

A love of textiles that runs deep

The textile collection at the Museum der Kulturen Basel is world-renowned. Pattern-making techniques have been systematically documented. One of these is tie-dye. This is the first time it is the focus of an exhibition. Visitors can see how magnificent patterns are created.

It takes a great deal of knowledge, experience, imagination and even a touch of maths to create the marvellous patterns that can be admired from 4 September 2026 in the exhibition “Tie-dye: Folded, Stitched, Coloured” at the Museum der Kulturen Basel (MKB). The focus is on the techniques and processes involved in dyeing a fabric.

Shibori is a tie-dye technique. Bandhani, Plangi, Tritik and Adire are other names for this unique form of textile patterning, which is created through folding, tying and sewing. During the process, the fabric surfaces are transformed into three-dimensional shapes. This is a characteristic feature of tie-dye. With certain fabrics, this is only temporary; others retain this shape permanently.

For the first time, an exhibition at the MKB is focusing on this technique. There is no shortage of prime examples. Curator Stephanie Lovász can draw freely from the extensive textile collection. She presents a selection of kimonos, boubous, headdresses, children's clothes, skirts, blouses, jackets, scarves and even shoes, amongst other items, on a catwalk.

Visitors can follow the process at the technique stations and understand how a pattern is created and what goes into the textiles. Tie-dyeing, for example, has been practised worldwide ever since fabric was first dyed. It is astonishing that all the patterning techniques on display require rather simple materials: needles, wood, thread, small stones or seeds. Yet this results in an enormous variety of techniques and outcomes.

“The exhibition aims to convey the joy and pleasure derived from the end result,” says Lovász. And the great appreciation for craftsmanship and arts and crafts.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the 12th International Shibori [Symposium](#) is being held at the MKB. Experts from all over the world will be discussing “Textile & Architecture: The Art of Dimensional Transformation” in Basel from 25 to 27 September 2026.

The “Tie-dye” exhibition runs until 23 January 2028. Images of the objects on display are already available to download from our [website](#).