

SCHOOL OF
BOTANICAL ART & ILLUSTRATION



AT DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS



FOUNDATIONAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM OVERVIEW



DENVER BOTANIC
GARDENS

SCHOOL OF BOTANICAL ART & ILLUSTRATION FOUNDATIONAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Botanical Illustration Foundational Certificate Program is designed to provide students with everything they need to be a successful botanical illustrator. Courses cover technical content as well as explore specific media.

Please use the School of Botanical Art & Illustration [Self-tracking Form](#) to track your progress.

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Required Courses

The following 15 courses are required if you wish to receive a Foundational Certificate in Botanical Art & Illustration. Classes should be taken in the order determined by their prerequisites. Courses consist of exercises, critiques, demonstrations, and homework assignments. A syllabus including a list of required supplies for each course and recommended books will be sent with class confirmation.



Cover artwork (large):
İşik Güner, Watercolor

Cover artwork (left to right):
Judy Graham, Pen and Ink
Constance Sayas, Watercolor
Leslie Hancock, Pencil

This page:
Laura Matthews, Watercolor

Core Course	Prerequisites
Botanical Illustration in Pencil I (see page 5)	None
Botany for the Botanical Illustrator (see page 6)	None
Composition for Botanical Illustration (see page 7)	None
Color Mixing in Watercolor (see page 6)	None
Color Layering for Colored Pencil (see page 6)	None
Light on Form (see page 7)	Botanical Illustration in Pencil I
Perfecting Perspective (see page 7)	Botanical Illustration in Pencil I
Botanical Illustration in Pen and Ink I (see page 4)	Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Light on Form
Botanical Illustration in Colored Pencil I (see page 4)	Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Light on Form, Color Layering for Colored Pencil
Botanical Illustration in Watercolor I (see page 5)	Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Light on Form, Color Mixing in Watercolor
Botanical Illustration in Pencil II (see page 5)	Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Light on Form, Botany for the Botanical Illustrator, Composition for Botanical Illustration, Perfecting Perspective
Botanical Illustration in Pen and Ink II (see page 5)	Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Botanical Illustration in Pen and Ink I, Perfecting Perspective, Botany for the Botanical Illustrator, Composition for Botanical Illustration
Botanical Illustration in Colored Pencil II (see page 4)	Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Light on Form, Color Layering for Colored Pencil, Botanical Illustration in Colored Pencil I, Botany for the Botanical Illustrator, Composition for Botanical Illustration, Perfecting Perspective
Botanical Illustration in Watercolor II (see page 6)	Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Color Mixing in Watercolor, Botanical Illustration in Watercolor I, Light on Form, Botany for the Botanical Illustrator, Composition for Botanical Illustration, Perfecting Perspective
Portfolio Preparation	All required courses + minimum 100 elective credit hours

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REQUIRED COURSE DESCRIPTIONS & COURSE GOALS

Botanical Illustration in Colored Pencil I

Colored pencil is a versatile and portable medium perfect for sketching on location as well as in the studio. You have already learned to layer colored pencil; now learn new techniques and methods to draw effectively in this medium. Techniques include layering, building and burnishing in color. Learn through instruction, demonstration and practice on small studies of botanical subjects.

Prerequisites: Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Light on Form, Color Layering for Colored Pencil

Course Goals:

- To understand basic art element and design principles: line, shape, form, values
- To practice the steps to drawing a botanical plate (layered drawing)
 1. Observation
 2. Sketching
 3. Accurate drawing in perspective, proportion and composition
 4. Value study
 5. Color matching and mixing
 6. Building color on the plate
 7. Depicting detail and refined edges
- Reinforce understanding accurately representing key botanical elements
 1. Growth habit
 2. Attachments
 3. Proportion and scale
- Introduce elements of atmospheric perspective
- Introduce the steps and skills for finishing a plate in colored pencil
 1. Adjusting color
 2. Enhancing form
 3. Refining perspective
 4. Cleaning
 5. Labeling

Botanical Illustration in Colored Pencil II

Take your colored pencil skills to the next level and become proficient in this fun, versatile medium. Work through a step-by-step process to create a preparatory layered drawing. Learn techniques to create texture, detail and depth to enhance your subject. Experiment with different surfaces and solvents for blending and shading. Add depth with atmospheric perspective and learn finishing techniques that will make your drawings pop. Individual attention guides you to create a finished botanical plate.

Prerequisites: Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Light on Form, Botany for the Botanical Illustrator, Color Layering for Colored Pencil, Botanical Illustration in Colored Pencil I

Course Goals:

- Compose and complete a finished botanical plate in colored pencil

Botanical Illustration in Pen and Ink I

Pen and ink are at the heart of botanical illustration. Expand your drawing repertoire as you learn techniques to create line, form and texture in black and white. "Expressive line" and "stipple" become part of your artistic vocabulary as you practice this traditional medium with modern and versatile technical pens. Step-by-step instruction, demonstration and practice give you the foundation you need to draw any botanical subject accurately and skillfully.

Prerequisite: Botanical Illustration in Pencil I

Recommended: Perfecting Perspective

Course Goals:

- Practice holding and using a technical pen as a tool for producing line drawings
- Practice using technical pen as a tool for producing simple stipple drawings to produce value
- Practice basic techniques for indicating texture and understand when to use them
- Introduce scientific illustration conventions for producing a pen and ink plate
- Produce one simple line and stipple illustration

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Botanical Illustration in Pen and Ink II

Take your pen and ink skills to a new level of sophistication. Explore the Gardens' limitless world of color, texture and complex botany and incorporate this information into black-and-white illustrations. Working with both technical pen and traditional quill, learn advanced techniques to make strokes mimic the fuzz on a fern, the down in a milkweed pod or the mottled colors of a variegated begonia. Learn how to layer and manipulate lines and stipples to develop a full range of value, texture and atmospheric perspective. Pen techniques take on new meaning as you flesh out the final inked illustration of a plant of your choice.

Prerequisites: Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Botanical Illustration in Pen and Ink I, Perfecting Perspective, Light on Form, Botany for the Botanical Illustrator

Course Goals:

- To introduce more advanced textures using the quill pen
- To compose and complete a pen and ink a final technical plate or fine art plate using both technical and quill pens

Botanical Illustration in Pencil I

Learn to draw! Begin with a brief history and an overview of the specific elements of botanical illustration. Learn the skills of careful observation and realistic drawing in graphite pencil, including line drawing, shading and perspective. Step by step, added techniques help you render accurate perspective, texture and detail. This is the entry course for every program student and a prerequisite for all required courses to follow. Emerge from this class with the tools you need to draw anything.

No prerequisites

Course Goals:

- To understand what botanical illustration is
- To understand basic art principles:
 - Line
 - Shape
 - Form
 - Values
- To practice the steps to drawing a botanical plate (layered drawing)

Botanical Illustration in Pencil II

Simple and classic, pencil drawing is a timeless art form. Expand on the drawing skills you learned in Botanical Illustration in Pencil I as you reinforce and refine your knowledge of graphite pencil. Learn additional techniques for shading, texture, perspective, depth and composition. A good drawing is the basis of botanical illustration in any medium. Group instruction and individual attention are tailored to help you complete a botanical plate in this subtle and striking medium.

Prerequisites: Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Light on Form, Botany for the Botanical Illustrator

Course Goals:

- Provide tips and guidelines to analyze your work in progress through weekly critiques
- Develop smooth texture and continuous tone in pencil and other materials
- Complete a graphite botanical plate

Botanical Illustration in Watercolor I

Combine drawing skills, your knowledge of color mixing and discover the delight of putting brush to paper. Be guided through a variety of watercolor techniques: flat and graded washes, highlights and drybrush detail. Learn to build washes for depth of tone and shading, and how to create soft and hard edges. With these foundational skills you'll be ready to create a finished illustration (plate) in Botanical Illustration in Watercolor II.

Prerequisites: Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Color Mixing

Course Goals:

- Understand how to apply paint and consider form
- Learn a variety of fundamental watercolor techniques used in botanical illustration
- Learn the steps for planning and painting botanical illustrations

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Botanical Illustration in Watercolor II

Develop your confidence as you work toward completing a finished illustration, also known as a plate, from a live specimen in this most traditional of botanical media. In this class, bring all your skills together, learn and refine additional techniques and focus on layering, shading and building form. Try new brush techniques and learn to use colors that enhance perspective and depth. Follow painting steps through completion, from broad washes to final detail. Learn how to fix mistakes and understand why watercolor is a forgiving medium.

Prerequisites: Botanical Illustration in Pencil I, Color Mixing, Botanical Illustration in Watercolor I, Botany for the Botanical Illustrator, Light on Form

Course Goals:

- Review, hone and expand watercolor skills used in botanical illustration
- Master the steps for planning and painting botanical illustrations
- Compose and complete a finished botanical plate in watercolor

Botany for the Botanical Illustrator

What is the difference between a carpel and a pistil? Where can I find the stamen? The science of the subjects you draw determines what you see! Put away your pencils for this enlightening designed specifically for students of botanical illustration. Take a close look at plant anatomy and learn to recognize botanical details that will make your drawings more accurate and realistic. Learn plant morphology through detailed instruction and supporting visuals. Your botanical art will improve when you understand the subjects you draw.

No prerequisites

Course Goals:

- To increase the knowledge of basic botanical principles, plant structures and terminology
- To increase the motivation to accurately illustrate botanical subject matter
- To read and understand botanical descriptions and realistically translate them
- To increase the knowledge of the history of botanical documentation through the ages
- To understand botanical taxonomy and nomenclature
- To be able to use botanical nomenclature

Color Layering for Colored Pencil

Color layering using colored pencil presents a special challenge. You must mix color directly on your drawing. Learn to use a simple color-mixing method adapted to the application of colored pencils. Two-, three- and four-color mixing will get you to the gorgeous greens and luscious lilacs you've been missing. Learn to determine shadow colors for vibrant results. Practice color matching with a variety of plant material as you create your own extensive color workbook to speed color selection and application for all future colored pencil drawings.

No prerequisites

Course Goals:

- To introduce students to color theory and color mixing with colored pencils
- To understand basic principles of color theory
- To learn and practice the steps to creating effective color mixes in colored pencil

Color Mixing in Watercolor

The first step to painting with watercolor is learning to mix colors. Learn a system for combining colors consistently to eliminate frustrating trial and error. Exercises, demonstrations and discussion show you how to achieve the broadest possible spectrum. Learn about paint properties and choosing pigments. Practice mixing colors to match a variety of plant material. Gain confidence and skills and improve all your color work.

No prerequisites

Course Goals:

- To understand the basic principles of color
- To learn how to mix colors efficiently and effectively
- To produce color mixture reference sheets for future classes
- Explore various methods for fixing the correct color, correcting mistakes and managing paint with paint brushes and paper

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Composition for Botanical Illustrators

The difference between a pleasant picture and amazing artwork is often found in composition. The arrangement of line, shape and color in artwork is an art form in itself. This course begins with a study of recognized masters and contemporary illustrators. Learn how to use compositional elements and principles in your botanical illustration. Create your own thumbnail compositions and develop insight and expertise to enhance all your future illustrations.

No prerequisites

Course Goals:

- Provide an overview of composition for two-dimensional art
- To introduce students to the elements and principles of composition
- To learn the steps to building a composition
- To learn to go beyond just drawing an accurate picture
- To build a more complete understanding of what makes a good composition
- To build a more complete understanding on how to improve an existing composition
- To introduce how to properly label and make scales in a drawing
- Introduce the concept of "real" versus "schematic" or simplified compositions

Light on Form

Take your drawings from flat to fabulous. The secret to portraying light and shadow on your subjects lies in understanding the scientific method of light as it applies to different forms. Beginning with basic geometric shapes, refine your skills in showing light and volume on any subject. The class works entirely in graphite pencil, but the principles apply to all other media. As you progress from fruits and vegetables to leaves and flowers to entire plants with complex shapes, overcome the obstacles in creating three-dimensional drawings.

Prerequisite: Botanical Illustration in Pencil I

Course Goals:

- Acquire the ability to depict three-dimensional form through understanding how light interacts with various shapes and plant forms
- To understand basic principles of light and shape
- To practice the steps to shading shapes to create the illusion of mass

Perfecting Perspective

Do you shy away from complicated plants? Even experienced illustrators sometimes struggle with foreshortening and simplify their subjects to eliminate difficult elements. Work with botanical subjects that demonstrate each aspect of perspective and learn techniques for seeing and depicting perspective accurately. The class works entirely in graphite pencil, but the principles apply to all art media. Gain confidence in your drafting skills and improve all your drawings from this class forward.

Prerequisite: Botanical Illustration in Pencil I

Course Goals:

- Understand the principles of perspective as they relate to botanical subjects
- Recognize when and how to produce three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface
- Practice different approaches to drawing correct perspective
- Improve drafting confidence and proficiency

Elective Courses

Elective courses serve a variety of purposes. They are designed to increase the student's knowledge, ability and experience in botanical art and should be integrated with the required courses. In addition to the 15 required courses, students must select no fewer than 100 elective hours; it is strongly recommended that students take relevant elective courses simultaneously with the required curriculum. The number of elective classes offered each year may vary. Typically, an elective course meets weekly for three hours over a five-week period (15 hours total), but condensed courses are also available. Guest instructor workshops may be taken as electives.

Science and Art Lectures

Selected lectures at Denver Botanic Gardens qualify for elective credits. Attendance at one lecture gives one elective credit hour; students can receive a maximum of 15 credit hours from these lectures. Café Botanique is a lecture series open to School of Botanical Art & Illustration students, Gardens members, the general public, academia and artists. Pre-registration is required for credit.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

For Inquiries &
Consultation About The School of
Botanical Art & Illustration:

CALL: 720-865-3670

EMAIL: sbai@botanicgardens.org

VISIT WEBSITE:
botanicgardens.org/SBAI

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& Illustration](#)

TO REGISTER:

REGISTER for classes [online](#)

PHONE our Resource Center: 720-865-3500

NOTES:

If a class does not have a sufficient number of registrations, it will be cancelled within 7 days prior to class. Supply lists are sent as an attachment with your registration confirmation.

REFUND AND CANCELLATION POLICY:

Student cancellations more than one week prior to a class are subject to a 15 percent cancellation fee. Cancellations less than one week prior to class are non-refundable.

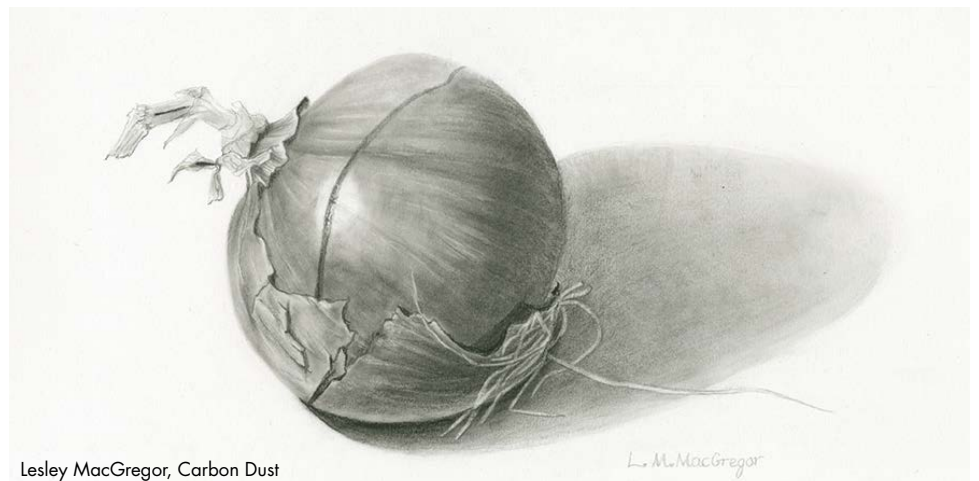
REQUIREMENTS FOR INDIVIDUAL COURSES:

Attendance is **required at the first class for all courses**. In order to receive credit for a Botanical Illustration Certificate, 80 percent of a course must be attended (at least 12 hours of a 15-hour course).

Instructors are not authorized to grant or promise refunds or exceptions to course policies. In select circumstances, the student can complete the course later by taking missed single classes from the same instructor and notifying the school manager two weeks before the course starts. If more than 20 percent of the course is missed, the course can be retaken for free during **the same year from any instructor in that medium, if space is available**.

Excluding exceptional circumstances, course credits expire after five years and will not count towards your certificate.

These policies apply to all registrations in the School of Botanical Art & Illustration program. Selected courses have additional cancellation and refund requirements printed with the course description.




Lesley MacGregor, Carbon Dust



Sue Carr, Watercolor

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