

Friday, June 9, 2017

Greetings from Alan S. Wicks at Just Shibori.

Regarding the making of the quilt top pictured below using clamp resist (Itajime) Shibori.



The basic folding pattern is a square accordion fold with a hollow parallelogramish opening and solid borders to the outside of the square with slight cutouts on one of the corners.

NOTE: Please see the notes at the end of this document with suggestions on how to practice this process first using 3-ply napkins instead of cloth and then using small panels of cloth before using the larger piece of fabric.

GENERAL PROCESS: You will be dying just the quilt top and then backing it and quilting it later.

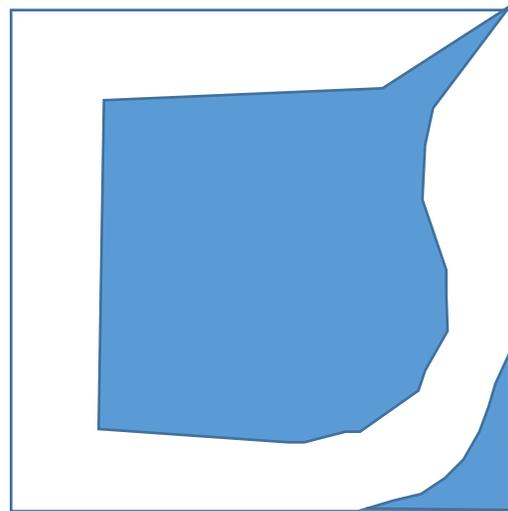
FOLDING:

- (1) You need to decide how big each square panel will be. The reason is that this will affect how wide and long your piece of fabric will be. You can do it backwards, but the finished size will probably not be a standard commercial quilt size.
- (2) For instance, if you wanted the panels 1 foot square then the final dimensions of the quilt top would have to be an even multiple of that: say 8 foot or 10 foot wide. If the panels were 10 inches wide then you could have $8 \times 10 = 80$ or $10 \times 10 = 100$ inch wide/long cover top. The important thing is that if you want the panels to be square, then you need to decide ahead of time what size the panels are and how that relates to the final size. NOTE: The length and width do not have to be the same so long as the number of panels in each direction is an even number.

- (3) Fold the fabric lengthwise in a fan fold with each fold being the predetermined width. Then fan fold the other direction keeping the pieces square. Ironing each fold helps. Making a cardboard template the correct width can help too.

THE CLAMP RESIST FIGURE:

- (1) You will need two pieces of wood, metal, acrylic, etc. cut into the shape below. The wood is the white part, the blue is where the dye will go.
- (2) Where the white goes to the edge I suggest that you extend the wood beyond these edges for better resist.



Bottom left

CLAMPING TO THE FABRIC:

- (1) There are a few very important things to know when you clamp the wood to the fabric.
 - a. Orient your folded fabric so that the corner that has the free corners of fabric is on the bottom left and align the bottom left of the wooden resist pieces with that. This keeps the repeat pattern right.
 - b. You will need about three or four clamps for this piece.

DYING THE FABRIC:

- (1) Clamp well and immerse. I suggest that you use standard MX dyes with a soda ash presoak before folding. You can find this information on the internet.

USING THREE PLY PAPER NAPKINS AS A STUDY AID

There are several advantages to using 3-ply paper napkins to learn about folding patterns in Shibori. They are relatively cheap and you don't feel guilty trying ideas and throwing away the results as you might using cloth.

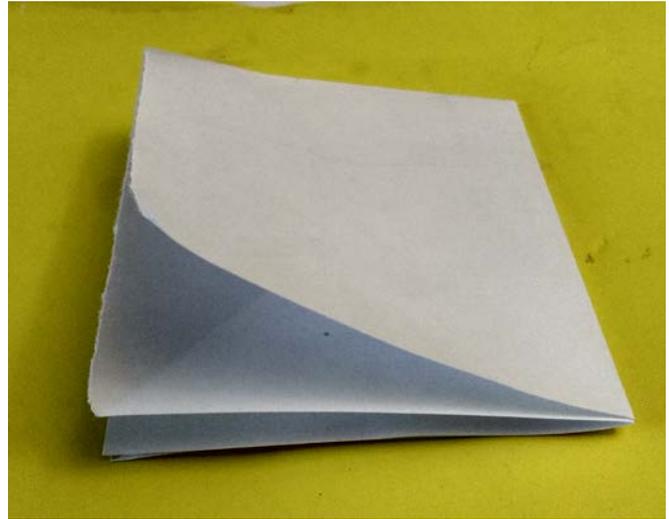
There are basic two sizes of 3-ply napkins, (1) a 15x17 inch and (2) a 16x16 inch. They are both usable. For myself, I prefer the 16x16 simply because it saves me the time it takes to trim the others to a 15" square. I realize that the pieces don't need to be square, but it makes it easier for me to visualize the results.

If you want to use these in a different size you will have to trim them but this can cause a problem when you go to unfold them since two of the sides will not be bonded together anymore. You have to be careful when you unfold them after drying.

I use the napkins in the fold pattern they come in though I might iron them to get them into a better 4 panel configuration. This is an excellent form for studying a square fan fold pattern.

When using them I strongly suggest that you orient them so that the free outer corners of the napkin are in the bottom left corner as shown in the photo to the right.

I use just standard MX dyes but I do not treat the napkins with soda ash since I am not going to wash them out nor, for the same reason, do I worry about letting them cure. What I do after applying the dye is simply to dry them in my oven at 180°F (80°C) for two hours. Then I can separate the layers and see the results.



There are differences between napkins and fabric. The paper napkins are very absorptive. It is more difficult to get really crisp edges. But for the purpose of learning about the effect of clamping/dyeing corners, edges, centers, etc., napkins work really well.

GRADUATING TO CLOTH:

Once you have solidified your ideas using napkins then graduate to squares of cloth. Test your ideas. Take your time. Keep the same corner in the bottom left so what you do is reproducible. The corners and edges are not interchangeable.

Vaya con Dios,
Alan S. Wicks
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