

Papercraft: Book Arts

Ruby Red Workshop
Thursdays, 1:30 – 4:00 pm
6-week session, February 26 – April 2, 2026
Educator: Jasmine Abena Colgan, abena.the.zelephant@gmail.com

CLASS DESCRIPTION

This all-level studio class explores the art of paper and bookmaking through the lens of Modern & Contemporary Art as well as cross-cultural traditions. Students will learn hands-on techniques in papercraft and book arts—ranging from folded and stitched book structures to sculptural paper forms—while drawing inspiration from African, Asian, Ancient American, and Latin American artistic practices.

Throughout the course, students will engage with select works from the Denver Art Museum’s Collections and exhibitions, using these as catalysts for creative exploration. By studying pattern, symbolism, and material traditions across cultures, students will discover how book arts can become a vessel for storytelling, cultural exchange, and personal expression.

The class emphasizes experimentation with media such as handmade and recycled papers, collage and mixed media. Students will leave with a series of unique artist books and paper-based projects that reflect both technical skill and imaginative interpretation.

No prior experience is required, only curiosity and a willingness to explore the possibilities of paper.

Pricing:

Museum Friend: \$260/ Member: \$275 / Student: \$275 / Non-Member: \$320

**Students will purchase their own materials and should expect to spend \$80-100. The DAM will supply bulk materials for an included \$20 Studio Fee.*

Refund and Class Cancellation Policy:

The Denver Art Museum adheres to a no-refund, no-exchange policy. If you are unable to attend, please consider your payment a tax-deductible donation.

If a class or workshop is cancelled by the Denver Art Museum due to inclement weather or teacher illness, a make-up day will be scheduled on a later THURSDAY as the educator's schedule allows.

Accessibility Statement:

To request large print materials, a sign language interpreter, CART or any other accessibility service, please email access@denverartmuseum.org at least ten (10) business days in advance of the program. We will make every effort to provide accommodation for requests made outside of that window of time.

Please see further information about accessibility, parking, and directions to the DAM here: <https://www.denverartmuseum.org/en/accessibility>

Materials:

Students must purchase their own materials and bring them to each class session. The anticipated materials spend is \$80-100. The DAM will supply bulk materials for an included \$20 Studio Fee.

The DAM partners with Denver-based [Meininger Art Material](#) to create class materials kits that can be ordered online and picked up or shipped locally. Students must pre-buy the kits online via the [Meininger's website](#) before picking up prior to the first day of class.

Item	Quantity	Suggested Link
Newspapers, magazines, vintage photos, travel photos, etc.	Assortment	Feel free to bring your own recycled newspapers, magazines, photographs, found paper items, etc.
Modge Podge	1 bottle, 16 oz	Modge Podge
Rubber Cement	1 bottle, 4 oz	Elmer's No-Wrinkle Rubber Cement
Glue Sticks	1 -3 sticks	Elmer's Washable School Glue Sticks
Fountain Pens	1 set	Fountain Pens for Writing, set of 8

Calligraphy Pens	1 set	<u>Calligraphy Pens, set of 8</u>
Colored Pencils	1 set	<u>Prismacolor Colored Pencils, set of 24</u>
Crayons	1 set	<u>Crayola Crayon Box, 64 count</u>
Bone Folder	1	<u>Teflon Bone Folder</u> or <u>Bone Folder & Creaser Tool Set</u>
Awls	1 set	<u>Leather Awl Tool Set, 6 pieces</u>
Needles	1 set	<u>Heavy Duty Hand Sewing Needle Kit, leather & curved needles</u>
Tape	2-3 rolls	<u>Scotch Scrapbooking Tape, 3/4-inch</u>

Note:

Please feel free to substitute or bring additional drawing and writing materials as you prefer.

What to Expect:

In *Papercraft: Book Arts*, students can expect a mix of hands-on studio time, guided exploration of the Denver Art Museum’s collections, and opportunities for personal experimentation.

Classroom Experience: Each session will include demonstrations of paper and bookmaking techniques—such as folding, sewing, cutting, and binding—followed by time to practice and develop projects. Students will create a series of small experimental works as well as more finished artist books over the course of the class.

Gallery Inspiration: The class will regularly visit the galleries together to view works of Modern & Contemporary Art, along with selected African, Asian, Ancient American, and Latin American works. These visits will serve as starting points for discussion, sketching, and gathering visual ideas to bring back into the studio.

Creative Outcomes: Students will build a portfolio of handmade books and paper-based artworks, ranging from simple folded structures to more elaborate mixed-media pieces. The emphasis will be on exploration and discovery rather than perfect craftsmanship.

Accessibility: No prior technical knowledge is required—this class is designed for all levels. Beginners will receive step-by-step guidance, while more experienced students will have space to expand their practice in new directions.

Day-to-Day Flow: A typical class may begin with a short presentation or gallery visit, move into a technique demonstration, and then shift into open studio time where students can work at their own pace, experiment with materials, and receive individualized feedback.

The overall atmosphere will be supportive, experimental, and inspired by the museum's world-class collections.

Timeline:

Week 1 – Integrating Text into Book Arts

- 1:30 pm – Introduction & demonstration: ways to integrate text, handwriting, and typography into book arts
- 2:00 pm – Visit museum collections for inspiration (Modern & Contemporary text-based works, cultural uses of text and script)
- 2:30 pm – Open work time: experimenting with text layouts and lettering
- 3:30 pm – Mini critique & group discussion
- 4:00 pm – Closing thoughts

Week 2 – Book Arts Folds

- 1:30 pm – Demonstration of folding structures (accordion, map folds, and experimental folds)
- 2:00 pm – Museum collection visit: folded forms and geometric inspiration in global traditions
- 2:30 pm – Open work time: creating folded book structures
- 3:30 pm – Mini critique
- 4:00 pm – Closing thoughts

Week 3 – Repurposed & Recycled Materials in Book Arts

- 1:30 pm – Demonstration: transforming everyday/repurposed materials into artist books

- 2:00 pm – Museum collection visit: examples of material experimentation and cultural reuse
- 2:30 pm – Open work time: working with repurposed papers, textiles, and found objects
- 3:30 pm – Mini critique
- 4:00 pm – Closing thoughts

Week 4 – Photo Book Arts

- 1:30 pm – Demonstration: incorporating photographs and collage into book arts
- 2:00 pm – Museum collection visit: photographic works and narrative storytelling examples
- 2:30 pm – Open work time: designing photo-based or collage artist books.
- 3:30 pm – Mini critique
- 4:00 pm – Closing thoughts

Week 5 – Book Binding Basics

- 1:30 pm – Demonstration: simple bookbinding methods (pamphlet stitch, Japanese stab binding, etc.)
- 2:00 pm – Museum collection visit: bindings and functional book structures from global traditions
- 2:30 pm – Open work time: creating bound artist books
- 3:30 pm – Mini critique
- 4:00 pm – Closing thoughts

Week 6 – Sculptural Book Arts

- 1:30 pm – Demonstration: moving beyond the flat page—creating sculptural and dimensional book forms
- 2:00 pm – Museum collection visit: 3D works, installations, and cultural forms of storytelling objects
- 2:30 pm – Open work time: building a final sculptural book project
- 3:30 pm – Mini critique
- 4:00 pm – Closing thoughts & course wrap-up

Educator:

Jasmine Abena Colgan is a Denver-based artist, educator, and entrepreneur whose work blends contemporary design with cultural storytelling. Her practice spans photography, handcrafting, book arts, and material exploration, often drawing inspiration from her Ghanaian and Irish heritage. Colgan's art has been

exhibited in spaces such as the Denver Art Museum, Emmanuel Gallery, and the BRDG Project, as well as through community-based fashion and cultural events. In addition to her studio practice, she is the founder of by abena, a skincare and lifestyle brand rooted in natural materials and traditional craft, and Tough Skin, an empowerment-driven project celebrating resilience and identity. Her work has reached diverse audiences through museum collections, fashion collaborations, and public workshops, where she emphasizes creativity as a tool for connection and self-expression.

www.photographsbyjazz.com

WORKSHOP SPACE POLICIES

About:

The Ruby Red Workshop is a dedicated space for Creative Classes and adult programs located on the first floor of the DAM's Martin Building. Students can expect a traditional style art workshop with tables and four-legged chairs with backrests. There are a variety of other seating options available. Sinks, soaps, paper towels, and waste receptacles are accessible in the workshop. Restrooms are located in the elevator bay just outside the workshop entrance. Food and beverages are allowed inside the workshop space, please ensure that you do not enter any galleries with these items.

Each class is different and does not follow a strict or set structure, but will generally include instructor presentations and demonstrations, class gallery visits to view artworks in the DAM collections, individual work time supported by class instructor and assistant, and discussion or share-out time of finished works and works-in-progress.

Cleanup:

Please remove all artworks from the classroom at the end of each class. If wet paintings or in-progress artworks need to be stored in the classroom, there is limited storage on drying racks and in the equipment closet. Students must take home their own materials after each class. Please ensure that art supplies and equipment belonging to the DAM are put back in the appropriate locations. Sponges, paper towels, and cleaning solution are provided in the classroom for cleanup.

Classroom Access:

Students will have access to the classroom only during scheduled class hours. Please contact Mia DeBakker, Creative & Public Engagement Coordinator, if you need to

arrange entrance to the Workshop outside of those hours – mdebakker@denverartmuseum.org.

QUESTIONS

Questions about class content, curriculum, materials, etc. can be directed to Mia DeBakker at mdebakker@denverartmuseum.org or Sarah Rockett at srockett@denverartmuseum.org.

For any questions concerning your registration, please reach out to our Sales & Service Team at info@denverartmuseum.org or (720) 913-0130.

Thank you for being part of Creative Classes at the DAM!