



STITCHED SHIBORI: TECHNIQUE, INNOVATION, PATTERN, DESIGN by Jane Callender. Search Press, Wellwood, North Farm Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, United Kingdom TN2 3DR. 2017. Softcover. 176 pages. \$35.00.

For anyone who has ever pulled up and dyed a simple stitched resist, the beauty and complexity of Jane Callender's work is awe-inspiring. In this generous book, she shares, with great detail, her mastery of shibori techniques and dyeing. Attention to detail makes this an excellent guide for all levels.

An introduction explains shibori as the interaction between compressed cloth and dye. The section entitled "Shibori Tradition," along with additional pages throughout the book, reveal the history of shibori worldwide and how politics, economics, and fashion affected design, including particular techniques developed by significant Japanese masters in modern times.

The "Techniques" section proceeds from the simplest to more complex stitched patterns and shows the power of simple motifs in repeat. Even complex techniques are made clear with step-by-step photos and illustrations. Only a few indigo photos are perhaps too dark to be easily discernable. Some 100 pages are devoted to cloth preparation and process for specific techniques. Even the most experienced practitioner will learn something new about stitching on a single layer, on folded or pleated cloth, or combined methods such as capping and oversewing. Developing a motif by filling in larger shapes encourages creativity. Techniques not usually associated with stitch resist, such as clamp resist and binding or capping to a core, increase our understanding of the possibilities. Suggestions on dip dyeing for variety in some patterns and buffers for clean edges and to prevent knots from pulling through are invaluable. Degumming silk and even working on synthetic fabrics for interesting dimensional results without dyeing is explained. Japanese stitch names are used throughout.

The sections on "Pattern" and "Dyes" will set the novice on the right path. Although many examples are dyed in traditional indigo, which is particularly well suited to resist dyeing, mordanted natural dyes, tannins and fiber reactive dyes enliven the book. There are excellent didactic chapters at the end of the book on these dyes. Indigo in particular is well explained. Callender acknowledges the dye experts she has learned from: Michelle Kwon of Maiwa, French dye chemist Michel Garcia, and her compatriot author Jenny Balford Paul. The chapters devoted to discharge and dyeing whet the appetite for further exploration. Imperial measurements need the slight conversion to American gallons and fluid ounces, but gram measurements are always accurate. The reader is encouraged to innovate and adapt traditional patterns according to her own artistic creativity. The author provides excellent sections on working with a grid and planning ahead for complex interactions between small pattern motifs. Other valuable tips are highlighted throughout. Callender's book should be read through with care and referred back to often when planning a new project. In this age of searchable documents on line, references to useful pages on particular techniques are appreciated. Finally, the gallery of Callender's own inspiring artwork shows what true mastery of craft can produce. This is an excellent companion to Yoshiko Iwamoto Wada's two earlier seminal books on shibori. Callender's book is a must have for all textile schools, shibori dyers and surface design artists.

*Reviewed by Barbara Shapiro
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