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The Cutting (& Stitching) Edge – Tamar Stone’s Dress vs Woman

by Mr X on 17 June 2010

THE CUTTING (& STITCHING) EDGE

We featured the astonishing Corset Books of Tamar Stone in an [Edge post](#) some time ago, and they are truly astounding works. It’s a real pleasure to be able to share her latest piece with you, entitled Dress vs Woman.



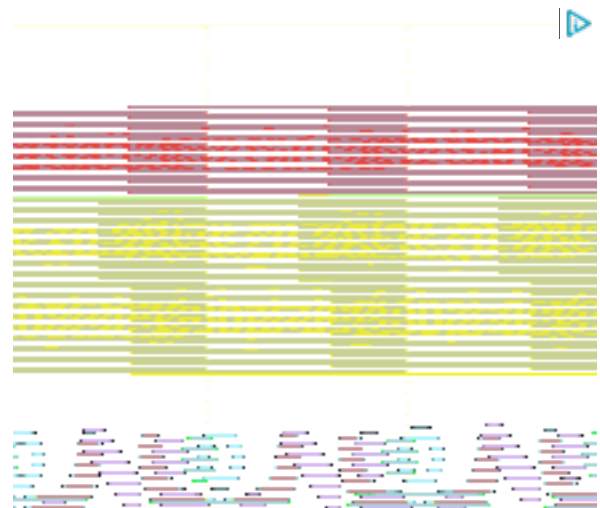
This book is inspired by a series of pamphlets from the McDowell Drafting Machine Company^Â from the turn of the century and also by a photograph of a studio portrait of Tamar’s Aunt Cecille^{â€™}s grandmother, ^ÂCecille Kleinman.



Tamar explains: *“This piece explores the messages given to women at the time concerning their clothing. McDowell^{â€™}s slogan was, ^Â“To-day, unless a lady^{â€™}s dress is properly shaped and well made, all the beauty that nature may have bestowed on the figure, or art given, the fabric covering it is considered lost; and the pleasure she might have given those surrounding her is thrown away.â€*



“From an etiquette book from that time, “When a young woman is given to extravagant displays in dress, it is but publishing to the world, her own consciousness of a want of other attractions of a more substantial nature. It is but virtually saying, “I seek to execute attention by my dress, because I have no other good quality by which I can secure attention.” Of course, not everyone was ready to subscribe to those dictates of fashion, “That a majority of women do not wish for any important change in their social and civil condition merely proves that they are unreflecting slaves of custom—they are totally unconscious of what they have lost by the systematic stifling of their souls.”



Handwritten text on the top edge of the page, including names like "Mrs. T. Stone" and "Mrs. T. Stone" and phrases like "Name, Mrs. T. Stone", "Residence, ...", "When to be finished, ...", "Name, Mrs. T. Stone", "Residence, ...", "When to be finished, ...".

Every Woman Should Know How To Make a Dress

1. Because it is more profitable an accomplishment than painting or music.
2. Because a woman can have two dresses for the cost of one.
3. Because any member of the family can make dresses for the entire family.



Keeps the symmetry of your figure, your shoulders erect, dress good fitting, back and spine strong.
Helps your figure, your dressmaker, your bodily health, your natural charm, your appearance in the eyes of everybody.

This book is remarkable on many levels. From a technical perspective, there is the initial skill in turning a corset into a book, which is then enhanced by the smaller fabric volumes contained within, each of which combines print, stitch and other techniques to amazing effect.



The social and historical commentary then seals the deal, creating a piece of art that presents you with a historical observation that you can touch and explore and consider. These books are simply wonderful.

From an early age "girl's" knowledge
must be sought and gained with
a twofold object in view:

As a Future Woman,
she receives that she may give.

Then let every girl learn to think of
herself as of a future
Teacher
of the Beautiful and Useful.



It is at the very
Summit of Girlish Ambition
that the guiding hand *should be clasped*
which is to lead her into
the secluded *but happy*
Valley of Domestic Life.
She must be percularly unfortunate
if it is not offered:

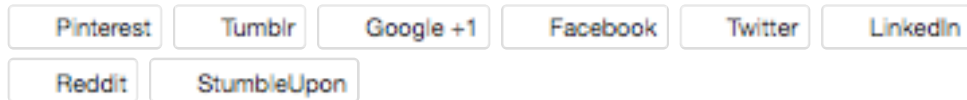
For more pictures and information on this book, and the rest of Tamar’s fantastic works, visit her website.

“”””””

The Cutting (& Stitching) Edge is brought to you in association with [Embroidery As Art](#), the inspirational stitched art blog from the legendary Jenny Hart.



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[Average Joe June 17, 2010 at 7:37 pm](#)

I love how one piece can say so much about the art form that is dress making, and yet also say so much about how modesty has shaped the female part of the art form. The tale of how we got from nothing but the head and hands being visible, to the point where we can now tell what kind of panties a woman prefers has always interested me.

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