission fees apply

DG Design Network  
www.dgdesignnetwork.com.au  
© Copyright DGi Media

'I always try to find ways of manipulating reality to accentuate the central focus of the film. I'll exaggerate certain details and discard others.'

- Dante Ferretti

Dante Ferretti (top, middle)  
*Baron Munchausen*, film still and sketch.

Dante Ferretti (bottom)  
*The Black Dahlia*, sketch.



Film production design is being celebrated at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) in its current exhibition *Setting the Scene: Film Design from Metropolis to Australia*. To coincide with the exhibition, ACMI Film Programs have curated a unique film season dedicated to the significant body of work of Academy Award winning, Italian production designer Dante Ferretti. A showcase of thirteen selected films featuring art direction or production design by Ferretti will take place at ACMI from Friday 20 February to Sunday 1 March in *Focus On Dante Ferretti*.

Dante Ferretti was both in Macerata, Italy in 1943, and studied set design in Rome before he was employed as an assistant to film architect Luigi Scaccianoce. With now 70 films in his continuing body of work, his first assignment as a designer was for Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Medea* (1969) who taught Ferretti to draw inspiration from art history. One of the greatest examples of this influence can be seen in Jean-Jacques Annaud's *The Name of the Rose* (1986). The film, adapted from the novel by Umberto Eco, is a medieval monastery-set thriller shot in Italy and Germany, and called for complex interior design to represent the labyrinthine drama. The construction of the interior plaza and abbey was supervised by Ferretti, and a reconstructed model is being exhibited at ACMI as part of *Setting the Scene* until April, 2009.

Following *The Name of the Rose*, Ferretti's next major project was working on Terry Gilliam's *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (1988), a film now perhaps better known for its production problems and cost overruns. However, this film can be viewed as a launch of sorts for Ferretti, as following this film his career really took off internationally. Since *Baron Munchausen*, he has worked with significant directors from all over the world, including Neil Jordan, Claude Chabrol and the late Anthony Minghella. Ferretti has also frequently collaborated with Academy Award winning American filmmaker Martin Scorsese on six feature films to date. Three of these films will be screening as part of the *Focus On* showcase: *The Aviator* (2005), *The Age of Innocence* (1993) and *Casino* (1995). Scorsese's new feature, *Ashecliffe*, with Ferretti as Production Designer, is currently in post-production and due for release later this year.

Roberta Ciabarra, ACMI Film Programmer and Curator of the season, says, 'Dante Ferretti's vast body of work included ongoing collaborations with some of cinema's greatest auteurs. In a way this is testament to his significant role in the history of filmmaking. From baroque and neo-realist Italian cinema to the Hollywood machine and some of the really defining moments in film, Ferretti has been part of it all.'

Dante Ferretti has won two Academy Awards in the Best Achievement in Art Direction category, most recently for Tim Burton's *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (2008) and in 2005 for Scorsese's *The Aviator*. Both of these films will screen as part of the *Focus On Dante Ferretti* season, as well as *The Age of Innocence* (Martin Scorsese, 1993), *Titus* (Julie Taymor, 1999), *The Black Dahlia* (Brian de Palma, 2006), *Interview with the Vampire* (Neil Jordan, 1994) and *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (Terry Gilliam, 1988).

# ACMI Presents: Focus on Dante Ferretti

Focus on Dante Ferretti  
20 February - 1 March, 2009  
Australian Centre for the  
Moving Image (ACMI)  
Federation Square,  
Melbourne  
Admission fees apply

DG Design Network  
[www.dgdesignnetwork.com.au](http://www.dgdesignnetwork.com.au)  
© Copyright DGi Media

Dante Ferretti (top)  
*The Aviator*, film still.

Dante Ferretti  
*The Age of Innocence*, sketch.

Further Information:  
[www.acmi.net.au/focus\\_on\\_dante\\_ferretti.aspx](http://www.acmi.net.au/focus_on_dante_ferretti.aspx)

Ferretti's early career in Italy and France will be represented by screenings of a smaller number of arthouse titles such as *E la nave va (And the Ship Sails On)* (Federico Fellini, 1983), *La nuit de Varennes (That Night in Varennes)* (Ettore Scola, 1982), *Storie di ordinaria follia (Tales of Ordinary Madness)* (Marco Ferreri, 1981) and *Decameron* (Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1971).

'With the sheer volume of works in his filmography, we could have done a whole festival,' says Ciabarra, 'but these works represent some of Ferretti's defining moments, as well as those of the directors he has worked with. It's a chance for ACMI to highlight the importance of production design and visionary directing and perhaps even more so, the deep interpretative skills these artists (quite literally) have. Their ability to get into someone's head and translate concept into finely woven fabric is really quite something.'

Kate McCurdy

