



Smithsonian Associates

Gyotaku: Fish Printing From Japan

Instructor: Sue Fierston

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Hi everyone!

Please contact me a few days ahead of our workshop at sue.fierston@gmail.com so I can forward the fish selection and preparation information to you.

Over the three hour class I'll show you how to set up your space and how to prepare your fish. Then I'll demonstrate the printing process, and set you free to make your first gyotaku. Along the way, I can help you troubleshoot your prints, choose papers, and draw a realistic fish eye, one that will bring your prints to life.

MATERIALS

From an Asian 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.

- Whole Foods and Wegman's can deliver the fish to you.

Art supplies to purchase, available online at Dickblick.com or at your own art supply store:

- newsprint pad, 16 x 24 inches or larger, 50 sheets. You will use this for your first prints and for supporting the fins of the fish.
- Speedball brand water-soluble printing ink, 1.25 oz.
 - 1 each of black, blue and silver
- 1 watercolor paintbrush size 8 or 10, an inexpensive brush, not a sable
- 1 sheet unryu paper, 24 x 39 inches.
- 1 sheet Thai kozo 25 x 37 inches. You will use these papers for later prints.

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Optional supplies:

- 1 pad Yasumoto sumi-e calligraphy paper, 12 x 18, 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. You can use this paper instead of newsprint to practice on and it makes beautiful, lasting prints.
- 3 colored pencils, Prismacolor or similar:
 - Warm gray 90%, Gingerroot, Celadon Green (neutral colors for drawing the fish eye)
- Watercolor paintbrush size 0 or 1 for painting the fish eye on the print

You likely have at home:

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