

ASSIGNMENT // AN ILLUSTRATED POEM IN SCRATCHBOARD

Scratchboard, a technique developed from wood, metal and linoleum engraving, is a traditional method of illustration originating in the 19th century. In this method, knives and various tools are used to scratch into an ink-coated clay board; this is an excellent way to get thin lines, high contrast pieces and a range of textures. The highly dramatic possibilities of scratchboard lend itself well to poetry, an often poignant and stark form.

OBJECTIVE //

Our objective for this project will be to create an interesting illustration to be presented alongside a poem of your choice. Ultimately, all of our images will be scanned in and compiled into a book using the self-publisher, Blurb.com. For our critique, the scanned image will need to be printed on art paper; archival is idea.

MATERIALS //

Poem, sketchbook, scratchboard, scratchboard tools, mat board, spray adhesive. For the book: digital copy of the poem, high-res digital scan of the image.

GUIDELINES //

Here is our timeline and process for this illustrated poem:

// Choose a poem

*Choose any poem that is suggestive of imagery to you. It can be by any author, old or new.*

// Thumbnails + Composition

*Again, thumbs are quick analyses of the board; nothing detailed is drawn in them, just blocks of object/negative space indicating where something might go. Find the best composition for your concept. Also think about what ideas translate the message, and those which are less successful.*

// Sketches

*After determining which thumbnails will be the most effective in communicating your message, choose those and develop larger scale sketches to further analyze the placement of various textures, lines, negative space, shapes, etc.*

// Practice!

*The absolute most important component in scratchboard is practice. The board takes getting used to, the tools require skill in order to manipulate the image as you see fit, in order to communicate your message. Practice ahead of time, on throw-away boards before moving into your final piece.*

// Final Illustration

*Your final drawing should be 7 x 7 inches on the scratchboard. You can draw in pencil on the scratchboard and scratch into the marks thereafter.*

// Presentation

*After completing your final illustration, scan in your board at a resolution of 300 dpi. Save this as a .TIFF file. Then print on good paper (the paper in the Print Studio Workshop in the art building is archival and creates beautiful results).*

ASSIGNMENT TIMELINE

Date	What's Due
2/11	Review assignment. Find poem and develop concept.
2/16	Due: Readings 3 and 4; Blog Post; Thumbs Demo of materials; Discussion of concepts
2/18	Due: Sketches
2/23	Due: Reading 5; Developed sketches/drawings; Practice techniques
2/25	Begin work on final scratchboard
3/2	Due: Reading 6; work on final scratchboard
3/4	Critique!

INSPIRATION//

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