

Function and Fashion Forward Face Masks

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Face masks have not been made essential wear in Canada yet, but as it's happening in the US, it's probably not far behind. Face masks can be worn now for daily protection and used for travel later, especially if they mix function with fashion.

Toronto-based Peach Berserk is owned by designer Kingi Carpenter who now enjoys mixing function and safety with style. Sewing face masks takes much longer than she anticipated and she finds the best results using vintage 1960s sheets as they are thick cotton. Each face mask is completely lined and pleated with a small pocket sewn in each one so that a filter can be added.

Kingi is doing her best to keep prices low by using recyclable materials and everything is done by herself and one sewer. At \$20 each, a portion goes to a local charity and to the sewer to keep her working as much as possible. "Creativity during even difficult times is what we are all about," she says.

It was her sister-in-law's idea. "I didn't think it would work but talked to my sewer. I put a few masks on my Instagram at 6:00 a.m. in the morning when I couldn't sleep. In 15 minutes, people started ordering them which freaked me out." Kingi adds, "a few things converged all these elements. I needed a mask and a bit of fun. With this, I had no idea how many people knew about Peach Berserk, which started in the 80s, a fixture on Queen Street. It really meant something to people."

Kingi has several designs to choose from or you can contact her directly and she will try to find the custom design you are looking for. She likes making the custom masks as it's a "really important part of what I am doing and shows my versatility".

Kingi is surprised by the response to the masks. "I cannot keep up with them and we are making at least 300 a day. Downtown artistic people need work, so I am working with two people at a time social distancing. "Orders are primarily local, but also from the US and as far away as New Zealand.

"Art makes things more livable," she says.

<https://peachberserk.ca/collections/upcycled-fashion>

