

Brenda Gael Smith is happy to share the following tutorial

## Serendipity Shibori Tutorial #1: Karamatsu – Japanese Larch



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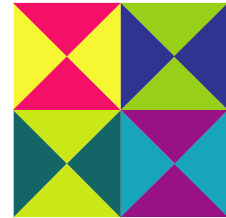
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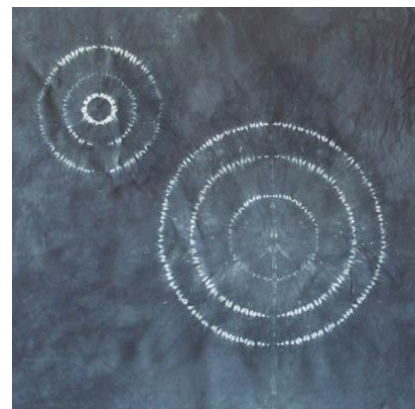
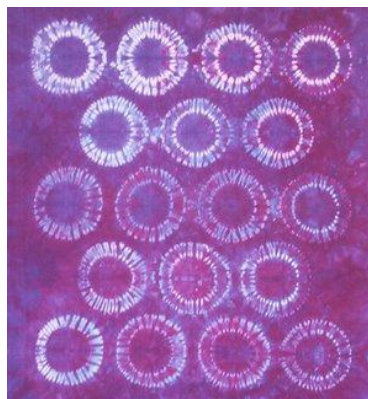
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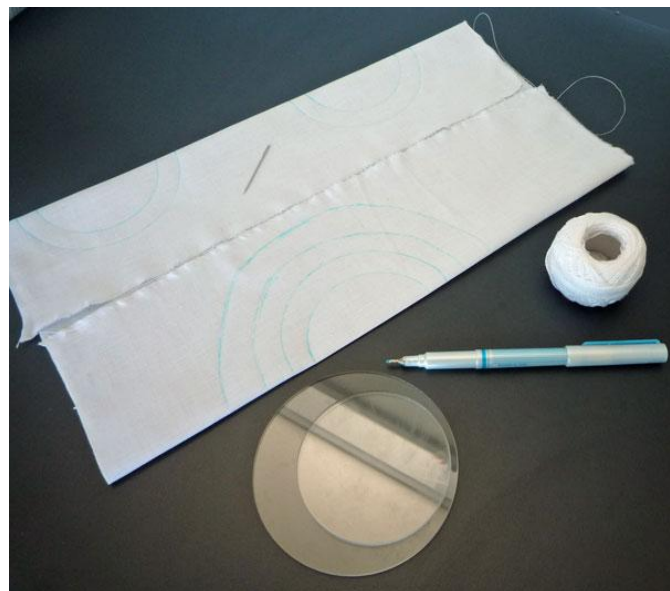
## Introduction to Shibori Dyeing Tutorial #1: Karamatsu - Japanese Larch

Karamatsu, or Japanese larch, is a radiating circle design created with a stitch resist. Different effects are achieved depending upon the number of circles you stitch; the number of rows of stitching; and how close together the rows are.



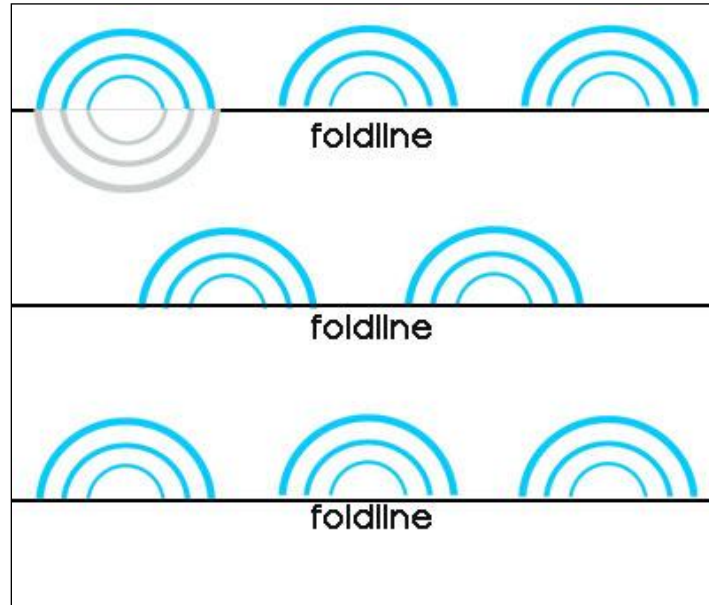
### You will need:

- A piece of PFD (prepared for dyeing) cotton fabric OR light coloured cotton fabric that has been washed in hot water ready for over dyeing – say 15x15in
- Half circle templates OR make your own with a compass and cardboard
- Water soluble marker
- Strong thread (I use perle) and a crewel needle
- Scissors
- Soda ash solution - see attached
- Procion dye solution(s) – see attached
- Plastic container for dyeing
- Rubber gloves



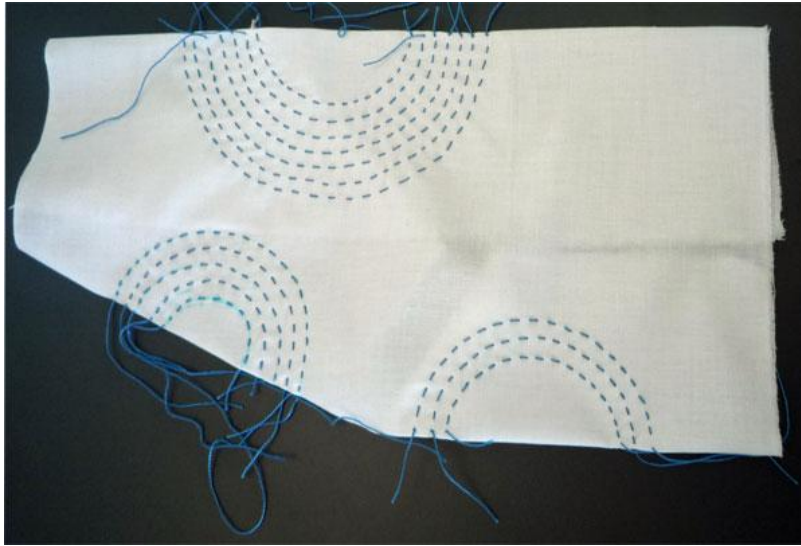
### Step 1: Mark and fold the fabric

- Mark concentric circles along a fold line in the fabric using the water soluble marker and half circle templates or you can do this by eye. (Make sure you leave enough space below the fold line for the other half of the circle!)
- Fold the fabric along the foldline(s). If required, pin to keep the two layers together.



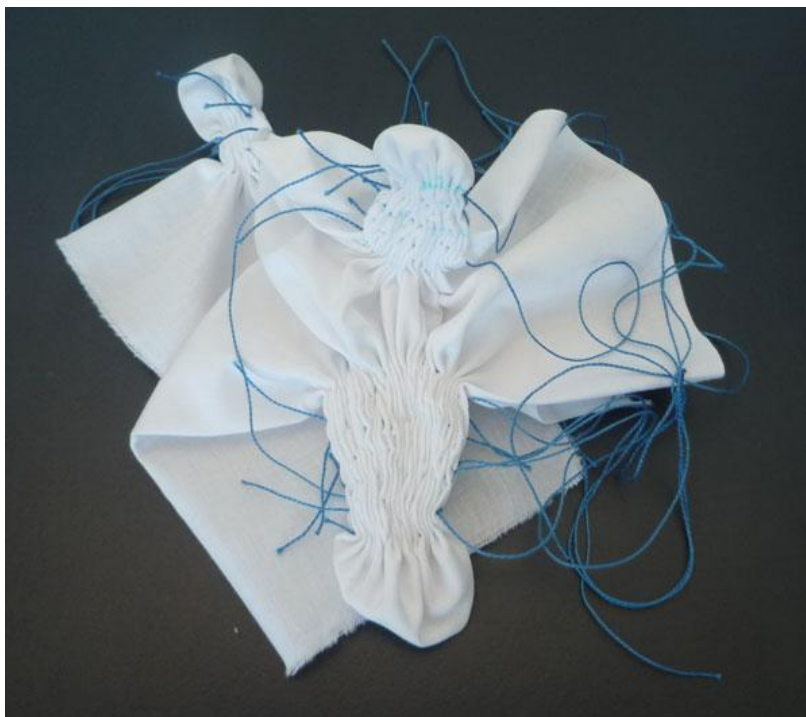
### Step 2: Stitch the half circles

- Thread up needle and knot the end of the thread leaving a short tail.
- Stitch a small running stitch around each half circle through both layers of fabric.
- Use a separate thread for each half circle. (If you have several circles positioned close together on a fold line, as shown in Step 1, you can use the same thread for all the outer circles on the foldline; a new thread for the three middle inner circles and so on.)



### Step 3: Gather the threads

- Gently pull the gathering threads until the fabric is **tightly** gathered. The tighter, the better! otherwise no pattern will be created.
- Tightly knot the gathering thread (so there is a knot at each end).
- Trim the gathering threads, leaving a small tail (image shows tails before cut).



### Step 4: Soda Ash Soak

- Place the gathered piece into a plastic container.
- Pour soda ash solution over the piece and leave to soak well for 5-10 minutes.
- Squeeze the piece to remove excess soda solution and pour all the leftover soda solution back into your storage bottle (it can be reused).
- Return the soaked piece to the plastic container.



### **Step 5: Dyeing**

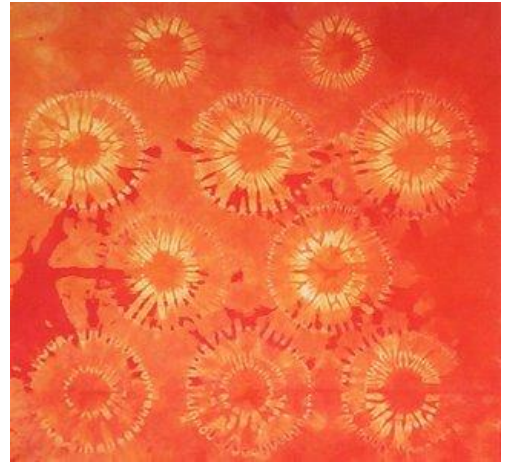
- Pour dye solution(s) over the soda ash-soaked fabric. Use enough dye solution to saturate the fabric but it doesn't need to be flooded.
- Leave to batch for at least two hours but preferably overnight.
- Pour off excess dye into the sink – this dye is exhausted and **CANNOT** be reused.
- Rinse in cold water and squeeze excess moisture from the piece.
- Allow the fabric to dry completely before removing the threads (**optional**)

### **Step 6: Remove gathering threads**

- Snip the gathering threads – taking care not to cut the fabric!
- Remove the gathering threads and loosen the fabrics.

### **Step 7: Rinse, wash & iron**

- It is more efficient to wash small pieces of fabric by hand.
- Start with a cold water rinse and end with hot water (a dash of dishwashing detergent is optional).
- Ensure that the water runs clear at the end of the rinsing and washing process.
- Dry, iron and admire!



## General Instructions for Soda Ash & Dye Solutions

Procion fibre reactive dyes are economical, safe and easy to use. When combined with a soda ash fixative (sodium carbonate), procion dyes react quickly at room temperature to lock the colour in place permanently.

Please take precautions when dealing with chemicals. Always wear a dust mask or respirator when mixing chemicals along with gloves and protective clothing. Once you have used containers and utensils for dyeing, never use them for food or drink.

These instructions quickly cover the basics of preparing soda ash & dye solutions. For more, detailed guidance please refer to one of the many fantastic books about dyeing (see below).

### You will need:

- Soda ash (sodium carbonate)
- 2 litre plastic bottle (or similar)
- Apron
- Latex or plastic gloves
- Respirator or dust mask approved for fine particles
- Measuring cup
- Plastic measuring spoons – teaspoon and tablespoon
- Procion dye powders
- Plastic bottles (or jars)
- Funnel



### Preparing the Soda Ash Solution

- Dissolve soda ash in warm-hot water. (Use at room temperature.)
- 3-4 tablespoons of soda per litre of water. (1/2 cup to 1 cup soda ash per gallon of water.)
- Usually, I measure the soda ash into a 2 litre bottle with a little warm water. I tightly screw the lid on top and shake the bottle until the soda ash is dissolved. Then I top the bottle up with more water.
- The soda ash solution can be stored for later use. **Label your solution clearly and store out of reach of children.**

#### Suppliers:

Soda ash (sodium carbonate) is available from pool supply stores.

Procion dyes are available from:

- ProChem [www.prochemicalanddye.com](http://www.prochemicalanddye.com)
- Dharma [www.dharmatrading.com](http://www.dharmatrading.com)
- Kraftkolour [www.kraftkolour.com.au](http://www.kraftkolour.com.au) (Australia)

#### Further Reading:

- *Art Cloth: A Guide to Surface Design for Fabric* Jane Dunnewold ISBN1596681950
- *Fabric to Dye For: Create 72 Hand-Dyed Colors for Your Stash; 5 Fused Quilt Projects* Frieda L. Anderson ISBN 1571208232
- *Color by Accident: Low-Water Immersion Dyeing* Ann Johnston

### Preparing the Dye Solution(s)

For the purposes of shibori dyeing, you will need at least one set of dye solution in a darker colour than the fabric you are dyeing. If you are overdyeing a coloured fabric, this will affect the outcome – for example, overdyeing a yellow fabric with blue dye will create a greenish background with yellow patterning. Beginners might like to try three primary colours – a red, blue and yellow with white fabric and experiment with dyeing serendipity. (Caution: if you mix the three primaries together, you will get a muddy colour!)

1. Pour a quarter cup of warm water in the bottom of the measuring cup.
2. Measure 2 rounded teaspoons of dye powder and sprinkle on the water.
3. Stir briskly to fully dissolve the dye particles.



4. Using a funnel, pour the concentrated dye solution into a squirt bottle or storage jar.
5. Fill the measuring cup with  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of water and swoosh around to catch all of the residual dye left in the cup.
6. Top up the squirt bottle or jar with the  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of water and residual dye. Put the lid on firmly, holding in place with your finger, and shake to fully combine.
7. For best results, use the dye solution within seven days. (Refrigerating or storing dye solutions at cooler temperatures will extend shelf life but the dyes will gradually lose their oomph and colour will wash out.)

