

Remembering Franca Sozzani, Vogue Italia's Editor in Chief

Joelle Grosso (December 29, 2016)



Franca Sozzani, the fearless woman who has been the face behind Vogue Italia for the last 28 years has recently passed away at the age of 66 due to an unspecified yearlong illness.

American [Vogue](#) [2]'s editor-in-chief [Anna Wintour](#) [3] remembers Sozzani as “warm, clever, funny,



and someone who could give the Sphinx a run for its money when it comes to keeping a confidence.”

[Vanessa Friedman](#) [4], the Fashion Director at [The New York Times](#) [5] says that Sozzani “redefined the job of editor as one of activist, grappling with topics like race, domestic violence, plastic surgery, drug addiction and the BP oil spill.”

[Donatella Versace](#) [6] of the luxurious [Versace](#) [7] empire beautifully articulates that “the world has lost the icon of Italian style and the epitome of feminine empowerment. I will miss her more than words can say.”

Fashion stylist [Lori Goldstein](#) [8] adds that “Franca didn’t have to try. She wasn’t trying to be cool. She wasn’t trying to be revolutionary. She just was.”

The biggest names in the fashion industry have only kind words to describe [Franca Sozzani](#) [9], expressing their grief as well as their gratitude after her unexpected death earlier this week. For those who don’t know, Franca Sozzani was born in the city of Mantua in Northern Italy and started her career in the fashion industry at the age of 26, working for publications like Vogue Bambini, Lei, and Per Lui before finally heading to [Vogue Italia](#) [10] in 1988. What made her such a unique editor was her courage to give full creative control to others, to take risks, to push boundaries, and to question social norms.

Some of her most controversial covers include Vogue Italia’s “black issue” which was published back in 2008, when citizens of the United States were considering electing their first black president, [Barack Obama](#) [11]. The entire magazine exclusively featured models of color, which turned out to be a best seller because it challenged the non-inclusive standards of the beauty industry and pointed out the racial problems within the fashion industry. Another magazine issue that sparked conversation was put out in July 2011 and featured three plus-sized models on the cover as a way to battle anorexia, another huge problem in the fashion industry. Sozzani herself stated that “fashion has always been blamed as one of the culprits of anorexia, and our commitment is the proof that fashion is ready to get on the frontline and struggle against the disorder.”

Sozzani didn’t solve all the problems in the fashion industry but what she did best was to simply start up a dialogue, which is always the first step in breaking down any barrier. Through powerful imagery and provocative ideas, Sozzani’s contributions to the world are irreplaceable and go beyond clothes.

“Fashion isn’t really about clothes,” she once said, “it’s about life.”

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