

# EGO THE LABEL

*An interview with Selah Cotton and Eden Emory*

*By: Amelia Raden*

A: I'm so excited to speak with y'all! To start off, could you guys give me a little introduction on the brand and yourselves?

S: Yes! The first time I went to Eden's house I noticed she had an unused sewing machine and insisted that she learned to sew. I told her that being able to make your own clothes is a superpower. It's so cool. Eden quickly became addicted to sewing and started creating her own patterns from scratch. The week before my 19th birthday we had the brilliant idea to make matching sets to go out in! We sewed nonstop, and we had a photo shoot on top of this parking garage. When we got out of the car, there were girls literally coming up to us and asking where we got our outfits. It was the coolest feeling ever: Seeing their faces when we told them we hand made the sets a few hours before! This was the weekend that Eden and I realized we had something really cool to share with the world.

E: I had always wanted to start a bathing suit company, and it just all fell into place with Ego.

S: It was so crazy.

A: That's such an incredible story! How does your brand name play into all of this?

E: The definition of Ego is "a person's sense of self-worth or self-importance".

E: With everything happening in the world, it's easy to lose a sense of purpose. When Ego started coming together, it gave us a sense of importance.

S: It gave us something to do. Before this started, I was sitting in my apartment, trying to figure out what I'm going to do with my life.

E: We just know that this is something that we're so passionate about, and we're talented at it.

S: I've never worked so hard in my life before. When the passion and the dedication is there, it just doesn't even feel like work. We wake up every day and sew and create and brainstorm until we finally crawl into bed, then do it all again the next day. Starting a business has been so fulfilling, because all of my passions are incorporated into one thing. I wanted to be a photographer and a social media marketer and now I run our social media and shoot all the photos! .

E: I always wanted to be a model, and now I'm modeling my own clothes. It's weird how it's all just happening for us. We're putting our all into it, and everything's falling into place.

A: What is the most unique aspect of your brand?

S: There are three things that come to mind when I think of what sets EGO THE LABEL apart. One is the most obvious: We're size inclusive and do custom sizing. People send us their measurements.

E: We just want everybody to feel confident and comfortable wearing our clothes. We want to create clothes that boost your ego!

S: Another thing that makes us unique is how we want to incorporate the behind the scenes of kids starting a business into our social media. Everything is self taught, and anyone could do it. It's mind-blowing to us, we're the first generation to grow up with the internet: the biggest invention in the history of humanity. Social Media allows us to do anything we can imagine. The fact that millions of people can see your content for free in seconds is crazy! The world has never been like that. People sit around on their phones and watch TikToks all day, when they could be doing something like this, which is a million times more fulfilling. You can either be on that side of the screen or on this side of the screen: Putting out content and building a brand.

E: The third thing that sets us apart is how the voice we want to give our followers. They tell us what they want, and we create it for them. We really want to keep our customers super engaged on our social media, asking them for ideas and opinions constantly!

S: Our first drop has been really special because of how personal our connection with our customers is. We've stalked all of their Instagrams; we know them all by name.





A: How long have y'all been sewing and designing, and what inspired you to take that to the next level by starting a small business?

E: I think it was designing the zebra print pants: My very first pair and seeing how easy it really was to make something from scratch.

S: I've been familiar with sewing machines for around 10 years, but I wasn't sewing as an active hobby until my senior year of highschool. I started working at a wholesale vintage warehouse, and I was upcycling things myself and thrifting a lot. I didn't start making things from scratch with patterns until a little more than a year ago. The first thing I ever made was a bucket hat from a video. If you have any interest in sewing, you have to learn.

A: You're making me want to! From what I've heard, it sounds like you guys are going to get more sustainable as you grow.

S: Yes, definitely! As we expand we'll have even more opportunities to positively impact our environment. We plan on sourcing all of our materials from an eco-friendly manufacturer. For now, we're doing the best we can to be sustainable by reusing all of our scraps, thrifting materials, and hand making our packaging!

Selah points to Eden, who is working on a pair of glittery white flares.

S: Right now, Eden's blending two sizes to make these, and this is the custom aspect that you wouldn't get if you just bought a random pair of standard sized pants.

A: Why did you guys decide to do custom sizing instead of standard? I imagine it's a lot more work.

E: It is a lot more work. But that's what makes us so different.

S: Size inclusivity is just so important to us. We want everybody to feel really good in our clothes.

A: Do you have any advice for anyone trying to blow up on TikTok for art or design?

S: Absolutely. Do your research on the TikTok algorithm. There's a lot of small details that go into it. You have to make sure your first 5 videos are great, because those are the most important ones, and you have to be consistent. If you just do some research, you'll learn so much.

E: Also, the Law of Attraction is huge. Everything we've done has been through manifestation. I just want everyone to know to give themselves credit. You can do so much if you just give yourself credit. Everyone beats down on themselves, thinking about what they could've done better or differently. But think about what you still could do.

S: Culture today is just really negative, and it's easy to complain, but if you have positive energy and realize your potential, you can do anything.

E: Don't worry too much. Put yourself out there; be authentic.

S: Authenticity is what people want to see nowadays, because the opposite of that is so common.

E: And once you start doing what you love and what you're passionate about, you start to attract people that are doing the same thing.

E: We're just in love with our jobs.

S: I've never cared so much about anything before.

A: And it shows! I've been staring at the label on the back of these pants, and I'm so obsessed with the way that you sew it on the back of each pair with your little rainbow stitching. All of the small details just make what you do so special.

S: I'm so glad you noticed that. We worry that some people don't notice that stuff, because we're making these pieces with our hands, and each stitch is different, and every piece has its own unique design.

A: What keeps you guys motivated?

S: I've never felt unmotivated when it comes to working on our brand. It's very empowering to have your own business. I haven't even needed to look for motivation, because it's always there, which is something that I've never experienced. I've always had so much trouble being motivated to do anything. It's just amazing to know of the impact that we've had on the people around us, and it's really encouraging to see kids doing what they want.

*This interview has been edited for clarity and conciseness.*