

Ashley: Welcome to Woolful, a podcast for fiber folk. Iâ€™m excited to share with you some incredible people Iâ€™ve had the opportunity to talk to in this community we love so much. From shearers and shepherds to knitter and shop owners, hereâ€™s where you get to listen to a little art of their fiber journey. This episode is sponsored by Fancy Tiger Crafts, a beautiful yarn shop based out of Denver, Colorado who recently launched their online shop fancytigercrafts.com. They have an amazing selection of fabrics and yarns including their own heirloom Romney yarn which is grown and milled and dyed right here in the US. Make sure to visit Fancy Tiger Crafts in person when in Denver and online at fancytigercrafts.com. Today, we get to meet two amazing and talented women, Julie Hoover and Deedee Morris. Deedee is an amazing photographer, fiber dyer, passionate gardener and explorer in the kitchen, hailing from Nova Scotia. You can find her at DeedeeMorris.com and on Instagram @diemorr and with that hereâ€™s Deedee. Ashley: Youâ€™re a photographer, I notice through your Instagram that you also dye, why donâ€™t you tell me a little bit about both of those ventures? Deedee: Well, I started dying yarn for 11 years ago now I think for the same company that I continue to work for. The companyâ€™s name is Fleece Artist Handmaiden. And when I started it was run by Catherine Thomas who is the mother of the current owner now. So itâ€™s a family-run business. Itâ€™s really small and tight so both daughters work their mom and her oldest daughter just took over the company this spring so itâ€™s a little bit of transition but it seems to be going great and the dying is fantastic. Itâ€™s like coloring all day long. Ashley: Do you do it at your house or do you have a studio? Deedee: I have a studio. So I lived just outside of Halifax, on the east coast. I worked in Halifax, my boss has a studio in there that there are four dyers and we all go in there and dye for her. And then I also work for another little company called Mineville Wool Projects. It is run by Catherine Thomas now. So she started another little venture so Iâ€™m dying for her and she lives just down the road for me so I work at her place as well. Ashley: Thatâ€™s awesome. So what is this wool project? Deedee: The Mineville Wool Project, itâ€™s very similar to Fleece Artist Handmaiden only itâ€™s not a line so they donâ€™t have like yarns that are staple. So itâ€™s not a continued project so she gets wool in from spinners that have an overstock of yarn and they need to get rid of the overstock so she will purchase it and then sell it in bulk to retailers so thatâ€™s the Mineville Wool Project. Basically, for that we just dye whatever colors we want and then we take a photograph of the box of yarn and put it up on the website and then retailers can go on the website and purchase that box. Ashley: Thatâ€™s so cool. So do you know what her passion was behind starting this project? Deedee: She is one of the original hippies I would say. She started a shop in Halifax that originally sold fabrics. This was 35 years ago. So it originally sold like silks and other high end fabrics and buttons and a little bit of yarn. So she worked in the city which is about 40, 45 minutes away from where she lives so she was commuting quite a bit and decided she didnâ€™t want to do it anymore so she started Fleece Artist Handmaiden out of her house in her kitchen. And then eventually it just grew and grew and Mineville Wool Project is just another way for her to keep her hands in yarn I think because she loves it. Ashley: So I imagine with all the dying that you do both with Fleece Artist and Mineville Wool Project that you get exposed to a lot of different types of fiber. Is there a particular kind that you gravitate towards or is there a fiber that when you get it in, this is mine, this is the stuff that Iâ€™m going to dye? Deedee: Definitely. My boss always teases me because when I first started working she has just started to get some more silks in and so there is one yarn that we call rumple, and itâ€™s a silk boucle. And I told her this is like the very first year that I started working there and I said I will work for you forever if I can dye this yarn forever. Because itâ€™s so beautiful. It picks up the colors so beautifully. Itâ€™s just gorgeous. The yarn that I gravitate to all the time to knit with is the cashmere of course. Itâ€™s just so soft and luscious. Ashley: So tell us a little bit about what knitting projects youâ€™re working on right now. Deedee: Iâ€™m just started a knitting projects making another blanket for the winter. I really like knitting blankets. They are my thing that I like knitting in the winter time because you can wrap up the knit while youâ€™re knitting it. I am knitting that out of blue faced aran, leicester aran weight and itâ€™s going to be all different stripes of earth toned colors and Iâ€™m also working on a little baby project for a friend of mine who is about to have a baby at around Christmas time. Just making a pair of pants for her out of some Angora wool mix. Ashley: I feel like thereâ€™s like this baby season that just started and so just list of eight different friends that are having babies; okay crunch time I got to get all of these little gifts on thankfully they donâ€™t take that long. Deedee: Yeah I know thatâ€™s the nice thing about knitting for babies; super fast. Ashley: So you said youâ€™ve been dying for quite a while now. What kind of started that? Can you tell me a little bit about your first introduction to dying and then how it became something that involved in your life on a more regular basis? Deedee: Yeah well interestingly I was introduced really to the knitting world around the same time as I was introduced to dying. A friend of mine was working for Catherine and I actually just needed a job and so she introduced me and I came down and had my â€œinterviewâ€ which basically Catherine just taking me around the studio and showing me what they do and then asking me if I wanted to work there. So I said yes because it was fascinating and we just went from there and now thatâ€™s what I do. Ashley: Do you feel there was a learning curve or do you feel like itâ€™s one of those things that as a creative person you just kind of gravitate towards a certain method or color palettes or maybe learning through experimentation and stuff? Deedee: Yeah. I think itâ€™s kind of all of those really. I kind of described it as a little bit like cooking. You can have somewhat of a recipe but in the end itâ€™s a lot more about feeling your way through it because itâ€™s not an exact science. So when we train people it takes quite a while. It takes three months for them to get a hang of it and get their speed up because thatâ€™s like one thing that we have to do. We have to be quite quick at it. It takes a while. I love cooking and it just kind of came naturally to me. I learned pretty quick and some people takes them a really long time to get the hand of it and other people they canâ€™t. They never do get the hang of it and thereâ€™s a lot of people like me who just pick it up right away and just know by feel when things are done. Because we dye over a boiling pot of water. Which is like kind of usually people who knit like they know that boiling water and wool kind of donâ€™t mix usually because of felting but thatâ€™s where kind of knowing when things are done comes into play. You have to kind of feel your way and just know when to take it out before it felts. And thatâ€™s where itâ€™s not an exact science because every yarn is different and every yarn takes the dye differently so you have to play around with that and figure it all out and thatâ€™s where it just kind of comes to feeling your way through it I guess. Ashley: As you fill up this kind of innate knowledge of your process around dying, do you feel that thatâ€™s influenced other areas in your life where youâ€™re creative, either your photography or things that you knit or even like your daily wardrobe? Deedee: Absolutely. I always tell people that the dying and cooking go hand and hand, I think the dying has improved my cooking skills and my cooking skills have improved my dying so I really like cooking for people and having like a table that is on display and making it really beautiful and bringing the different colors together and really just showing off food. And so those two have definitely complimented each other. In terms of my wardrobe, maybe a little bit because I mean Iâ€™m a very earth toned person and a lot of our colors tend to be, I mean we definitely our earth toned colors, but some of our colors are much more vibrant and I

donâ€™t think they have really been incorporated into my life because of dying them. But when I do the dying at work because we make up colorways every season just to add new color to what people have to choose from and so I think I always gravitate towards the more earth toned palettes when making up those colors but also I remember when I first started working there even now when Iâ€™m walking around in the woods or on the beach or whatever, I like seeing color palettes now. So Iâ€™m always like oh that one would make a great color palette I should try and dye that. Just the other day I was walking on the beach in the seaweed was very golden, I need to try and dye that colorway that would be really beautiful on the yarn. So itâ€™s definitely transferred into the rest of my life for sure. Ashley: Thatâ€™s great; you talked about how each season you guys develop a color palette or a selection. Do you get to be a part of that process? Deedee: Yeah all the dyers get to so I think we usually do three or four colors a season and we all kind of make up our own colors and then the boss gets to choose which one she likes the best and thatâ€™s how it goes. I work a lot with specific clients because we also have the options for customers have us make up custom colorways for them. So Iâ€™ve done quite a bit with different customers and usually there are some people who send in photos and say hey can you try and match this with your dye on your yarn. Other people they send in swatches, like swatches for furniture or wall paint or whatever and we try and create a colorway that will kind of go with that. Itâ€™s pretty fun, I like doing that. Ashley: So great. So you live in Halifax and you are a photographer by trade. Deedee: Yes. Ashley: Iâ€™m looking at your Instagram as weâ€™re talking right now and I think thatâ€™s the first thing that had me gravitate towards you, itâ€™s all of your gorgeous photography. Deedee: Well thank you. Ashley: You have this dying job that you do and then you have your photography, how do you do both on your daily life and then also tell me a little bit more about your photography. Deedee: How I do both in my daily life? Well, the dying is kind of like a 9 to 5 job. But my boss has been amazingly flexible with me so if I have to book a shoot one day for like early morning or afternoon, she lets me take off or come in late or if I need the day off to do like a full day shoot or something then sheâ€™s super flexible with me which is amazing. Iâ€™m super grateful about that. So thatâ€™s allowed me to really continue to do both things. And then of course I work a lot in the evenings and the weekends with my photography. Yeah photography; that started a long time ago for me. I have always been really interested, always been the one in school with the camera and taking photos of my friends and waking up early to watch the sunrise and all of that. Itâ€™s always been a passion but never something that I thought I could do to make a living until a few years ago after so many people asked me can you do photos of our wedding, can you take photos of our family, can you take pictures of my baby and then finally cluing in maybe I could charge money for this. So yeah it was about three years ago that I finally started to do that. And itâ€™s been going amazing. I love it. Ashley: Thatâ€™s great. Your photography is incredible. You talk a lot about cooking as one of your passions. Deedee: And gardening. So we live right by the ocean like right on a hill and our land right goes down to the ocean so itâ€™s a little bit intense to try and garden here because we have a lot of days where the wind reaches about a hundred kilometers an hour. Itâ€™s salty wind. So gardens donâ€™t really like that. So we have a lot of wind block around our plants. I love it. I love getting my hands in the dirt and growing stuff and like eating tomatoes off the vine and carrots popped right out of the ground. Nothing beats it. Itâ€™s amazing. Weâ€™ve just started from the last five years or so. Itâ€™s just like weâ€™ve been gradually growing the garden so that we can try and grow as much food in the summer as possible to keep us going to the winter. The last couple of years, weâ€™ve been growing a lot of beans to dry like black beans, Jacobâ€™s cattle beans or baked beans and potatoes and onions and garlic like some of the staples. And so far like last winter we had enough of each of those things to keep us going so thatâ€™s really exciting to me. I really like that idea of not having to go to the grocery store to buy that many things. Ashley: I love that too. The self-sustainability is very much a topic trend these days but more than that there are so many people that have been doing it for forever and I think itâ€™s pretty cool in some small ways Instagram has really opened a lot of peopleâ€™s eyes to people that thatâ€™s just a natural part of what they do. You know things that they are striving to do and thatâ€™s really awesome. Deedee: Instagram has been amazing for that I think. Itâ€™s been amazing for a lot of things I have to say. I only joined Instagram I think a couple of years ago. but since I have I feel like there a lot more of a community there than I ever felt like there was on Facebook and itâ€™s weird because itâ€™s just images but for some reason I feel like I get to witness peopleâ€™s lives a lot more intimately than ever before. Itâ€™s really cool. Ashley: Yeah I heard something, really interesting last night. Someone was saying that and myself Iâ€™ve never really gravitated towards Facebook at all. I have an account, not super active on it mainly I just post pictures of my son but one of the reasons I think Instagram just exploded for creatives and in that way is that not only that you have kind of this power around like what youâ€™re curating, what your seeing. Everything is super positive on there most of the time. Majority of the stuff you see is some kind of creative expression about something positive the way that people see the world and Facebook, itâ€™s like you kind of got a filter through all this junk and itâ€™s really a place where people are projecting opinions and things like that. Mixed in with some other great stuff too but Instagram you just on in there just photo after photo, inspiring amazing stuff. Deedee: Yeah thatâ€™s very true. Ashley: One of the things that I like people to get a sense of with all the different guests that I talk to is their atmosphere; putting them in a place where they are at and getting a little glimpse into kind of the environment that you do these creative endeavors in. You said lived on a piece of property that goes right into the ocean. I mean that alone just sounds so dreamy. Why donâ€™t you tell me a little bit more about where you live and more about how that inspires all the things that you do. Deedee: So I live in this little village just outside of Halifax, itâ€™s called Seaforth and I lived on a hill on seven acres of land and this community is pretty amazing. There are a lot of surfers that live here. There are a lot of fishermen and then thereâ€™s also kind of middle class, businessmen and people that are into politics and a lot of creatives, a lot of artists. Itâ€™s this really eclectic mix of people and itâ€™s amazingly close knit. I feel Iâ€™ve never experienced this kind of community anywhere else because we do think, there is this little tiny hall, community center in the middle of the village. This village is seriously teensy weensy. Itâ€™s a name on a highway basically is what it is. But every once in a while the hall will hold events and everyone goes. It doesnâ€™t matter who you are, what you do for a living or what you donâ€™t do for a living or anything. Itâ€™s just like everyone comes and is supportive and interacting and super positive. Itâ€™s amazing. I love it here. Thereâ€™s lots of creative people. Thereâ€™s a little gallery a couple houses down from me and a bakery and so they have every month a new show of an artist that lives around here. I feel like Iâ€™m romanticizing this place but itâ€™s actually this cool. I live in this little tiny house. Itâ€™s about 1200 square feet. It used to be an old barn that the previous owners to us completely gutted and renovated and made into a house. And so itâ€™s one and half story. Kind of made to fit the Acadian architecture style out here so it has like a really steep roof pitch and then our gardens and a lot of trees and the ocean surrounding us. Itâ€™s pretty great. Ashley: So you have a pretty clear view out your window of the water. Deedee: Three sides of the house is ocean. Yeah itâ€™s pretty great. So weâ€™re on top of the hill and at one end of the hill is the highway, the road and then the other side is the ocean and down the bottom of the hill by the ocean we have a little tiny cabin that we can hang out at. Itâ€™s pretty cool. Ashley: Iâ€™m pretty

sure everyone is going to be so jealous of you when they hear this. Deedee: I know. I'll temper that jealousy by saying that we also have lot of wind and that is something that takes a lot of getting used to because there are nights when the wind is very strong and you feel like your house is going to blow off of that hill. So if you don't like wind, this is not the place for you. Ashley: For this week's man of the street, I asked a handful of fiber enthusiasts to answer the following question: How has your fiber community inspired you? Here is what they had to say. Andrea: Hi there. My name is Andrea Mowry and I am from Michigan. You can find me on Instagram, Ravelry, and etsy as dreareneeknits. My fiber community is why I do what I do. I have made friends all over the world, thanks to Ravelry, Instagram and blogging. Whether I'm at my Sunday knitting group, visiting my local yarn store or participating on a knit-along with people all over the globe I know I always have a place I belong. Friends and fiber in general are just a kind group of people. They all want to support each other, whether you are a newbie learning to spin, or knitting your first sweater, or an advanced knitter delving into the world of design. You will find an entire community of people cheering you on. When I got really into knitting as a teenager, I remember feeling like it just immediately clicked. It's all I could and wanted to think about. Before I was a stay at home mom, I was a baker and I think it's so similar to knitting; following a recipe, tweaking it just so to make it your own, working with your hands and delighting in what you've created, sharing it all with others. Knitting is my love language. You know when you just want something so bad, that's how I feel about knitting, too much be my life, whether it be designing or owning a yarn shop. Up until this year though I was afraid. I was afraid that because I wanted it so bad it wouldn't happen. People won't want what I have to give. I was terrified to put myself out there, to be that vulnerable. Then one morning I woke up and I just did it. Thanks to the huge part of Instagram, I started to feel confident enough to publish my pattern. The response was so wonderful that it has become my main focus. I even reopen my etsy store to start selling ready to wear garments for people who don't knit. I'm still on the very fledgling stage of my business but instead of fear I find myself completely awoken. I start and end each day feeling grateful. Even if it's always just something small, a hat pattern here or there they do it because they love it. I want to be a part of this community and I want to share all the joy it brings with everyone around me. Barbara: Hi this is Barbara from Calabasas, California, you can find me on Instagram @stixsandstring. As for so many of us, my fiber community is a combination of brick and mortar shops and virtual connection. I find this with a local yarn store and in my case not so local yarn store that it provides an opportunity to touch and feel the yarn before you make a purchase and also meet other knitters face to face. This type of interaction always lends to learning something new and even after my 15 years of knitting there is always something new to learn. I find it inspiring to share time with members of the fiber community, to see works in progress and to listen to other knitters' stories, often discovering a common thread between us. Social networking sites give me the opportunity to connect with knitters around the globe, people who I might never had a chance to meet. This community is so incredibly supported, encouraging and generous that one would be hard for us not to be inspired. I feel the social networking channels are playing a significant role on the fiber industry's ongoing serging. So much an example would be Tolt yarn and wool which in addition to its beautiful shop in Carnation, Washington successfully manages the blog and Instagram feed sharing information about products and patterns, designers, classes and events. I was personally so inspired by their Instagram page last summer that I hopped on a plane and traveled to the shop to experience it in person. Fringe supply company is another site gaining attention offering softly selected merchandise, Karen Templer's spot on intuition on what knitters will love. Brooklyn Tweed's Wool people and quarterly releases have become highly anticipated collections and the list goes on and on. And happily now, includes WoolFul. At the core, this craft succeeds because of the passionate, dedicated people involved. Each of us taking a part in creating a community which inspires me each and every day. Beatrice: Hi, this is Beatrice from Portland, Maine. You can find me at Instagram @threadandladle. The local community here for knitting is pretty amazing, I have my local knitting group, there are people from all ages and all walks of life and knitting is just this common ground that you can find something to talk to anyone there about. It opens up the door for more conversation, whether somebody is giving you comforting words because you had a rough night with your kids or they are talking about your knitting or bolstering your confidence and your skills--whatever it is. There is always something that people can talk to you about. And also there is an incredible community of designers. Portland, Maine is home to Quince and company as well as a bunch of amazing designers; Pam Allen, Hannah Fettig, Bristol Ivy, some of whom I have met personally and some of whom I haven't. There is always trunk shows or meet and greet and there is just an incredible amount of people who are doing beautiful things in the knitting industry in Portland. Ashley: I have the pleasure of getting to know our next guest over the past few months as she shared her humble fiber journey and it really struck a cord with me as I know it will for many of you. You might be most familiar with Julie Hoover as a designer from Brooklyn Tweed. But more than that she spent her lifetime making her way as a creative while raising three boys and most recently, building her dream home in Ann Arbor. You can find her at juliehoover.com and at Instagram at jgourmet. And with that, here's Julie. I know you're kind of living in chaos with this building, I'd love to give people a better idea about where you are at or your community as a maker. Julie: Yes, so I moved to Ann Arbor last summer 2013. We moved here and immediately thought that we'd be building a house, and as it turned out that the whole process is a lot slower as I thought it was going to be. We have been living in an apartment, we put everything in storage and just kept out essential kitchen, bedding and things, clothing items. So we are in a fairly cramped living quarters right now. I would say that more than 70% of my normal things that I have around me are out of sight and have been for almost over a year now. So it's a little bit challenging in that respect. I don't find a lot of inspiration in my current living situation but I am dreaming a lot about my future. My future work room is going to be amazing. I have a whole room just dedicated to just working in but that won't be completed until this coming summer of 2015. And then it will take me a while to kind of get the right pieces and the right setting established there but I'm very much looking forward for that. So I spend a lot of time just trudging through my work load as fast as I can at home during the day when my kids are at school. But I do get out and get together a lot with a good friend, who I work a lot with. She helps sample knit a lot of my pieces. We'll meet at coffee shops around Ann Arbor and have lunch, makes half a day of it and just spend time together talking and working. So that is always nice to kind of get out of the house and do that. Everything I do with the exception of my computer time is portable so it makes it very convenient to travel and socialize with someone. I am not really a social person but I do get enjoy getting together with like-minded people when I can. Talk to me in a year I'll have a different answer. Ashley: When we talked previously, I think you and I both connected a little bit on a fact that we tend to be, I wouldn't say anti-social but a little bit more introverted and really treating I guess the time that we have! Julie: !private. Ashley: Yes, our private time, time for ourselves to make things and to treasure with our family. It's interesting and its amazing thing when you find that someone, I am guessing your friend that you have there at Ann Arbor that you can connect at some level that you kind of invest in those few people rather than spread your investment in a lot of people.

Julie: Yes, yes, I like to make a deeper connection and then focus on that relationship versus a lot of more superficial relationships. Ashley: I don't know if you find this but especially when I am working on something that I feel very, I don't know like a level of attachment to. But anytime you design something, you're a designer, you're putting a little bit of yourself out there and it's great to have someone to give you feedback that you trust. Julie: Oh for sure. Ashley: So tell me a little bit about what you are dreaming about for your new space, in your new house because I know it has been a long process for you. Julie: Oh yes, very much it was on a wish list you know, when I was working with our architect, that was high open priority that I have a studio space, not an independent studio space but a dedicated work room that has storage options for all my tools and yarns and such, as well as large work surfaces. That sort of my thinking as I have plenty of storage space, doors and shelving and then I also have a work table for putting up both of my big giant blocking boards, maybe making that more of a counter height so I don't have to bend over so far. I find that as I got older it's harder to stand up straight when you're out pinning stuff up, it's like oh my gosh, I have blue sky limitations. And also I can kind of I will wait till I see the space built out a little more before making final decisions but my thinking is that I will have some sort of a dining room table size, counter height, table in the center of the room that I can really put things on and get that sort of visual snapshot of what I am doing or actually working on. And then I will have space for my computer and my sewing machines, some things like that. I use a lot of my space for photography things like that. So I have a plan for a wall that will be white that I can shoot photography again so I got natural light from both sides and we're also doing some interesting things, materialize with our house with brick, express brick and concrete so I'll have textural surfaces and things like that to play with the house. I'm really excited. I am so excited. Aside from that I have not gotten into detailed about it but that is what I am thinking, I will go. I am obsessive about keeping things organized so that is a very big factor for me, like this room is mine so no one's coming in it, don't touch my stuff. Just like my kids are not allowed in there anymore. Ashley: Do they like to get into your things? Julie: Sometimes, you know like my husband, right now we don't have room for his computer and mine so we sort of share our computer and that drives me crazy. Not that I mind him using my computer it's just that he tends to be on there at the time I most to be in there and I feel bad for telling him he has to leave. He solved that by getting a laptop. Ashley: But when we were talking before one of the things that I really enjoyed hearing about was kind of your journey from like through your different careers and then how it kind of lead you to knitting and then designing and I'd love it tell a little bit about that story. Julie: I think I have seen it, it's in your DNA it's a matter of finding out like how do you make your current situation work with what you are passionate about, pay the bills, and all that sort of what you do in your life revolves along the lines what's possible. For me, I have been really lucky; I have always been interested in making things and very visual realized that that creative side of me is going to be my ticket. Early on I didn't know exactly what I was going to do but I studied in clothing and textiles in college and have a degree on that. This was in late '80s, early '90s, so things have change a lot since then for what is possible in schools and things now, there is FIT, that wasn't really an option for me. Back when I started college, I was thinking a four-year degree and something completely different so, I fell into it and I'm really glad I did. It was a very broad, broad-spectrum of things from design to chemistry. It was definitely not a waste of my time and I learned a lot. After I graduated from college I moved to DC, and got a job with Nordstrom which was a good company to work for. And when I met my husband, he was finishing medical school and his residency program was going to be in San Francisco so we moved out there and I was able to transfer my work, same job, different location. That was nice, but then shortly after he finished his residency, we moved to Japan. That was early days of the internet; I am trying to remember what year that was, '95 I believe. He finished his residency, we moved to Japan and I had just had my first child, he was about a year and a half old. And suddenly here I was in a foreign country and wondering, it's great to be a mom but how am I going to keep this creative juices flowing and I'm too interested in things. So I took up; I have always loved photography, I have that photography side and I love to cook, so there is that. I am spending a lot of time cooking and taking photos of things I cooked. I started a website that was the other things I taught myself to do. I taught myself how to code websites back in my early days. If you wanted a website, you have to know how to do it. So I kind of geeked out a HTML, so I put the photography with the HTML and started blogging back in '96 before blogging was even a word; few recipes here and there, few travel photos. More along the lines, whether or not anyone ever saw it did not matter to me as long as I was doing it and I was having fun with it. I was learning a new skill and to me, it was, how can I make this better. Pretty soon I realized, I know how to do this pretty well and people are offering to hire me at that point. So, one thing led to the next, by the time we left Japan, we moved to Germany, and I find myself in the same situation, just kind of got better at it. I had an opportunity to teach web design and HTML to college students in Heidelberg, like a weekend end indepth course, two days straight, which kind of introduction to this. That was just a part time but that was fun. When we moved back to the United States, I decided to kind of pursue, taking that up to the next level working for somebody, got a job at an ad agency in Little Rock in their, interactive team as an art director, worked on some interesting things there. So anyway, not to dwell on that so I have that background in like putting the puzzle pieces together and how does this work; such an early start in that industry that there weren't a lot of professionals that knew how to do it or do it well. And I just got really lucky being in the right place at the right time. I walked into a team that I have a lot of fun and I learned a lot with. So then we moved to Anchorage, Alaska after that. This is a cliff notes version of my life. We moved to Anchorage in 2006 and I was still working remotely for that Ad agency at the time I was pregnant with my third child. He was born and then some things happened that the team I was working with, we just kind of all went our separate ways and the whole team just got dissolved, gone, have a good life. It was all meant to be in a good thing. It wasn't like anything disastrous happened. We all just closed up the shop and went our separate ways. So then I had this pocket to fill and I was living in a new place, new baby and I just took up knitting at that point. My sister-in-law, Kim, came to visit and she was a knitter, so we went to a yarn shop, I bought some yarn and knitting needles, book and started knitting the stockinet stitch blanket that was in Sara Dale's knitting book that I just kind of thought that was really neat. I knitted that blanket all winter, loved it and never stopped knitting at that point. I tried finding other patterns to knit. She introduced me to Ravelry so that was the source and I started meeting people virtually through Ravelry and came to a point where I realized that I had sort of found this perfect storm of a way to tie what I learned in my early years to this new skill I had discovered that I was really passionate about. I love knitting, I can't really explain it, although I am imagining any knitter listening to this gets what I am saying. It's just that there in your fingers, in your bones, and your blood. It's just when you find something like that that you love and enjoy doing so much that anytime you're sitting still it's just naturally, you pick it up and you're doing it. And if you're not doing it at the moment, you're thinking about doing it later. So there I was, I realized, okay, I have got this. The knitting skills are coming along, I still have a lot to learn but I understood garments, I understood construction and I understood publishing and I understood

photography, all these little things that I have skills to do, it was sort of a no brainer for me to try it. So I published my first pattern, it was pretty well received and I never looked back after that. I was like, this what I need to do. And I take what I do very seriously but it was not like I was feeling super competitive or wanting to be had any high hopes for taking the knitting world by storm, or anything, I was just like, Iâ€™m just going to do this and I am enjoying what I am doing. If I make any profit along the way, great. And so, itâ€™s worked out. Ashley: Yes, it totally has Julie: I think I made a good decision. Now I am like, that was great. Iâ€™m glad it worked out. Ashley: Itâ€™s hard to explain to people that donâ€™t understand progression that technology has taken but a designer can really take a lot of different paths and I feel like as designers, we could start one place, 10, 15 years ago and end up in a completely different place, 10 or 15 years later. And even though in our mind itâ€™s just this progression, to a lot of people they are like, youâ€™re changing careers like all these different times or they donâ€™t really understand. But to anyone who is a creative or a designer itâ€™s just like a natural thing, at least that how itâ€™s been for me. Julie: You are doing the same thing itâ€™s just a different medium. Itâ€™s like this house we are planning, Iâ€™m spending a lot of time doing the interior design portion of it. I am working with our architect and they have a staff interior designer but I feel like this is my vision coming to life here. I am not a licensed interior designer but I am doing it. I think a lot of people, if you have a talent, you donâ€™t necessarily have to have a certificate, just to do it. If you are good at it, people will get it and people will respond to it and if they donâ€™t, then maybe rethink your path. But for the most part, I feel like anyone who has a talent in something should try to pursue it and if itâ€™s meant to be itâ€™ll work. Ashley: I feel like part of it is taste, which is something that I hear a lot just in the design industry, taste drives a lot in the decisions that you make and for me your design taste is kind of authentic to who you are. And so in your case, hearing about your progression from like garment design and all these different paths that you took in your career, in the end, you had this vision that is your own. You are not doing this for anyone else but it just so happens that other people gravitate towards that same or similar things and love what you do. Julie: It is a good thing, Ashley: One of the things that we talked about the other day is a little bit of influence that Jared had on your coming in to Brooklyn Tweed. And I know it was a very natural thing in that how you came in to designing for Brooklyn. Julie: Yeah, so that had took me by surprise as well as. It was one of those things that I donâ€™t know where I was going to go. It has been a good experience. I met Jared, I donâ€™t remember the exact year but it was maybe 2010 or 2011. You can figure out when Shelter was born, which I believe itâ€™s been four years now. I donâ€™t know if itâ€™s been in production for four years but I know that Shelter is four years old now. It has been a few years but I met him when he was at Bainbridge, Island at the Church Mouse Yarns he was doing a little speaking engagement evening thing and again I was out in visiting a family, my sister-in-law Kim who I have to thank for this as well. She got me to knitting and also took me to this event. She had tickets so I came with her. We made a day of it. We took the ferry over and did some shopping and what not before the event that was supposed to start that evening. And Jared was there hanging around the shop a little and was not too busy so he sat down at the table I was sitting at and I think I was wearing a scarf that Michelle Wong, her seed stitch scarf, I had knitted myself one in a fingering way and he recognized it and started to break the ice that way and we started talking and it just felt like we have known him for years. We were chatting at the table for a while and then he got called away and that was it. Did his spill that night, I had few more minutes with him. It was just so nice, pleasant evening, he was great. I didnâ€™t think too much about it but during our conversation he sort of encouraged me after hearing I had background in clothing and textiles, he just sort of encourage me to take it to another level. And I kind of like, yes, okay, I will never do that but thanks anyway. But the more I thought about it, the more that time went on, I realized he is totally right. So after I had publish my first pattern and things are going well, I was working on second and third. I just sent him an email, I didnâ€™t know if heâ€™d get it or respond at all and he did and he was very gracious about it. Remembered our chat and asked if I would contribute to his Wool People Collection and started working on something for that. I had seen him in the fall almost the year to the date of the following year at Madronna to give him passing along the wool people sample to him. And then we ended up spending that evening talking with some other people as well but again it was just like this really nice kindred spirit, really warm, positive relationship that I think we both felt was there. It was natural we like hanging out. And then we separate ways again, and then things, sometime pass and I got an email from him asking if there was some free time that he could call and talk to me and I was like okay, sure. That conversation was would you like to join my design team, Iâ€™m thinking about making some changes. I didnâ€™t expect that, I was sort of taken by surprised by it but I felt like of course, yeah, yes, absolutely. So that was how I became part of the team. I donâ€™t really know what he would say about it but I would just say it was one of those things that you wake up one day and of course this was meant to happen. So it has been a great experience, I love the people I work with, I love what I do. Itâ€™s a crazy, busy pace but I wouldnâ€™t change it for the world. I feel incredibly lucky to be part of it. Ashley: Tell me about the pace, kind of progress what it is like to you to be a designer for Brooklyn Tweed, how it works and with your designing. Are you designing other things? How it fits into your daily schedule? Julie: So I try to work on things independently. I always I have this a pile of things, sketches and swatches or whatever that I would like to pursue, but thatâ€™s sort of always free time, back burner. With Brooklyn Tweed, there is an absolute terrain that never stops. The design team, we do three collections a year, at least we have in the past. That may evolve as time goes on. So we do our fall collection in September and then we published a winter collection in January and then somewhere around March, May weâ€™ll do sort of a special collection where itâ€™s more a theme like for example last spring we did a children collection, spring before that we did a menâ€™s collection. This coming spring will be a second menâ€™s collection and then maybe a little surprise after that. So we start the process 40 weeks in advance from launch. So if you can imagine, you know right now weâ€™re planning the design team is to work, you know weâ€™re all working independently on concepts for fall of 2015 and next month weâ€™ll get together to throw all that out there and plan, edit down and plan the final roster for that collection next month. Then from there it goes into we all work in our design spec packages for the tech editors. So we will take the sample size and we will do final gauge. Weâ€™ll completely map out an entire garment stitch by stitch for the pattern writer to take and she will make sure we havenâ€™t screwed it up and then sheâ€™ll write the pattern and itâ€™s sort of a back and forth process while that is going on between the senior tech editor and the designers to kind of get that ironed out and then from there it will go into sample knitting for several weeks. It will be allotted for sample knitting. Once sample knitting is completed then thereâ€™s photography and pattern layout, then thereâ€™s counter editing, proofreading, revisions, revisions and itâ€™s a huge production process. A lot of expense goes into that, time and money. So then they overlap as well so like for example right now I am sample knitting menâ€™s garments. Iâ€™m also working on pattern layouts for the wool people eight collection thatâ€™s coming out soon. So thereâ€™s different phases of each collection overlap and for me I have behind the scene role as well. As being part of the design team I have been doing a lot of graphics work; just production end of it so I have to take off one hat and put in another and so thatâ€™s even extra overlap for

me. I am hoping to kind of ease myself out of that role and when Jared can find someone that whoâ€™s confident can take over. He spends a lot of his time doing some more things behind the scenes. Well, I mean thereâ€™s hundreds of things behind the scenes but pattern production is one of them where he does the illustrations for the schematics and charts and things like that. Itâ€™s time consuming and definitely could be something that could be off of both of our plates. Just finding the right person to take that off our list would be a good thing but we just havenâ€™t gotten there yet. So once that happens I can see myself having even more I can replace that amount of time with focusing on my independent designs because I certainly have, Iâ€™m itching to spend more time on that. I really want to but thereâ€™s only one of me and so many hours in a day so I just have to kind of prioritize right now and my highest priority is Brooklyn Tweed because thereâ€™s a production schedule involved it. Itâ€™s not just centered around me. Ashley: You did some of the original like design of the pattern, right? Like you are telling me the other day how you work on kind of developing the look and feel for the pattern design? Julie: Yeah sort of. It was something that was in a rough template form when I got it, I donâ€™t know whether it visually changed a whole lot. It was more or less taking it and kind of cleaning it out so that it was honed down to exactly the right formatting and getting rid ofâ€”this is all graphic artist speak youâ€™ll follow me but you know when youâ€™re working in designers thereâ€™s a lot of extraneous stuff that gets carried over so I sort of cleaned it up and got rid of guide marks that shouldnâ€™t be there or things that were in the master template that should have not been there or things that were in per page layouts that should be on the master page. It was just kind of cleaning it up so that it was like a really clean template. Yeah but once that was done and itâ€™s just plug and jug along. So itâ€™s a lot of busy work but it takes a real eye for detail to be able to do that pattern after pattern after pattern. Ashley: I think itâ€™s really cool that, this kind of adventure that youâ€™re really on with Brooklyn Tweed, kind of touches on a couple different areas like creative background but most probably interest keeps things fresh a little bit. Julie: Yes and I came to it with just the fact that this was something that Jared had done in the past and I had those skills that are already hard-wired into me. Itâ€™s very easy for me to say give it to me, Iâ€™ll do it. It took no time at all before I was running with it. So I think I never meant to do it long term but it was more of a, like here, let me help you with these. And since I have my background, I already had the skills, it was sort of an accidental thing, oh yes you can help me out with this, here you go. It wasnâ€™t like, oh youâ€™re the person I have been looking for forever to do this. It more of a, lets help the family out with the chores. Ashley: Right. Julie: But I think Brooklyn Tweed now is to the point where someone could be kept part busy doing all that, not very full-time but very much part time, steady part time, kind of time to graduate to that one. Ashley: Being in kind of a Michigan area and then, do you find that you can work long distance? Julie: Oh yes, very much. The office is in Jersey City so I get there two or three times a year for face-toâ€”face time but, yes the rest of it is very easy remote. We are all plugged into each other on a daily basis so itâ€™s not trouble at all. I means much as I enjoy being in the same office as everyone else every day, itâ€™s not necessary at all. Ashley: Thatâ€™s great, obviously youâ€™re working a lot of Brooklyn tweed but what are some of the other fibers that you gravitate towards youâ€™re either working with currently or just some of your favorite fibers? Julie: : So right now I spend seventy percent of my time with Brooklyn Tweed and that definitely takes me in a very specific direction. So when I am not doing Brooklyn Tweed I tend to gravitate towards the opposite of Brooklyn Tweed, so more refined you know worsted spun yarn or interesting tight little fibers like cottons and linens and silks versus the wool. So I have a current obsession, well I have an Habu obsession, Iâ€™ve had it forever but I have a box full of all habu that I have been to at least swatching and my pile is probably six inches high of just swatches ready to go in to like what can this become. I also discovered a new yarn at TNNA and the yarn company is called my MYAK. MYAK, M-Y-A-K. So very small producer; sheâ€™s just doing baby yak and baby cashmere yarns at the moment but they are just beautiful. The color palette is very limited. She has lace weight and worsted weight yarns in both fibers and they are just lovely. Iâ€™ve been kind of like dreaming about doing something with those. Iâ€™ve got some specific ideas but again, how Iâ€™m going to, when and where; itâ€™s not going to happen. I love shibui yarn, I love they are very good to me. Theyâ€™ll send me any yarn as much of it as I want and I love their yarns. They are beautiful. Theyâ€™re consistent color. I know that when I get bag full of yarn Iâ€™m not going to have dye issues. They play well together. I get to create fabrics with the right drape and texture that I sort of really feel happy as in my real house. Itâ€™s just like that Iâ€™mâ€”I donâ€™t mean to play favorites. Itâ€™s just works for me and I still havenâ€™t fully explored all the options there so Iâ€™m still like okay why would I change gears. It was still exciting and stimulating so I do have some plans for that as well. Christine Fordâ€™s new yarn is pretty fabulous. I would like to get my hands into some of that soon. Again, you know finding the time and putting in the long list of my plans. Who else? My dear friend Katherine Lowe she has the most amazing yarns that I have been dying to use for the last couple of years and Iâ€™ve got some plans to kind of work in a design or two or three using her yarns. I donâ€™t know when again but her yarns are wonderful and I absolutely adore her. In fact, Iâ€™m looking forward to spending time with her this weekend at the meeting. She teaches and I go just to tag along and see her. Ashley: What is her yarn made of? Julie: She has some of the great yarns. So her yarns are kind of spoke in the way that, she calls them the spoke where you can blend them so she has a very beautiful silk, one ply silk. Shes got a merino yarn. She also has a baby alpaca yarn. So itâ€™s kind of like silk, silk mohair, merino and alpaca and you can kind of combine most and create your own blends. My favorite one has two plies of alpaca, two plies of silk and one of silk mohair. Itâ€™s sort of like the number five, she calls it because it has got five plies and itâ€™s just amazing. I love stockinette stitch. Itâ€™s my happy place and stockinette stitch in that I could just do yards and yards and yards of it and never really worry what it turns into. Itâ€™s just so amazing. Itâ€™s the perfect yarn. Ashley: One thing that gets me excited is checking out new yarns but then also like a little nervous because I tend to get a lot of them. And then my husbands like, what are you buying, you donâ€™t need it anymore. Julie: Well, I know and I get myself a little trouble too because Iâ€™ll use these yarns that I didnâ€™t necessarily have to spend a fortune on. So I donâ€™t reign myself in thinking about the cost of actually purchasing this yarn and knitting it from the consumer stand point. But her yarns are definitely worth it. Yarns that I have used in the past I also still have in my stash and will go back to is Zealana yarns, I donâ€™t know if Iâ€™m saying that right. I love their yarn. Ashley: Iâ€™ll discover a new yarn like every six months or something and then Iâ€™m just obsess with it and Iâ€™ll have these kind of staple yarns that Iâ€™m really will gravitate towards but Iâ€™m kind of one of those people that if I really like how the food, for instance, if I really like a specific dish or something I could just use that or eat that for forever and I find like-- Julie: Isnâ€™t that funny? Iâ€™m the same way. I find my favorites at a restaurant and itâ€™s like who cares, I just love this. Itâ€™s like Iâ€™m going to eat this for the rest of my life. Ashley: My husbandâ€™s like really, come on try something different. No because I donâ€™t know if I like it and itâ€™s like the same with yarn. I just finished knitting him a sweater, the fort sweater in Brooklyn tweed, old world then I actually started your pattern the docklight and heâ€™s like isnâ€™t this the same yarn that youâ€™re just using on this one; heâ€™s like donâ€™t you want to use something else. Iâ€™m like

no. Iâ€™m like I like this, so going to stick with this. I finished swatching, I think I told you this. Iâ€™m a loose knitter. Iâ€™ve just discovered I always have to go down so I finally got the right gauge and Iâ€™m actually making progress on the sweater which Iâ€™m excited about. Julie: So you even had to go with a smaller needle than recommended? Ashley: I went down twice. Julie: On a four? Ashley: Yes, I am on a four. Julie: Wow Ashley: I think I am. Julie: Itâ€™s really loose. Ashley: Itâ€™s weird, I donâ€™t know, it just varies and I think what it could be too is that, because Brooklyn tweed is like woolen spun, I am a little worried like Iâ€™m pulling too tight or something.. I donâ€™t know Julie: Yes, youâ€™re afraid youâ€™ll break it if you worked too tight. Ashley: So I am funny like that I think people, I have knit many different patterns it always varies but I always noticed I have to go down, but it looks good, so that itâ€™s all that matters. Julie: Well thatâ€™s one of the reasons why doing a gauge swatch is so important is that I may use a certain needle and get a certain gauge in a yarn that is completely different from you but when Iâ€™m writing the pattern I only go with my own gauge so you canâ€™t assume that youâ€™re going to knit the same way I am or any other knitter on the planet for that matter so people have to learn the hard way. If they donâ€™t gauge swatch and get as close to the pattern gauge as they can, theyâ€™re just shooting themselves in the foot. Good girl for gauge swatching. Ashley: Well you want to know, itâ€™s funny because you actually tie back into this epiphany that I had that I was like, oh Ashley you really need to gauge. I was knitting one of your hats. I think it was maybe in the menâ€™s collection and it was, I canâ€™t remember what itâ€™s called but it was likeâ€” Julie: Was it the Janson hat? Ashley: I think so, and it was a menâ€™s hat. It was like every other row was a different color. Julie: Yes and a really tight gauge? Ashley: Yeah. So that was my first time knitting with loft and because that and even in particular too much tension you know and I was all worried about breaking it, I didnâ€™t knit a swatch for that and I just went and I knit and I knit and I knit and I knit and I mean tiny little stitches for a very long time. Julie: Yes it is time consuming. Ashley It was more of like a slouchy hat for a girl and so I was like I can dig this. Iâ€™ll wear this. So, itâ€™s alright Yeah. It looked good but I was like, oh my gosh Ashley why are you being so stubborn about this. And so thatâ€™s when I really decided that I had to change my mindset about swatching and it had to be something that I have to psych myself into being fun. Ever since then I do get a little frustrated in the second or third swatch but I embrace it now. So you are instrumental in some small way to that. Julie: Yeah and thatâ€™s a progression. Learning swatching techniques is a progression too. Iâ€™ve learned that they can be manipulated. So I may block a swatch that Iâ€™m working on and not really have any particular gauge in mind to put it. Iâ€™m very anal about my swatches too. I put them on block needles or blocking wires and get them nice and square but I find that now when Iâ€™m doing gauge for a pattern Iâ€™m very careful to try to achieve a target gauge versus just like putting in on the wires and then just kind of randomly smoothing it out. Iâ€™ll get one gauge but itâ€™s not necessary gauge that I would ever get again if I was trying to get a certain gauge. So now when Iâ€™m blocking for my pattern swatches, Iâ€™m very careful to try to block to a specific gauge and have it hold versus I just put it down and let it dry and see what the gauge is. So Iâ€™ve learned if youâ€™re careful about thatâ€”that was something I didnâ€™t really pay much attention to until I started writing more than one pattern. I was like how come I got 21 stitches in 34 rows or the same needle size, the same yarn but here what Iâ€™ve got something slightly off with this pattern and then I realized itâ€™s because the way I let my gauge dry was how that happened. So now I am much more careful to be consistent with my pattern gauge. That was a learning curve for me. Ashley: I read a really interesting blog post by Alexis Winslow whoâ€™s designed some for Brooklyn but she wrote this really interesting blogpost about on how the needle material can pretty much drastically change your gauging. Julie: Oh very much. Ashley: I had never really thought about that before. Julie: Yes, wooden versus metal. Ashley: I really gravitate towards the Karbonz, the knitterâ€™s pride Karbonz and previously I always use the wood needles and so Iâ€™m starting to think in my mind that that might have a little bit to do with like how Iâ€™m knitting looser because the yarn doesnâ€™t stick on the needle as much you know. Itâ€™s a much smooth with each stitch. Julie: Yeah, that makes a huge difference. I have a complete collection of lantern moon wooden ebony needles that I love to use but my gauge is not a gauge most knitters use at ease can ever achieve. So I stopped using those for my design pattern, my pattern designs because I realized people are always have to go down needle sizes and itâ€™s not because Iâ€™m a tight knitter probably itâ€™s because the needle I was using was wood and it just had a firmer grasp of the stitches. Ashley: What needles do you gravitate towards now? Julie: Well, when Iâ€™m just doing my own knitting for pleasure I still use my lantern moons but I switched to Addi needle. I like the rockets. Ashley: Iâ€™ve never used their needles. Julie: Theyâ€™re just great needles and I have an interchangeable set that I take with me travelling too. They are good. They are just consistent. I donâ€™t really care for the brass finish on the lace ones but I like the tips so I started buying the rockets which have more, the tips are more like the lace needles but theyâ€™re in the nickel plated. I like them. I didnâ€™t like them at first but now I like them. Ashley: One of the things as weâ€™ve been talking and when weâ€™re talking the other day that keeps coming into my mind and probably because of where Iâ€™m at right now; trying to still work in design but make this transitional shift to a career in the future based on fiber. You have three boys. You moved in support of your husbandâ€™s career and you had to find your way and make your way into those spots. Being a mom and being a creative, how did you make that work? Iâ€™m sure that wasnâ€™t one thing specifically but if you could sum it up in some way how did you split your focus but also stay dedicated to progressing in your creative achievements or aspirations? Julie: Oh gosh thatâ€™s a tough question. The first thing that comes to my mind in answer to that is take it day by day. I donâ€™t know whether I can really say there was a magic formula to the way I did it. Itâ€™s more of listen to your gut and follow your instincts. So my kids, Iâ€™m really fortunate. My kids are six years apart. Each one of them Iâ€™ve got aâ€”my oldest, heâ€™s 21. Heâ€™s studying mechanical engineering and heâ€™s in his third year college. Like heâ€™s my oldest and I have a second grader who is eight and then my middle son is 14 just started high school and they are all boys so even though theyâ€™re all unique, theyâ€™re very similar in certain ways. They are very independent. Theyâ€™re very self-entertained sort of. So I didnâ€™t find it difficult at all. They are around me and they know Iâ€™m there for them but they are not that needy for attention aside from the essentials that they know they are going to get anyway. Thatâ€™s a lot of okay whatâ€™s on the schedule today, get through today and then once I know they are taken care of the rest of my time is free to pursue my interests and I have days that I completely waste all my time too but for the most part I sort of take off the mom hat, I put on the Julie hat and Iâ€™m very much focused in on what I need to accomplished that day. Not necessarily that I put pressure on myself to have to finish what I set out to accomplish every day. But yeah I find that works for me to work, you know sort of like the mom job and the creative job at the same time. I donâ€™t know. Does that making any sense? I enjoy both equally. I get so frustrated when deadline start to approach. Then I get a little manic but for the most part every day is a joy to me. I love being a mom. I also love what I do so itâ€™s finding a balance of the two where I am not so focused on one that Iâ€™m neglecting the other. Thatâ€™s the trick. And for the most part I can do it. Itâ€™s a dream situation for me. Ashley: Yeah, I think listening to just your journey the reason that that was coming to my mind was not so much like you know. I imagined

you had some specific way you set out to do it. I think everyone just kind of in some ways copes but also just has to figure it out as they go along but I think itâ€™s just like being reflective upon your journey. I think some people donâ€™t take steps because see how others do it and maybe they donâ€™t understand how they did it or they think there are some special way they did do it and you just have to understand thatâ€™s not how it was and how oftentimes it is just like what you said, just taking one day at the time and figuring it out how it works. Julie: Yeah, not being overwhelmed by it. I think itâ€™s easily to get overwhelmed by the idea of it when really itâ€™s more or less just executing little portions of it and suddenly youâ€™re looking back and realizing how much youâ€™ve actually accomplished, not letting all of it overwhelm you. Ashley: Yeah thatâ€™s definitely important. I find that with myself sometimes; what are you trying to do, you have so much on your plate right now. Julie: Let it go. Ashley: I know. And then I realized that just by watching other people that that is a very paralyzing thing. You know being overwhelmed then no steps are taken forward. Just do your next thing. Thatâ€™s all you can do. Julie: Right and be prepared to say no sometimes is also a good thing. You donâ€™t have to please everyone. Thatâ€™s a lesson that I think is a hard one to learn sometimes but you tend to say yes to everything and be held their fingers to all these little opportunities but you canâ€™t function that way. You have to focus on and prioritize or you donâ€™t accomplish anything. Ashley: What does your family think about all of your wool of design and knitting? What do they think about what you do? Julie: They love it. You know, thatâ€™s good question. So they all know that Iâ€™m always making things. Thatâ€™s sort of a given with mom. Sheâ€™s always seen either cooking or doing something with textiles. And Iâ€™m also cleaning. Iâ€™m obsessively clean. They are used to that. I think they like it. I mean I think they like that Iâ€™m able to drop it in any moment to focus on them so theyâ€™re appreciative of the fact that Iâ€™m always around. My middle child is very, very creative as well. We sort of share a lot of similarities. I recently taught him how to knit and it was so fun. I mean I was like donâ€™t put it down, donâ€™t put it down just to see what he would do. And occasionally he always comes in to hang out with me constantly handing him his project thatâ€™s good thatâ€™s new taking him forever to accomplish but heâ€™s learning to knit and heâ€™s very much into fashion and art. He spends a lot of time drawing. So I think he gets it more of than maybe my older son is much more science minded kind of like my husband. But they are all very supportive and proud of me for what I do. I get lots of support and love. Ashley: Yeah and Iâ€™m sure like your sister-in-law who kind of introduced you to knitting, sheâ€™s probably very supportive. Youâ€™re telling me a funny story about her seeing--. Julie: Thatâ€™s hilarious yeah. Ashley: About her seeing someone refer to you on Instagram as like some superstar or something and sheâ€™s Julie? Julie? That was a really funny story. Julie: Oh yeah she had mentioned that she had struck up a conversation with someone that she follows on Instagram and it kind of revealed that I was knitting something for her and the person thought, oh my gosh how is that possible. It just makes me laugh because sheâ€™s my sister-in-law, I love her, why wouldnâ€™t I knit something for her? Of course I do that. Ashley: I think people with like anything especially Instagram or social media where itâ€™s very easy to I donâ€™t know, glamorize someone. I think people lose touch that those they are real people. And especially youâ€™re very private and so you donâ€™t put a lot out there and I think in some ways it adds a little bit to the mystique but youâ€™re doing this for yourself. Itâ€™s funny. I think that thatâ€™s part of the reason too why I wanted to talk to you because people, thereâ€™s less space between theyâ€™re doing and what youâ€™re doing than people think. Itâ€™s really just a matter of making that decision to do it. Julie: Oh for sure. And I donâ€™t do it so selfishly that I donâ€™t realize that. Obviously knitters are very important to me. I donâ€™t want just be publishing for no reason at all. Iâ€™m always happy and willing to be engaged with my knitting audience I suppose. I donâ€™t know what itâ€™s called them I guess fan base sounds kind of weird. I knit for a very specific aesthetic which is sort of based in my own selfish taste. Iâ€™m not the only person that it speaks to so Iâ€™m hoping that those who do love my work and appreciate it feel like they can connect with me. Iâ€™m absolutely approachable, Iâ€™m not scary or of like leave-me-alone type of person. Iâ€™m very much nice and will respond to almost anyone. So no need to be afraid. Iâ€™m human. Ashley: The winner of last weekâ€™s giveaway is, Bethany Dean, you won a copy of Mandarinâ€™s Pinecone and Mulberry hat pattern and two skeins of Quince and Company, Owl tweet, congratulations. The giveaway this week is sponsored by Local Color Fiber Studio, an amazing fiber and natural dye farm located on Bainbridge Island, Washington. We are giving away two skeins of their US grown spun and dyed Rambouillet wool in fingering weight dyed with Japanese indigo from Local Colors Farm. To enter this giveaway, visit the giveaway post on Instagram @woolful and tag a friend in the comments. You can also enter by leaving a comment on the blogpost at woolful.com. I wanted to make sure to thank our sponsors again, Fancy Tiger Crafts, this inspired place is owned and operated by self-proclaimed fiber nerds Jamie Jennings and Amber Corcoran, two women whose hope and journey allow them to share their knowledge, adventures and passion in fiber. And this is reflected in their beautiful shop as well as their endeavors in creating their own yarn, Heirloom which you can find in their shop both online and in person. Make sure to share and visit, FancyTigerCrafts.com. Next week Iâ€™ll be taking a little break to spend some quality time with family, record a couple more amazing fiber folks and naturally dye my little heart out as we complete this quarterâ€™s naturally dyed yarn club. Make sure to follow along as I share on Instagram @woolful. I also wanted to mention the two Woolful knit-alongs that will be taking place in the coming months. Next week weâ€™ll be starting our first knit-along, the Nordic shawl pattern design of Denise of Cabinfour using some amazing new icelandic lopi yarn which will be at the Woolful mercantile starting tomorrow. You can find a kits that include both the knit-along pattern and lopi yarn or you are always welcome to use your favorite lopi yarn. You can find more information on this knit-along and our next little woolen and hat pattern knit-along in our Woolful Ravelry group. The biggest of thanks to everyone involved in this weekâ€™s episode, Jamie, Amber, Deedee, Andrea, Barbara, Beatrice, Julie, Emily and Tatiana. I hope youâ€™ll join me each week as we talk and learn from more fascinating fiber folk. For podcast notes and transcription, visit woolful.com. If you are interested in being a part of this podcast, including our man-on-the-street segment, shoot me an email at hellowoolful.com. Have a wonderful week.