

WEARABLE ART

Teenage Fashion Designer Ariel Swedroe Weinberg Takes Miami By Storm

When it comes to fashion, Ariel Swedroe Weinberg has big plans – but, first, she has to finish middle school.

The 13-year-old fashion designer recently launched the second collection by her label, Swedroe by Ariel, which includes made-to-order lycra-neoprene swimsuits and silk cover-ups that she describes as “bold, bright and happy.”

Ariel, a Miami native who is in the eighth grade and calls Valentino her favorite designer, got an early start in the business.

“When I was in first grade, I asked my mom to sign me up for sewing classes because I always loved dressing up my dolls and myself,” she says.

She enrolled at DesignLab Miami, where she learned how to cut patterns, drape and sew. She also learned about digital printing and started to print collages by her grandfather, architect and artist Robert Swedroe, onto fabric.

“I would always go to his studio and watch him make his art,” Ariel says. “I was in love with the collages.”

She adds: “I made my little collection and showed it to him, and he thought it was a great idea and wanted to make it into a brand and a business. And now, here I am, two years later!”

Ariel eventually wants to translate her grandfather’s colorful collages into shoes and accessories such as sunglasses, purses and beach towels.

“He’s made over 700 collages, so there’s a lot to choose from,” she says. “And he’s still working at 83, so I don’t think I’ll run out any time soon.”

She calls designing her passion and makes time to sketch in between homework and applying to high schools.

“It’s hard,” she says. “But, if it’s a lot of work, I’ll do it, because I love what I’m doing.”

Plus, it’s fun, she says: “Friends always want to try on my clothes, and people ask for autographs. I made my friend a bathing suit for her birthday out of my fabric.”

While her vibrant beachwear is a perfect fit for South Florida, Ariel is also excited about expanding nationwide and hopes to one day attend fashion school in London.

“I would love to be well-known all over,” she says. “But I want people to know I’m from Miami and I get my inspiration here.”

– Rheana Murray

Ariel Swedroe
Weinberg

