

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Fendi reinterprets, repurposes its boutique for Design Miami

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Sarah Coleman reimagines Fendi for Design Miami exposition. Image courtesy of Fendi

By NORA HOWE

LVMH-owned Italian fashion brand Fendi has commissioned New York-based artist Sarah Coleman to reinterpret its Miami Design District boutique and create a series of unique pieces for the annual Design Miami fair.

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Fendi is dedicated to breaking barriers and setting new standards for luxury through the development of new elements and design techniques. Inspired by this tradition, Ms. Coleman felt encouraged to reimagine and repurpose the brand for the Design Miami event, ultimately creating a retro yet classic display.

"Fendi continues to push the boundaries of collaboration by finding and securing young talent that will help drive them towards a new audience desired audience that will hopefully become advocates of the brand," said Rebecca Miller, founder of [Artful Communication](#), New York. "As a heritage brand, they understand the critical need to reinvent, rediscover and repurpose their product.

"They are cautious not expose their brand to unauthentic measures as they explore and execute collaborations, understanding the nuances between new, for sake of new, and new, for the sake of value, as it related to their consumers," she said.

Old is new

In collaboration with Ms. Coleman, three limited editions of Fendi's *Peekaboo ISeeU* bag will launch exclusively at the Miami boutique in late November.

The first will be available in yellow with the FF embossed design, with a second handbag available in a white Napa leather with phosphorescent FF beads and embroidery creating a glow-in-the-dark effect. The third version has a canvas body with multicolor FF thread embroidery.



The reinterpreted phosphorescent Fendi bag. Image courtesy of Fendi

Ms. Coleman has also reinterpreted a one-of-a-kind piece of the Peekaboo bag in white canvas, transforming it into a multicolored style in plaster and acrylic paint with FFs cut from suede and glazed with resin. The bold colors of the bag are inspired by the vibrant art scene in Miami as well as the toys of her childhood.

For the art fair, the Fendi boutique will have a special facade, conceptualized by Ms. Coleman, including the vertigo Pequin Fendi logo in the brand's iconic yellow.

In addition to the reimagined bags, Ms. Coleman has also created a series of furniture pieces to be displayed in the Miami store during the event. For instance, she reupholstered a cushion using the fabric from a vintage 1980s Fendi beach bag.

Other pieces in the design renovation include a rattan peacock chair refinished in yellow acrylic paint and plaster and an acrylic zig-zag chair covered in collage of vintage books and magazines, printed with Fendi images. The use of old paper materials, Fendi archival images and a re-imagination of iconic Fendi designs highlight Ms. Coleman's affinity for blurring the lines between art, fashion and design.



Fendi and Sarah Coleman for the Miami Design District boutique. Image courtesy of Fendi

Fendi has previously leveraged collaborations during the event ([see story](#)). For 15 years, Design Miami has been a hub for collectible design, with biannual events that unite the design world's most influential people.

Design Miami will run from Nov. 27 to Dec. 6 in the Miami Design District.

To ensure the wellbeing of its staff, exhibitors and guests, Design Miami has implemented health and safety protocols in consultation with the University of Miami Health System and has extended the runtime to ten days, to facilitate viewing at low capacity.

Union of art and high-fashion

The collaboration with Ms. Coleman for the Design Miami exposition is hardly Fendi's first attempt at marrying art and high-fashion. Over the past year, the brand has made a significant shift toward the celebration of art and creativity through its collections and brand strategies.

In May 2019, Fendi drew parallels between graffiti and craftsmanship in a collaboration with street artist PREF. The brand had previously worked with PREF on its FF Reloaded launch event in London. In the most recent partnership, PREF took the Fendi logo and remixed it, paying homage to the brand's relationship with its hometown of Rome ([see story](#)).

A few months later, Fendi turned to street art for inspiration in its "F is for Fendi" collaboration geared towards younger consumers. The brand tapped British artist Sam Cox, known as Mr. Doodle, to create an installation at the brand's headquarters in Rome.

The effort offered another contemporary perspective on the connections between graffiti and craftsmanship ([see story](#)).

Most recently, Fendi released a new series "Hand in Hand" which showcases the intricacy of the handiwork of its artisans, casting light on the network of Italian craftspeople who are responsible for the various pieces in the brand's collections ([see story](#)).

"Fendi has evolved over the years leading with trends, environmental concerns and understanding the interest and value of collaborations, steering away from more siloed offerings," Ms. Miller said. "Fashion, architecture, interior design and the arts have studied this and embraced these attributes to increase awareness for their brands and to strategically expand their audience.

"Fendi's project with Sarah exhibits a dimension of sustainability by repurposing existing, typically discarded products, giving the materials a new meaning, a consumer a varied opportunity to participate with the brand, on an unanticipated level, and a new market, that translates into additional revenue," she said.

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