

Traditional Yoruba Batik Workshop with Indigo

Class Description and Supply List

Learn the traditional Yoruba batik technique as well as the meaning behind the designs used in this 3-day workshop. Both hand painted and stamp techniques will be taught, and the clothe will be dyed in organic indigo from Nigeria. The Yoruba tribe calls batik dyeing adire alabela, which means wax resist. The wax can be applied to the fabric using wood stamps, stencils, or foam rubber. In my culture we primarily use foam rubber to apply the design to the fabric free hand. I believe that batik is the way of creating so many beautiful colors. Traditionally in Nigeria the dye used for batik fabrics is a dye called Jaman dye or Prosion dye, which are both colored dyes. However, indigo is currently the common dye used. The Yoruba name for indigo is “elu”. Since the olden days indigo has been used for medicine as well as a dye; it cures an upset stomach. Indigo is also used to ward off viruses; houses are painted with indigo to prevent the sickness from entering. Indigo is an organic substance, it comes from the indigo plant which grows wild in Nigeria. During the beginning of the rainy season the leaves are harvested and then dried. After they have dried they are formed into little balls which are then used to prepare the dye.

SUPPLIES

- 2 yards of white 100% cotton fabric
- Apron, rubber gloves, notebook and pen.
- *optional, in addition to the 2 yards of fabric students can bring a tshirt, tote bag or scarf as long as they are 100% cotton or silk.