



Curated By You: Syd Roper Makes A Linen Asymmetrical Wrap-Style Padded Gambeson

Description



Asymmetrical Wrap-Style Padded Gambeson made with FS AUBURN

Heavyweight Fabric

Tell us a bit about yourself and how you have become a costumer.

As a kid, I always loved to dress up: Halloween, Renaissance festivals, cosplay...I went to NYC Comic-Con 8 years in a row and always was sketching historical clothing, but finally, my partner bought me a sewing machine for Christmas 2018 and that was that.

Why do you sew? And more specifically why do you sew period clothing?

I sew because I love watching garments come together, and all the little processes that go into them, especially with historical clothes. I think I tend to be more excited by fantasy and historically inspired clothing because I love stories and history and creating characters, as well as making myself something I couldn't necessarily buy (or doesn't exist) off the rack.



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Do you think people approach clothes differently now than they did 2+ centuries ago, given that all of the sewing was done by hand and fine fabric was a luxury of the rich?

They absolutely do. Even among the rich, there was very little waste: once your clothes were no longer in the fashionable shape, you'd simply take them apart and put them back together in the newer style, and extant examples are full of piecing and patching and using every scrap of fabric. I've learned a lot from researching historical clothes which has really helped how I think about my own contemporary wardrobe.

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

If I'm being honest? It was probably the library scene from Beauty and the Beast. The library launched a thousand creative impulses.

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

Right now home is my parent's home in Connecticut, which was a pandemic-related decision that has lasted a lot longer than we anticipated (I'm sure that's a relatable sentiment). It means I'm a bit confined in workspace and have very few areas to take good, well-lit pictures in, but I'm close to a lot of beautiful historical areas and the ocean, which is a constant source of inspiration.



Heavyweight Fabric

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

I read a book called *The Eighth Girl* that I believe came out this year, about a young woman with DID (dissociative identity disorder) that was written by a psychotherapist, and I really liked it. It was compassionate and sharp and it made me think about the different pieces of my own identity and the ways in which they can work together or against each other sometimes.

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

As a kid I made things constantly: boats for the creek, bows and arrows, complex floor plans for my future mansion... but my pride and joy was a thing we called *The Beast* that I made during a power outage for my neighborhood friends and I. It was a kid's folding beach chair attached to a skateboard with a wooden frame that created "wings" on it for balance and a smaller crosspiece for your feet, and we would pull up to the top of our street's hill with a rope and ride all the way down like a luge. I put metal c-clamps on the wings so when you leaned to turn, it would skitter along the pavement. As ramshackle as it sounds it held up like a champ and we made several design improvements to it over the years before we outgrew it.

Who are your muses and inspiration?

I'm inspired constantly by historical paintings and portraiture, whether it be of a woman in a beautiful gown or a stormy landscape, and classical mythology. I'm interested in architecture as well, and love being reminded how old the world really is compared to me.



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

I absolutely have a community now, but it wasn't always that way. Instagram, for all its faults, has introduced me to several people I'm now lucky enough to call close friends, and I feel very supported.

How important is it to make something with your hands?

Crucial. It's part of my hierarchy of needs, and my brain starts to get itchy when I haven't been able to do it in a while. I'm refinishing two mid-century dining chairs in my garage right now.

What does success mean to you?

It may sound cliché, but my own happiness. I sew to challenge myself, occupy my hands, and make beautiful things to surround myself with, and I feel most successful when those aspects come together.



FS AUBURN Heavyweight Linen

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

I'm making an open front linen surcoat to wear over my chainmail. I first got introduced to FS (and costume sewing, really) through Youtuber Morgan Donner's medieval clothing tutorials, so it felt right that I should make

something fantastical and classic. Plus I ordered some custom armor that should be here in the next month or two, and having watched the new season of The Witcher I'm very ready for some knight action. The shape I'm going for is inspired by a garment the character Filavandrel wears in the show, actually.

The garment I made is an asymmetrical wrap-style padded gambeson I self-drafted to wear under the new Ukrainian steel breastplate and gorget I have. It is one layer of [FS AUBURN Heavyweight Linen](#), two layers of cotton quilt batting, and a lining layer of batik cotton quilted together. I was inspired by medieval gambesons but wanted to go for something custom and asymmetrical, so I made a few mockups and sketched out the quilting pattern myself. It ended up a little bit 1970's sci-fi too, which I don't mind at all.

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