



Calligraphy from a Palaeographical View Point

A YEAR-LONG COURSE OF STUDY WITH PAUL ANTONIO

Hosted by Texas Lettering Arts Council

This is a year-long (four session), residential course of study in the Dallas/Fort Worth area comprised of three, 3-full-day sessions and one, 4-full-day session with a two + hour lecture/homework review preceding each session.

Course is limited to 30 students.

Class begins May 10, 2018 and ends February 24, 2019

10 - 13 MAY 2018 - (3 + Days)

16 - 19 AUG 2018 - (3 + Days)

01 - 04 NOV 2018 - (3 + Days)

20 - 24 FEB 2019 - (4 + Days)

SYLLABUS

The aim of this year long course is to teach you how illuminated manuscripts were written in the Mediaeval Period. In order to do so, I will introduce you to some of the main high grade book hands used for the writing of books in the Middle Ages and why you cannot simply refer to a hand from this period as 'Gothic' or blackletter'. You will be introduced to think critically about the letterforms, the tools used to produce them and how to construct a manuscript page.

The ultimate aim of this course is to get all students to collaborate on a final project which will culminate in the production of a handwritten manuscript. The final completion will be up to you to fill in the initials on all the pages of your own personal copy. You can either do this with the group over many hands or collaborate with fellow students on one hand alone.

This course requires a traditional hand hold. If you do not have a light touch and/or a traditional triangular hold where the tool is held by the thumb and forefinger, and resting on the middle finger, you will be expected to alter your hand hold. A *quadrangle* hold causes much damage to the tendons and rarely allows for a light grip. You will be working on a steep angled board and changing the hold is a necessity, especially when comes to writing with quills. I have developed an easy system within which, altering your hand hold will be easily accommodated with practise.

A working knowledge of muscular movement and whole arm moment is essential, as is evident in the German Writing Master Copybooks. A video will be sent to you to practise.

All participants will be expected to be familiar with my **Posture**, **Placement** and **Position** videos. Additional pre-prep homework will be sent, once you have committed to the full course.

Posture - <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=L3o-XqiDohs>

Placement - <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Uz2806GJteQ>

Position - <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=BWtvNpVNOqA>

As this is based on the *High Grade Bookhands* used for the writing of liturgical texts, I will introduce you to *Script as Meditation* for the writing of sacred language.

SESSION 1 - MAY 10-13, 2018

Textualis Quadrata & Textualis Semi Quadrata

This is an evening lecture with 3 full days of writing.

May 10th – 7:00pm to 9:30pm

Lecture – The rise of the Gothic Scripts from Carolingian to the end of its written period. The lecture will cover Display Capitals both as illuminated initials and rubrics, as well as focus on Textualis Quadrata and Textualis Semi Quadrata.

The lecture will also present variations and how they relate to the script as well as touch on bastard hands, in addition to spotting the differences between degrees of bastardisation in the scripts. This is lecture with a question and answer session.

May 11th - 9:30am – 5:00pm, 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Day 1 will focus on learning the minuscules for both hands using Zig® and Sakura® marker pens. The focus is on the letters. I want you to learn the letters and not to have to fuss with ink and nibs. We will also look at variations for the minuscules and how to control them and now slip into stealing letters from different families.

May 12th - 9:30am – 5:00pm, 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Day 2 will focus on the majuscule and how rubrication works. Again this will be done with markers as accuracy of form is more important than writing in ink with dip nibs. We will also look at variations for the majuscules.

Evening Session will introduce you to writing the script as a monk did, concentrating on writing and genuflecting. This helps to stimulate a better sense of the letter and imparts life into the text. TQ is one of the easiest scripts to apply meditation to due to its simplicity.

May 13th - 9:30am – 5:00pm

Day 3 will focus on how to write copy for consistency of letterforms and spacing. After the morning break, we will switch to nibs and see how you can use the nature of dipping to find a rhythmic construct within which to structure the script. It will look at the rhythmic basis for the script and how to use that to engender life in continuous writing. Care will be taken to explain the layout of manuscripts in the Mediaeval period to ensure you have adequate knowledge to manage the homework.

Homework

You will be expected to write out two pages of copy in both TQ and TSQ leaving space for initials to be dropped in at the end of the course. At this stage we will initiate the making of gesso, in preparation for use at the end of the class. This may be something which you do as a group separate to the class, but we will work out where this can fit in.

I have always been partial to Jerry Tresser's gesso recipe and feel it is the best to work with for what we are intending. You will be expected to choose a paper, which you will take through the duration of the course.

You will not be taught numbers, but will be expected to produce a set, based on your experience with the script, and then an historical set you have researched.

Students will be expected to start collecting dull or blunt pointed nibs to make into tiny flexible, broad edged nibs for small writing and mediaeval capital construction.

SESSION 2 - AUG 16-19, 2018

Fraktur

This is a lecture and homework evening with 3 full days of writing.

August 16th 7:00pm to 8:30pm

Lecture – In this lecture we will look at the glory that is Fraktur. From its development to its pinnacle. We will see how decoration works with these letters then have a chance to delve into the volume of its variations. This lecture will not have as much time to deal with questions.

Homework Review - 8:45 – 10:00pm

This is time to look at the homework - what you have accomplished and what you have struggled with. You have an option to have only completed roughs of the 2 pages per script, so we can discuss how you can execute them or to show the final pieces. It is advisable, if you have final pieces to please bring the originals and at least 2 sets of photocopies on which we can make corrections.

August 17th - 9:30am – 5:00pm, 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Day 1 will focus on the minuscules of the hand. We will, once again start with markers, as letterforms - shape and accuracy is critical here. The afternoon sessions will concentrate on dip nib use. You will be introduced to some of the variations which arise in the hand and see how they sit within the written form. This will help you to understand how to add variations without compromising the feel of the page.

August 18th - 9:30am – 5:00pm, 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Day 2 will focus on the majuscules, once again with markers in the morning, and graduating to dip nibs in the afternoon. You will be expected to improve swiftly, even though the capitals are more complex than the lowercase. The evening session will introduce you to flourishing off these capitals.

Evening Session will look at how to feel the multitude of parts as one. This will help to further your understanding of meditation. Focusing your mind on feeling the parts rather than looking at them to write them (this is what allowed the monks to write so small).

August 19th - 9:30am – 5:00pm

Day 3 will focus on writing copy and continuous text. We will look further at flourishing off both the majuscules and minuscules. Variations in the hand will be demonstrated, as well as how to use variants together, cohesively.

As we have been working with dip nibs, I will introduce quill cutting and how to prepare quills for formal writing in preparation for the next session.

Homework

Students will be expected again to produce a two pages of copy in Fraktur.

SESSION 3 - NOV 1 - 4, 2018

Batarde - This is a lecture and homework evening with 3 full days of writing.

November 1st – 7:00pm – 8:30pm, 8:45pm – 10:00pm

Lecture - Batarde is the principal hand used in France in the Mediaeval period. It, as with the other hands, has many variations. How to distinguish between it and the myriad of Gothic Cursives is a trick, one which will be shown in the lecture. There is a plethora of majuscule variations, but also of illuminated initials, as well as some stunning border decoration. The lecture will also touch on the spectacular 'Letter Bourgeoise' a sumptuous hand used in Burgundy, which is a cross between Batarde and Fraktur. It has its own special ascender and descender flourishes, embellishments, decorations and grotesques.

By now, you would have written out at least the TQ and TSQ in full. This I will expect to see. If you have not done so with the Fraktur, you will need to have at least worked up the rough and some trials. For all of the homework, I expect you to come with two copies of each for correction.

November 2nd - 9:30am – 5:00pm, 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Day 1 will focus on the minuscules and show why they are so difficult to write. We will walk through the subtle underlying movements which you cannot see in the letter, without which the letter looks flat and not quite there. We will be working with nibs. The afternoon will be spent working with quills and getting to know the tool – to feel how it can produce minute shifts in the line. By now you would have cultivated a lighter touch.

The evening session will look at writing and concentration on the subtler sensations of the script for a sensitive execution of letter. Many Batarde manuscripts had wonderfully elaborate borders and we will consider how this fits into the context of the final project.

November 3rd - 9:30am – 5:00pm, 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Day 2 will focus on the majuscules. These are far more complex than their lowercase counterparts. A greater sensitivity is necessary, which would have been developed in the previous evening. This will mean more quill writing, and more quill cutting to match the previous quill.

Evening Session will introduce you to vellum and parchment and how to prepare them. Care will also be taken to show pricking and ruling of the skin. This is in preparation for the next day. Writing on vellum is an amazing experience. This experience cannot be complete without the correct ink, so whilst some are preparing vellum, others will prepare inks made of soot (for the black) and minimum (for the red). You will also be shown how to stain vellum as an option to doing Chirography (writing in gold on the surface for your manuscript project).

November 4th - 9:30am – 5:00pm

Day 3 will focus on accuracy of writing and attempting to write smaller in the morning. The afternoon will require you to work on scraps of vellum at a smaller x-height and with smaller cut quills or nibs.

Homework

By now you would have completed the TQ, TSQ and the Fraktur pages. You should have done sufficient research to sketch some letters in with ideas for gilding which should also include tooling of the gessoed base.

You will be expected to work on both Roman Capitals and Uncials hands in preparation for the final session. You will also be expected to produce numerous pages of line work showing you can control your pen to within an inch of its life. This is key to producing the glorious letter we will tackle in the 4th and final installment of the course.

SESSION 4 - FEB 20 - 24, 2019

Mediaeval Capitals - The last session is a lecture evening and 4 full days of writing.

February 20th - 7:00pm – 9:00pm

The number of different kinds of majuscules used in the Middle Ages is staggering. So many traditions funnel into the creation of some of more elaborate forms, it is worthwhile looking at decoration as a whole. One of my favourite types of flourishing is *Littera Florissa* and it is from here, and its relationship with hatched shapes and foliage where we will begin. The capitals can either be based on *Roman Caps*, leading to Versals or Uncials leading to Lombardics. But we will look at a third set – the *Cadeaux* or *Cadel*, as well, as see how they integrate with the specific majuscules for the corresponding minuscules.

February 21st - 9:30am – 5:00pm, 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Day 1 will focus on Roman Capitals and Versals. We will not be learning Roman Caps in this class, your homework would have given you a strong enough base to jump right in. The morning will be spent on different forms of line execution and how they work together to build-up the requisite letterforms.

I will lay some gesso in the afternoon, so we can see the various ways it can be utilised. I will also write with some 24k gold I have ground and write with it for burnishing later on. The evening will concentrate on complex use of nesting and conjoined stem sharing of letters.

February 22nd - 9:30am – 5:00pm, 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Day 2 will focus on Uncials and how they are used as the base for Lombardics. We will not need to introduce any additional line augmentation, as this would have been covered on the previous morning. This would allow a speedier letter construction and faster progress on how the Lombardics are built. As Lombardic letters have more internal space we will look at how to utilise this internal space effectively.

February 23rd - 9:30am – 5:00pm, 7:00pm – 10:00pm

Day 3 starts with counting spaces. This is how a Cadel is constructed. It is assumed you can make vertical and diagonal lines straight and without shaking. Cadels are based on the capitals of the hands we previously learned so a sound, comfortable working knowledge of all the majuscules of the TQ, Fraktur and Batarde is essential.

We will also look at Rotunda, also known as Textualis Bolognese, as its majuscules form the basis for some stunning Cadels used in the gradual the pope uses for the Christmas Mass. They too, have little grotesques, similar to the Textualis Bourgeoise.

February 24th - 9:30am – 5:00pm

Day 4 will focus on text and page layout. It is at this point you should be ready to either go with what you have been working on or throw it out of the window and start from scratch to include border decoration. You will also need to make a decision on group collaboration; collaboration with one or two people or an individual project.

The afternoon session will look at laying gold on the various bits of gesso. Writing with gold gouache and gold mica will also be shown, as well as how to paint with gold using a wonderful Arabian technique known as Halacar!

Times and material are subject to change slightly.

VENUE & ACCOMMODATIONS

Nazareth Retreat Center

1814 Egyptian Way

Grand Prairie, TX 75050

(Conveniently located near DFW and Dallas Love Field airports)

A non-smoking facility with comfortable accommodations and home cooked meals conveniently located on 25 acres within 7 miles of both DFW and Dallas Love Field airports.

The Center is located adjacent to the convent (and home) of the Sisters.

Nazareth Retreat Center is sponsored and operated by the *Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth* and features beautifully landscaped grounds including a private lake, patios and sitting areas.

TUITION

It is recommended that students stay "on campus" for the duration of each session, however, commuting is an option. Additional nights for lodging are available.

Private Room Student

Includes tuition, meals, coffee breaks and snacks, some necessary supplies and 13 nights of private lodging at the Nazareth Retreat Center. Private rooms are limited and on a first-come-first-served basis.

\$3475 before 3/30/2018 - \$3600 after

Share Room Student

Includes tuition, meals, coffee breaks and snacks, some necessary supplies and 13 nights of shared lodging at the Nazareth Retreat Center.

\$3285 before 3/30/2018 - \$3410 after

Day Student

Includes tuition, meals (except breakfast), coffee breaks and snacks, some necessary supplies.

\$2850 before 3/30/2018 - \$2975 after

REGISTER [HERE](#) and a packet with additional details and payment options will be sent via email.. Register before March 30, 2018 before the rates increase.

QUESTIONS

Please contact Angie Vangalis, Course Coordinator at 214-957-1736 or angie@txlac.org for questions about registration and lodging. Contact Paul Antonio at thestudio@pascribe.com about any questions pertaining to the course material.

*Texas Lettering Arts Council is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization committed to promoting and preserving the fine art of lettering and related disciplines.
For more information about educational opportunities please visit our website at www.txlac.org.*