

Curated By You: Theresa Whiting Makes a Linen Somerfield Coat from Elbe Textiles

Description



Theresa wears the Somerfield Coat made with FS Black linen

Could you tell us a bit about yourself and how you got into sewing?

I have a background in fine arts and consider myself an artist and maker. For work, Iâ??m a full-time project manager for a remote team of educators. I live with my husband and two cats, and weâ??re all in the process of relocating to New Orleans!

My mother introduced me to sewing. When I was young, she made many of my clothes and I would watch or assist her. She taught me the fundamentals and imparted an appreciation for clean, precise construction. Interestingly, I didnâ??t start making my own clothes until my 30s, though I did sew (and sell) tote bags, tea towels and waist aprons prior to that. Eventually, I discovered the Instagram sewing community and from there, indie patterns. Shirt No. 1 from 100 Acts of Sewing appeared on my feed, and I finally thought, *You can do this!*

Why do you sew?

I sew for many reasons which continue to evolve. One early motivator was obtaining the kinds of garments I admired but couldnâ??t afford. It was empowering to make a pair of sailor pants that Iâ??d pay hundreds for off the rack, from a $25 cut of canvas. I also have a knack for precision work and am compelled by the technical aspects of the craft. Nowadays, sewing not only affords me beautiful, quality garments, but is also an outlet for other creative pursuits like writing and photography.



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Where is home and how does it affect your creative practice?

The concept of home is less about geographical location and more about the space I share with my family and favorite things. A minimal setup with white walls and ample natural light is my preference. It facilitates productivity and is also helpful for photography.

Has your sewing practice changed your relationship to your body image and self-acceptance?

One outcome of sewing for myself is a close attunement to my measurements and proportions. I now think of the body more technically, as a series of shapes relating to each other and the clothes they interact with. I must also acknowledge that sewing is not only enjoyable, but a great labor. Since the resulting garments are highly valuable in terms of time and effort, gifting them to myself is certainly a form of self-acceptance and love.



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What are your seven favourite sewing patterns?

My most frequently made (and worn) patterns include the Persephone Pants and Pomona Pants by Anna Allen Clothing, the Coe Trouser by Daughter Judy Patterns, the Cynthia Blouse by Viki Sews, the Jenna Button-Down Shirt by Closet Core Patterns, the Wiksten Unfolding Jacket by Jenny Gordy, and the Lola Tank by Staystitch Pattern Co.

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

For the past few years, Iâ??ve mainly been connected to a really robust and supportive online community of makers. The experience has been positive, inspiring, and informative. Iâ??m investing more time and effort into sharing on my Instagram account, and itâ??s resulted in more one-on-one conversations. After my upcoming move, I hope to also develop more in-person connections with local makers, and maybe even organize a craft-related gathering.



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How important is it to make something with your hands?

Itâ??s crucial. Itâ??s a space in my life where interest and skill align. Itâ??s a necessary antidote to hours of computer work and cell phone use.

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

Iâ??ve always treasured a good, well-fitting pair of jeans. Last year, I made my first pairâ??complete with a coin pocket and hardware. I wanted to hang them on the wall like a painting, but decided to wash and wear them instead. Topstitching is also one of my favorite sewing techniques, soâ?¦

What is more important to you â?? the process or the final product (i.e., your garment)?

I value these equally. The process of constructing a garment requires a high level of concentration, which can be both challenging and meditative. I usually donâ??t listen to anything while I work, so I just exist with my own thoughts. Wearing the finished product is almost like wearing an experience. Itâ??s gratifying because thereâ??s so much beyond the aesthetic.



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What does success mean to you?

Success is knowing that Iâ??m spending my time in ways that align with who I authentically am, with my core needs: spending time with loved ones, practicing self-care, creating, and sharing with others. Itâ??s about getting out of my own way, embracing discomfort, and being committed to self reflection.

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

I love outerwear for layering and pulling looks together, but donâ??t prioritize sewing it because I live in a warmer climate. This project was the perfect excuse to finally make a lightweight coat that I can wear year-round. The Somerfield Coat from Elbe Textiles had been in my queue for ages, just waiting for the perfect black linen.

What is it like working with fabrics-store linen?

Iâ??ve made many projects with Fabrics-Store linen over the years and enjoy the variety of weights, finishes, and colors available. Most of my first garments were made with this linen because I find it versatile and easy to work with.

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