

Anna Weyant, Jeffrey Gibson, and 9 Other Art Stars Have Reimagined Dior's Iconic Bag

The French luxury house has tapped renowned international artists like Faith Ringgold, Anna Weyant, and Jeffrey Gibson to reinterpret the Lady Dior bag.



Anna Weyant and reimagined Lady Dior bags. © Joe Perri, Courtesy of Dior.

Is fashion art? It's a question that's long transfixed fans of either (or both) occupations. But the storied French maison Dior seems to have an answer with its ongoing program Dior Lady Art. Now in its ninth edition, the project takes one of the brand's most well-known handbag styles—the diminutive Lady Dior, made famous in the 1990s by Princess Diana and recognized by its quilted tote-style, two top handles, and dangling charm—and offers it up to a host of artists for as a blank canvas for them to do with as they wish.



Vaughn Spann's reinterpretations. © Joe Perri, courtesy of Dior.

For its latest release, Dior tapped 11 artists from various aesthetic styles and locations, and gave them free reign to reinterpret the Lady Dior, or as the brand puts it, “take their turn in appropriating the Lady Dior as a fascinating emblem of poetic metamorphosis.” The artists for this edition are Sara Flores, Huang Yuxing, Liang Yuanwei, Danielle McKinney, Duy Anh Nhan Duc, Hayal Pozanti, Faith Ringgold, Vaughn Spann, Anna Weyant, Jeffrey Gibson, and Woo Kukwon, a range of artisans who prove just how adaptable the diminutive tote can be in the hands of the right visionary.

The Canadian rising star Weyant—a painter who's known for rendering sensual, elegant female figures with a lush physicality that recalls the Dutch masters—created two versions. One evokes the dark undulations of wood grain, while the other, in shiny gold, is topped with 3-D floral blooms. Much like her oeuvre, Weyant's work is obsessed with surfaces—here smooth, glossy, shiny—that are feminine yet somewhat subversive and even, in their way, disquieting and dangerous. Weyant already has major fashion world cred: she's been profiled in GQ and

recently was hand-selected by Vogue magazine's first-ever guest editor, Marc Jacobs, to contribute one of two December covers, of the model Kaia Gerber.



Huang Yuang's majestic landscape transformed the bag. © Wenqingao Lei, courtesy of Dior.

Contrast that with Faith Ringgold, the prolific artist who died earlier this year and whose work, including her renown "story quilts" helped shed a light on, in vibrant detail, the lives of African American women. Her contributions keep in line with that legacy, one where art is a form of joyful activism, a trio of which are beaded in Technicolor glory, one with an expressive singer, another with a soulful saxophonist, and a third covered in a triangular pattern. Three more styles complete her offering, one covered in a dense pattern comprised of the words "Woman," "Now," and "Freedom" and, on another, a poignant scene of bridge against an inky sky and a young Black girl looking on.



Faith Ringgold's Lady Dior bags. Courtesy of Dior.

In a video on Dior's YouTube page, the Chinese artist Liang Yuanwei shows you how she came together, where 3-D printed resin pieces are placed on the bag's exterior to reproduce the craggy textures of her oil paintings. The video is a short but fascinating look at the process the yields a beautiful outcome.

Dior also chose Jeffrey Gibson, gay Native American painter who represented the United States in the this year's Biennale. Known for his hyper saturated colors, graphic geometric designs, and vibrantly beaded and fringed sculptures, the New York-based artist added dense beading to his Lady Dior, plus a side festooned with heart locket.



The Chinese artist Liang Yuanwei © Wenqingao Lei, courtesy of Dior.

Each bag, then, in essence becomes its own masterpiece, making any questions of the divide between fashion and art moot. Instead, the focus is shifted to craftsmanship, creativity, and self-expression. About how a bag can be a small snapshot into the mind of an artist, and how carrying that bag can be like carrying their message with you.