

Fashion at the Fest

Nestled among the jewelry, pottery and furniture at the Jazz Fest's craft booths are one-of-a-kind clothes to tempt fashionistas of all stripes.

— Susan Langenhennig, fashion writer



Humidor handbags

Nancy Alexander culls through flea markets, thrift stores and tag sales to find the pretty ephemera and vintage illustrations she incorporates into her bright, Blue Maya bags. The paper, ribbon and vinyl purses have a Frida Kahlo aesthetic, with collages of birds and saints and old cigar logos. A former Montessori school teacher, Alexander lived in New Orleans for 29 years. A post-Katrina move to Massachusetts prompted her to turn her bag-making hobby into a business. This will be her third year at Jazz Fest.

Prices range from \$25 to \$150. Contemporary Crafts, Tent F



It's a wrap

We should wish for weather cool enough to necessitate wrapping one of Susan Otterson's sweaters around our shoulders. The Janesville, Wis., designer, who returns for her third year in Contemporary Crafts, takes the age-old art of knitting and gives it a contemporary spin with plaiting and ribbing techniques. Her sweaters, wraps and jackets are made from cottons, silks, rayons and merino wool, and some are perfectly weighted for tossing on in those over-air-conditioned restaurants and workplaces.

Prices range from \$30 to \$700. Contemporary Crafts.

Penny for your thoughts

Lorna Leedy doesn't squander her money, she squashes it. The former New Orleans resident, now living in the artsy West Texas town of Marfa, works near the railroad tracks. As trains approach, she puts pennies on the rails. Flung onto the gravel after they're squashed, she retrieves the misshapen discs and sews them onto shirts, like a poor man's paillettes. The gypsy-ish pieces are a new part of her Fancy Pony Land designs. For her fourth year at Jazz Fest, Leedy also will bring back her "bandage" dresses crafted from strips of cloth and her popular Western snap shirts made from vintage reproduction fabrics.

Prices range from \$80 to \$350. Contemporary Crafts, Tent H

