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# Écru by Cecilie Manz

3daysofdesign

elvang  
RESPONSIBLE SINCE 2003

# A THROW FOR EVERY OCCASION

To snuggle under on the sofa when the cold unexpectedly strikes. To decorate the end of the bed because the colour pleases the eye. Or to take out to the terrace when the temperature drops but the evening sun still beckons. A throw has a myriad of functions. It is also a historical archetype – an indispensable piece of everyday design that we wrap around ourselves whenever clothing is not quite enough.

Since 2002, Danish company Elvang has supplied a variety of textile products for the home, including throws in a multitude of colours and patterns, mostly woven from alpaca wool and cotton. Now, it is launching a brand-new collection called Écru, consisting of now four simple, classic and functional throws designed by Cecilie Manz.

The collaboration between Elvang and the internationally recognised Danish designer was born out of a shared ambition to create textiles that are beautiful, long-lasting and sustainable – just like alpaca wool itself, which served as the original inspiration behind Elvang's creation.

"It was wishful thinking when we reached out to Cecilie Manz, but we had an idea that she would be the right person to work with our core material, alpaca wool. We were convinced that with her timeless aesthetic and refined sense of materials, she would produce something special. Luckily, she immediately fell in love with the amazing softness, durability and environmental benefits of the fibres," says Tina Elvang, co-founder of Elvang.

Manz took the selvedge on woven textiles as a starting point for her designs. The result is an exclusive collection of four throws which at first glance differ only in the colour of the edge stripes, but on closer inspection also diverge in the placement of the final stripes in the weave – a slight variation that gives each throw its own unique character.

The collection's name comes from the French word for 'natural colour' and represents the pale grey, off white, light beige and brown colourways, which are not dyed but determined by the hues of the animals themselves. At the edges of the throws, Manz has also incorporated a number of dyed tones that help shape each piece's individual expression. What the throws all have in common, however, is that they fit Elvang's philosophy of textiles that are exquisitely designed and durable, with a clear focus on sustainability.

"Choosing the best materials and using processes rooted in centuries-old traditions sit at the heart of the responsible business practices that we stand for and pursue. We believe that this meeting of craftsmanship, materials and beautiful design is a small step towards a world where our throw-away culture is replaced by a new form of consumption – one where we care about what we buy for many years to come," says Tina Elvang.



Danish designer Cecilie Manz is known both at home and abroad for her clear, stringent design language and her declared love of quality. She has now worked with Danish company Elvang to create a series of throws – a historical design archetype that shouldn't make too much noise and should ideally last for a lifetime. Because if we spend resources on producing something new, it has to be here to stay.

#### WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH THE COLLECTION OF THROWS YOU'VE JUST DESIGNED FOR ELVANG?

The world doesn't really need more things, so if you're going to produce something new, it has to be of good quality. I actually see it as our duty – to choose decent materials that last, and to ensure the processing and design are in order so that you don't want to get rid of the item in question. I work with things that endure for the long term, not what appeals to short-term interests. I myself am almost addicted to quality, and it's my experience that once you get used to going down that road, it's hard to go back. The Écru series was created with this ethos in mind.

#### WHAT WAS THE INSPIRATION?

The design was inspired by the selvedge – the tightly woven edge on a piece of fabric that prevents it from fraying. Often striped or in a different colour, it has a technical function and has always fascinated me. That's why in my design I've chosen to only have something happen along the edges of the throws, in the form of narrow, coloured stripes that end in fringing. On the rest of the surface there is... nothing! I like the fact that the overall expression is allowed to be quiet and discreet – it's classic and maybe even a little conservative. I can't say it any better than the founder of the Swedish company Källemo once did: "Things must also stand the wear and tear of the eye". It's a great quality if something can hold our

interest over time. If things are very loud or fashionable, they don't belong in the universe I work in.

#### WHAT ROLE DOES THE CHOSEN MATERIAL, ALPACA WOOL, PLAY?

Alpaca is the finest wool – and I love wool. The series is called Écru, and the name sprang up during the idea phase because I knew I wanted to work with raw materials in nature's own colour scale – actually the colours of the animals themselves. We selected three tones and combined them with dyed wool for the stripes. The wool comes from farms in Peru, where the animals are sheared and the wool is then sorted by hand according to colour. As a result there may be slight variations in the colours over time, but that's part of the charm when working with natural materials. Woven alpaca wool has a nice fluidity, a bit like linen when you move it. It's warm, but at the same time it has a cool surface and there's a pleasant weight to the weave we've chosen.

#### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU THAT SUSTAINABILITY IS AS IMPORTANT TO ELVANG AS DESIGN AND QUALITY?

We're used to using and throwing away. When something breaks, we say: "Oh well, I'll buy a new one this weekend". I simply won't be a part of that. It has to be right, otherwise I can't allow myself to create something new. That Elvang has a credible set-up, with close

contact with suppliers and a knowledge of exactly how things are done, is therefore very important to me. Because it's not only the manufacturer's responsibility to think about sustainable materials and ethical production – it's also the designer's responsibility to create products that are worth the resources and effort involved. I'm not one of those people who think you should just give consumers what they want without question. Instead, we as designers should constantly strive to make something that will last long and last well, and we should do this in collaboration with manufacturers that we can trust to make the right choices.

#### CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE DESIGN PROCESS?

You might think it's just a solid-colour throw with a few narrow stripes, so how long can it take? But it can actually take quite a long time. You test and discuss, consider options and try alternatives, constantly assessing whether you're on the right path until you reach the point where you realise it's there. In my work process, one of the key questions is always whether I would want the furniture, cup or textile I'm working on in my home. Yes or no! That determines whether it's a project I want to embark upon. Later, the design comes to my home for a visit or lives for a period of time in my workshop, in my own light and where I have my own peace and quiet. It can be a weekend or several months. The

crucial thing is that it is given a context. Only then can I really feel whether it works. It's also about having respect for the time it takes for an object to be finished, which means that it needs to mature in a specific context while you try it out. It's about both time and place.

What do you enjoy most about the process? It's nerve-racking but also exciting when it's all up in the air and I have to find the common thread again. You can get lost in the process, which is why the first quick sketch or model is crucial to keep. This is often where the idea is hidden. Maybe I'm the only one who can see what the doodle represents, but it doesn't matter, as long as I can find the idea – the spark that started it all.

#### WHAT IS GOOD DESIGN TO YOU?

It's basically everything we need as humans. I like the archetypes – a spoon or a cup, for example, is a vital tool that you simply need. The blanket is also an archetype. A woolen blanket has existed in all times and in all cultures, and it's very satisfying for me to be able to design such an essential and fundamentally useful product.

Elvang

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# ALPACA – NATURE’S MODEST WONDER

Its quality is exceptional, its insulating properties are unmatched by any other material and, most importantly, it is so comfortable against the skin that those who normally find ordinary sheep’s wool scratchy will enjoy its softness. Alpaca wool originates from Peru, where the animal – a member of the camel family – has for millennia been a vital natural resource. Its unique fibres are hollow, meaning the wool is thermoregulatory. It is up to seven times warmer than sheep’s wool, yet it feels lightweight and cool when temperatures rise. It is also naturally wa-

ter-repellent and breathable, keeping you warm and dry when conditions are wet or humid. What’s more, alpaca wool is hypoallergenic and, unlike sheep’s wool, does not contain any lanolin, making it an obvious alternative for those with an allergy to the substance. Alpaca wool comes in an array of natural colours dictated by the hues of the animals themselves, which range from a very light beige to a multitude of brown shades and a deep, saturated black.



Elvang



Elvang





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Ecru throw - Pale grey



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Ecru throw - Pale grey



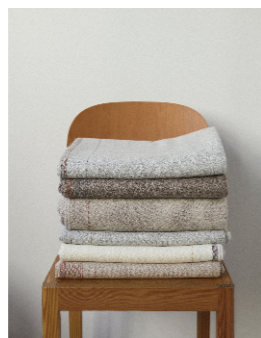
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Écru by Cecilie Manz  
130 x 207 cm / 51 x 82 inches  
Recommended retail price:  
DKK 2795 / NOK 4.495 / EUR 375

For more information, images, loans and other enquiries, please contact Tina Elvang  
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High-res imagery of the Écru collection can be downloaded via the following link:  
[Press Kit ELVANG x Cecilie Manz](#)

Responsible since 2003

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