Institute for Church Life  
Department of Theology at the University of Notre Dame

Instructor: George Kordis

Course title: Writing with Light: Art of the Icon 3 LS, SS 8:00-11:30.

The course introduces the student to the theory and practice of the art of icon painting, according to the Byzantine tradition. The basic ideals and principles of the theory of Byzantine painting will be presented in relation to Patristic iconology, on which the art of icon painting is founded. The main aim of the course is to introduce participants to traditional methods of icon painting using the egg tempera technique.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Regular attendance to classes.
2. Active and thoughtful participation in studio work (drawing and painting) – 40%.
3. The icon created during the course in the studio will be considered as the final examination – 60%.

SCHEDULE

Monday, June 13th
Introduction. The ideals and principles of Byzantine icon painting. Byzantine painting as a system. Drawing of a saint (head, figure, garments).

Tuesday, June 14th
Drawing of a seated figure.

Wednesday, June 15th
Introduction to Byzantine painting composition. Drawing of a small composition (The Annunciation of Theotokos).

Thursday, June 16th
Final drawing for the portable icon painted in class. Proposed themes: St. Anthony the Great, The Annunciation of Theotokos, St. Francis of Assisi). The students may choose one of the above themes or a different one, according to their skills.

Friday, June 17th
1. Transferring the drawing onto the wooden panel. Finalizing the drawing. Application of underpaint coat.
2. The egg tempera technique. Practice.
Monday, June 20th - Thursday, June 23rd
Work continues on painting the icon.

Friday, June 24th

SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources


Secondary Sources - History, Theology, Aesthetics, Technique


LIST OF MATERIALS

Materials for drawing

1. Pencils (2 or 3B)
2. Eraser
3. Drawing paper Pad
   http://www.dickblick.com/items/10440-1005

Materials for painting with egg tempera

1. Ampersand Cradled Clayboard (12”x16”)
   http://www.dickblick.com/items/14915-2216/
   item: 14915-2216
2. Three small jars for mixing of colors
3. One piece of plexiglass (12”x16”) for mixing of paint
4. Kitchen towel or a piece of soft absorbent cloth
5. Plastic paint trays
   http://www.dickblick.com/products/plastic-paint-trays/#photos
6. Short-haired round brushes for egg tempera (pure red sable or their synthetic equivalent). I would suggest:
   More specifically the codes:
   1. 05003-1002 Series 101
   2. 05003-1003 Series 101
   3. 05003-1005 Series 101
   4. 05003-1006 Series 101
   5. 05003-1008 Series 101
   6. 05003-1010 Series 101
   7. 05003-1014 Series 101
7. Some Flat brushes.
   (no. 05842-1006, series 505 and no. 05880-1001)

Students can also buy pure Kolinsky brushes
8. KREMER PIGMENTS (http://www.kremerpigments.com/) - THESE QUANTITIES ARE FOR 12 STUDENTS

1 kg. Iron Oxide Yellow (48000)
1 kg. (mars black (48420)
1 kg. English red (light (40542)
500gr English red dark (40545)
2 kg titanium white (46200).
100 gr Cadmium Yellow No 6.medium. No 21040
100 gr. Cadmium Red No.1. Light , No. 21120

9. 20 sheets of heavy paper (Stonehenge)
http://www.dickblick.com/items/10423-1782/

10. Small plastic cups (espresso size)