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PRESS CONTACT

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NEW ART EXPLORATION CLASSES



The Art Exploration series, hosted by the Gardens' School of Botanical Art & Illustration, provides introductions to a variety of artistic mediums and techniques in hands-on in-person and online courses inspired by the natural world. The classes are designed for all skill levels looking for a creative outlet, artists interested in trying a different medium and those curious about the School of Botanical Art & Illustration. The topics range from drawing, painting and printmaking to handwriting, quilling, cyanotypes and more. These classes are open to all, regardless of previous art experience. The current offerings take place January through June, and additional courses will be added in March.

Food for Thought - ONLINE

Fridays, January 6, February 3, March 3, April 7, May 5 and June 2, noon – 1 p.m.

No fee, advanced registration required

This online series addresses professional practices and highlights botanical artists, Gardens staff members and speakers from the greater botanical illustration community. During these one-hour Zoom discussions, we demystify the art world and share skills that help our creative community thrive.

Sketching in the Galleries

Sundays, January 8, February 5, March 5, April 2, May 7 and June 18, 1-3 p.m.

\$18, \$15 member

Join us on Sunday afternoons in the art galleries of the Freyer – Newman Center to practice your observational skills and learn drawing techniques amongst the art. Bring your favorite dry media (such as pencils or colored pencils), paper and an open mind. Stools and drawing boards are provided, and an instructor offers guidance. Paint and ink are not allowed in the galleries to protect the art.

The Artist's Journal: Winter's Hidden Treasures - ONLINE

5-part course: Tuesdays, January 10, 17, 24, 31 and February 7, 5-7 p.m.

\$185, \$155 member

Students receive a set of prompts for nature walks that highlight seasonal themes and encourage intimate connection with nature. Discover what plants are still at work in our neighborhoods, find some furry mammals to draw, try to

capture the cold in our palette and practice making expressive lines. Return to the studio to use drawing, painting, writing and mixed media to tell the story of individual experiences in nature.

Preparing for Success in Pen and Ink

5-part course: Wednesdays, January 11, 18, 25, February 1 and 8, 9 a.m. - noon

\$395, \$335 member

Explore both technical and flexible nib inking and supplies. This class covers the technicalities of both pen types, how and when to use them properly and how to care for, clean and repair them. Most importantly, learn about daily warm-up and practice exercises, as well as stroke and line work techniques. Use these hands-on practices to establish and polish inking skills in preparation to confidently create a botanic illustration plate.

Basic Encaustic Techniques

2-part course: Wednesday and Thursday, January 11 and 12, 11:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

\$230, \$200 member

Discover what you can create with this ancient, luminous medium — a molten mixture of beeswax, tree sap and pigment. The workshop is designed to give participants an overview of the encaustic process and allow students to experiment with various tools and techniques.

Artist's Skills: Label Conventions & the Artist's Mark - ONLINE

Monday, January 16, 1-4 p.m.

\$75, \$65 member

Discover the importance of your signature in the context of botanical labeling. In this course, learn a reliable and step-by-step method on how to label your finished plate legibly, stylishly and with composition in mind. Come prepared to review labeling conventions and learn what standards are expected.

Introduction to Design: Nature-Inspired – IN-PERSON & ONLINE

5-part course: Thursdays, January 19, 26, February 2, 9 and 16, 4-5:30 p.m.

\$75, \$65 member

Explore plant motifs and botanical themes in this introductory survey of design. Get acquainted with western European and American artists and designers from the 19th and early 20th centuries to discover their inspirations and creations. Uncover the intersections of form, function, art and social context. This class is offered in a hybrid format; register for either the onsite or online format.

Pencil I (Botanical Illustration) - ONLINE

5-part course: February 2, 9, 16, 23 and March 2, 9 a.m. – noon

\$375, \$315 member

Beginning with 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, add techniques to render accurate perspective, texture and detail, and emerge from this class with the tools you need to draw anything from observation.

Exploring Monotype with Gelli Plates and Akua Inks

Saturday, February 4, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

\$215, \$180 member

Don't miss this opportunity to work with local multimedia artist Melanie Yazzie! This workshop guides participants through a printmaking process called monotype that produces one-of-a-kind, unique images. Use gelli plates to create richly layered compositions through one or more impressions and countless design variations to tell a personal story of identity. The workshop is intensive and uses eco-friendly, soy-based Akua inks.

Creative Convening

Thursday, February 16, 5-8 p.m.

\$18, \$15 member

Science and art unite in the Gardens' Freyer – Newman Center. During each event, the botanical illustration classrooms are opened to explore, try new mediums and kick back with creatives of all walks. BYOB wine and beer are permitted. Please bring valid ID if you plan to consume alcohol.

Artist's Skills: Improving Your Handwriting

3-part course: Wednesday, March 1, 8 and 15, 9 a.m. – noon

\$280, \$235 member

Practice and improve the nuances of your personal handwriting style. As you learn about characteristics of alphabet letters in both print and cursive, discover how to write them to express your personal style. This course also guides exercises to develop your artist's signature and explore lettering in various artists' media.

Introduction to Zentangle Botangle - ONLINE

5-part course: Fridays, March 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31, 9 a.m. – noon

\$280, \$235 member

Botangle© is Zentangle®-inspired botanical art. Based on the popular art method developed by Rick Roberts and Maria Thomas, you can relax and focus as you express your style through repetitive strokes that form intricate decorative patterns. What look like complex, ornamental drawings are simple to render if taken one step at a time. You can create a colored Botangle© based on a contour provided by Certified Zentangle® teacher (CZT), Annie Reiser, using the traditional grisaille color-layering technique.

Pollinators and Their Plants Mixed Media Workshop - ONLINE

2-part course: Saturday and Sunday, March 4 and 5, 1-5 p.m.

\$200, \$170 member

Join science illustrator and fine artist Erin E. Hunter to learn how she uses a combination of acrylic paint, graphite, fine pigment marker and colored pencil on watercolor paper to create her wildflower-pollinator paintings. Discussions also cover using tracing-paper sketches, how to transfer to paper, as well as Hunter's preference for acrylic paint rather than the more traditional watercolor.

Artist's Skills: Photographing Your Artwork

Wednesday, March 8, 9 a.m. – noon

\$75, \$65 member

This workshop provides simple tips and tricks to help you use the camera you have on hand (even if it's just your phone) to capture the best, most accurate photos of your art. The session combines a series of demonstrations, examples and discussions to help you avoid common pitfalls and get the most from your camera.

Cyanotypes on Paper and Fabric

2-part course: Saturday and Sunday, March 11 and 12, 9 a.m. – noon

\$145, \$125 member

The cyanotype process dates to architectural blueprints, the first illustrated books published and the first photographs of botanical specimens. The medium is a mash up of art and science and is still used today by artists to create editions and one-of-a-kind images that are beautifully blue. This class teaches the basics of cyanotype photograms on both paper and fabric. Learn about alternative and experimental exposure techniques and then add to the cyanotypes using watercolor, ink, embroidery thread and more to create mixed media final works.

Photography for Botanical Illustrators

Friday, March 24, 9 a.m. – noon and 1-4 p.m.

\$150, \$125 member

This one-day workshop celebrates the Month of Photography by enlisting two instructors to show you different ways photography can help your botanical illustrations. Learn how to photograph specimens from Scott Dressel-Martin,

Denver Botanic Gardens' official photographer. In the afternoon session, Teaching Artist Marjorie Leggitt shows you how to draw from your photos.

Creating Your Own Botanical MiniWorld

Friday, March 31, 5-8 p.m.

\$105, \$95 member

In this class, each participant makes their very own MiniWorld! Play and learn with The Terrorium Shop—Denver's home for unique art combined with natural history, best known for their MiniWorlds. Permanently encased in a glass dome, the displays feature dried botanicals, insects, bones, crystals and other elements from the natural world. Take home a customized small glass dome filled with a pinned-for-display butterfly specimen, an assortment of dried botanicals, crystals and more. All specimens used by The Terrorium Shop are ethically and sustainably sourced and collected postmortem.

Retablos and Natural Paint: A Living Artform

Saturday, April 1, 9 a.m. – noon

\$85, \$75 member

Explore the process of creating natural pigments from plants, flowers, sediments and insects and learn about the artform of santos and retablos. This art form has been practiced by Native American tribes and Spanish colonial settlers for centuries in what is now known as the state of Colorado. Experiment with the processes required for pigment-making and create a step-by-step painting on a wooden retablo.

Drawing Raptor Wings and Feathers

2-part course: Monday, April 3, 1-4 p.m. and Friday, April 7, 9 a.m. – noon

\$115, \$95 member

This two-session workshop featuring time at both Denver Museum of Nature and Science and Denver Botanic Gardens better acquaints you with birds of prey and techniques to sketch live specimens. During the first session we review basic anatomy, focusing on the wing and wing feathers, make observations and sketch from mounted specimens. Then it's time to apply what you've learned and sketch from live raptors during the Gardens' annual Raptor Day celebration.

The Artist's Journal: Spring's Renewal - ONLINE

5-part course: Thursdays, April 6, 13, 20, 27 and May 4, 1-3 p.m.

\$185, \$155 member

No matter the season, an artist's nature journal documents the beauty of nature in a unique, personal format. Students receive a set of prompts for nature walks that highlight seasonal themes and encourage intimate connection with nature. For this spring season, look for re-awakening plants, birds, nests and capture the weather and practice using text in our journals. In the studio, use drawing, painting, writing and mixed media to tell the story of your experiences in nature.

Printmaking: Time to Get Tropical

4-part course: Saturdays, April 8, 15, 22 and 29, 1-4 p.m.

\$245, \$205 member

Discover the magic of printmaking—transfer an image from a carved surface to paper and experience the instant gratification of using a printing press and peeling the paper away to reveal your print. This course begins with a brief history and overview of the components of relief printmaking. Then get inspiration from the Boettcher Memorial Conservatory and through a series of exercises and demonstrations to design and transfer a tropical-themed image onto a printed edition of five botanical illustrations.

Introduction to Egg Tempera - ONLINE

5-part course: Fridays, April 14, 21, 28, May 5 and 12, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

\$375, \$315 member

This course introduces students to egg tempera that has the capacity for exquisite detail and glowing colors that last for centuries. Practice rendering highlights, mid-tones and shadows before completing your own egg tempera masterpiece.

Madhubani: Folk Art from India

Online, Friday, April 14, 10 a.m. – noon

Onsite, Friday, April 21, 9 a.m. – noon

\$145, \$125 member

Madhubani literally translates to *forests of honey* in English. Its main features are line drawings filled in with bright, high contrast colors and eye-catching patterns. The designs announce an occasion of celebration and ask for good fortune and blessings. This course introduces *Madhubani* to all through an understanding of history, motifs, themes, and techniques, and concludes with hands-on demonstrations to make your own paintings.

Botany Spotlight: Asteraceae - ONLINE

Wednesday, April 26, 4-7 p.m.

\$75, \$65 member

From asters to zinnias, the daisy family (Asteraceae) is one of the largest flowering plant families in the world. With bright and bold floral displays, they are a frequent and favorite subject of botanical artists and illustrations. These may appear an easy subject for the artist, but to render them botanically accurate takes a little knowledge about the obscure characteristics that separate one from another. Learn this family's unique floral morphology and which key features to note for inclusion in accurate, detailed illustrations.

Artist's Skills: Matting & Framing Your Art

Friday, April 28, 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

\$190, \$165 member

Elevate the display of your artwork and save money by learning the important skill of matting and framing. This workshop taught by Megan Farlow, Denver Botanic Gardens' Assistant Manager of Exhibitions & Art Collections, teaches you how to choose, measure, cut, mount and assemble your mat and frame. Come prepared with a piece of art no larger than 11x14" and go home with a mat and suggestions for affordable, quality frames.

Coiling & Shaping in Paper Quilling

2-part course: Friday, April 28 and May 5, 9 a.m. – noon

\$115, \$95 member

Paper quilling, also known as paper filigree, is a centuries-old craft featuring neatly spiraled paper coils that are then manipulated into beautiful shapes such as flowers and birds. Quilling designs are comprised of several small, contemplative elements that come together to form a finished image. Learn how to use quilling for a variety of projects from simple gift tags to ornaments, jewelry, three-dimensional cards and more.

Introduction to Watercolor Pencil

2-part course: Mondays, May 1 and 8, 1-4 p.m.

\$150, \$125 member

Discover the amazing versatility of watercolor pencils for illustrating and painting. Learn tips and techniques on how to manage the color wet or dry. Used as a mixed media or alone, watercolor pencils travel well and are perfect for developing botanical illustration, botanical art, journal entries and quick sketch applications.

Introduction to Botanical Illustration

5-part course: Tuesdays, May 16, 23, 30, June 6 and 13, 5-8 p.m.

\$375, \$315 member

Through carefully explained demonstrations, simple exercises and helpful critiques, learn step-by-step how to draw what you see and build the skills required to enter the School of Botanical Art & Illustration with confidence.

Pencil I (Botanical Illustration) - ONLINE

5-part course: Wednesdays, May 31, June 7, 14, 21 and 28, 1-4 p.m.

\$375, \$315 member

Beginning with 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, add techniques to render accurate perspective, texture and detail, and emerge from this class with the tools you need to draw anything from observation.

Illustrating Irises Workshop

Friday, June 2, 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

\$150, \$125 member

Join us for an inspiring day in the field at the Gardens' Chatfield Farms location. The collection of 400 irises are rare historical varieties that otherwise might be lost to time. During this workshop, spend time selecting and sketching, photographing or painting an heirloom iris from our spectacular collection.

Plein-Air Painting in the Gardens

3-part course: Saturdays, June 3, 17 and 24, 1-4 p.m.

\$225, \$190

Draw and paint amongst the flora and fauna on Denver Botanic Gardens' York Street campus. From observations, planning sketches, color matching and final paintings or drawings, you will be taken through the process of working in the great outdoors. Any water-soluble medium, colored pencils or pastels may be used during this three-day workshop.

Bundle Dyeing at Chatfield Farms

Sunday, June 4, 1-4 p.m.

\$90, \$80 member

Join us for an experimental dyeing workshop with Maki Teshima, a botanical dye fiber artist, at the Gardens' Chatfield Farms location. Use locally grown plants and explore other natural materials that can be used in bundle dyeing or Tataki (pounding) dyeing. After learning from Maki about these basic natural dyeing processes, create a unique and abstract surface designs with cotton and silk fabrics.

Working with Watercolor Mishaps - ONLINE

Saturday, June 24, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

\$75, \$65 member

In this session with visiting instructor Jarnie Godwin, learn how to save a painting from the scrap heap. Through presentations and demonstrations, Godwin shares her experiences with making mistakes, techniques for correcting and concealing errors and how to work with some of the most common blunders made in watercolor painting.

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About Denver Botanic Gardens: Green inside and out, Denver Botanic Gardens was founded in 1951 and is considered one of the top botanical gardens in the United States and a pioneer in water conservation. Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, the Gardens has a robust living plant collection, natural history collection and art collection along with temporary art exhibitions. The Gardens is a dynamic, 24-acre urban oasis in the heart of the city, offering unforgettable opportunities to flourish with unique garden experiences for the whole family – as well as world-class art exhibitions and education programs in the Freyer – Newman Center; plant conservation efforts and horticultural research. Additional sites extend this experience throughout the Front Range: Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms is a 700-acre native plant refuge with an active farm in Jefferson County; Mount Goliath is a high-altitude trail and interpretive site on the Mount Evans Scenic Byway. The Gardens also manages programming at Plains Conservation Center in Aurora. For more information, visit us online at www.botanicgardens.org.