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REIZ
»Wolf«



Celebrating
Three Decades
Of Independent
Eyewear Design

»Suisse«



REIZ
TIMELESS
BY
DESIGN

Thirty years is a remarkable milestone in the eyewear world. Collections come and go, trends shift with the seasons, and supposed must-haves quickly become little more than footnotes. REIZ has never followed that rhythm. Rather than chasing every new hype, the brand has pursued its own design path since 1996 – guided by a refined sense of proportion, premium materials, and a visual language that has never needed to demand attention. To mark its 30th anniversary, we speak with founder Franz Reutter about the beginnings of REIZ, the evolution of the brand, and what will continue to define good eyewear design in the future.

Franz, first of all, congratulations on your 30th anniversary. REIZ in three words, please.

Precise. Timeless. High-quality.

When you look back at the beginnings of REIZ today, what was your original idea? Was there a moment when you knew: Now I'm going to start my own eyewear brand?

I had always been fascinated by eyewear. At the same time, I felt it was a shame that there were hardly any models on the market back then that truly conveyed character, style, and a certain sensuality. In the 1990s, fashion still played a relatively minor role in the eyewear industry. As so often happens in life, the right people then came together at the right time and in the right place. What began with our first experiments in my brother's basement quickly developed into a clear vision. By the time we visited *Optica 1995* in Cologne and received the support of a small network, it was clear that the right moment had come to make this dream a reality.

Do you still remember your first collection? Looking back after 30 years, what would you do differently today – and what would you do exactly the same way again?

The first collection involved a great deal of experimentation – trying out shapes and working with different materials. The first frames were made entirely by hand, each one unique. It was a different time, and it was exactly right back then. I would do it the same way again.

REIZ has never been the loudest brand in the market. Was that a conscious decision, or did it simply develop from your personality and your approach to design?

It was indeed a conscious decision. I never wanted to be the loudest brand, but one that convinces through quality, personality, and consistency while also being positioned within the fashion segment. This attitude is reflected both in our

REIZ
»Rockers«



»Inti«



designs and in the way we interact with our customers.

Many brands follow trends. Your designs often seem to resist the zeitgeist. How do you achieve this balance between relevance and timelessness?

I am certainly inspired by new developments, but I do not chase trends. For me, the central question is: Will people still enjoy wearing these glasses several years from now? Timelessness comes from clear shapes, high-quality materials, and a design that emphasizes the wearer's natural character.

Geometry plays a major role in your designs. What is behind that?

Geometric shapes give our frames a clear signature. They create character without being intrusive and allow us to play with proportions and lines. The result is eyewear that is distinctive while remaining a versatile companion.

Are there any models or collections that still embody REIZ for you today?

»Mia« – one of the first REIZ classics.
»Wolf« – this model comes from the *Lovely Animals* series. Its defining feature is its three-dimensional look.
»Krios« – in 2024, we introduced the new *MONUMENT* collection. The designs of these models named after gods impress with their balanced dimensions and sculptural shapes.

The eyewear industry has changed enormously over the past three decades. Which development has surprised you the most?

What surprises me most – and pleases me at the same time – is how strongly eyewear has evolved from a purely functional object into an expression of personal identity. In the past, glasses were more of an unwelcome necessity, with function taking priority above all else. Today, eyewear is often a consciously chosen style statement. Many people own several frames and select them to suit the occasion, their outfit, or their mood. At the same time, quality and environmental considerations have moved more strongly into focus. This development has made the industry considerably more exciting.

At the same time, many independent brands have disappeared from the market or become part of larger corporate groups. What does it take today to establish an independent design brand successfully in the market?

A clear attitude, distinctive design, and the determination to stay true to your path. As in every area of daily life, there are tempting offers. Even so, remaining true to yourself pays off. Particularly as an independent brand, it is important to develop a signature that remains recognizable over many years. At the same time, it requires the highest quality, close cooperation with specialist retailers, and the courage to think long term. Trust does not develop overnight – it grows through consistency, credibility, and products that bring people joy.

What role do new materials, digital tools, or modern manufacturing technologies play at REIZ?

Here too, we are not the ones shouting the loudest. In recent years, many new materials have become established in the

market – whether wood, 3D-printed polyamide, or even paper. Almost anything is possible today. This variety is fantastic. We have also worked with aluminum and titanium, yet our hearts have belonged to acetate for many years. It offers countless creative possibilities in terms of color, is lightweight and comfortable against the skin, and has an unmistakably premium feel.

Looking ahead to the next ten years, which topics will have a lasting impact on the eyewear industry?

Over the next ten years, three topics in particular will have a lasting impact on the eyewear industry: digitalization, individualization, and sustainability. Artificial intelligence will gradually play a major role here as well. Customers increasingly expect individual solutions – from made-

to-measure eyewear to personalized frames. In addition, sustainable materials, resource-efficient production processes, and longer product lifespans will become increasingly important purchasing criteria. Nevertheless, I am convinced that specialist retailers will continue to hold their own against online competition and other technologies by offering personal advice and a high level of expertise.

Where would you like to see REIZ for its 40th anniversary?

I hope that by then I will mainly be lying somewhere on a deck chair with a view of the mountains (*laughs*). No, jokes aside. I hope that in ten years' time, I will still enjoy designing new models and still feel happy whenever I meet people on the street wearing a frame by REIZ GERMANY and looking sensational.

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