



# Smithsonian Associates

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## Gyotaku: Hawaiian Style

with Sue Fierston

Please see the fish preparation instructions on Page 2

Feel free to contact me at [sue.fierston@gmail.com](mailto:sue.fierston@gmail.com) with any questions

### SUPPLY LIST

- From H Mart or Lotte market, Whole Foods, Wegman's or any store that sells very fresh whole fish
  - A whole fish weighing between 1 and 2 lbs. including tail, all fins, all scales. Don't let the fish merchant gut the fish, simply buy it whole one or two days ahead of class, bring it home, and keep it cold in the back of the refrigerator. If you have no choice but to buy a gutted fish, no worries, it has happened to me, too. Let me know at the start of class and I'll show you how to manage the fish print regardless.
- Art supplies, from Dickblick.com, Jerrysartarama.com, and in the mid-Atlantic at Plaza Art
  - 3 3/4 to 1 inch flat watercolor brushes, acrylic bristles. Don't purchase or use a fine sable brush!
  - One pad Aitoh brand sumi-e calligraphy paper, 12 x 18 or larger, 50 sheets. You will use between 5 and 10 sheets of this paper, so feel free to share a pad if it is logistically possible. It makes beautiful, lasting prints. Yasumoto brand is easier to find, but the paper is not as good for our purposes. Plaza Art, our great local art supplier, carries the 12 x 18 inch pads which can be hard to find. Here's the link
    - <https://www.plazaart.com/sumi-e-painting-and-calligraphy-paper-sketch-pad-12x18>
  - Three 59 ml jars Akua intaglio printing ink in these colors: Hansa yellow, pthalo blue, quinacridone magenta. These three colors blend well to make greens, purples and oranges
  - One 118 ml squeeze bottle Akua blending medium
  - Caran d'Ache watercolor crayons: yellow, purple, olive, ochre, Prussian blue, white. These colors match the Akua ink exactly, and they help to bring out definition in the print. If you have similar colors, give them a try
  - 3-4 white paper plates OR 9 x 12 inch piece of freezer paper taped to your table to use as your ink palette
  - Copy paper or newsprint to use as slip sheets
  - Water mister, Holbein watercolor atomizer bottle or other sprayer that releases a fine mist. An olive oil sprayer is great, too. Don't use a spray bottle meant for cleaning solutions, the spray is too coarse
- 1 plastic cup or other container that will not be reused for food
- 1 tiny watercolor paintbrush sizes 0 to 2, for painting in a fisheye on the print

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### **You likely have at home**

- Pencil
- Paper towels
- Salt and dish soap to wash the fish
- Newspaper or an old tablecloth to cover your worktable
- A trash bag

### **Optional supplies for printing with sumi ink**

- Inexpensive, new cosmetic brush, the fluffy type used to apply loose powder or blush
- One 2 oz. bottle Yasumoto sumi ink. This is a widely found and inexpensive sumi ink. You can substitute another brand
- 1 sheet unryu paper, 24 x 39 inches. You can fold or cut it smaller, depending on the size of your fish. You would use this to print a larger composition, say a school of fish swimming past

### **Prepare your fish for printing**

- The day before class, purchase a whole, ungutted, unscaled, head-on fish weighing between 1 and 3 pounds. If you can choose the fish yourself, look for whole, untattered fins and a fish body that is sleek and unblemished. Fish merchants may look at you as if you're crazy but tell them that you're making art! Store the fish in the coldest part of your refrigerator.
- *4 hours before class or even the night before*, prepare your fish. Remember you won't be eating this fish, so it does not need to be kept cold. With the Akua inks we are using a warm and dry fish makes the best print. Lay out newspaper or newsprint in a spot next to the place you will be washing your fish.
- Unwrap your fish and wash it gently in the kitchen sink using your hands, not the sprayer. If you want to wear gloves, go ahead. You may find there is a quiet magic in peacefully rinsing your fish under cool water and getting to know the shape of its fins and the color of its scales. Many fish have spines in their dorsal fins. For this reason, take care as you wash the fins.
- You can use a few drops of Dawn dish soap, a sprinkling of baking soda, or a sprinkling of salt to help you remove the slime from the body of the fish. Your aim is to remove all slime so the printing ink will stick to the fish.
- Transfer the clean fish to the newspaper. Leave it out to dry, uncovered, until class begins. The fish will come to room temperature in this time, and the combination of dry, clean skin and a room-temperature fish will help you make the best prints.

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- Please plan to keep your Zoom camera on for the first hour of class when I will be demonstrating and taking your questions. Next, we will spend the next hour to hour and a half practicing, and I will keep my camera on and be ready for your individual questions.
- At 12:30, we will have a class gallery of work and collect class advice for making more prints at home. I will also demonstrate printing with traditional sumi ink, which on your optional supply list.

