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Sylvie Fleury Hosts Solo Exhibition Showcasing Makeup-Inspired Installations

Fleury talks about her work among life-size reproductions of Chanel and Tom Ford's eye shadows.

By [Fiona Ma](#) on April 5, 2019



LONDON — Art often informs beauty, but for artist Sylvie Fleury, beauty and makeup is what inspires her art.

Even though she has been “booed for showing fashion in an art gallery” in the past, Fleury is still keen on embracing fashion and for her solo show, which is housed at Ely House in London’s Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac and titled “Hypnotic Poison” after a Christian Dior perfume, she put center stage gigantic makeup compacts inspired by Chanel and Tom Ford.

“In the Nineties, they felt that fashion was a lower kind of art. When I first started showing my work I got criticized for incorporating elements of beauty and makeup, but I wanted to show that it’s not superficial and in fact, you can use fashion and beauty to talk about feminism, politics and consumerism,” said the artist, who was dressed in a bright purple sweater, Fila shoes and a Balenciaga tote during an intimate tea she hosted to mark the launch of the show.

Life-size makeup palettes, single eye shadow pans, blushes and other color cosmetics made out of frames and stretched canvas are some of her most recognizable works. Missing from the canvases are the names of these beauty products; however, makeup fanatics will be able to recognize some of them such as the large [Chanel](#) “Pink Explosion” eye shadow displayed on the wall.

“Chanel eye shadows are rounded, so it was quite challenging to get this canvas to curve and protrude that way,” she added.



Sylvie Fleury exhibition at Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac. Ben Westoby

While Fleury often reproduces makeup from well-known brands, the artist said she doesn't have a favorite makeup or fashion brand and often will buy drugstore products.

"I'm not reproducing the ones that I use or that I love the most. I'm reproducing the ones that strongly call to me because they look like miniature artworks and the ones that fit my purpose. And with fashion, what I love changes with seasons. That's what's so wonderful about fashion, you don't need to be faithful," she said.

Fleury is drawn to the colors and the textures used in makeup such as glitter, as seen in her reproduction of Tom Ford's "Camera Obscura" eye shadow. She also says she loves Nars makeup for the intense pigmentation.

Not only do colors in fashion and beauty inform Fleury's art work, but she has been using them as a communication tool with gallerists, too: "When I began making shows abroad and DHL and FedEx at the time were luxuries, I had to find ways to tell galleries what colors to paint the walls, so I used makeup colors. For example, I would tell them, this letter should be painted in the same red as the bathing suit of the girl in pg. 92 of American Vogue or like the beige in the foundation from Christian Dior number 72," she added.