



Santa Reparata International School of Art Course Syllabus

Florence, Italy — Spring 2006

Introduction to Book Arts (Course # 22-3347SR)

Monday & Wednesday 9:30-12:15 pm

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Office hours: by appointment

Course Description

This is an intensive hands-on course where students will learn to make well-crafted bindings and book structures. Students will also learn to use traditional typesetting, combine text, image and use diverse techniques to make expressive and personal statements. Book Arts is a very expressive and flexible medium which can be combined with printmaking, papermaking, photography, digital imaging, letterpress, drawing, painting and many other image and text-making techniques.

Introduction

This intensive course will introduce students to the traditions and methods of the handmade book, as well as the expressive possibilities available with bookworks. The student will begin with simple foundational structures such as pamphlet-stitched and accordion style books and progress through more complex historical structures such as books sewn on supports, longstitch and coptic bindings. Exploration with materials is encouraged and students can combine other media (such as photography, printmaking, painting, etc.) they are familiar with in creating their bookworks. To help acquaint the student with the long and on-going tradition of book arts in Italy, time permitting, fieldtrips will be organized to visit contemporary artists (bookbinders, papermakers) in their studios as well as visits to museums and institutions in the area which maintain collections relevant to the art of the book. Lastly, through slide presentations, sample works and lectures, the student will be given an overview of the history of the book and its development in Western art.

Prerequisites

No previous knowledge or experience of book arts is necessary for this course, though good manual skills and attention to detail and craftsmanship are desirable.

Goals and Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course students will have acquired the basic skills and techniques to create a minimum of 10-12 different book structures, as well as, several different types of enclosures. Students will also have experimented with the use of several new image and text-making techniques, including letterpress, xerox transfers, paste papers, etc.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. This is a hands-on learning class where students must see demonstrations in order to complete projects. More than 2 absences will affect your grade. More than 5 absences will constitute a failing grade in the course. Students must have a signed note either from a doctor or from the school's director for an absence to be considered excused. Demonstrations will take place at the beginning of class, therefore, students must arrive on time. Arriving late and/or leaving early from class will impact the student's final grade. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

Grading

Grades will be based on attendance and class participation (20%), completion of assignments (Midterm 25% and Final 25%), individual progress and quality/creativity of individual projects (30%). There will be individual Midterm and Final critiques, as well as, group critiques of individual products. Students will be expected to complete examples of all structures introduced in class. Students will also be required to complete, at least, three individual projects in which the student will introduce content (text and/or images) into a structure of their choosing. Two group class projects will also be produced.

Course Fee and Required Text

The course fee will cover the costs of guest lecturers and the cost of a bookbinding kit which each student will receive. Materials in this kit include: bookbinding needles, awl, bone folder, utility knife, etc. In addition, students will have access in class to communal materials such as book board, adhesives, etc. The required course handbook will be a bound reader of notes which can be purchased from the school at a cost to be announced. In addition, some reference books will be placed on reserve for students to consult if needed.

Personal Supplies

Supplies not included in the Course Fee will be purchased by the student as needed. These include:

- book paper
- decorative papers
- book cloth, etc.

Optional, though recommended personal use materials include:

- scissors
- metal straight edge
- 90° triangle (preferably metal)
- plastic self-healing cutting mat

Classroom Behavior

There will be no cell phone use during class time. You will be given a 15 minute break at the middle of each class and you may use your phones at that time. There should be no eating during class time. Book Arts requires a clean work environment and we do not want food crumbs, etc. staining our materials. Students should listen and take notes during demonstrations.

Course Syllabus

Each class period will begin with a discussion of the binding to be completed that day. At this time, students will also be told what materials they will need for the next class meeting. Please come prepared!

Week 1 (January 16-20):

Discussion of required materials and course expectations

Introduction: History of Book Arts (slides and examples)

Introduction of bookbinding terms and paper grain.

Pamphlet stitch

- with simple covers
- with wrap around covers
- with double text block

Assignment of Project #1

Begin Accordion structures

- accordion with separate covers
- accordion with wrap covers
- carousel/star accordion

Week 2 (January 23-27):

Complete Accordion structures

Paste papers

Demo: Image transfer techniques and other simple image-making ideas

Assignment of Project #2

Week 3 (January 30-February 3):

Concertina structure

Photo album structure

Demo: Backing cloth

Week 4 (February 6-10):

Project #1 due in class

Enclosures for Project #1

Stab bindings

Week 5 (February 13-17):

Complete Stab bindings with enclosure

Demo: Letterpress

Assignment of Project #3

Open studio

Week 6 (February 20-24):

Project #2 due in class

Longstitch binding

Fieldtrip to Marbling studio (tentative date)

Week 7 (February 27 - March 3):

Slotted longstitch binding
Assignment of Project #4
MIDTERM critique

Week 8 (March 6-10):

FALL BREAK

Week 9 (March 13-17):

Buttonhole stitch
Open studio time

Week 10 (March 20-24):

Project #3 due in class
Enclosure for Project #3
Screwpost binding
Assignment of Project #5

Week 11 (March 27- March 31):

Flagbook structure
Coptic stitch binding

Week 12 (April 3-7):

Caterpillar binding
Fieldtrip to see book arts collection (tentative date)
Open studio time

Week 13 (April 10-14):

Project #4 due in class
Case binding

Week 14 (April 17-21):

Clamshell enclosure
Project #5 due in class
Open studio time
STUDENT SHOW (date pending)

Week 15 (April 24-28):

All assignments and models due in class
FINAL CRITIQUE

N.B. This syllabus may be revised and/or amended as the course proceeds, you will be notified of any changes.