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## Arts Group Creates 'Power Suits' to Reflect Shoppers' Hopes and Dreams



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MIDTOWN — During Fashion Week (<http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/tags/fashion-week>), a Garment District (<http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/manhattan/midtown-theater-district>) pop-up boutique and art performance is helping city dwellers wear their hearts on their sleeves .

From last Friday through this Thursday, PowerSuits Boutique ([http://www.chashama.org/event/Power\\_Suit\\_Boutique](http://www.chashama.org/event/Power_Suit_Boutique)) on West 37th Street is holding 30-minute "consultations" with prospective shoppers — then creating custom-made jackets, dresses, shirts, pocket-squares and more, each based on the person's aspirations, fears, loves and goals.

"It really is an opportunity for people to talk about their biggest dreams that they haven't fulfilled, or that they maybe have fulfilled but want to get to the next level," said artist Aliya Bonar, 26, one of the two women behind the project. "Me and my sewing team will create a garment or an object that reflects that conversation for them to wear, and to have those ideas be present with them."

Bonar, designer Lindsey McCord, 21, and a four-person sewing team, together using a storefront owned by the Chashama (<http://www.chashama.org/>) arts group, plan to make garments for as many as 20 visitors. Each item will range from \$30 to \$200.

"We're going to be building from scratch mostly, and that's actually going to be a big part of the boutique itself, a display of all our materials," Bonar said. "It's going to be pretty utilitarian."

Bonar and McCord finished setting up the space Friday. Sitting in white plastic chairs near the boutique's front window, with boxes of yarn and thread stacked high behind them, they went through their first consultation with Bonar's boyfriend, Eric Petersen, a graduate student studying urban affairs at Hunter College (<http://hunter.edu>).

For roughly 20 minutes, he discussed how he enjoys leading bike tours, what he hopes to achieve after graduating Hunter, and what he sees as his "roadblocks" or would consider an "anti-powersuit."

"Getting power over to other people in a productive way, this is what I want to do right now," Petersen, 26, said. "But it might change tomorrow. I lose focus really easily. There's always a voice in my head going, 'This is stupid, why are you here?'"

Later, McCord and Bonar brainstormed what they felt his power suit might look like.

"The word I pulled from that was, 'refocused,' so I thought 'small' immediately," McCord said, getting nods from Bonar. "At first, I was thinking about a biking shirt, but that's something present, not your goal."

Bonar added, "Maybe something that goes in your wallet, or the inside of your shoe."

"The inside of the tongue of the shoe," McCord suggested.

Petersen smiled through the pair's review.

"I feel invigorated," he said later. "It's cool when you say something, when you vocalize it — it's an opportunity to create yourself."

Ultimately, Bonar and McCord presented him with a pair of intricately embroidered gray patches to wear on top of the laces on his shoes.

"It was his desire to have something that he could have with him at all different times, wherever he's going, whatever he's wearing," Bonar said. "They really seem to point more toward his future as opposed to where he has been."

*Reservations at the PowerSuits boutique can be made by emailing [boutique@powersuits.org](mailto:boutique@powersuits.org).*

*Related Items* [Alyia Bonar \(Http://Www.Dnainfo.Com/New-York/People/Alyia-Bonar\)](http://www.Dnainfo.Com/New-York/People/Alyia-Bonar) [Lindsey McCord \(Http://Www.Dnainfo.Com/New-York/People/Lindsey-Mccord\)](http://www.Dnainfo.Com/New-York/People/Lindsey-Mccord)  
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