



DONATE

VOLUNTEER

HOME BLOG EVENTS DOWNTOWN TOUR DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DIRECTORY

GRANTS MEDIA ABOUT

< Previous Next >



Shop Pittsboro: New Karma For Old Threads

by Francis DiNardo



Andrea Batsche

Does your closet contain clothes that no longer fit but you can't bear to discard them because they're associated with happy memories? Are you hanging onto clothing items that once belonged to a love one who is no longer here?

A visit to New Karma for Old Threads should be in your future.

Andrea Batsche and Jennifer "Jen" Young are the proprietors of New Karma for Old Threads. The shop is located in the Blair Hotel Buidling at 17 Hillsboro Street, in the northwest corner of the Pittsboro traffic circle. Andrea and Jen have developed creative ways to repurpose old clothes and fabric remnants into new, usable items of clothing or decoration. They like

to say that they created an Emporium Of Creativity.

I spend a lot of time sitting in New Karma for Old Threads bothering Andrea and Jen because they're not fast enough to lock the door when they see me coming and they're too polite to remove me from the extra chair that they keep at the back of the store. Consequently, I've fallen in love with their business and I'm fascinated by their creative energy. All you have to do is walk into that shop and ask a few questions about items hanging from the racks before you realize how extraordinarily talented they are.

Andrea calls her process "Memory Design". It works like this: someone brings in clothing owned by a loved one to have it repurposed and transformed into a practical and useable keepsake.

Andrea points out a small table lamp which is an example of Memory Design. A gentleman brought in several neckties that were important to him but that he no longer wore. Andrea worked her magic by constructing a lampshade so that he could continue enjoying the ties in a unique way.

“Memory Design’ first started when my friend Jean saw my work at [The Joyful Jewel](#). I was the featured artist in a show there and all my stuff sold out. After the show, she told me how much she loved my work.” Jean told Andrea that she had some ties that once belonged to her father and wondered if Andrea could turn them into something useful. It turns out that ‘some ties’ was actually dozens of ties. “So, I made her a long dress with a velvet bodice and a skirt made out of the ties, which were all Christmas ties. We called it the Family Ties dress.”



A table lamp with a shade made from neck ties.

Another of Andrea’s creative efforts was a collaboration with local artist [Onicas Gaddis](#). Andrea made a coat from lightweight canvas onto which Onicas painted one of his abstract designs — truly an example of ‘wearable art’.



Andrea’s friend Jean wearing her dress made from ‘Family Ties’.

“Recycling is really important to me,” Andrea explained. “I grew up in the Green Mountains of Vermont and recycling was part of every day life. We didn’t even call it ‘recycling’ — it was just what we did.” She carried that experience into her later life when her interest in sewing was rekindled. “I saw so much waste and decided to transform old T-shirts into something useful by making them into little bags and skirts and head bands. When I started working again with my sewing machine, I realized that I really needed to sew more. I was in a very stressful job at that time and sewing gave me a sort of meditative calm. I discovered that I really liked the warmth that comes off the machine and it’s little hum and the very slight smell of the fabric as you push it through the machine. It was a very nurturing and healing experience for me.”

It didn’t take long before Andrea decided to market her ideas and skills full time. She shared a cooperative retail space with a group of six other women at The Joyful Jewel. Following the successful show there, she moved to the current shop in fall of

2015. Jen joined her shortly thereafter and "...has a lot of experience sewing leather goods and teepees.

The shop evolved and started selling gently used vintage clothing when Andrea couldn't use the clothing fast enough for her work. Her daughter suggested that she put some of it on the racks and sell it as is. If it doesn't sell, Andrea transforms it into something else.

Andrea is rightfully proud of her success and grateful for the support of the Pittsboro community. "I did all of this by the seat of my pants, I didn't plan for it to turn out to be this beautiful thing. It really blossomed. I appreciate this town so much and this was a very safe space for me to do this. I just followed what I wanted to do and had the support of my family and friends. And I'm just dumbfounded by that support, I can't even put it into words. I feel fortunate in so many ways!"



An original collaboration between Andrea and local artist Onicas Gaddis.

If you have clothes with strong sentimental attachments, Andrea and Jen are the people to see at New Karma for Old Threads.

New Karma for Old Threads

(Upcycled, handmade, vintage and resale)

ADDRESS : 17 Hillsboro Street Pittsboro, NC 27312

located in Studio 17 next door to [Pittsboro Toys](#).

HOURS – Monday : By appointment only

Tuesday : Closed

Wednesday-Friday : 11-6pm

Saturday : 11-4pm

First Sunday : 12Noon-4pm

TEL : 919.545.4552

EMAIL : newkarma.oldthreads@gmail.com

June 18th, 2018

Share This

