

## Venice and the Book

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### Course Description:

This course serves as an introduction to the various practical methods of book design and production within the context of historical development of the book and printing, specifically with an emphasis on the unique history of book publishing in Venice. Demonstrations and discussions will be augmented by visits to libraries, binderies, studios and museum collections. The course will include intervention from visiting artists and specialists. Some readings will be given.

During the semester the student will be introduced to the basic historical aspects of book production, but will likewise learn basic forms of binding, printing, and layout, and will produce a series of projects.

### Assignments:

A total of 3 assignments will be given, designed to help the student incorporate historical aspects of book layout, design and technique with contemporary art practice. Students are also required to keep a journal during the course, recording thoughts, feelings, experiences and ephemera of their time in Venice, as well as serving as a place to work out ideas for book projects. The journals will be made in the first class.

No late work will be accepted. Attendance is mandatory and only 2 excused absences will be accepted. Unexcused absences will result in lowering of the final grade.

### Final grades based on the following criteria:

Work completed and on time	20%
Attendance and class participation	20%
Visual and technical growth	30%
Quality of imagery and craftsmanship	30%

### Materials:

All materials for in-class demonstrations are provided. All other materials are the responsibility of the student. A tessera is available for purchasing materials directly from the Scuola. Students may also get another tessera (student ID) from the Scuola that allows for student discounts at several art supply stores in Venice and Mestre.

### Binding processes covered in the course:

Sewn bindings  
Coptic, Long-stitch, pamphlet, Japanese stab bindings  
Non traditional  
folded [a]er books, alternative structures (flag, tunnel, etc)

### Some printmaking processes covered in the course:

Xerox transfer, "xerox" lithography, Letterpress, Collagraphy, Monoprint, Trace Monotype, Hand Cut stamps, (possible) alternative process photography

# SCUOLA INTERNAZIONALE DI GRAFICA - SYLLABI

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### Schedule:

#### January

- 15 Intro/Collection of the Scuola/Origins of the book (the scroll, tablets)/Artists' Books
- 22 Simple book forms/ 1st assignment given/workday
- 29 The birth of the Codex/Illuminated Manuscripts/demo/workday

#### February

- 5 Materials, traditional layouts, bindings - the making of books before the press/workday
- 12 1st assignment due - visiting artist critique with Michael Taylor
- 19 The Birth of Printing/Gutenberg/Manutius - Venetian publishing/2nd assignment given
- 22F VISIT: San Lazzaro degli Armeni - Venetian Island Library and Monastery
- 26 Visiting artist talk with Ulrike Stoltz of Unica T/workday

#### March

- 5 Social Impact of Printing/workday/discussions on 2nd project/demo
- 8F VISIT: Bassano del Grappa, Remondini Print Collection 10:30 AM
- 12 Mid Semester Critique - 2nd assignment due - visiting artist Ketih Achepohl
- 19 Anatomy of the book today/Contemporary bookmaking/final project given
- 26 Libraries, Censorship, the Trade/discussions on final project/demo/work

#### April

- 2 SPRING BREAK
- 9 VISIT: Conservation Center in Padova (potential)
- 16 The future of the book/workday
- 19 VISIT: Castelvechio Print Collection - Verona (morning)
- 23 VISIT: Tipoteca Antiga - type and printing museum
- 30 Work period

#### May

- 5 Final assignment given - critique with guest artist

### Projects

#### Before the codex, the scroll

Jan 15 - Feb 19 (Due)

"Kublai Kahn does not necessarily believe everything Marco Polo says when he describes the cities visited on his expeditions, but the Emperor of the Tartars does continue listening to the young Venetian with greater attention and curiosity than he shows any other messenger or explorer of his."

Invisible Cities, Italo Calvino

Create a scroll that maps to your first impressions of Venice. You are the scribe and cartographer. Think of this as a description of your first experiences as well as a map you create to help you find your way, including instructions to yourself or those who come after about how to navigate your new world. Show us what is important, not in a literal sense, but in a cognitive sense. Use your images and responses of the city to give us a map of your first month in Venice.

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Aldus Manutius (Aldo Manuzio) - Venetian Scholar/Printer

Feb 19 - March 12 (Due - Mid Term Critique)

Aldus Manutius (Aldo Manuzio) was one of the great Renaissance printers. He developed the forerunner to the modern "pocket book," invented Italic type and single handedly changed the way publishers thought about editioning and marketing. He reprinted classics in the native Greek and published in the Italian vernacular instead of the church approved Latin. He invited scholars to his home and workshop and published their writings, working side by side as editor while they wrote the books. His home and printshop were in Venice, in Campo San Agostin.

Using the information covered in class about Aldus and his press and publishing in Venice, and responding to the idea of "scholar/printer," make a book that reflects Aldus Manutius and his impact on society from the Renaissance to the present. This could take the form of a reflection of his location or a response to the types of books he published and the controversy and debates they ignited to a dialogue with Manutius and the past. The book must be a codex.

REflections in Life and Water

March 19 - May 5 (Due - Final Critique)

"Water equals time and provides beauty with its double. Part water, we serve beauty in the same fashion. By rubbing water, this city improves time's looks, beautifies the future. That's what the role of this city in the universe is. Because the city is static while we are moving...Because we go and beauty stays. Because we are headed for the future and beauty is the eternal present."

Watermark, Joseph Brodsky

The final project will reflect the mapping of the first project while responding to the elusiveness of life in Venice. Using reflections and metaphors, the final project is a book that describes, by not describing, your experience of life in Venice.