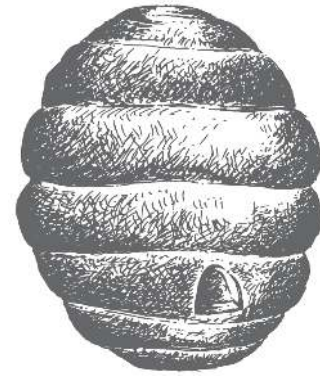


JANUARY 31ST,
2017

NEWS FROM THE HIVE



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SLOW FASHION, HIGH QUALITY: A YEAR OF INTENTION



Without fail, January is a time to think about fresh beginnings. New year, new ideas, new energy. And though this email lands on the last day of the month, we've been spending January thinking about what knitting means in our lives.

A few weeks ago, there was a movie screening at the Old Art Building in Leland followed by a panel discussion, in which Liz and other local artists outlined some of the facts--and peril--of fast fashion. As our society continues to glorify "busy-ness," we become more demanding of instant gratification -- *constant information at our fingertips, speed-of-light technology,*

Amazon Prime shipping--and it often feels like we are fumbling to find what's really

important. We're coming up short, feeding our bodies empty foods, creating surface relationships on social media--and filling our closets with cheap clothes. We have an entire culture that's built on fast fashion--clothing companies come out with new styles weekly, made as cheaply as possible, meant to keep us buying more and more, with little to no regard for quality. It's our job--in the eyes of the retailer--to consume. To buy as much as possible. And to keep wanting more.

As purveyors of yarn, our livelihood depends on customers purchasing what we have to sell--that concept is not lost on us. *However.* Over the years, we have honed our selection to include yarns and tools that fit a little different model than one of a traditional yarn shop. Our focus is on thoughtful companies who add their own stories to our little spot in the world. We're selective about brands we carry at Wool & Honey, giving center stage to companies that are based in the United States, as well as Michigan and even Leelanau County, whenever possible. Companies that do their best to practice sustainable, low impact production methods. Companies that support women, both in production and at the management level. Companies that are interested in bridging the gap between traditional craft and modern fashion.



The faster and more stressful life gets, we find ourselves gravitating towards things that last, things that matter, things that slow us down. It's part of what makes knitting so appealing--and why we embrace Knitting As Lifestyle. It's not something we do, but who we are. As the worldly distractions fall silent with every growing stitch, we realize we want less, but with a caveat--we want the really good stuff.

Insert the capsule wardrobe.



There are so many reasons to cultivate a capsule wardrobe, specifically one that's handmade. Ethical, economical, environmental, your wardrobe is deeply personal--it's all about you. (You decide why you pick the items in your closet.) It's pretty clear that you don't need 28 pairs of shoes (you probably don't wear half of them!) but instead you find you'd rather have five pairs of shoes that are well-made--and that make you feel like a queen. A really amazing pair of jeans. The ubiquitous Little Black Dress.

Of course, quality oftentimes brings a higher price tag, and for good reason.

Quality clothing purchased from ethical, fair-trade companies (**Patagonia, Amour Vert, Zady**) is made by paying employees fair wages, sourcing low-impact materials and using high quality, natural materials--things we can all agree are worth paying for. Yes, a hand knit sweater for an average woman can range from \$65-\$350 (depending on the fiber content, of course,) but between the time that it takes to knit the sweater--perhaps upwards of 50 hours--and taking good care of your piece (properly washing and mending it,) in theory, you'll have it in your wardrobe for years. If you were to break that cost down, a \$150 sweater is shockingly cheap and arguably money well-spent.

But what about the things I own that aren't high quality?

What about the things I bought on the cheap? Before you start feeling guilty for everything that you own that isn't traceable to a specific cotton field in Georgia, remember that it's not about erasing the past, but being mindful going forward. Use what you *do* have. Mend your jeans with sashiko embroidery. Invest in a de-fuzzer for sweater pills. Learn how to darn socks. Have a sweater made from yarn you love but you never wear because it's too trendy/not your style/doesn't fit?



Rip it out. Knit it into something you know you'll love and actually wear. (And think about how much mileage you're getting out of a sweater you've knit twice!) It's not about the size or diversity of your wardrobe, it's about surrounding yourself with beautiful, functional clothing that makes you feel good for all kinds of reasons.



Okay, we know what you're thinking:

"What if I'm not a sweater knitter?"

"I don't want to knit sweaters."

"I don't have the time/patience/money to knit a sweater."

"I'm scared to knit sweaters--how do I know they'll fit?"

"What about shawls? Socks? Gift knitting?"

So you're not a sweater knitter--that's okay! We've always been a shop that focuses on small projects and kits--some things never change. We will never stop featuring (and knitting!) shawls or mittens

or socks; in fact, we think that's the best way to spice up a wardrobe full of classics--adding a speckled shawl this season, a pair of funky, rainbow socks, whipping up a slouchy hat that's in fashion right now.

However, as the year goes on (and the years to follow,) we'll be encouraging you to lean

heavily on the classics--yarns and patterns--that help to flesh out a wardrobe you'll keep for years. We'll start with a Knit-A-Long (more on that later) and a set of tools we think you'll find helpful in your knitting toolbox.

Reading Materials

We've compiled a short list of articles and blog posts that we think might inspire your handmade wardrobe. Some of these articles are written for hand-sewn wardrobes, but we think they translate well to knitting, too. (And many of you happen to do both, so we thought you might appreciate the crossover references.) You'll see that making hand-sewn garments is a surprising affordable way to add classic modern items to your closet.



<http://www.un-fancy.com/capsule-experiment/>

<http://www.manrepeller.com/2015/07/fast-fashion-shopping.html>

<http://www.sewmamasew.com/2014/12/sewing-resolutions-10-tips-for-transitioning-to-a-mostly-handmade-wardrobe/>

<https://www.pastemagazine.com/articles/2016/07/made-to-keep-the-slow-fashion-movement.html>

<https://www.pri.org/stories/2016-04-04/slow-fashion-designers-tout-their-wares-better-planet>

<https://blog.colettehq.com/wardrobe-architect>

And quite possibly the most inspiring link of all:

<http://fringeassociation.com/2016/09/14/slow-fashion-october-2016/>

Karen Templer is the owner of [Fringe Supply Co.](#), a company built on superlative tools for knitters, the genius behind the [Fringe Association blog](#) and Slow Fashion October, and a driving force for transparency and sustainability in the knitting industry. Karen is meticulous in her planning, a stickler for minute detail and her fashion sense is both timeless and modern. There are TONS of links throughout the entire Fringe Association blog--we'd suggest putting a kettle on and settling down for a major click-fest; Fringe Association should be required reading for everyone.

On Instagram, search hashtags [#slowfashionoctober](#) and [#memademay](#) for thousands of inspiring posts (with tons of juicy details, of course!) by women all over the world who've

committed--at least in part--to creating a handmade wardrobe of sustainable classics.



We encourage you to rent **The True Cost**, which is available on iTunes, Amazon and Netflix, if you missed the screening earlier this month. It's a story about clothing. It's about the clothes we wear, the people who make them, and the impact the industry is having on our world. It's a groundbreaking documentary film that pulls back the curtain on the untold story and asks us to consider, who really pays the price for our clothing? **The True Cost** is an unprecedented project that invites us on an eye opening journey around the world and into the lives of the many people and places behind our clothes.

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And of course, we would be entirely remiss if we didn't mention how important it is to take care of YOU.

There is real tension right now across the globe for reasons we are implicitly aware. In fact, it's one of the major reasons we're feeling such urgency to strip life down to the simple, classic, comforting basics. Please, please, please--if you only read one article we suggest, it's **this one**: on how to take care of yourself.

<http://theartofsimple.net/politicalselfcare/>

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Stay tuned for another newsletter at the end of week--we're so excited to begin this leg of our handmade journey with you!

100% PURE MICHIGAN: **FRESH WATER FIBER**



We are thrilled to introduce **a new yarn** at Wool & Honey, **a yarn** made from the most luxurious fiber grown in Michigan-- blend of 50% white alpaca and 50% merino. The animals were lovingly raised on small farms throughout Michigan, including:

*Eagle Ledge Farm, Grand Ledge
Fredenberg Farm, Munith
Happy Goat Lucky Ewe, Mason*

*Harris Farm, South Lyon
Miller's Llama Land, Potterville
Tillers International, Scotts
Via Verde Farm, Byron Center
Maplewood Farm, Charlevoix
Zodiac Ranch, Milford*

This yarn is made by supporting Michigan fiber farmers and ensures the growers receive fair market value for their raw fiber. Stonehedge Fiber Mill in East Jordan, Michigan processed this fiber. Stonehedge is famous for Shepherd's wool yarn, which is found in hundreds of shops around the world. **Fresh Water Fiber Yarn** was processed in the same exquisite manner as the famous Shepherd's Wool.



We can envision this yarn knit into a traditional Aran sweater (a wardrobe staple!) but **Fresh Water Fiber** would lend itself to a base yarn for hand-dyeing--maybe now's the time to use some of those dye recipes you have in your Pinterest board! Or perhaps you could make a trade with your favorite local dyer who would add a splash of color on this yarn for you . . . just a thought!

Find our **Fresh Water Fiber** yarn **HERE**.



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*Wool & Honey is a bricks-and-mortar yarn shop located in Cedar, MI,
just 15 minutes west of Traverse City,
smack dab in the middle of The Most Beautiful Place in America.*

*We love cherries, wine, beautiful beaches and you guessed it—yarn.
Can't stop in to see us? We ship worldwide every day.*

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