

# haute couture

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## MOXIE AND THE COMPOUND 909 WEST MARY (512) 441-MOXY MOXIEANDTHECOMPOUND.COM

"I try not to do boring," says Kayci Wheatly, owner of indie-style haven Moxie and The Compound. While she's talking about her store, she also seems to be talking about her life. But then, life imitates art, right?

And Moxie and the Compound is a study in art. Everything in the store (with the exception of the shoes) is made by local designers. Wheatly has managed to blend creativity and function, coming up with a business model that few others have tried. She runs her store on a commission basis, a 60/40 split with the designers taking home the larger percentage.

Of course, Wheatly claims that she didn't plan any of this. Within two weeks of hatching the idea of a co-op, she spotted a cute house on South First and signed a lease. Ten designers moved their wares in and the doors to Moxie and the Compound were opened—sans business plan or rent money.

The store's name is just as serendipitous. "I liked 'Moxie' because it's sort of like the female version of having balls; but I liked 'the compound' because it sounded better than 'the co-op.' I was telling my best friend I had two ideas: Moxie, and the Compound, and she said, 'Oh, I love it!'"

She laughs when asked if her dream was always to open a boutique. "I was too drunk to dream!" She drinks, she smokes, she has short, spiky hair that changes colors often.

She looks every bit the part of risk-taker—but she's somehow extraordinarily laid-back. Wheatly says, "If it works, it works." It's that attitude of taking life as it comes and doing what's fun that has led to Wheatly's success.

The next fun thing on her plate is a weekly event at the store that models itself after *Project Runway*. Wheatly says, "Not many people watched the first season of *Project Runway*, even though it's big now. So we're going to show it." But here's the kicker: local designers are going to replicate the challenges faced by the designers on the show. Judging on the previous week's challenge will take place the following week, before the next episode. Judges on the slate include local luminaries Stephen Moser of the *Austin Chronicle*, Marques Harper of the *Austin American-Statesman*, Christy Butler of *Jewell* magazine and Kathie Sever of Ramonster clothing.

Kayci Wheatly is making sure that her store is anything but boring. In fact, Moxie and The Compound looks like it will be around a long time. But with a shrug, Wheatly says, "I'll keep it open as long as it's fun." So there's that laid-back attitude that underscores the store's success. **amē**



Coincidentally, Austin-based band **Moxie** recorded their first EP, *Fight the Monochrome*, at an Austin studio called **The Compound**, though neither is related to the store. Serendipity indeed! The EP is available at Waterloo Records. more info: [moxieplease.com](http://moxieplease.com); [kentondre.com](http://kentondre.com)

## HANDMADE HEAVEN

There's nothing like a unique piece made with a lot of love.

**DAVID HODGES DESIGN**  
AVAILABLE AT ELIZA PAGE  
(229 W. 2ND STREET)  
[dhdhdesign.com](http://dhdhdesign.com)

A little bit rock 'n roll and a lot timeless accessory, Dripping Springs resident David Hodges is just releasing his exotic animal skin accessories to the public. Made from crocodile, alligator, stingray and python, the bracelets, belts, clutches and more exude a classic elegance with an edge. Every single piece is unique, handmade to perfection by the artist himself.

**PARTS & LABOUR**  
1604 S. CONGRESS AVE.  
(512) 326-1648

In the same vein as Moxie and The Compound, Parts & Labour is a commission-based showcase of Texas-made goods. The store maintains over 100 labels, ranging from T-shirts to jewelry, reconstructed clothes to handmade handbags. Small and trendy, the rotating inventory of homegrown designer wares makes the shop worth checking into every once in awhile.

**TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES**  
1317 S. CONGRESS AVE.  
(512) 440-0440  
[villagesofaustin.com](http://villagesofaustin.com)

The perfect place to find a beautiful and well-priced gift, vibrant and colorful Ten Thousand Villages is good for the soul too. Filled with housewares, jewelry, books and more from over 30 countries around world, the entirely volunteer-run store buys all of its goods directly from artisans in the developing world, paying them a living wage.

**STITCH**  
11.10  
AUSTIN CONVENTION CENTER  
[stitchaustin.com](http://stitchaustin.com)

The fifth annual Stitch Fashion Show and Guerrilla Craft Bazaar is the event of the year for local designers. Over 3,000 people annually head to the fashion show and fair, shopping while listening to deejays and checking out the latest fashions. All proceeds benefit the Stitch Grant, a grant program for independent, creative businesses.