

INTERNET

Dior revitalizes architecture roots for Archi Dior jewelry collection

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Archi Dior collection

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

French fashion house Christian Dior is bringing its jewelry and apparel closer together with the Archi Dior campaign.

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Archi Dior, photographed by Patrick Demarchelier, highlights Dior fine jewelry creator Victoire de Castellane's latest collection, which was inspired by the design of the brand's dresses. Having a visible link between apparel and jewelry helps establish a clear brand identity, ensuring that those who love the clothing will not jump to another brand for their jewelery needs.

"For a fashion house, jewelry collections are brand extensions," said [Thoma Serdari](#), Ph.D., founder of [PIQLuxury](#), Co-editor of [Luxury: History Culture Consumption](#) and adjunct professor of luxury marketing at [New York University](#), New York.

"These allow the brand to reach out to a broader audience whose interests are not focused on fashion exclusively and incentivize existing customers to spend more on brand extensions," she said. "While brand extensions may be priced to move the brand lower in the pyramid of luxury brands, in the case of Dior, its line of high jewelry is intended to reinforce the luxury status of the fashion house. In that sense, Dior's jewelry collections are complementary to the creations of its fashion lines.

"To further reinforce that message, Victoire de Castellane, Creative Director for Dior's Jewelry, introduces designs that resonate with core themes of the brand's fashion philosophy. In doing so, she achieves what luxury house Dior is aiming at: concentrate on the most recognizable elements that create continuity, coherence and constancy. In other words, the jewelry collection reinforces Dior's brand message because it elaborates on the fashion house's brand codes."

Ms. Serdari is not associated with Dior, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Dior](#) was unable to respond by press deadline.

Fashion architecture

One day after revealing La Rose Dior, jewelry made to look like roses, the brand unveiled the Archi Dior collection on DiorMag, Dior's branded news and editorial magazine. The collection directly celebrates the designs of brand founder and namesake Christian Dior.



Archi Dior Bar en Corrole

Mr. Dior defined himself as one "who respects the laws and principles of architecture" in his fashion. Ms. Catellane spoke of wanting to create the jewelry in the same way Mr. Dior created his dresses, sculpting them in accordance with the designs of architecture.

"The new collection is distinctively reminiscent of Dior's architectural aspirations and references materials used in architecture, for example masonry or metal structures," Ms. Serdari said. "Rather than limiting itself to a literal reference to architectural principles, Dior's jewelry collection is also communicating specific ideas of femininity.

"It is an emancipated view of women in the world that brings to mind Dior's 1948 skirt suit that, post WWII, took women from the home to the workplace," she said. "Yet, as resilient as that image of Dior is, it is also softened with folds and feminine shapes that eliminate the edginess and render the pieces softer and more approachable."



Archi Dior Diorama necklace

Forming necklaces that resemble gowns and rings that resemble suits, Ms. Catellane wished to instill the same appearance of defying gravity into her jewelry as in the brand founder's apparel.

To showcase the design, Dior has made a short video showing the drawing and then the step-by-step creation of the ring, which is carved, shaped, polished and fine-tuned, all by hand. Next to the video, copy echoes the entirely hand-made design and further reinforces the architectural design principles, which must balance with the femininity of the jewelry's curves.

When complete, the jewelry's shape echoes the movement of a skirt, the pleat of a dress or the drape of fabric, with precious stones serving as embroidery.



18K pink gold Archi Dior "Cocotte" ring with diamonds

Five particular dresses, all created between 1947 and 1957, served as inspiration. The Bar en Corolle ring refers to the brand's Bar outfit and the name of the first New Look line, Corolle, from decades before.

The Libre Plumetis line in the collection takes inspiration from the white tulle of the Belgique dress. The coils of the Diorama dress, meanwhile, manifest in a coiling streamer to be worn around the neck, ear or wrist.

Asymmetrical pieces pay homage to the back of the Cocotte dress, and finally, the Aile line resurfaces in a bracelet containing pave-set scrolls.



White gold Archi Dior Ailee Bracelet

Long-lived luxury brands must walk the line between heritage and innovation, finding ways to incorporate one within the other. Looking across sectors to create new products with clear roots in the brand serve both purposes, reminding consumers of the brand's history while also providing new, original products.

Heritage meets innovation

Finding creative and purposeful ways to revive old traditions or reinvigorate old designs is a common theme in the luxury space.

Recently, department store chain Barneys New York remembered and reinstated a 30-year-old charity initiative to usher in its new Chelsea location.

In 1986, Barneys hosted its "Denim Jacket" event, in which the retailer partnered with designers and artists to redesign a jean jacket to their personal aesthetic for auction. Prominent designers and artists participated in the Denim Jacket project, including Keith Haring, Jean Michel Basquiat, Andy Warhol and Yves Saint Laurent, with proceeds of the auction benefiting an AIDS charity ([see story](#)).

"Christian Dior was very interested in architecture and had wished to pursue a career in the field in his early years," Ms. Serdari said. "While he took up fashion with great enthusiasm and dedication, he always strived to achieve architectural effects through his designs.

"For Christian Dior it all came down to working with the clothing's structure," she said. "This led him to innovative forms that became his signature.

"He also incorporated in his work methods architects use, for example working with volumes and shaping objects (silhouettes) through a sculptural approach. This resulted in several impactful designs such as Dior's folds, overblown skirt shapes, elaborate drapes, all of which have their origins in geometry and architecture."

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