

Printmaking in the Gardens

Every semester, the ARTIS 206: Studio Fundamentals: Printmaking course comes to Reiman Gardens to collect observational drawings of flora, fauna, sculptures, and architecture, for the intaglio drypoint project. The prints on display here span student works from Fall 2019 to Fall 2022.

Drypoint is an intaglio technique. Intaglio (from the Italian *intagliare*, 'to engrave') refers to any printmaking process which involves making incisions into a plate. The ink is applied, pushed into the incisions, and then wiped off the surface. The image is created with the ink that remains in the incised marks. The plate is then run through an etching press with dampened paper.

The lines in a drypoint tend to have a distinctive velvety look because of the slightly raised ragged rough edge of the lines, known as the burr. The burr is delicate, so drypoint is usually made in small editions, stopping before the burr is crushed by the pressure of the press.

The earliest dated intaglio print is an engraving from 1446. Since ancient times, goldsmiths were using engraving to decorate metalwork, including armor. One theory is that the idea of making prints from engravings came from the goldsmiths taking impressions on paper of their designs from these objects. Albrecht Dürer is among one of the best-known historical engravers.

ARTIS 206 is a half-semester course, offered twice every Fall and Spring semester. For enquiries, please contact Raluca Iancu, at riancu@iastate.edu.