

Curated By You: Katie Armour Makes a Linen Jumpsuit

Description



Tell us a bit about yourself and what you do.

My name is Katie and I live outside of Portland, Oregon with my husband and our two young boys. I stay home with the kids, but as theyâ??ve gotten older Iâ??ve had more time to pursue creative interests. I sew, primarily quilts, but also do woodwork and ceramics.

Having several mediums to work with keeps me from getting bored or burnt out. I get to do commissioned pieces from time to time but keep my sewing habit rolling by making sewing tools that I sell on my website, katiearmour.art

Why do you sew?

Iâ??ve always had an â??I can make thatâ?• attitude. Iâ??ve only recently applied that to clothing. At the start of 2022, I resolved to not buy any clothing and to put some effort into learning to sew my own clothing. It was a challenge to become aware of my spending habits, the quality and sustainability of my clothing, and to broaden my sewing skill set. I started simple with loose fitting dresses, then I made more structured tops and jackets.

2023â??s goal is pants. I feel like there is a mountain of things to learn there and not having to find pants that fit, because I can make my own, keeps me motivated.



Jumpsuit made with FS Cognac Softened Midweight Linen

What do you like to listen to when youâ??re working (and why)?

When Iâ??m quilting Iâ??ll listen to anything thatâ??s entertaining, mainly fiction audio books from our local library. When Iâ??m sewing garments and following patterns, I really need to focus so I donâ??t listen to anything. Maybe someday Iâ??ll be able to zone out and just sew, but Iâ??m not there yet!

As a child, what was your first encounter and memory of beauty?

When I think back, Iâ??m pretty sure my mom was my first memory of beauty. I was 5 or 6 and just came home from spending time with my grandparents. Seeing her and running into her open arms, her loving and welcoming spirit was beautiful to me. It still is.

Where is home and how does it affect what you do?

If I didnâ??t live somewhere where it rained 9 months of the year, Iâ??d probably be outside a lot more. But when I donâ??t want to face the weather, I take to sewing which allows me to feel productive, entertained, and dry. The boys roll with it tooâ??theyâ??re usually working on their own art projects while we wait for a break in the weather to get outside.



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Name a book that youâ??ve recently read which inspired you and why?

â??The Wild Dyerâ?• by Abigail Booth. This book gives a good foundation for exploring the botanical dying process. Reading it opened my eyes to how many plants around me, that Iâ??ve been surrounded by for years, can be processed into dyes.

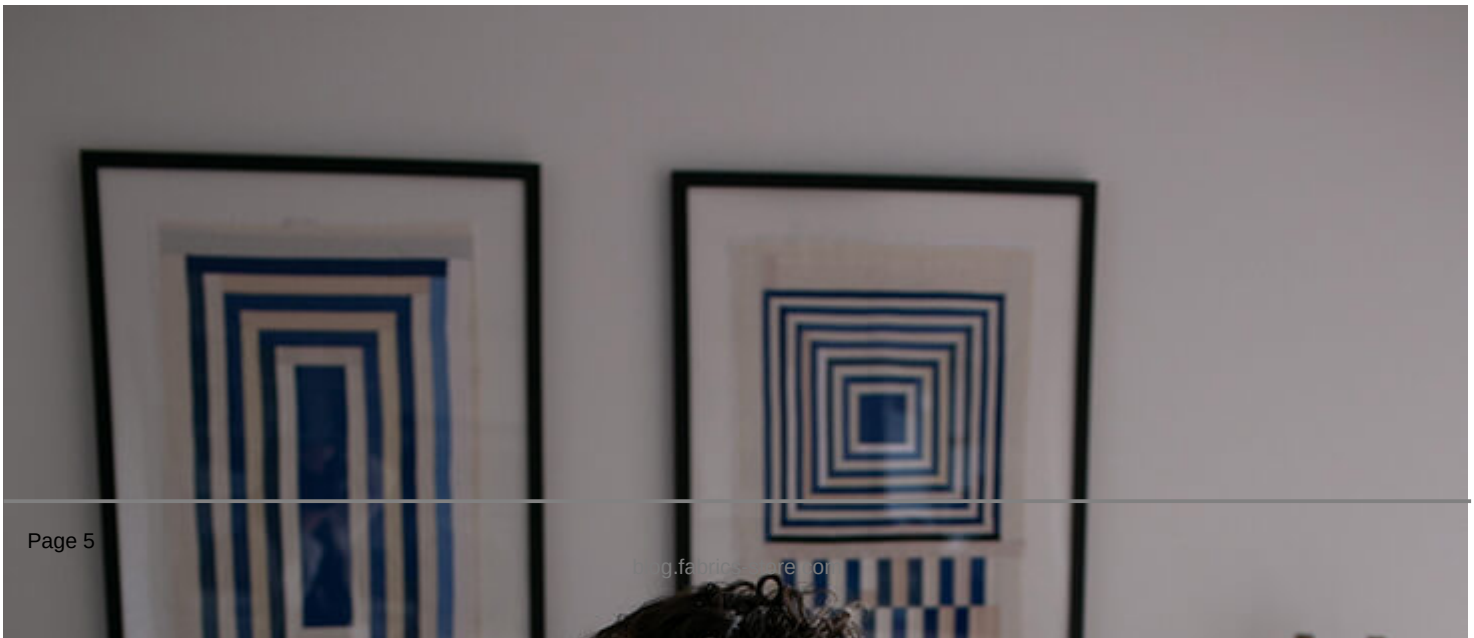
Now I look at plants in a completely different light. I just started scratching the surface of this last fall and Iâ??m looking forward to picking it back up once the weather allows me to work outside more.

What was the first thing you ever remember making on your own? Tell us about this memory.

When I was 6 or 7 someone gave me a craft book. It had a project to make cuff bracelets by wrapping embroidery thread around aluminum strips, double sided tape was involved.

My dad took me around to the hardware store and craft store to get all the supplies, which felt like a big deal because the craft store was all the way on the other side of town. Our town only had a population of 24k.

I probably tried to sell them after I made them. Iâ??ve been trying to sell the stuff I make from an early age! Scrunchies in middle school, beaded jewelry in jr. high, ceramics in high school, linoleum prints in college.



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Who are your muses and inspiration?

Iâ??d probably not be trying to sew my own clothes if it werenâ??t for some of the amazing sewists I follow on Instagram. Seeing these women try new things, share their successes, and admit to when they fail is very inspiring to me.

Do you have a community of crafters/ makers around you or do you find you are on your own?

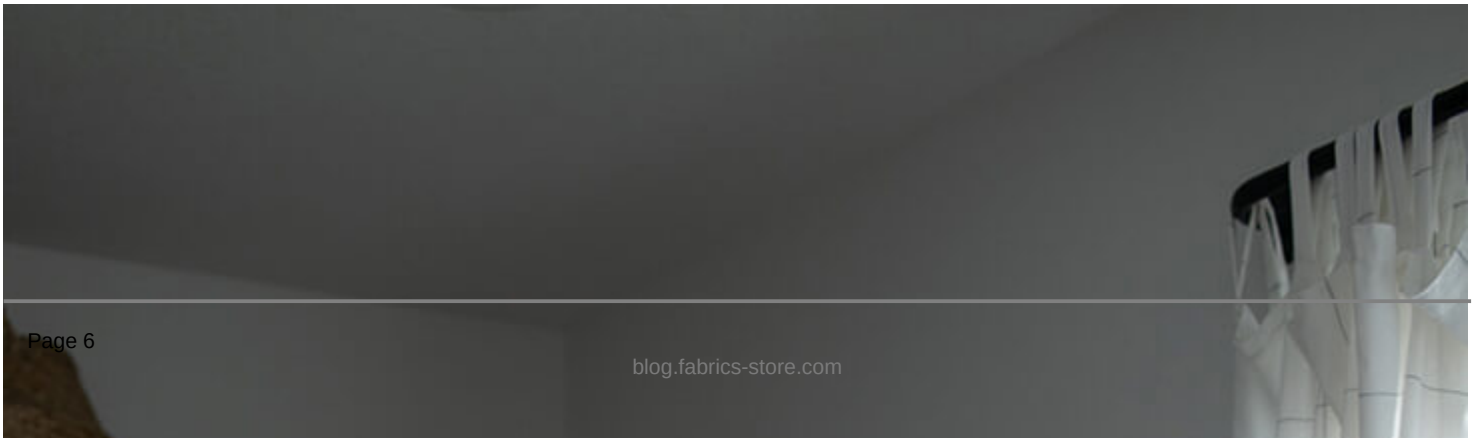
Yes, itâ??s a small community, but solid. I have a couple of close friends who are artists and weâ??re always there for each other to bounce ideas off of and encourage each other.

How important is it to make something with your hands?

Itâ??s vital to my sanity. Ha! I got my degree in graphic design. I did that for a couple years out of school, but creating on a screen just didnâ??t do it for me. Iâ??d find I was spending most of my time making the book or packaging I designedâ??it was the tactile aspect that I loved.

That realization led me to a job creating window and in-store displays at Anthropologie. I spent several years making a lot of different things out of a lot of different materials. And that gave me a greater sense of what I really loved creating with, namely, wood and textiles.

I donâ??t shy away from the tedious or receptive processes, itâ??s peaceful for me. And if my hands are creating I feel like it gives another layer of purpose to my life.



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What has been the most rewarding sewing project youâ??ve completed so far and why?

At the end of last year, I had the privilege of being invited to a quilt collaboration with Portland brand, MADRE. To save their table linens and bedding offcuts from landfill, they had the brilliant idea of having artists turn them into one-of-a-kind quilts.

It was my first time quilting with linen and it spoiled me. I love the weight and movement of linen and now cotton just canâ??t compare! I designed and created a quilt top and back for them and I love how it turned out. The quilt top was very much my style, structured and symmetrical but the backing was improvisational, which was a new process and I love the juxtaposition of them together. My quilt and several from other artists will be released this year.

What is more important to you â?? the process or the final product (ie your garment)?

Thatâ??s a tough question. Most of the process Iâ??m anxiously thinking, â??Gosh, I really hope this turns out.â?• I donâ??t make most things more than once, so what Iâ??m doing is usually new to me. Itâ??s a little stressful, a little exciting, and I enjoy the pressure it puts on me, especially if it all works out. But the satisfaction of the final product is hard to beat. I just get to relax, enjoy it, use it and when the opportunity comes up I get to say, â??I made it.â?•

What does success mean to you?
It means that Iâ??ve been able to use my gifts and passions to create something special, something that will last, and something that will be used. It doesnâ??t matter what Iâ??m creatingâ??a commissioned piece or lunch for my kidsâ??if I do it to the best of my abilities and with a joyful heart, thatâ??s a success. I canâ??t say I always make lunch with a joyful heart, but on the days that I do, Iâ??m sure my kids can tell ð??? Success!



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What have you chosen to make out of FS linen and why?

I made a jumpsuit by cobbling together a couple of patterns. The bodice is from FSâ??s Luna Dress pattern, and the pants are an altered version of the Arthur pants by Sew Liberated.

I was inspired to make a jumpsuit after seeing a RTW version that was similar, but so far outside of my budget. Iâ??m really happy with how it turned out and I think Iâ??ll be riffing off this idea for a while.

CATEGORY

1. COMMUNITY
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