

Q&A with STEPHANIE MARANO

Cut from a literary cloth

Fiction & fashion collide in jackets

BY MELISSA KRAVITZ
Special to amNewYork

Literature is in style for one Williamsburg designer.

Stephanie Marano melds fiction with fashion with her customized, handmade letter jackets.

Characters, themes and plots are portrayed by pins, patches, quotes, crests and other adornments that tell a fictional story via street style-inspired couture.

amNewYork chatted with Marano, 31, about her new business, God Save the Mis-anthropes.

Where did the idea for your book jackets come from?

I had gone to see a screening of Stanley Kubrick's "Lolita" with a friend, and we happened to win a T-shirt. We decided that we would cut it up and split it — I took the title script. I have always been into retro youth culture and so the "Lolita" jacket organically evolved.

Can you accommodate all of the requests?

I'm working on patches



Designer Stephanie Marano sports her "Lolita" jacket.

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that should be up for sale by the end of the month. And I have two jackets officially lined up. I have one based on "The Golden Compass" series. The jackets take seven to nine months to make, so that should be done in November. Then I'll have a "Great Gatsby" one coming up.

How do you decide what elements go on a jacket?

It starts with me reading or rereading the book, just to get ideas in my head and take notes. After reading the text, I listen to the audiobooks while doing the designing process to keep everything flowing in my mind and see if anything

else jumps out at me. I'll research the motifs that stand out and go from there. I like to work with vintage items and deconstruct them. I have a pretty broad catalog of vintage in my home and I also shop vintage and contemporary textiles or trends that lend themselves. I'll go vintage with pins and things that I source.

How do you curate the design?

The construction process is one of my favorite parts. The patch design is the most difficult — that's where my hidden design details are centered. I spend weeks on the development of those, getting thread colors and embroidery correct. I stay up late hours and I know when a jacket is done as soon as I'm comfortable hand-sewing that last stitch in the lining.

What other books do you want to make into jackets?

I would absolutely love to do one based on "The Catcher in the Rye" — it was the first novel that got me into reading. [It] was really relatable. I'd also love to do "The Bell Jar;" I'd love to do something in PVC.



The 'Secret' details

Marano's jackets are like "a treasure hunt." But she broke down a few details for us in her ode to "The Secret History," Donna Tartt's murder-filled tale of six classics students.

1. FABRIC

The faux astrakhan is a reference to an astrakhan coat worn by Camilla and the lyric "We are little black sheep who have gone astray," sung by Francis.

2. PINS

A pin of Persephone nods to a comment Richard makes on Henry and Camilla's relationship. It's joined by a racket and playing cards. "Games are a common motif in literature and there's no shortage of them here," she says.

3. CHEVRON

The three bars are a nod to Bunny, a third-year student who is killed after blackmailing the group for a murder.

4. RIGHT SLEEVE PATCH

"The symbol of the raven is used throughout the novel," says Marano. "They are a notable bad omen." She pulled from a scene for this patch.

5. PSI PATCH

"Tulips are a prominent symbol," Marano says. The tulip-like Greek letter "was a necessary accent."

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