



TWO-DAY, THREE-DAY, and WEEKLONG MEZZOTINT WORKSHOPS

**by
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TWO- and THREE-DAY WORKSHOPS

In the two- and three-day long workshop format each student engraves and prints a 3 x 4-inch mezzotint plate. To accommodate the amount of information presented, it is highly recommended that participants be present for the complete workshop.

DAY ONE

Students are shown a portfolio of original mezzotints (dating from the early 18th century to the present) that provide a broader understanding of the medium's potential. They're taught the proper way to hold and use rockers, and the most efficient methods for preparing a mezzotint ground. Each student receives a rocker and small copper plate that he/she rocks. When grounds are complete, students are taught how to transfer images of their own design to the plates. To engrave images, students learn correct handling of scrapers, burnishers, and other tools and materials used to alter mezzotint grounds. Proper sharpening and care of tools are explained and stressed.

DAY TWO

Students are coached through the engraving process and gain experience in assessing progress through plate reflections. Proofing demonstrates ways to adapt intaglio printing techniques and materials for mezzotint. Discussions include: wiping methods and materials; paper choices; inks and modifiers; and press variables (blankets, pressure, etc.). After pulling first state proofs, students learn techniques for correcting mistakes, making further alterations, and regrounding techniques. Format usually provides opportunity to pull second state proofs. When time allows, the subject of color and the use of mezzotint with other drypoint and engraving techniques are introduced. The color process demonstrated in the two-day class is selective wiping (*à la poupée*), with emphasis on the use of 18th century ground tint methods.

DAY THREE

Class concentrates on alternative grounding techniques and the use of mezzotint with other intaglio techniques. Creation of a second plate using these methods allows students to create either a second image or add another color to their first plate using the color separation process. All methods for printing in color are covered in greater depth. Uses for chine collé and non-intaglio materials on a mezzotint ground are demonstrated.

ONE-WEEK WORKSHOPS

One-week workshops, usually five days long, allow students to gain more extensive experience with advanced techniques. Creation of textural effects is encouraged through the use of: different gauge rockers; open grounding patterns; and incorporation of other intaglio techniques. Students may work on larger plates, produce more plates, and/or multiple-plate images. More extensive use of color and experimental methods are also covered. Format permits maximum individual attention and guidance on ways students can use concepts presented to more effectively communicate their personal visions.

IN GENERAL

Throughout the workshops, techniques are also illustrated with plates and state proofs. Information presented and amount of work accomplished depend on the experience and interests of the participants. While participants are expected to master the rudiments of traditional mezzotint, uses for these and related methods in the creation of other intaglio fields are also emphasized.

PRIOR PRINTMAKING EXPERIENCE IS HELPFUL BUT NOT REQUIRED.

WORKSHOP HOURS

Daily schedules usually depend on the hosting institution. All formats are flexible enough to accommodate most programs and arrangements. Depending on class skill, some third day material can be covered in two longer days.

NOTE: Two-day workshops are recommended because they can be held on weekends so they don't interfere with regularly scheduled classes or professionals' work schedules.

CLASS SIZE

DEMONSTRATIONS can be conducted in classes of unrestricted size.

ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS can accommodate larger class sizes, but a limit of 15 students is recommended. (See website link to single class mezzotint demo for full description.)

TWO-DAY, THREE-DAY, and WEEKLONG WORKSHOPS are contingent on rocker availability. At this time, twelve students can be accommodated, but more may attend if the school or participants can also provide rockers.

SUPPLIES

PLATES

While the use of other metals is discussed, mezzotint is taught using copper plates. If the hosting organization is unable to supply copper, 3 x 4" plates (cut and beveled) are provided at cost. If the school or participants can provide copper for two- or three-day workshops, 18-gauge copper is sufficient, and the copper does not need to have a mirror finish. It is strongly recommended that plates be beveled in advance. Copper for one-week workshops must be supplied by hosting organizations or individual students.

TOOLS

MEZZOTINT ROCKERS ARE SUPPLIED. All rockers are weighted and manufactured by Edward C. Lyons, with blades ranging from two to four inches wide, and gauges ranging from 40 to 100 teeth to the inch. Should a rocker become so badly damaged that it requires reconditioning by the manufacturer, the student or school will be responsible for the cost of that service. Should a rocker become lost or damaged beyond repair, total reimbursement for the current retail value of the tool is expected. Participants who already own rockers are strongly urged to bring them.

ENGRAVING TOOLS

Students may use their own scrapers, burnishers, or other tools. Scrapers and burnishers recommended for mezzotint, as well as a limited number of roulettes and other tools, may also be available to students wishing to purchase them at any time during the workshop.

PRINT/SHOP SUPPLIES

PRINTING MATERIALS

Workshops that include printing demonstrations or participation require inks, tarlatan, solvents, and papers suitable for intaglio printing. (Rives BFK, German Etching, and Somerset papers are among those suitable.) Hosting institutions are expected to provide standard printshop supplies unless other arrangements are made in advance.

OTHER SUPPLIES

Complete lists of equipment requested and supplies provided are available, but most materials are included.

FEES

For fees and further information, please contact Carol Wax through e-mail at waxcarol@gmail.com