Q&A with Lisa Dorr of Le Bouton. Linen for kids from the heart.

Description

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It is always a great pleasure to feature a store which makes beautiful hearty clothes from linen. It is an even greater pleasure to showcase a store which makes these clothes from our linen at fabrics-store.com. We came across Lisaâ??s online store www.leboutonstudio.comâ?? and instantly fell in love with the idea and the execution.

Q: Please introduce yourself and tell us a little about what you do.â??

A: Hello! Thank you for including me on The Thread! My name is Lisa Dorr, and I have a clothing line called Le Bouton. I live, and work in Freedom, Maine. I design clothing for children, and a few pieces for women. I began making clothes â?? in earnest â?? when my daughter, Frances, was entering kindergarten â?? 2005.

Q: You designs are so simple, but I can imagine the kids that wear these clothes feel so good in them. Who came up with the concept of simplicity?

A: Yes! The designs are very simple. Itâ??s what I love, and it seems fairly difficult to find â?? especially for children. The pieces I have in the shop now

are very basic. Every piece is a shape/volume, and a color/texture. This is not to say I wonâ??t make clothes with detail â?? Iâ??m sure I will! Kids do feel great in the clothes because they are easy to move in.

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Q: Tell us about your relationship to linen.â??

A: I love linen. I love it for children. I think linen looks best rumpled, and kids are great at that! It is my hope that children wear these pieces as daily clothes. The more theyâ??re worn the better they look!

Q: Talk us through the production process from idea to finished garment. Do you do everything yourself or are parts of the production outsourced?

A: My creativity is moody! I canâ??t force it, but when itâ??s there I can design a line of clothes without difficulty. Also, I really do not want to be too involved in trends â?? I am interested in timelessness. Styles are often repeated at Le Bouton! I look at a lot of images. I am inspired by most everything. Color is important for me right now. So, I will do a quick sketch of something, or, Iâ??ll start by cutting out a garment, and sewing it up. I never make a muslin! Iâ??m too impatient. If I like what Iâ??ve done, then I will take some good pictures of it, and post it on my blog, and Pinterest, and sometimes Facebook. Then, Iâ??ll make a simple pattern. Production sewing is done by the very excellent P. Wentworth, and a little by me. I hope to do some hiring in the next year of some more stitchers, and a pattern maker. It is important to me to keep production in Maine.
When orders are complete, I pack them, and ship!
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Q: How do you choose your colors? Do you have period references you base your ideas on?â??

â?? A: I am easily influenced when it comes to color. I find I need to see colors already existing together for them to be inspiring to me. I am also very

fickle with color. I will make grand statements like â??RED? NEVER!â?• and then, of course I fall in love with it!! This past winter, I did something called a CSA. It stands for Community Supported Apparel. I had groups of clothing that people could purchase in advance â?? they purchase in January, and receive 2 shipments of clothes. One in May, and another in October. I offered many color choices for each piece of clothing â?? like, a LOT. It was so cool to see what people chose for their groups â?? completely genius color combinations. That was inspiring!

Occasionally, I reference a certain time. Or, I will do it without realizing it, and I will hear from people that it looks very â??Dutch Masterâ?•, or â??depression eraâ?•. I like that!
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Q: Do you have a work motto?

A work motto. I donâ??t. I should. No time like the present?!!! Maybe â?? slow, and steady wins the race, but get moving!

Q: What has been the most challenging part of running your own business, can you talk us through a failure and how you dealt with it?

The only failure I can think of would be giving up on what I do, and that has not happened!
I can say, that there have been quite a few times when maybe I should have said yes to an opportunity to have Le Bouton in some excellent stores, but I didnâ??t feel ready. I have that regret, but Iâ??m working towards that goal! Hmmm, maybe this isnâ??t so much a failure, as much as a thing that I grapple with, and that is social media promotion. I have trouble with the concept of it. Frances, who is 13, says I should get over it â?? itâ??s not a big deal. But, for me, it feels really weird! Must be my age!! However, I love it when people find my blog, and then write to me! That feels real.
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Q: Can you name your greatest success in your business experience?

My greatest success is that I am doing what I love!

Q: What is the best piece of business advice you have received to date?

Someday, I WILL implement this advice â?? hire the right people for the job! I canâ??t wait to have a team!

Q: Do you have a hero you look upto? A mentor to guide you?

Heroes? â?? Yes, both real, and imaginary. Many! Mentors? Yes. I am in the process of writing a business plan, and I have great support through a local business organization. I need a great deal of guidance in the business realm!

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Q: What does success mean to you?

Success is a funny thing. It seems like it is a mixture of being satisfied, and wanting more at the same time. For me, I feel successful â?? I am doing what I love, and I feel a great deal of satisfaction from it, and I want more from it, and I am happy to be moving towards the more. Does that make sense? That is the personal feeling part of â??successâ?•, then thereâ??s the numbers, the money. When youâ??re in business you canâ??t pretend that doesnâ??t exist! True business success, for me, will be growth at a sustainable rate, and when Le Bouton can pay people very well for the work they do, and everyone feels a part of something special.

Q: A lot of the pieces you make are made out of our linen, why did you chose fabrics-store?

Firstly, I love the quality of the linen from Fabric-store. It washes very softly, it has perfect texture, and no sheen. It has an old-world quality. The colors are beautiful! I love the warm olive â?? please, keep this color forever! â?? I live in a fairly remote place, and I have to purchase fabric online, and fabric-store has been perfectly reliable for many years.

CATEGORY

1. INTERVIEWS

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