



ANSELM REYLE FOR DIOR

Anselm Reyle. All photos courtesy of Dior.

This week in Miami Dior debuts a special capsule collection with the artist Anselm Reyle at a pop-up store in the Design District, open through December 11. Anselm Reyle for Dior marks the first time the brand has asked an artist to design a collection. The result is a variety of products in playful (and oh-so-Miami) colors, patterns, and shapes: leather goods, shoes, jewelry, scarves, sunglasses, makeup, and bags. Here the artist answers a few of Whitewall's questions about working with the fashion house and his ongoing exploration of "good taste".

WHITEWALL: How were you approached by Dior for this project?

ANSELM REYLE: Delphine Arnault has been familiar with my work for quite some time and contacted my gallery Almine Rech in Paris to ask if I could envisage a collaboration with Dior. I had to think about it, but finally agreed. It was a new challenge for me. The Dior team came to Berlin to see how I work in my studio. Together we developed the idea to create two allover patterns.

WW: Did the fact that these accessories would debut at Art Base Miami Beach affect the colors, designs you worked with?

AR: I can imagine that it fits quite well, but in the end the design was not created for a specific place. For example, I have already used the camouflage pattern for my paintings before and I know this motif from the street wear context rather than from luxury clothing.

WW: Why make the camouflage pattern neon?

AR: I took the camouflage motif because I was interested in how it has been adapted by the pop world from its military background and how it has lost its original meaning. It remains a kind of empty surface. Usually the camouflage hides something, but here it's the opposite - it is very visible because of the signal neon colors.

WW: You said that you really enjoyed working with the Lady Dior handbag because a lot of the work that you do is with found objects or already existing objects. What sort of twist did you want to put on these accessories?

AR: While thinking about the project I decided to work with the most classical Dior elements such as the "Cannage" and the Lady Dior bag to place them in contrast to my own language, especially colors, materials, and textures. So, for one design I tilted the "Cannage", which might be considered as a kind of intervention and deconstruction of the traditional Dior heritage.

WW: Had you ever designed before for accessories or fashion?

AR: Not yet, this is the first time that I am working together with a fashion house. Last year I made an edition of skateboards for Mekanism – also a French company. Actually, I am working on another collaboration with Meissen – the well-known Porcelain manufacturer – where I'm using flawed rejected products and useless residues to make new sculptures.

WW: Do you have a favorite piece in the collection?

AR: I like the yellow Lady Dior bag with its dissonance between the greenish yellow of the metallic material and the neon yellow stitching. And I like the yellow camouflage pattern. For me it is the most psychedelic color combination.

WW: A lot of your work deals with the question of when something becomes art. Would you consider the pieces in this collection art? Does any product of artist/fashion house collaboration ever become art?

AR: It is a design project. For me it was interesting to work in a field outside the traditional art context, to make something that is not art and that exists in another framework. I enjoyed working together with the Dior team. And I found it amazing that such a big fashion label develops its ideas similarly to the way an artist does in the studio. In my own work, as well as here, I used found objects as a starting point that were further developed and modified especially regarding their surface and effect.

WW: Your work is shiny, bright, overly decadent even, which calls into question our idea of taste. What was it like to work with a luxury brand like Dior given that?

AR: During the cooperation, I discovered an echo between the palette of elements, the research into materials and the colors that Dior craftsmanship involves, and my own artistic research. While I was studying, these two fields art and fashion were rather separated and it was kind of a taboo to create design. This disposition further provoked me to deal with this negative connotation. And I started working on decorative objects, furniture, and lamps with a dubious design that I place in contrast to my paintings. I tried to explore the socially established boundaries of art.

If we look back to the last century, take Bauhaus for example, these restrictions did not exist. The artists made paintings, decorative objects, and fashion all at the same time. I find it interesting to see how different artists deal with design commissions from fashion labels today. I can imagine that this field will continue to develop and become more open and fluid.

WW: Did it give you a new perspective on "good" taste?

AR: Just like Dior I am interested in elegance. Nonetheless, my perspective stems out of a fascination for dubious taste, whereas Dior is a symbol of good taste. I think, the initial position is similar but the inspiration comes from different sources.

TAGS: Anselm Reyle, Delphine Arnault, Dior, miami, Miami Design District