



Curated By You: Katie Kortman Makes Helen's Closet Yanta Overalls

Description



Katie Kortman in her studio

From her online presence, Katie Kortman exudes colour and energy filled with contagious positive enthusiasm. She also happens to be a mother of four (hats off!) and manages to regularly update her handmade wardrobe and teach art and sewing online. You can follow her creative journey either on [Instagram](#) or by following her [blog](#). Katie chose to use the vibrant, stunning FS ZENITH Softened 100% Linen to make [Helen's Closet Overalls](#).

Tell us a bit about yourself:

I am a sewist, artist, textile designer, and an aspiring dancing queen!!! I sew my whole wardrobe (rarely buying any clothes since 2018), and then I like to make dance videos in my handmade outfits! Recently I started designing fabric from artwork and I am really excited as I see my two loves of painting and sewing converge into textile designs that I can wear! I blog over at [Katiekortman.com](#) and I dance and live life over [@katiekortmanart](#) on Instagram

Why do you sew?

I sew as a form of self-expression, as a creative outlet, and as a way to be more mindful of my wardrobe and what I really want to wear (not just buying clothes because they're cheap/on sale/fit). I also sew as therapy/self-love /a reward at the end of each day with my 4 kids!! I love making clothes that are as fun, bright, and as crazy as my mind can imagine, and not being limited to what I can afford, or what the retailers have to offer.



Softened 100% Linen

What do you love most about having your own business?

I have the freedom to choose my hours, stay home with my kids, but also have my own thing where I feel like that person I was long ago before I became a mom. It has allowed me to connect with other creative people and have conversations about the same topics that excite me (sewing, art, fashion, instagram)!

Can you talk us through a failure or a setback in your business that you learned from or an experience that helped improve your business.

Every time I fail at something, or anytime I have felt like someone has ripped my idea off, it fuels me create/do something that much better. It lights a fire under my butt. In my current “business” (weird to call it that as I do so many different things!) I haven’t yet had any setbacks, but I’ve been learning to not say “yes” to every opportunity that comes my way. I always want to say yes, I want to help someone out, or I love what they have to offer, but I overbooked myself for 7 months straight and I’m finally seeing what life is like when I’m not crazy busy. And I like it.



Katie Kortman studio

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

I listen to podcasts and audiobooks! I like listening to podcasts so I can learn more about sewing, business, self-help, history, murder.... and myriad other topics! I love reading but I don't have time now that I sew in all my free time, so listening to audiobooks means I can do two things I love at once!



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

We are a military family so home is “wherever the navy sends us” as they say. Currently we’re in coastal Virginia, but we’ve also lived in Utah, Georgia, Florida, Connecticut, Bahrain (tiny island next to Saudi Arabia), and we’re hoping to live in Japan next! I think the biggest effect of all the moving is how it changes my studio space (trying to find where it will be in each new house) and subsequently new rhythms for my creative work. Where that space is located in my home influences when I can sew/paint/make, and when I can’t. I’ve also done different creative “jobs” (never full time since I stay home with my 4 kids) in each place we’ve lived because of different people, culture, space in my home and abilities to find babysitters!

If one place affected my overall aesthetic it would be South Florida, where I grew up. Color here is bright and bold and everywhere. It’s in the nature, the people and art everywhere!



Katie Kortman studio

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

“Outliers” was incredibly interesting and eye-opening. It explains how some people make it so big and why they are hugely successful. It isn't just because they're extra special—or more talented than someone else. Often it's because of a trifecta. The time (year/date/era) they were doing whatever they were doing, the place (in the world), and how much time they'd spent in that arena (10,000 hours makes you an expert!) are the deciding factors that make one person an outlier over another!

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

I remember making clothes for my barbies out of burlap and tape! I remember wanting to make clothes for them and those were the only tools I had to do so. Ha!



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Who are your muses and inspiration?

I don't often seek out inspiration for sewing or art projects but I do follow lots of people on Instagram that are inspiring and often draw ideas from subconsciously I'm sure! In art I always loved Robert Rauschenberg who's art DID influence mine for many years. In fashion I loved the bright, colorful Kate Spade and Kenzo ads from the early 2000's (I read a lot of magazines back then). I loved the avant-garde style of Alexander McQueen and I watched Project Runway from its inception which highly influenced my desire to sew creative garments.

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

I don't, but I did discover that [Tabitha Sewer](#) lived just an hour from me back in January, and we've been friends ever since! Everyone needs a creative person to do things with where they live! My BFF lives in San Diego (we met in Virginia the first time our husbands were stationed here) and when I met her we instantly clicked bc we both loved doing creative things, making, sewing etc and it was incredible to have someone to do that with!

What does success mean to you?

Doing something you are passionate about and love.



Softened 100% Linen

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

I had been eyeing the [Helen's Closet Yanta Overalls](#) and wanted to make them out of linen, so when this opportunity arose I jumped at the chance! I initially wanted to do [half yellow](#) and [half pink](#) but there wasn't enough pink to do that so you can see how I used the two colors instead. I chose a heavier [ZENITH Softened Linen](#) and I love how substantial they feel, and yet soft!

[FS ZENITH Softened 100% Linen comes in Middle and Heavy Weight](#)

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