BOROWOVENS

What is Boro?

Boro is a style of patchwork, though it is less about a craft or technique than a way to salvage textiles using scraps. The farming classes of Japan would mend torn clothing, futon covers and other textiles using rough running stitches out of economic necessity and the scarcity of cotton cloth.

Embodying the Japanese aesthetic of wabi-sabi – the acceptance of imperfection – boros have many shades of color and a variety of textures resulting from being created over the course of many years by successive generations of a family.

While each boro is unique, the process is the same. As everyday textiles would run thin or

by moda

tear, a scrap of fabric would be layered over the spot and joined with sashiko stitching – long straight running stitches done with white cotton thread, though a bit of red thread might be used for a special occasion.

With the industrial production of post-war Japan and the modernization of the mid-20th Century, boros were largely forgotten as a reminder of an impoverished rural past. The work of historians to preserve the cultural legacy of the textiles brought boros back to prominence, as did the recognition of their artistic importance. Modern Japanese fashion brands have popularized boros by creating garments, accessories and home décor items using the layered, mended patchwork of vintage boros.



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