

# GONZAGA-IN-FLORENCE SYLLABUS

Course: VART 250 Linograph Printmaking  
Credits: 3 Credits  
Instructor: Yvonne DiPalma



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This is a course in Printmaking using Linoleum, which is the modern version of the ancient woodcut "Xilograph" technique. In general, various projects of increasing difficulty are given to the beginning student, while the history of "Xilography" is also discussed and many examples are shown, to enable the student to apprehend this technique and finally express himself artistically.

There are many facets to this technique and each one must be learned carefully. One of the hardest obstacles to overcome of this art is the incising process itself. In order to face this difficulty, the student is immediately given a small piece of linoleum and taught how to utilize the carving tools. Simultaneously, of course, he must have drawn a strong simple image with sharp light - dark contrasts, and have learned how to transfer it onto the linoleum block. The most famous works showing "The New Stile" introduced by Albrecht Durer are illustrated, although the much more remote Egyptian origin of the technique is mentioned, together with the fundamental importance of the great Japanese school. Through practice, demonstrations, and historical references, the student slowly gains facility with the tools, and he becomes aware of the vast possibilities which are opening in front of him.

The second phase is that of the printing. Basic methods of spreading the ink, registering the paper, and imprinting the image are studied. Even the "quickness" and pressure of the inking process can affect the end result helping the student in his realization of how much work is required to obtain a decent linoleum print. The student is introduced to the Japanese "*inbutsu*" and "*shubutsu*" printing methods which date back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

Next, the student learns the techniques of "*camaieu*" and "*chiaroscuro*" utilizing more than one linoleum plate. This enables the artist to both add color and "light and dark" and depth to his print but requires extra carving and printing work and a more refined drawing. This exercise, done once again with a small, simple image, forces the student to start directly facing the complexity of this technique, superimposing images and "registering" various plates to obtain each special effect in the final print.

For the third project, the student must carve an image adding letters and /or words, as this obviates the necessity to "think backwards" and connects the process to one of its original uses as a literary means of communication. The Renaissance culture of Florence, and the nearby "San Marco Cloisters" facilitate the demonstration of the important historical connection between "Xilography" and the first multiple production of illustrated manuscripts in the fourteen hundreds, and then the typographical use by Johann Gutenberg revolutionizing both literature and art.

Finally, the discussion of the development of "Xilography" through the centuries goes into depth with more examples of modern and contemporary artists who have further developed the technique especially like Munch, Van Gogh, Gauguin, "Die Brucke", Kandinsky, and Picasso. This is done hoping to inspire the student to produce a good-sized, serious, final print worth printing in a complete numbered edition. Types of paper are analyzed, and, if the work has been properly executed, various qualities of rice paper are used for the printing and the final piece can be perfected with accents added by hand. For this final project, the preparatory drawings have been selected and carved with great care and may now combine all the techniques one has learned with a strong, personal expression.

Note: The course is offered both Fall and Spring Semesters, and since extensive study is required to perfect this technique, as with Sculpture, it is possible to continue from Fall to Spring. The serious, continuing student can carve his image on wood and print it. (Summer Course possible, also)

As with Sculpture, ALL of the projects must be completed, and the student is NOT allowed ANY absences. If he should miss class, he is required to make up the time. This has always worked well, because usually everyone who chooses to take the class is doing so of their own desire.