



## **MAKE MEND:** **I'm DYE-ING to Make That!**

**Monday, December 6, 2021, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.**  
**USC Fisher Museum of Art Courtyard**  
**University of Southern California**

### **KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**

- This is the second of the “Make Mend” series of wabi-sabi workshops organized by the USC Roski School of Art and Design.
- Materials will be provided to registered participants. Participants may also bring cloth items that they want to dye or alter. These cloth items must be cotton, linen, silk, or wool only. Synthetic or poly mix cloth will not dye; indigo dye only adheres to natural fabrics.
- Space and supplies are limited and registration is required. Walk-ups will be accommodated on a standby basis only.
- Indigo dye will stain. Please dress accordingly.
- All skill levels are welcome. Techniques will be demonstrated at the workshop.

### **WABI-SABI**

Wabi-sabi is a concept in Japanese aesthetics that centers the beauty in imperfection, seeing flaws as part of beauty.

### **INDIGO**

Indigo is one of the oldest and most popular dyes used for coloring fabrics. It can create many shades of blue, though it is perhaps best known for its deep blue.

A traditional dye that has been used for thousands of years all over the world, indigo was common in the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Asia, Mesoamerica, Peru, Iran, West Africa, Greece, and Rome. It's also the iconic dye used for classic blue jeans.

Historically, indigo was a natural dye extracted from plant leaves. It gets its name from the *Indigofera* genus of plants, a historically important crop in Asia. Synthetic indigo was created in the mid-nineteenth century. And while much of the indigo dye used today is synthetic, plant-derived indigo is still available and prized by many artists and makers.

The Japanese word for traditional indigo dyeing is *aizome*. *Aizome* became popular in Japan during the Edo period (1603–1867), when the lower classes were prohibited from wearing silk or bright colors—so people dyed cotton with indigo.

In addition to its beauty, indigo also has antibacterial qualities, which has led to its use in skin products as well as clothing and household items.



## SHIBORI

Shibori is a Japanese tie-dyeing technique that dates back to at least 238 CE, the date of the earliest known written mention of shibori-dyed cloth. There are several different ways to create shibori with tools including thread, poles, or wooden blocks. It's traditionally done with indigo dye, and can create countless different patterns. The Japanese verb *shiboru* means "to wring, squeeze, or press."

## BORO

Boro is a type of Japanese textile made by mending and patching. The term derives from a word that means tattered, ragged, or repaired.

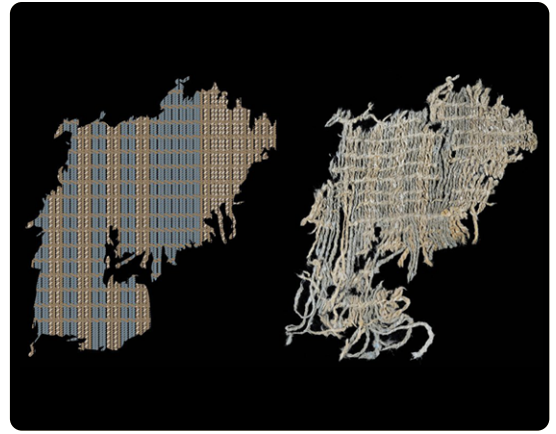
Boro textiles are usually made via continuous, repeated patchwork and/or stitch repair. A single boro garment or duvet cover might be the work of generations of patching and repair, with family lineages embedded in the layers upon layers of patches. Boro reflects the values of wabi-sabi (beauty in imperfection) and minimizing waste.

## FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- What associations do you have with the concepts of mending and repair? Did this workshop shift your perception of these terms or practices in any way?
- How can mending be a wellness practice?
- What is the value of seeing the beauty in imperfection, or the imperfection in beauty?
- To what else can you apply the concept of wabi-sabi?

## IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- World Shibori Network  
[shibori.org](http://shibori.org)
- Repair Café  
[repaircafe.org](http://repaircafe.org)
- Tom of Holland: The Visible Mending Programme  
[tomofholland.com](http://tomofholland.com)
- Christina Kim of the eco-conscious design house Dosa  
[dosainc.com](http://dosainc.com)
- The Far Woods: Designers, artists, and sisters Sonya and Nina Montenegro, who wrote a book called *Mending Life: A Handbook for Repairing Clothes and Hearts*  
[thefarwoods.com](http://thefarwoods.com)
- Aja Barber, who works at the intersections of fashion and sustainability  
[ajabarber.com](http://ajabarber.com)
- Artist Andrea Zittel  
[zittel.org](http://zittel.org)
- 4/15/22 at USC: [Make Mend: Kintsugi Hack](#)

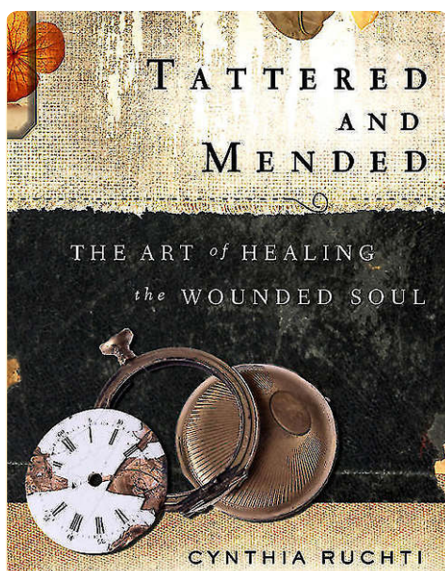
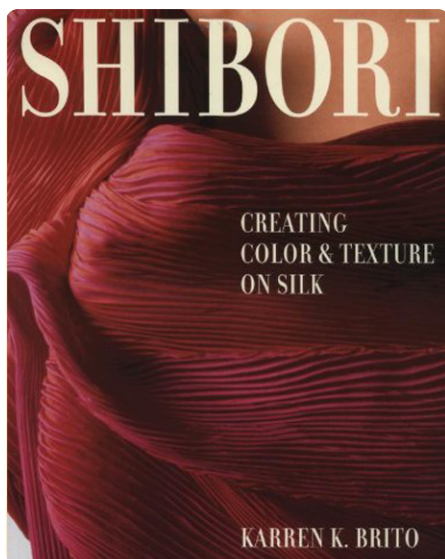


The oldest known use of indigo to dye fabric was in Huaca Prieta, Peru, 6,000 years ago. This image shows a scrap of the indigo-dyed fabric (right) and a diagram of the cloth (left), highlighting the blue stripes.



Rare Japanese "Boro" textile from 19th century.





## DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

**Christina Snider** of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this event. Electronic resources are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at [libraries.usc.edu](https://libraries.usc.edu) but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

### BOOKS AND DISSERTATIONS

- 🕒 Melanie Bowles, [\*Print, Make, Wear: Creative Projects for Digital Textile Design\*](#) (London: Laurence King, 2015).
- 🕒 Karren K. Brito, [\*Shibori: Creating Color & Texture on Silk\*](#) (New York: Watson-Guptill, 2002).
- 🕒 Leren Li, “[\*Reviving Boro: The Transcultural Reconstruction of Japanese Patchwork\*](#).” PhD diss., Royal College of Art, 2020.
- 🕒 Cynthia Ruchti, [\*Tattered and Mended: The Art of Healing the Wounded Soul\*](#) (Nashville: Abingdon, 2015).
- 🕒 Yoshiko Iwamoto Wada et al., [\*Shibori: The Inventive Art of Japanese Shaped Resist Dyeing: Tradition, Techniques, Innovation\*](#) (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1983).

### DATABASES

- 🕒 [JapanKnowledge](#)
- 🕒 [Art, Design & Architecture Collection](#)
- 🕒 [Cultural Japan](#)

### JOURNALS

- 🕒 [Arts and Crafts of Japan](#)
- 🕒 [Studies in Japanese Literature and Culture](#)

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- 🕒 [Japanese Studies Research Guide](#)
- 🕒 [USC Dornsife Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture](#)