

SHIBORI TECHNIQUE USING PROCOLOUR DYES

TECHNIQUE COMPATIBILITY	
WITH HEATFIX DYES	WITH STEAMFIX DYES
YES, EXC.	YES, VERY GOOD

'Shibori' is the Japanese art of tie dyeing. This method of physically resisting the penetration of dyes into fabric is not only a sophisticated discipline in Japan, but also throughout the East, and more recently the West.

For the purposes of this information, it is assumed that you, the practitioners, are familiar with the many ways of tying, binding, ruching and folding the fabric to restrict the dye penetration and thus create a resist pattern during dyeing.

The quickfire shibori technique given below involves painting the dyes onto the tied fabric rather than the traditional method of immersing the tied fabric into successive coloured dye baths. This is because painting allows much more control over where and how much dye is deposited onto the tied fabric. Painting also means that the Shibori process is a lot quicker because multicoloured effects can be achieved in a single step rather than being built up by immersion dyeing in a series of different coloured dye baths;(the traditional process of shibori.)

Usually, the most noticeable deficiency in a novice's shibori is that the fine veiny detail found in masterly examples of the art is lost, diffused. To prevent the loss of this illusive and sought after detail, the following measures are recommended:

- The dyes should be painted onto pre-wetted fabric, not dry fabric. A solution containing 5% RINSEFIX is used to pre-wet the tied fabric, prior to painting. Pre-wetting with this RINSEFIX solution instead of plain water improves the fine veiny detail for all shibori including traditional immersion methods.
- After painting, the dye must be dried or fixed as rapidly as possible. Slow drying of unfixed dye = diffusion = poor detail. Pre-wetting with RINSEFIX solution instantly fixes about half the dye immediately when the dye comes into contact with the fabric. This instant fixation effect that RINSEFIX has on the dye causes the retention of fine veiny detail before it is dissipated during normal drying.

QUICKFIRE PAINTED SHIBORI TECHNIQUE ON SILK.

For this technique a flat heatable container is required in which to do the painting. Containers suitable for this are as follows: a large frypan, oven tray or roasting dish. These can be easily heated on an electric stove element set on low. A solid steel barbecue top could also work well.

Method

1. If you're painting with **HEATFIX DYES** pre-soak the silk fabric in a solution containing: **250g of HEATFIX MEDIUM dissolved in 700g of warm water + 50g of RINSEFIX.**
If you're painting with **STEAMFIX DYES** pre-soak the silk fabric in a solution containing: **950g of water + 50g of RINSEFIX.**
2. Cover the container bottom with a couple of sheets of newspaper. Brush the pre-soak solution over the newspaper.
3. Ruch the pre-soaked wet silk on top of the flat newspaper so that the silk is reduced to approximately a quarter of its unruched flat size.
4. Apply the dye to the wet ruched silk by brush, dropper bottle or syringe.
5. Drain off any excess dye, and begin heating the container by placing it on the electric element set on low. **Avoid excessive breathing of the ammonia fumes given off during heating.**
6. When the heat has dried the newspaper and silk, remove the silk.
If **HEATFIX DYES** have been used then the dyes will be fixed by the heating so the shibori painting is complete ready for rinsing etc.
If **STEAMFIX DYES** have been used then the dyes will not be completely fixed so the painting will have to be steam fixed etc.

Notes

- **RINSEFIX ruins liquid dyes**, so utensils need to be immaculately washed before reusing them for dyes. It is not advisable to reuse a brush for dye that has been previously used for RINSEFIX. When painting dyes onto fabric pre-soaked in 5% RINSEFIX, take care not to absorb this pre-soak solution with the brush and then return it to your dye.
- **Textile paints are also ruined by RINSEFIX** so if the shibori requires paint embellishment then it must be applied and heatset prior to pre-soaking in RINSEFIX or alternatively the paint must be applied after the shibori and rinse procedure is complete.
- From painting up until when the ruched silk is dried, try not to overturn the shibori bundle or disrupt the ruching and always apply the heat to the under side, then any wet unfixed dye will be drawn towards the dark coloured valley bottoms of the ruches. If you were to iron or blow hot air on top of the ruched silk then residual wet unfixed dye would be drawn to the top crests of the ruches where it may cause unwanted darkening of highlights. Wet dye is always drawn towards dry areas of fabric.
- In the quickfire technique I like to inject the darkest dye colour first by syringe so that it runs along most of the creases to form a foundation lattice of dark veins.
- When diluting the dyes to make pastels omit DIFFUSANT from the diluent because it's detrimental to detail sharpness.
- **Doing the quickfire shibori on cotton, rayon and cellulose fibres** is exactly the same as the above procedure on silk except 3.5% soda ash needs to be added to the pre-soak solution.