

F13D073 - Making a Photographic Book - A vehicle for communicating and promoting Art

Self-published photographic books can be an effective and economic vehicle for communicating and promoting Art. They may serve as a record of an artist's work, as a portfolio, as a catalogue for an exhibition or as a retrospective presentation of a life's work that communicates the artist's personal vision. They may be small pamphlets or hardbound albums. They can be ordered as on-demand volumes, as single copies or in the thousands. Most self-published photographic books are produced by inkjet printing which can offer a much higher quality of reproduction than typical offset-printing.

In this course, participants will learn how to:

- photograph 2D and 3D works of art for publication;
- prepare photographs for publication by digital correction and enhancement;
- use concepts of narrative and scenography to select images and arrange them in sequences to constitute an aesthetic and dramatic unit with visual continuity and flow;
- use book structure, page architecture, layout and graphics to create an effective book design;
- use typography to effectively structure the book's message and present text;
- use book dummies (maquettes) to study and test their book concept and design;
- select and use production software to assemble a book for printing (including topics such as colour management, image resolution);
- obtain and use ISBN numbers and Canada Cataloguing in Publication indexing;
- proof, test print and make adjustments;
- and about production runs and marketing
- essentially everything from the initial concept to the finished product.

Course time and format

11 classroom sessions of 3 hours

Course Work and Projects

Participants are required to have at their disposition a corpus of their own work, or of another artist that they can use as project material to create a book. During the course, participants will work on the development of a book project with the objective of completing the book layout and assembly (book dummy and PDF files for book production) by the end of the course.

Course Part 1 - Photography for Books

In the first 5 sessions of the course, participants will learn how to use digital cameras, lighting and other techniques to make clear and expressive documents of art work. Through hands-on demonstrations, they will explore problems and solutions for photographing two-dimensional (canvases, drawings, prints, etc.) and three-dimensional objects (sculptures, installations, etc.). In order to directly relate these demonstrations to participants' work, they will be required to bring to class one or two works of art for photography in class.

Participants will photograph their own work on their own time at home or in their studio. To accomplish this, participants are required to have a digital camera and a tripod at their disposal. Point and shoot cameras are adequate if they have Aperture Priority and Manual Mode functions but SLR cameras are recommended. At the first session participants will be informed about materials and equipment useful for photographing artwork that they can procure at low cost from hardware, fabric and building supply stores.

To conclude this part of the course, participants will also learn how to organize and select images, then how to correct, enhance, and prepare images for printing.

Course Part 2 - Producing Books

In the subsequent 6 sessions, of course, participants will make a dummy for a book that they can publish. The books may be in the form of an art book, a catalogue or a portfolio. Participants are required to have a computer, a printer and software to work on their book projects. If they do not have the recommended software, they can install 30-day demo versions from the DVD that will be supplied. It is recommended, but not absolutely required, that they have a laptop computer to bring to class, in the later sessions, so that they can follow demonstrations and work on their projects. If not, they can follow the demonstrations in class and work at home. All participants are required to have a USB key of sufficient capacity in order to bring their book project files to class for discussion.

A presentation folder containing printed materials and a DVD with other notes and software will be provided to each participant at the first session.