COURCORAN ART AND THE BOOK (CBK)

Courses

CBK 2110. Letterpress From the 1400’s to the Digital Age. 3 Credits.
Introduction to traditional letterpress applications and contemporary digital and relief printing trends; typesetting; presswork, inking, editioning, and Vandercook press operation; black and white relief printing, reduction printing; and experimental collagraph techniques.

CBK 5220. Box Elements in Book Arts. 3 Credits.
This class covers the basic ins and outs for box making. Suitable tools and materials for box construction as well as various box applications are also discussed. Students create four archival box constructions as examples of storage and presentation solutions—the drop spine box, a slipcase, a paper box wrapper, and a folding box. Students also explore using the box as a creative outlet for self-expression. For final project, the class—under instructor guidance—creates a "story box" with the goal being to produce an individual conceptual book object while at the same time finding one's own unique artistic voice. Priority to graduate students of the Art and the Book department; open to other degree students as space is available.

CBK 5750. SMDA: Charting San Miguel de Allende: The Artist’s Journal. 3 Credits.
How do we write literature and make art that captures the experience of the places we visit as tourists? What strategies are available beyond the obvious ones? Through writing and the making of visual art, how can we see and record aspects of the daily life of a community that might go unremarked or unknown otherwise? The historic town of San Miguel, Mexico, with its rich history of art and literature, provides an unparalleled opportunity to explore these questions. This winter-session course focuses on the intersection of writing and bookmaking. Through a series of hands-on seminars and workshops, students learn how to transform the raw materials of their sketchbooks and notebooks into fully realized literary texts in a variety of hand-made book forms. Two major book projects, one collaborative and one independent, are required. Note: This course carries an additional fee which includes triple occupancy lodging, daily breakfast, materials fee for the duration of the course, and airport transportation. Airfare and tuition are additional, as is an optional excursion. Please contact the department for details.

CBK 6010. Art and the Book Seminar I. 3 Credits.
What is an artists' book and how can it be defined? Hands on in nature, Art and the Book Graduate Seminar I focuses on Washington, D.C. and exploration of the premiere book and related collections throughout the city. This academic course consists of research topics and discussions revolving around such areas as exploring characteristics of an artists' book, origins of the artists' book itself and defining the future of the book form along with roughly five site visits to numerous museum collections at outstanding institutions like the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian American Art Museum/National Portrait Gallery Library, the National Gallery of Art Library and the National Museum of Women in the Arts. Visiting artists are also invited to speak in reference to topics inspired by collection excursions when possible. Students are asked to delve personally deeper by developing a research paper and PowerPoint presentation based on material presented at the various site visits and through class lectures. The last two weeks of this course consist of in-depth formal presentations where students present their research papers and multimedia presentations to the group as a whole.

CBK 6020. Art and the Book Studio I. 3 Credits.
Collaborations can serve as an idea generation tool, an expansion of one's own skill set, or a joining of ideas to create a piece that is larger than the sum of its parts. The Art and the Book Studio I course explores various forms of collaboration through a series of hands-on projects that range from working with unknown collaborators to pairing with complementary skill sets. The semester culminates in a final collaborative project where students can experiment and explore as a synergistic unit. Visiting artists speak about their own experiences with collaborative projects. Priority to graduate students of the Art and the Book department; open to other degree students as space is available.

CBK 6100. Layout and Design of the Book. 3 Credits.
This course provides an opportunity for visual artists from all backgrounds to combine images with text, to sequence existing content, to expand their typographic options, and to explore publishing alternatives beyond hand-made limited editions. It covers type selection and typesetting, page grid systems and production methods for a variety of layout options, including handmade as well as commercially produced books. We test several online publishing services, bypassing the limitations of their proprietary software by using InDesign for design and typesetting and exporting the final layouts as PDFs. Image formats, color modes, and color correction are covered as needed. This course is open to MA/Art and the Book Students.
CBK 6110. Letterpress I: Letterpress Basics From the 1400s to the Digital Age. 3 Credits.
This course provides an introduction to traditional Letterpress applications while also exploring computer and relief printing trends used in the field today. Students are provided technical instruction in typesetting—from composing stick to quoin key—along with presswork, inking, editioning, and Vandercook press operation schooling. Students examine such areas as Linocut, Woodcut, and computer photographic processes with the goal being to incorporate these practices with that of traditional typesetting. A collaborative broadside project is produced in the second half of the semester. Priority to graduate students of the Art and the Book department; open to other degree students as space is available.

CBK 6120. Binding I: Intermediate and Advanced. 3 Credits.
This course covers advanced techniques in binding while laying a proper foundation in book arts. Both practical and aesthetic decisions are discussed as more challenging structures such as Coptic binding, portfolio, and flag books to name only a few are created. Independent projects are produced over the course of the semester in which content of the book is emphasized. This course culminates with a final artists' book project where a student explores any binding of their choosing while making conceptual decisions under a universal theme. Priority to graduate students of the Art and the Book department; open to other degree students as space is available.

CBK 6150. Type and the Book Form. 3 Credits.
Typography for book arts and design. Development of narrative themes through the use of type, image, grid, materials, and multiple page sequencing. The history of typography including the use of technology; terminology and classification. Restricted to MA in Art and the Book degree students; other graduate students with permission of the instructor.

CBK 6210. Letterpress II: Advanced Discoveries in Letterpress. 3 Credits.
Letterpress II. provides an exploratory arena in advanced letterpress techniques with the use of text and image as a fine arts medium. This course covers conceptual, aesthetic, and practical considerations in print media. Also, an individual book project is introduced midway through semester that the graduate student will work on as a team experimenting with new treads in Letterpress to produce a book edition. Priority to graduate students of the Art and the Book department; open to other degree students as space is available. Pre-requisite: Letterpress I or permission of the Art and the Book Director.

CBK 6331. Vandercook Relief Fine Art Printing. 3 Credits.
An introduction to fine art relief printing methods on Vandercook presses. Technical instruction in multiple relief printing processes, including reduction cut, multiple block registration, wood block, and collagraph. The use of alternative material printing on letterpress equipment emphasizing the graphic image and fine print quality. Focus on the production of multiple print editions and small books forms using learned techniques. Recommended background: CBK 6110.

CBK 6800. Independent Study: Book Arts. 3 Credits.
This option is appropriate for degree students who want access to independent faculty supervision, lab areas, and supplies for independent projects, and do not need or desire extensive course instruction.

CBK 6900. Art and the Book Internship. 3 Credits.
For degree students only. Internships can help students develop marketable skills, establish professional contacts, and explore different career options.

CBK 7010. Art and the Book Studio II. 3 Credits.
Working with the varied talents and experiences of the Art and the Book student population, this class embarks on the creation of a collaborative book project. What emerges from the unique personality of the Studio II class make-up is a student driven book edition. Beginning with discussions, this class experiments and hones in on the important issues of theme, content and structure which will establish the book’s character. Materials choices lend texture and nuance to the book form development. Production of the collaborative book edition entails creative and disciplined work in such areas as: layout design, typesetting, plate making, papermaking, printing and binding. By completion of the book edition, students will have experienced an ambitious team-building and productive inclusive art experience. For MA in Art and the Book graduate students only.
CBK 7311. Pop-Up Books: Exploration of the Sculptural Book through Paper Engineering. 3 Credits.
This class focuses on non-traditional sculptural book formats and on the design of pop-ups as sculptural book inclusions. Students learn to engineer a range of pop-up structures, beginning with simple non-adhesive cut-and-fold pop-ups and progressing through a series of more complex glued constructions, including platforms, props, V-folds, and volumes. Emphasis is on how to integrate the dimensional and mechanical aspects of the pop-up with graphic and illustrative concepts. The class also explores several sculptural bindings, including accordion books, carousel books, and tunnel books. The carousel book (a nested series of accordions) and the tunnel book (two accordions holding a series of page frames) are theatrical stage-like constructions employing layers of images and text to create dimensional graphic illustrations. Basic bookbinding tools and skills are discussed, along with the design of jigs and templates for streamlining production in for editions. Slide shows of historical and artist-made books are presented on each major class topic. Priority to MA Art and the Book students; open to other degree students on a space-available basis.

CBK 7320. Binding II: Leather Bindings. 3 Credits.
This course offers an introduction to the use of leather in Book Arts. Students focus on traditional techniques for creating both historic and modern book structures. Knife care, paring and application of leather, as well as excellence in book forwarding will be emphasized. Students will sew multi-colored headbands, and be asked to design and execute several books in quarter leather. A discussion and demonstration of inlay/onlay and tooling offers students a glimpse into the visual opportunities afforded by this exciting medium. Prerequisite: CBK 6120.

CBK 7322. Japanese Binding. 3 Credits.
The history and evolution of Japanese bookbinding. Exploration and production of historically important Japanese bookbinding methods, including hand scroll, stab binding variations, accordion books, and ledgers. Techniques such as backing paper or cloth for covers and making traditional book cases are covered.

CBK 7400. Exploration in East/West Papermaking. 3 Credits.
This intermediate/advanced course is an exposure to traditional and experimental methods of hand papermaking, with an emphasis on papermaking as an expressive art medium. Work includes processing raw fiber, pigmenting pulp, exploring Eastern and Western sheet formation styles, and examining various drying and finishing techniques. In addition, 3-D techniques, including paper casting and vacuum forming are taught. Throughout the course, the history of paper is discussed. Prerequisite for this course is 2D Applications in Paper or Dimensional and Color Papermaking. Or permission can be granted by Instructor or Director of the Art and the Book program.

CBK 7800. Art and the Book Pro-Thesis. 3 Credits.
In the Art and the Book program, Thesis for students with a studio focus consists of a cohesive body of work grounded in the book form with a formal exhibition, defense meeting, along with a written paper component that informs the candidate’s thesis studio project. For students in the program with an academic focus, an in-depth written paper, defense, and public talk to the college are required to fulfill the requirements of thesis. Students of the Pro-Thesis course develop a thesis petition and outline that serves as the guideline for Thesis construction. Students with a studio focus must in the petition also present a comprehensive plan for their studio exhibition to be developed and completed in the Thesis Forum course occurring in the following semester. All petitions must be approved by the Thesis Petition Faculty Committee. Students choose a paper and exhibition theme/topic and create a mission statement and written document during the expanded research and writing phase of this course. The final Pro-Thesis document is an academic paper that conforms to the writing standards of the Corcoran graduate programs and that of UMI dissertation publishing, where the final Thesis submission is published online of the Spring semester. Students in Pro-Thesis also explore professional development through a personal exploratory process culminating in the creation of a learned artist statement and CV. This class is for Art and the Book students only.

CBK 7900. Art and the Book Thesis Forum. 3 Credits.
In this course, students complete a comprehensive body of work with a written supporting thesis at the professional level exploring a unique book arts-related topic. Each student’s thesis should contain a rigorous exploration of theme, under the supervision of a thesis advisor with the goal being to produce a sound body of work or comprehensive written composition. The process culminates with the display of thesis projects developed over the course of the semester, with students presenting to jurors composed of faculty as well as professionals from the book arts community.