

Primary Presenters:

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1.

Katie Baldwin is a printmaker who has traveled to several countries as an artist in residence, including Japan, Poland, Mexico and Cuba. She has received funding through several organizations such as The Leeway Foundation and The Ludwig Vogelstein Foundation. Baldwin was an artist in residence at the Women's Studio Workshop, her work was included in a group exhibition at The Philadelphia Museum of Art, and she had a solo exhibition at The Delaware Center for Contemporary Art. Baldwin received her Masters of Fine Arts in printmaking and book arts from the University of the Arts. Her work is included in several collections including The Fine Prints Collection at the Library of Congress in Washington DC. Baldwin was the 2008 recipient of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Fellowship. She is currently a Stein Fellow at The Center for Book Arts in New York. She lives and works in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Yoonmi Nam was born and raised in Seoul, South Korea, spending part of her youth in Canada. She received a B.F.A. degree in Printmaking from Hongik University in Seoul, Korea. She moved to America to study at the Rhode Island School of Design, where she received a M.F.A. degree in Painting and Printmaking in 2000. Her work considers the cross-cultural experience and sense of transience through prints, installations and drawings. Her recent research interests include the study of traditional ink paintings and woodblock prints from East Asia, including those from Japan, Korea, China, and Tibet. She has received numerous grants and fellowships to support her research and travel. Most recent grants include, the Center for East Asian Studies International Research Travel Grant and the Ngwang Choephel Fellowship from the U.S. State Department. Currently, she is an Associate Professor and the Associate Chair of the Visual Art Department at the University of Kansas.

2.

Title: In the Age of Technology: Teaching Others to Print by Hand

Short Abstract:

Presenters, Katie Baldwin and Yoonmi Nam will facilitate a panel discussion on Moku Hanga education in the United States. Both Katie Baldwin and Yoonmi Nam have taught Moku Hanga workshops and offered university classes since 2005. They will share their experiences, teaching strategies, curriculum, as well as samples of student work.

3.

Description of Panel:

Katie Baldwin and Yoonmi Nam will discuss Moku Hanga education in the United States.

Technology moves and changes quickly, challenging educational institutions to “keep up” in order to prepare students for “the future”. As educators, we face the every day challenge of maintaining, up-grading and up-dating. There is intense pressure to remain on the cutting edge of technology. Despite the ways in which technology extends throughout curriculum in the United States, there is an enthusiastic and sincere interest in the exploration of hands on production methods. This includes processes such as letterpress, book arts and printmaking, which after all, are technology. Furthermore, due to the growing needs and demands of non-toxic processes, many workshops and colleges are interested in incorporating non-toxic printing processes such as

Moku Hanga in their curriculum. Once basic supplies are acquired, Moku Hanga is also a very space-efficient process that students can continue to work on in their own space after taking their workshops and/or classes. Teaching the printmaking technique of Moku Hanga in the United States combines an ancient Japanese technology with the contemporary desire to express ideas while making work by hand.

Katie Baldwin

After returning from Nagasawa in 2004, I began teaching a variety of workshops and demonstrations on Moku Hanga. I have found that teaching workshops offers challenges and experiences that differ from my experiences of teaching printmaking at the university level. Variables such as the skillset of students, and time available for the course affect the approach I take in teaching a Moku Hanga workshop. While I encourage all of my students to explore the development of personal voice through the technical processes of Moku Hanga, I spend most of the course time developing students' technical skills in this process. Students learn about the tools, materials, carving techniques and printing methods associated with Moku Hanga. Technical skills are gained in carving and printing woodblocks, including the use of color, multiple matrices and registration methods.

Time available for the workshop varies greatly from one teaching situation to another. On one end of the spectrum I have taught a two-hour workshop to art students and on the other end of the spectrum I have taught a ten-week course to community members who have never make a print before. A workshop that is to be taught in two hours provides a narrow focus for the workshop outline. I begin with a brief introduction to the history, tools and materials. I show examples of a "mapped" image, the carved block for that image (with kento registration), and printed examples from blocks. Then I demonstrate the carving techniques, kento registration, inking and printing the blocks. All participants have the opportunity to take turns printing off my prepared blocks or experimenting with the carving tools on extra blocks. A take-away item, such as my "Carving Woodblocks" zine, is available for participants. I have found that structuring a short workshop in this manner allows for students to experience the important aspects of the process in a manageable way.

When I provided a two-hour a workshop for printmaking students at Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia, PA, I found that students were extremely interested in the process. They are drawn to the inking brushes, baren and carving tools. Students are always eager to add nori and ink to the blocks, mix, and print. Most students are familiar with the delicate lines and complex patterning associated with Ukiyo-e prints. Often, they are surprised at how difficult printing and carving are. While they do not leave the workshop "really" knowing how to print in this technique, they do have a sense and appreciation for it.

The opportunity to teach for longer periods of time allows students to gain proficiency with this process as well as develop content in their work. Longer workshops provide an intensive focus of the particular demands of Moku Hanga printing. Students learned about the tools, materials, registration, concepts and techniques relevant to the Moku Hanga printing methods. They also learn health hazards, safety precautions and clean up procedures associated with the print studio. Technical skills are gained in carving, and printing woodblocks (including the use of color, multiple matrices and registration methods) through the exploration of technical processes and the development of personal print works. While the initial experience can be overwhelming in the sensitivity and labor required for successful results in Moku Hanga, through class handouts, demonstrations, critical analysis, and making prints, students develop sophisticated ways in which printmaking became a vehicle for the expression of ideas, content and personal voice.

In 2006, as a visiting artist at Prescott College in Arizona, I had the opportunity to teach woodblock printing in an intensive four-week course. Prescott College is an independent, liberal arts College, where the educational program reflects a commitment to the environment and social justice. At Prescott I worked with college students who were earning liberal arts degrees, studying a range of subjects including literature, art, languages, philosophy, history, math and science. At Prescott my students studied both western and Japanese style woodblock printing 6 hours a day, five days a week, for four weeks. The college and the students are particularly committed to non-toxic art processes, and learning relief techniques, such as Moku Hanga, were ideal. Due to the intensive nature of the course, I had more time to develop students understanding of the similarities and differences between oil-based and water-based printing methods. For example, applying the kento registration to reduction woodblock techniques allows for perfect accuracy in printing layers of color on an etching press. Another example would be using the carving sequence to achieve delicate line-work when

cutting a linoleum block. Content was equally considered alongside learning the technical aspects of Moku Hanga. Students were able to draw on their knowledge in other subjects as a foundation for their image making. For example, one student who had been studying anatomy created Moku Hanga images that used human muscles and bones as her primary source for image making.

In 2005, I taught Moku Hanga in the Pre-College Program at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. This program provides quality arts education to high school students locally and nationally who are preparing to apply to art school. In this workshop I worked with high school students who intended to attend art school. Overall they had a strong visual vocabulary for working two dimensionally, understanding how to use color, composition, line, texture and mark-making to develop dynamic images. The challenge in working with these teenagers was helping them develop the patience required for carving individual blocks and printing by hand. They found Moku Hanga to be a very labor-intensive process in contrast to other kinds of more immediate image-making processes. However, experimental and free form approaches to Moku Hanga came from these younger students. They took the opportunity to explore printing variations by changing colors, painting directly on the block or using other tools (such as a wire brush) to achieve marks on the block rather than carving.

Women's Studio Workshop, in Rosendale, New York, offers a variety of art classes for artists at any level of experience. Artists come from around the country to participate in five-day intensive workshops. An unanticipated challenge teaching at Women's Studio Workshop was that it attracted both students with no previous printmaking experience, and students who had extensive printmaking experience. For example, I had a professor supported by the University of Florida attend the workshop in order to broaden her (already extensive) skills in printmaking. In that same class I had a student who worked as a painter, and had decided to take the course in Moku Hanga for its potential of using watercolors for printing. She had never pulled a print before. While I also structure these workshops with demos, examples, hand-outs, etc., the small class size of 6 allows me to work with students intimately. I focus studio time on individuals, helping each build skills based on their particular level and experience. This allows students who have a print base to work from to move more quickly and students who are working with relief for the first time can work at their own pace.

Another institution with a similar supportive atmosphere, attracting students of all skill levels is the Fleisher Art Memorial in Philadelphia. Fleisher has a singular vision to provide high-quality, low-cost and tuition-free art instruction. I teach a regular ten-week course in Moku Hanga. Students of all backgrounds are attracted to learning Moku Hanga at Fleisher and commit to the rigor of a ten-week course on top of their daily responsibilities of work and family. Ten weeks allows me the luxury to introduce the tools, materials, and techniques gradually as students develop skills. Generally these students have no printmaking experience and are drawn to the fact that this is a print process that they can do at home without a press. They learn the basics of relief carving and printing on a single block. This teaches registration and the paper holding position for printing without having to manage multiple blocks and color. When we move into developing an image in multiple blocks or colors, I have each student "map" out their image using layers of tracing paper. This is an extremely useful exercise in assisting students in understanding how to transfer their image to separate blocks. It also clarifies possible ways to separate out color, layer two colors to create a "third" color, or selectively ink areas of the image. Spending time in this planning stage to create multiple sketches and maps ensures that students embark on a project that is manageable and well thought out. I have found that many of the students leave my ten-week course with a strong foundation understanding of Moku Hanga and many continue to work in the technique on their own.

Yoonmi Nam

I would like to focus my discussion on teaching Moku Hanga in a studio class setting at the university level. Since 2006, I have been teaching Moku Hanga classes every year at the University of Kansas, where I am currently an Associate Professor and the Associate Chair of the Department of Visual Art.

The content of the class emphasizes the aesthetic and critical development of the students' unique visual vocabulary while learning the new technique of Japanese style water-based woodblock printing. In addition, I try to take advantage of the resources that a large university offers, to allow a more comprehensive understanding of the Japanese style water-based woodblock printmaking; its history, aesthetics, culture, etc. Therefore, I have collaborated with faculty in the Art History department and the Center for East Asian

Studies, and curators at the Spencer Museum of Art at the University of Kansas. It is also important to me that I address contemporary artists, both Japanese and non-Japanese artists, and their works, whether they use the technique in a very traditional manner, or in an expanded and experimental manner.

Typically, students will complete five projects during a semester, which meets twice a week, for a total of 6 hours. Each project is designed to make connections between the technical, historical and conceptual development for the students. For example, the first project focuses primarily on learning the process of traditional Japanese woodblock printmaking by referencing historical Ukiyo-e prints that are in the Spencer Museum of Art Print Collection, both in its technique and subject matter. Through this experience, students are introduced to different varieties of historical Japanese prints, which include Ukiyo-e prints from the Edo period and Meiji period, Shin Hanga (New printmaking movement) and Sosaku Hanga (Creative printmaking movement), as well as traditional methods of carving and printing. The result of this first project is a copy (with some editing, if necessary) of a traditional Ukiyo-e print. The goal of this project is for the students to learn about basic history of Japanese printing and by copying an actual print, they are able to learn all the basic techniques, such as tracing an image, carving, printing, registering using Kento, etc. The next project builds upon the first project, in which the students are asked to make a print that 're-interprets' the traditional subject matter to address contemporary culture, issues and subject matter. For example, one of my students studied and made a print that portrayed an *Onnagata*, a male Kabuki theatre actor who specializes in playing a woman's role, for his first print, and for the second project, this student created a print that portrays an American drag queen prostitute in a contemporary American setting, using the traditional Ukiyo-e printing method.

In the latter part of the semester, students are introduced to more experimental techniques, such as coating the woodblock with varnish to achieve an uneven textured surface, or drawing on the woodblock with oil based crayon or wax to create imagery instead of carving. At times, students will combine western printmaking processes with Moku Hanga techniques. The final project is a print exchange, challenging them to produce a large consistent edition, and at the same time, students leave the class with a nice professional set of prints from everyone who is enrolled in the class, including the TA and myself.

We have very strong East Asian programs at the University of Kansas, so often times, several of my students are also enrolled in "HA 503: The Art of Japanese Prints" class offered in the Art History Department, while they are taking my studio class. In addition, I am also able to work with the curators at the Spencer Museum of Art and curate a small short-term exhibition of Japanese prints or other works in the collection that relate conceptually to my class content, in the teaching gallery at the Museum. For example, we had Ukiyo-e prints from the Edo period compared to those from the Meiji period. With the introduction of chemical pigments in Japan during the Meiji period, the coloring of the prints is significantly different from those from the Edo period. This was an added benefit for the students to see as they were learning about the history of Japanese printing.

Additional instructional materials that I use in the class include photographs and videos that document the different technical processes of Japanese woodblock printing methods, as well as those of traditional papermaking and marbling. From the Nagasawa Art Park residency experience, my experience traveling in Japan, and my experience being a guest artist for the Rhode Island School of Design Wintersession class in Japan, I was able to compile images and video resources that I made into individual Power Point presentations. These presentations cover carving, printing, papermaking, marbling and caring for the tools, which includes baren making and sharpening. A growing collection of Moku Hanga prints by various contemporary artists is a crucial resource that I also try to build for my students. Although many art museums are well stocked with Japanese prints, most lack works by contemporary artists using this medium.

In February 2011, my co-presenter Katie Baldwin will be a visiting artist at KU. She will be conducting a Moku Hanga workshop and will make two editions of Moku Hanga prints with the students during her time in Kansas. At the time of the conference in Japan this summer, we will also be able to report on this workshop.