

**American Society of Botanical Artists
23rd Annual Meeting and Conference
San Francisco 2017**

**Introduction to Drawing and Painting
on Vellum**
Deborah Shaw

Saturday, October 14, 2017

9:00 am – 4:00 pm
(full-day classes include a
one-hour lunch break)

Marriott - Connect 3



From medieval manuscripts to the great botanical artists of the seventeenth century to contemporary botanical artists—paintings on vellum are known for their luminous glow. This workshop is structured especially for those new to vellum—as well as those wishing to experiment. In the morning, learn about the materials, a variety of techniques, watch demonstrations, and complete exercises. Enjoy a private selection opportunity with Pergamena before lunch. The afternoon will focus on hands-on drawing, painting and individual feedback. Some watercolor experience required if using paint.

Supply List

Vellum and specimens will be provided by the instructor.

Please purchase only professional materials, not “student-grade”.

If you have something that is roughly equivalent to the supplies below, feel free to bring those instead of running out and purchasing new supplies. If you have “best-beloved” supplies that you would prefer to use or explore different ways of using them, please bring those as well. I’ll have additional supplies with me if you would like to try out something new.

Where to buy materials: I like to frequent our local brick-and-mortar art supply shops, so they don’t all disappear. If you shop online, there are a multitude of sites from which to choose. If you would like to support ASBA while shopping, go to <https://www.asba-art.org/shop/our-sponsors> and click on the “Click Here” words. This will take you directly to Blick Art Supplies online site. By clicking from the ASBA site to get there, Blick will donate a portion of your purchase price to ASBA.

Paper and board:

- Tracing paper, approximately 8-1/2 x 11 inches in size (approximately 21.59 cm x 27.94 cm) or larger. (NOTE: if you typically do not use tracing paper and prefer to draw directly on the vellum, tracing paper is not necessary, although you may want to bring some to protect the vellum from the oils on your hands). (See below under “Optional”).
- Small rigid board for mounting vellum, preferably white (or covered with paper), about 8-1/2 x 11 inches in size or larger (approximately 21.59 cm x 27.94 cm). This can be thick, white foam core, 8 ply mat board, museum board, or anything similar. I typically use a piece of Masonite, painted white.

Pencils:

Pencils can either be encased in wood, or leads used with a lead holder, whichever you prefer to use. You can use your favorite pencils (mechanical, Orenz, or others) as long as they can hold a good point and make a consistent line.

- H, 2H, or 4H (or all of these).
- If you're using lead holders, bring the lead holders and a lead pointer for sharpening.
- I'll bring some pencil sharpeners for wood pencils and one or two lead pointers, but if you have pencil sharpeners that are easy to bring, please do so.

Erasers:

- White plastic eraser (such as Staedler-Mars) or white plastic Clic eraser.
- Kneaded eraser (new and clean), or BluTac (new and clean).

Watercolors:

Bring your favorite watercolors, although they must be professional grade, and the highest light fastness possible. Transparent watercolors show off vellum's advantages best.

Brushes:

Kolinsky sable round watercolor brushes, or synthetic brushes for use by botanical artists. All brushes MUST come to a very, very, REALLY sharp point. Vellum can wear brushes down quickly, especially the smaller sizes, and you will be frustrated if your brush does not come to a sharp point. A larger brush with a sharp point can be used for everything if you do not want to bring a lot of brushes. Brushes with shorter tips (frequently called "detailer" or "retouch" or "spotter" brushes) are sometimes easier to use on vellum than regular-length watercolor brushes.

- Brush sizes: #4, #2, #1, #0, #00.
- Examples of some high-quality brushes are (in no particular order): Raphael 8404; Winsor & Newton Series 7; Da Vinci Maestro series 11; Escoda; Pro Arte; Rosemary & Company. I'm sure there are many others as well.
- Synthetic brushes (small) that you already use to correct mistakes.
- Brush you already use for mixing paint (#4 or #6).

Other:

- Portable light source (such as an Ott light or equivalent). In conference room settings the lighting is usually awful—it just goes with the territory. Occasionally there are outlets available for lights that plug in; most times, there aren't. It's best to be prepared with a battery-operated light source.
- Palette: your favorite palette or mixing plate is fine, preferably porcelain. If you don't have a porcelain palette, you can get a porcelain salad plate at a thrift store.
- Water container (small).
- One or more clean, white rags for wiping brushes, such as a square of old t-shirt material, or an old linen or cotton handkerchief. You also can cut the top off an old, white tube sock to wear around your wrist.
- Gloves or other vellum protectors: the tiniest bit of oil from your skin (or lotion) will make the paint bead up on vellum. We will discuss some solutions for when this happens in class, but the best solution is prevention. You can bring extra tracing paper as a rest for your hand and arm. I wear cheap cotton gloves with the fingers cut off, and for larger paintings, I wear long sleeves that I cut off an old t-shirt, or the elbow-length "sun gloves" sold in dollar stores. I highly recommend you DO NOT put any lotion on your hands, arms or elbows the day of the class.

Optional:

- Some old nasty or weird brushes if you want to experiment with creating different textures.

- Additional pencils: if you would like to experiment with graphic on vellum, please bring a range of soft (B) pencils and hard (H) pencils. I typically use a full range, from 9H all the way through to 9B. My “go-to” favorites are: 6H, 2H, HB, 2B, 4B, 6B.
- Colored pencils and/or water-soluble colored pencils (must be light fast). A variety of soft and hard points if you would like to experiment with colored pencil on vellum.
- Additional erasers: Papermate Tuff Stuff, Mono Zero Fine Point, Pentel Hi-Polymer Erasers, or your favorite.
- Sandpaper for sharpening pencil points (only if you typically give your pencils an extra-sharp point with sandpaper).
- “Warm up” Paper(s): a medium-sized pad, or a sketchbook, or one or two quarter-sheets of hot press watercolor paper.
- Dividers or rulers for measuring.
- Magnifiers.
- Masking fluid (if you are experienced with using it), with brush or pen for application.
- White Artists’ Tape (if convenient to bring) to tape the vellum to the board. I will also have some available if it’s too difficult to bring a roll in your luggage.

Questions? Contact me at db@dbshawstudios.com.

Instructor’s Bio

Deborah Shaw has a degree in fine art from Pomona College, The Claremont Colleges, where she also studied botany and native California flora. She is principal of dbShaw Studios, an award-winning design firm, specializing in print and interactive multimedia/web design, information design, illustration, and scientific illustration. Ms. Shaw is a member of the American Society of Botanical Artists, the Botanical Artists Guild of Southern California, the Northern California Society of Botanical Artists, and the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators. She has taught botanical art at numerous venues in the United States. She taught illustration, digital design and information design at the University of California, Irvine, Extension where she was the recipient of the “Distinguished Instructor” award.

Deborah’s work has been displayed in juried and non-juried exhibitions across the United States, is in the permanent collection at the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation at Carnegie Mellon University and is in private collections. She has received numerous awards for art, illustration, design, product design and advertising. Her preferred media include graphite, watercolor, colored pencil, scratchboard, Illustrator and Photoshop.