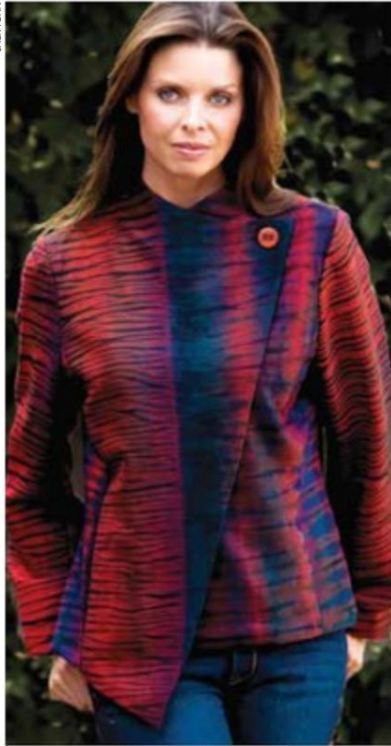


JACKYSON



INOCLOPOT

DOSHI designed costumes for theater, dance, ice skating, stunt shows, and TV—from Shakespeare festivals to Waterworld at Universal Studios Hollywood—before focusing on art-to-wear and shibori, a shaped resist dyeing technique. Nancy Jo Smith's nickname, Doshi, is derived from Sanskrit descriptions of her spiritual rebirth. She received a bachelor's degree in theater from Midwestern State University and an MFA in costume design from the University of Michigan. She will retire soon from California State University, Long Beach, where she is a professor of costume design and supervises an MFA program. www.doshifiberart.com

"I began college as a theater major," said Doshi. "One night, while performing as Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I realized I was much more concerned about the costumes I had designed than about my own performance. At that moment, I decided what I wanted to do." Even as a freelance costume designer from 1980 to 1995, she explored ways of hand-dyeing fabric. She taught herself the ancient Japanese art of shibori from books.

"I use the traditions of the Japanese art but make it my own," said Doshi. "The magic of shibori emerges from chance and practice, or accidents and practice." Patterns are achieved by pole wrapping, pleating over a rope core, folding and clamping, or stitching together tightly gathered fabric. Where the fabric is compressed, dye cannot enter. It is the root of American tie-dye, she noted.

Doshi describes the resulting designs as the memories of the method used to resist the dye. Having worked with chiffon, organza, and combination fabrics based on linen, she now works with silk broadcloth, loving the way it drapes yet retains body. One assistant does the base dyeing and cuts fabric to Doshi's patterns; another sews her one-of-a-kind garments.

Her shift away from costumes was inspired by the British fashion designer Zandra Rhodes. "During a workshop, Zandra asked why I wanted to design for theater—a collaborative art form working with directors and others to create their vision—rather than fashion. What interests me about doing art-to-wear is [that] it's much more an original art form—my design, my color sense."

Indeed, Doshi's vivid colorways radiate her joy in creation. "We're more of a disposable society now," she said of current challenges. "Younger people buy things that are less expensive, wear it for the season, then throw it away. One of my goals is to make comfortable clothing you can wear every day."

Janet Mendelsohn, a freelance writer and author of *Maine's Museums: Art, Oddities & Artifacts* (Countryman Press), especially enjoys writing about travel and the arts. She welcomes readers' story ideas. www.janetmendelsohn.com



TOP LEFT: Doshi, **Shinto**; 2012; wool gabardine, acid dye; arashi shibori, poured and vat dyed.

TOP RIGHT: Doshi, **Ember Kai**; 2009; silk-linen gauze, acid dye, direct dye, thiourea dioxide; tesuji shibori, poured and vat dyed, discharged.

RIGHT CENTER: Doshi in her studio.

LEFT: Doshi, **Innuendo**; 2019; silk organza, acid dye, thiourea dioxide; arashi shibori, poured and vat dyed, discharged.

ABOVE: Doshi, **City Lites, Rio** (Detail); 2019; silk crepe, acid dye, clamps; itajime shibori, poured and vat dyed.

