



*Imperatives*

# SQUARE ROOTS

KIMONO FABRIC FINDS  
A STYLISH SECOND LIFE. >>>

**WOMAN OF THE CLOTH:**  
Aruña Chong Quiroga turns  
forgotten kimono fabrics  
into dapper accessories.



## Pocket Full of Promise

**T**HE PHRASE “MADE IN MASSACHUSETTS” is one we hear too infrequently, and that’s one reason **Faburiq** caught our attention. The other is the dazzlingly beautiful pocket squares and scarves produced by this men’s accessories startup founded by Chestnut Hill resident **Aruña Chong Quiroga**, who’s honoring two rich textile traditions—from Japan and Lowell—in one fell swoop.

The idea for Faburiq started to percolate several years ago, when the Malaysia native was visiting a quaint fabric store in Japan with her husband, Alejandro (who comes by his Beau Brummel credentials honestly as the son of famously dapper Channel 5 newsman Jorge Quiroga). “He found a piece of material and asked me to make something for him with it,” recalls Chong Quiroga, who is now making accessories for a wider clientele, transforming Japanese heritage and vintage kimono fabrics into pocket squares and scarves available at [faburiq.com](http://faburiq.com), Newton’s Mr. Sid and Jamaica Plain’s Caramelo Clothing, all produced in a factory in Lowell. “I was always aware that it was a textile town with great history,” she explains, “and I’m happy to help that continue.”

With fewer men wearing ties to the office, the pocket square has become an au courant way for stylish guys to make a fashion statement—both *GQ* and *The Wall Street Journal* named the pocket square “men’s accessory of the year” in 2014. “It just completes an outfit and gives it a certain polish,” Chong Quiroga says. “And it’s so easy.”

But the beauty lies in the materials themselves. Chong Quiroga sources a variety of silks—such as dead stock *meisen* (ikat), *shibori* (tie-dye) and *omeshi* (crepe)—in brilliant colors and patterns, as well as the sturdier *kasuri* cotton, which tends to come in blue and white hues. The resulting accessories are finished with hand-rolled silk edges or baby hems by a group of Cambodian women in Lowell. “In Cambodia, they still wear traditional clothing with a lot of beading and fine sewing,” Chong Quiroga explains. “Hand sewing is part of their culture.” And because they use every inch of the fabric bolt, there’s minimal waste and the guarantee of a limited edition—once a bolt is used, that exact fabric is gone. “I’m very passionate about the way I consume,” she concludes. “It’s a means of repurposing and breathing new life into fabrics that would otherwise have gone unworn and forgotten.” / *Jonathan Soroff*

## Fabrics of Time

Chong Quiroga filled us in on some of her vintage finds. / *Alexandra Cavallo*



### **JAPANESE HAPPA (\$65)**

“The fabric was woven in the 1970s in a very unique colorway, in a time before computer-generated patterns.”

### **INDIGO AND WHITE (\$45)**

“The fabric was originally intended to make men’s summer kimonos. The indigo, almost black color is a common hue in cotton kimono fabrics.”



### **VARIANTS OF BLUE (\$45)**

“This is a more contemporary Japanese design made with light-weight kimono cotton. The rich blues and indigo colors of this fabric allow plenty of versatility.”

### **YELLOW KIMONO (\$65)**

“This pocket square with stencil-like drawing is made from *tsumugi* silk. *Tsumugi* originated with farmers who made use of cocoons left over after they sold their best silk.”

