



Curated By You: Fena Tandriarto Hacks the Saguaro top Into A Dress In Midweight Linen

Description



Midweight Linen

1. Tell us a bit about yourself and what you do.

Hello! I'm Fena and I'm currently residing in Northern California with my wonderful husband. I am a Makerspace teacher for 5th through 8th graders, which means I teach kids with 3D printers, sewing machines, and 5 types of scissors. It's my dream job and I'm so lucky to expose my students to making at their age.

2. Why do you sew?

I started to teach myself to sew at around age 10, purely out of curiosity. My curiosity progressed to a hobby and transformed into a need. I started to sew as a job to put myself through college. After 6 years, I despised sewing. I didn't touch my machine for another 4 years. It wasn't until mid-2021 that I found myself loving to sew again. I found my joy to create.

And now, I sew because it is joyful — a puzzle to solve in the making and the exhilarating feeling when the garment is finished. I sew because it gives me joy—the texture of the fabric, the hum of the machine, and the warmth from the iron emanating through the linen. I protect this joy fiercely because it is the only way I will continue to sew.

Moreover, I sew for the sustainability aspect of the craft. Fashion is the second largest polluting sector and we actually have a way to enact tangible change. While making your own clothes might seem extreme to others, I find it to be my small, personal way to be a good ancestor.

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

I might be a minority in this preference, but I actually prefer working in silence. I love hearing the hum of my machine and it is the time I get to hear my thoughts. I sometimes get some of my best ideas while sewing silently.



Fena wears hacked Saguaro top as a dress made with FS Spice All Purpose Midweight Linen

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

I remember visiting a national garden in Indonesia and seeing giant lilies, whose diameters triple my 5 year old height (or it seemed like it). I was enthralled by its rich colors and grandiosity of its being. That lily might have been my first memory of having my breath taken away.

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

Home is anywhere that smells welcoming and familiar. My childhood home

evokes memories of warmth and good food. My current home smells of rest and safety. Even the shirt of a loved one feels like home.

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

I am slowly gaining a small collection of cookbooks and one that has inspired me is Coconut & Sambal by Lara Lee. The author is also Indonesian, but grew up in predominantly white settings. She fuses rich Indonesian foods with a modern flair, using an explosion of colorful photographs. The book itself is mesmerizing to peruse through. You can judge a cookbook on how good it is based on how it lures you to create its recipes. This is a cookbook that does just that.

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

I remember being upset at my mom because she was throwing away the fabric covers off her pads! I ended up saving them to create my own "wallet". This was when I was around 8 so I had no idea what periods were yet! It wasn't until I was 12 when I realized how silly I must've sounded to my mom.

8. Who are your muses and inspiration?

I am constantly inspired by my middle school students. I love how their brains are wired to think of the wackiest ideas, which to them, make complete sense. They keep me on my toes and humble me daily. I am a wittier and more patient person because of them.

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

I am so thankful to have a good group of sewing friends in the area! We met through social media and are continuing to support each other offline. We have similar sewing philosophies and styles, something so special to share for a group of former strangers.



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10. How important is it to make something with your hands?

I've always had a penchant for creating with my hands. It is a way for me to process my thinking and make my thoughts tangible. Making with my hands is as imperative as any of my senses to add depth to my life.

11. What has been the most rewarding sewing project you've completed so far and why?

Have you ever fixed a stuffed animal for a child? Have they come to you broken-hearted and distraught, but leave you ecstatic? I love being able to

use my talents to help others find a little more joy! Most teachers will refer their younger students to me if a stuffed animal or a beloved garment becomes unraveled. And every single time I fix an animal or a worn-out hoodie for another, I find not many other things as rewarding. What a joy it is to call your hobby a little “superpower”!

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

In a gut reaction answer, the final product. But enjoying and finding meaning in the process is currently an area of growth for me. From French seams to ironing to the length of stitches, I’m finding that the details really do matter.

13. What does success mean to you?

The meaning of success has changed for me as I grow and mature; my attempt at a “definition” is viewed through my current age, circumstances, and life experiences. Success, for me right now, is living out your life’s purpose in a way that helps you and others thrive to their better selves. I know that’s cerebral and theoretical, but really, it’s the truth. If I can look back at my life and see that I have honored others’ opportunities to thrive while living out my life’s purpose, I know I’ve succeeded. I hope this thought resonates with you too.

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

I hacked the Saguaro top into a dress. I wanted a dress I could wear to teach, to church, and out with friends, which are the three criteria I use to make other garments. It’s a tough set of criteria, but it helps me whittle down my closet. I love the neckline, puff sleeves, and adjustable waist to accommodate various eating patterns (yum!).

CATEGORY

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