

Visual Art Classes

Course: Scientific Illustration: Spring Sketchbook

March 19 – May 7, 2022
8 Saturdays, 9:00-11:30am
Online

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A welcome note from your instructor:

This is a seasonally-themed sketchbook exploration designed to encourage the incorporation of art into a regular practice for relaxation and artistic exploration. The class will explore techniques for field sketching while out on a spring hike, individual spot illustrations of natural objects like seeds, spring snow and new plant growth, as well as guided exercises for looking at color and texture in both settings. This is a way to make space in the day for art as an enjoyable practice to take with you far beyond the limits of this class.

A slight change from Spring 2021: We will start the first few weeks focusing on black-and-white media, concentrating on graphite and ink. The second four weeks of the class will focus more specifically on watercolor techniques to bring color into your work as the spring season becomes more colorful as well.

Tips for success: As a distance learning class, the materials are pretty open and should reflect what you are interested in perusing. If you want to focus on watercolor and not do anything with colored pencils or vice versa that is perfectly fine, but since this is a class of exploration I would encourage you to try something that you are not familiar with and use it as a conceptual challenge to complement something that is more familiar. Our greatest learning moments happen when we are in an uncomfortable place and it is okay to embrace that.

Materials Fee:

Basic fee: None

Optional materials for purchase: None

Supply List (suggested):

- Graphite pencils (2H, HB, 2B, 4B, 6B) - or just stick with regular pencils, that's equally fine! When I field sketch I usually just have a regular pencil...
- Erasers (kneadable and regular style)
- Ink (Micron pens: a couple different pen sizes, ex: 01, 02, 04)
- Colored pencils (any brand – we just want at least 1-2 colors for preliminary sketch warm-ups where we use a different color to start)
- Waterbrush (this is a type of brush that has a fillable handle where water can come out through the bristles themselves. I've had best luck with Pentel waterbrushes - they don't suck color back up into the waterwell, which happens with some brands)
- Watercolor (any brand, at least 8 colors Cotman/Winsor Newton are fine but brand is less important than having something to experiment with) Dry pans are easier to take out field sketching, since the tube colors require much more setup - but you can make your own "dry pans" by making dollops of color in a small palette or even an old "Altoids" tin and letting them dry out for a few days.
- Multimedia paper (any brand, any size, I like Canson 9x12 myself because it is flexible for many media types, hence, the name). This will have you well set up for wet or dry media, so it's good to be flexible. Regular "sketch" type paper is good for graphite and ink, but it can be pretty flimsy for anything else. But if you have a paper that you like and works well for you, go for it.
- Items from the natural world for some of the warm-up exercises (please do not take anything from state parks or state natural areas of course). Interesting leaves, stones, pinecones, twigs, plants, seeds, etc.

