

Bull & Branch

A publication from North American Hand Papermakers

2020
Issue 1

WORKSPACES

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Editor's Note

DEAR MEMBERS,

Welcome to the 2020 Workspaces issue of *Bull and Branch*, which has been in gestation for over a year. The idea for this issue occurred to me when I saw a brief Facebook query from someone who wanted to make paper in her apartment, something I was doing myself. My own process involved lots of tarps, a bathroom full of buckets and vats, and sheets drying on frames leaning against the walls in my hallway. While not ideal, I hadn't yet figured out how to make a separate studio in an affordable way. This is a common problem for new paper-makers. It seemed to me that compiling the experiences and solutions of a number of paper-makers who created new, usable workspaces, for different situations would be a wonderful resource for our members.

The eight contributors each have different practices. Some are production papermakers, some are artists, some are educators, some are researchers—and some do all of those things. They have adapted basements in suburban homes, garages in the middle of cities, and even an outdoor space in Ghana. Some have their workspaces scattered around a city, while others are very compact and still others quite expansive. Some studios have evolved through many iterations over several decades, while some are brand new. This issue of *Bull and Branch*, with its varied stories and images, will have something for everyone.

I'm very grateful to Mary Hark, Maria Amalia Wood, Henry Obeng, Eric Benson, Joan Hall, Kelsey Pike, Amanda Degener, and Peter Thomas for agreeing to share their spaces with us. Each contributor has proven enthusiastic and generous in sharing their time, images, and details. It was a delight to work with them, especially during the months of isolation as many of us went into pandemic lockdown. Enjoy! And please share your own experience on social media: Facebook or Instagram with the hashtag #StudiosTogether.

I hope to see you at our virtual conference in October!

Best,
Hannah O'Hare Bennett



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President's Note

DEAR FELLOW MEMBERS,

This latest issue of *Bull and Branch*, focusing on artists' and papermakers' studios, laboratories, and papermills, has been underway for many months. The articles and photographs represent an informative and candid perspective on the public and private practice by the many contributing members. The short select, but representative pieces inspire with their innovative spirit and energy. Our fellow members bring to bear an extraordinary breadth of practical and technical knowledge as well as remarkable resourcefulness, designing to their specific needs and circumstances. We hope that in your reading, you'll discover someone whose paper works you don't yet know well—and you'll draw upon their experience and ideas for your own studio, or your own scholarship.

The Workspace Issue is a substantial addition to the continuing thematic series of digital *Bull and Branch* publications, initiated in August, 2019 by our organization with the special residencies number. With this issue you are seeing both the excellent design of Antje Kharchi, who has designed all three digital issues; and, for the first time, the new NAHP organizational logo and brand created by designer Francheska Guerrero. Editor Hannah Bennett and I join the rest of the Board of Directors in hoping you will enjoy it!



I very much look forward to “seeing” you virtually at the FREE October annual conference, “Paper Currents,” our online conference, which is free of charge to all members! To contribute to making it an inspiring conference, find the **Call for Presentations**; the **Call for Entries** for the new Juried Exhibition “Materiality”; and the **Call for Entries** for our annual Members Exhibition “Currents”.

Please accept my warmest wishes for the health and safety of you and your families,

Lynn Sures
President, NAHP

HARK! Handmade Paper Studio

By Mary Hark



HARK! HANDMADE PAPER STUDIO is located in the heart of the Frogtown neighborhood of St. Paul, Minnesota. It is housed in a repurposed two-car garage, that is attached to the house, in a lively, diverse, residential neighborhood, home to many new immigrant families. Our home is the result of a project organized by Art Space, 20 some years ago, that helped low-income artists to purchase homes in emerging neighborhoods, with a commitment to being in the neighborhood for at least ten years. Adjacent

to my hand papermaking studio here, is my daughter's bespoke shoemaking workshop (Hark-Weber Studio).

It took me many years to build my professional papermaking studio. Slowly accruing my equipment, I was supported by colleagues, teachers, students and friends who helped me locate, refurbish and fabricate what I needed. I discovered by luck an old Valley beater behind a building in Illinois and was able to rebuild it at Macalester College, where I was an adjunct in





the Art Department, with the help of skillful colleagues. Over the years many moulds and deckles have built for me by skillful friends for specific projects; I have inherited bits of equipment from unexpected sources and had generous help in fabricating needed items. My Dad built my restraint dryers based on Tim Barrett's design. My purchase of David Reina's wonderful press many years ago was transformative. It is the only piece of equipment I went to the bank to get help purchasing. And David has been so generously helpful over the years in many ways, helping me understand how to keep things running smoothly. Originally studying with Tim in his inventive and thoughtfully designed studios, and teaching at Women's Studio Workshop, Penland and other places, I have gathered so many good ideas for imagining a studio space that works for me.

All of this wonderful equipment was used in my basement, in my driveway, and moved to several other studios and back again many times. Two years ago, I decided it was time to invest in a permanent place to work. Again, with the help of generous friends, I was able to transform my garage into a year-round workspace. The biggest expense was the plumbing, which I was able to connect to the house, and the heater. Installing a floor drain turned out to be prohibitively expensive, however I installed a mop sink along with the stainless-steel sink, which allows me to easily tip the wet-dry vac water down the drain. Big double doors make it easy to push everything outside during warm weather. One of the coolest features in the space are the six marble drying racks that are attached to the ceiling on pulleys with cement counterweights. The friend who installed this system of ropes and pulleys grew up around theater and opera set designers. He could imagine and install this really slick system that I use for drying felts and paper and which freed up valuable floor space.

Being a neighborhood papermaker has suited me. Over the years neighborhood kids and adults have worked in my shop and assisted on large projects. Together, we have created two public art installations that are permanently housed in our public library, located four blocks away. My studio has trained neighbors to become excellent papermakers (Tony Santoyo, grew up across the alley from me and is currently a Penland Core Fellow), and supported a major regional art experience by making 2400 sheets of papers out of local bio-waste, used as placemats for a large community meal (CREATE the Community Meal, envisioned and led by my neighbor Seitu Jones). Over the years there have been times when 3 different languages were being spoken in my driveway—with neighborhood kids bringing their folks over to explain the papermaking process.

At this very moment, a painful time of social unrest, with protesting taking place just blocks from my studio, sirens and helicopter noise a constant part of our days, I am remembering a comment made by Toni Morrison when she spoke at the Walker Art



Above and right: Tony Santoyo, who grew up across the alley, as a little kid with friends working in what was then my basement studio.

Right column: Neighbors working in the shop.



Center many, many years ago. I was a young artist who had just moved to Frogtown, not long out of grad school. Morrison said, and I'm paraphrasing here, but I remember the idea: the most political thing you can do in America is where you chose to live. I accidentally found myself in Frogtown, but I understand now what she

meant. Having been given the opportunity to build my creative practice and my life in a messy, lively, diverse neighborhood, I have learned much from my neighbors—and in a most unexpected and organic way, I have been able to share things that I know. I want to believe I have made a small contribution: living and working and making together here at my paper studio in Frogtown. <https://www.maryhark.com> ♦

The Studio Beneath the Deck

By Peter Thomas

OUR HOUSE WAS BUILT IN 1960, in the “Sunset Magazine Zen” style of construction with a carport under the second story bedrooms. It was long and narrow with very low ceilings, and perfect to convert into our shop space. But the floors were perfectly level and we realized it wouldn’t work that well for papermaking, so we built a shop underneath the tile deck off the living room. We poured a concrete slab, making it sloped to drain and with rough textures so I would not slip.

The sheetrock on the ceiling and walls is the kind used in showers, so it can get wet without being damaged. We have a two ton press (that is what it weighs, not how much pressure it produces), two hollander beaters, two vats and storage space for the moulds, felts and pulp. There are shelves on most of the wall. Every time I add another shelf, every time I put another screw or hook in the wall, I think about “shelf hours” and realize that I really would not want to have to move. ♦



Meho Asem: An Unending Cycle of How My Art Defines Me And How I Define Myself

By Henry Obeng

GROWING UP IN A COMMUNITY IN THE SOUTHERN REGION OF GHANA, I developed a close interest in the fact that people always find a creative means of adapting to their environment. The observation of repurposing materials was a significant practice of individuals around the space, and that was how they each tell their stories or answer their basic needs.

My first degree of schooling at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology introduced me to a papermaking course, and that was love at first sight. Paper has been a basic need for every artist, whether used as a support or as the primary material in making a work of art. Interestingly, using or experimenting with fiber or non-fiber-based materials to form a sheet and the exploration of various procedures into sheet formation brought to light the diverse ways papermaking can take.

Studio visits are a useful tool for making new connections with other people in the art world. As I began to develop a professional career in papermaking, a studio was needed to ignite this dream.

During my initial stage of practicing professionally after school, I became interested in experimenting with large formats of handmade papers. Space to have a studio became a challenge that I overcame by building a 10ft x 10ft brick vat at our home.

My ideas and concept were built around the observation of repurposing materials that are sourced from spaces within a locality. I found this to be an exciting idea enough and also an influence based on observation.

Materials such as jute or burlap were one fiber that is being used as sacks in exporting Ghanaian cocoa, which are later used in bagging charcoal to other neighboring countries. These materials are mostly made in Bangladesh to bag sugar, and they end up being reused based on the needs of individuals.

These vegetable fiber levels are similar to that of cotton, and it has fiber-like hemp and flax. These materials are sourced from my immediate environments, and with the help of photography, images of the exact location are printed on the handmade paper from the fibers.

The idea is to bond a connection between the photograph and the fiber material.

Also, I explore the essence of materiality presence which parts of the fibers are not totally beaten down and this gives uneven formation of sheets which gives an illusion of dimensionality.

Construction of a 10ft x 10ft brick vat (below)

Completion of brick vat with wooden Deckle (right)



Clockwise from right:
Jute or Burlap sacks
Final work exhibit
Printing of images on
Handmade paper



Where There is a Will There is a Way

By Amanda Degener

FOR MORE THAN 25 YEARS CAVE PAPER HAS BEEN MAKING FLAX PAPER by hand from raw fiber. We boil walnuts for dye, and mix deep vats of indigo. Our process results in a leather-like paper of unparalleled durability.

Cave's reputation for teaching is equally lasting. Over 125 interns have been ushered through the immersive studio experience. They are also required to do their own work. The program teaches emerging craftspeople of all ages to keep hand-papermaking alive. We work with artists worldwide, bringing technical know-how to numerous projects. As a result, projects that use Cave Paper are housed everywhere from contemporary art museums to the Library of Congress. The Metropolitan Museum in New York City has purchased Cave Paper's archives as part of a larger collection and exhibition called "Paper Legacy" to be mounted in September 2022.

I started Cave Paper as a sole proprietorship in the early 1980's and slowly acquired equipment. Making paper by hand in the early days was always a loss on my tax returns which was depressing. Increasing the scale of production in 1988 became possible when I



Above: Amanda coloring at 211 N 2nd St. Photo by Jack Mador

Right: Wet room at 212 N 2nd. Photo by James Kleiner





Above: James Kleiner with 25 lb capacity beater

Right: Making Cave Cloud Paper. Photo by Jack Mador



purchased a 25 lb capacity Valley beater from Minnesota Center for Book Arts (MCBA), which Elaine Koretsky had donated to them. MCBA is where, in the late 1980's, I met Bridget O'Malley who I introduced to hand papermaking through MCBA's internship program. She left Minneapolis to work at University of Iowa where she learned about production papermaking from Timothy Barrett. In 1992 my then-husband Robert Hughes and I had the time, space, and money to finally set up the big beater. (Did I tell you it weighs 4000 lbs?) In 1993 Bridget moved back to Minneapolis. I had the equipment and she had production experience so Cave Paper turned into a partnership.

You need lots of heavy equipment to make something so light and ephemeral as handmade paper. Being able to afford a designated space that can get wet and can hold lots of heavy gear is not that easy. From 1993–1997 Cave Paper was in two locations. Sheet production, cooking, paper storage and the mailing address was at my house and the rest occurred in downtown Minneapolis at Campbell Logan Bindery. For three years we carried pulp to my basement while slow progress was made to get the downtown studio ready. This included installing a hot water heater and “rooms” to work in. From 1997–2017 all production including our mailing address was at Campbell Logan Bindery and our sales and production volume increased each year.

However, by 2016 it was obvious the downtown warehouse was becoming gentrified and we knew that we would have to move.

I have always made art with handmade paper and I decided to stop doing production papermaking. I was over 60, and Bridget, who is five years younger, decided to keep Cave Paper going. During the year we knew we were losing our Campbell Logan space and splitting up our partnership, I converted my garage to studio space. This required bringing water out from the house (an 8" deep trench) and redoing the cement floor to include a floor drain. Most important was installing heat and windows; missing luxuries during the 23 years of working in the basement at Campbell Logan Bindery. In anticipation of no longer having the 25 lb beater I had pre-beaten and dried out an enormous amount of my flax fiber. Then Bridget, who had planned to take over Cave Paper, became disabled and I was at a crossroads. The choices were to close Cave, or buy her shares and assume the 12K credit card debt. The idea of turning Cave into a worker-owned cooperative came up and a Steering Committee was formed. We did not think it was a good idea to close Cave even for a short time because of the way rumors spread. The Steering Committee did an Indigogo campaign (like Kickstarter) and found there was a lot of national community support to keep Cave Paper alive. We had to move out of our studio of 23 years the same month Bridget became disabled so the only option that late in the game was to move Cave Paper back to my house.

This time the wet work was done in my garage but my whole home was taken over by the papermaking process. My daughter

Amanda's garage.

Photo by Mort



was in college so her room and the upstairs became paper storage. The guest room was converted into the flattening room with fans going 24/7. We did coloring and gelatin sizing in the kitchen and the back porch. The kitchen and bathroom were frequented by interns all day long. Unfortunately, neighbors figured out I was violating residential ordinances so there were some challenges with city inspectors as well. In this three-year timeline I allowed some Cave work to be done at Traffic Zone Center for Visual Arts, where my printing press was located. We were reconstituting the dried out flax in a small beater but it was obvious a wet space to set up the big beater was needed.

James Kleiner, who had been working part-time at Cave since 2013, introduced Cave to Northstar Print Studio at Casket Arts Building in Northeast Minneapolis. Cave began renting a portion of their huge space (with floor drains!) for indigo dyeing and the 25 capacity beater. The relationship of print to paper has a rich history and Cave was interested in moving our sheetforming in with Northstar Print Studio. We were excited about giving the printmakers access to Cave's paper equipment and seeing what they did with the relationship of print to handmade paper. James and I made a proposal, agreeing to pay for all renovations including a lip on the floor to keep water

contained. After a lot of meetings with exact floor plans and their initial excitement we never really found out why they decided not to let Cave move in. North Star studio only had cold water and their decision not to include handmade paper for their members seemed to come down to our need to install a hot water heater. Out-of-the-tap water in Minnesota winters is not something you can keep your hands in for more than a few minutes. So the sheetforming move never happened. Ultimately, we rented a dry show-room area down the hall from Northstar at Casket Arts, and I was able to reclaim my house. As it exists right now, Cave continues to work in 2 locations: Beating pulp at Northstar, carrying it to my garage, making paper, then bringing the paper back to Casket Arts to color and flatten. Why all the hassle? Making paper is fantastic and we do it because we must.

The newest development in the evolution of this papermaking studio is that Zoe Goehring (she is under 35 years old) will be taking over Cave Paper and moving it to Tucson AZ. Amanda Degener is thrilled with Zoe's energy and ambition. Amanda is committed to multiple training sessions and will do what it takes to make it a smooth transition. Zoe's plan is to take on interns so keep your eyes on the new and improved website, Cavepaper.com. ♦

Fresh Press Agri-fiber Paper Lab

By Eric Benson

The Beginning

The idea of Fresh Press was born in hallway small talk between Steve Kostell (now at the University of Vermont) and me, as we passed one another heading to class or a meeting at the University of Illinois School of Art + Design. The two of us hatched the idea to start something innovative that embraced the natural landscape in East Central Illinois. Champaign-Urbana (or Urbana-Champaign depending on who you ask), a smallish college town surrounded by vast endless fields of corn and soy, is the home of Fresh Press. Chicago is a two-hour drive north on I-57. That journey provides similar views of Midwestern farm country with the addition of

prairie grasses growing wild in the highway median and ditches.

We didn't want to discount this ubiquitous landscape, but instead, embrace and celebrate it through the arts and entrepreneurship. Steve is trained in various forms of printmaking, papermaking, and graphic design. I am also a graphic designer with a focus on environmental activism and sustainability. In late December 2011, we got together over a few beers, the book *Caught in the Middle* (about the fall of Midwestern manufacturing), and a laptop to hash out plans for grant funding to launch Fresh Press Agri-fiber Paper Lab.

Despite both of us being new to large

Wash and Pack
Pavillion on the
Sustainable Student
Farm





grant writing, in 2012 we succeeded in raising \$42,130 to collaborate with the Sustainable Student Farm on campus to buy papermaking and farm equipment. The mission of Fresh Press is to change the paper supply chain from forest to farm. Most of the world's paper comes from wood fiber. But it is painfully obvious that trees belong in the ground to provide habitat, prevent erosion, sequester carbon emissions, and keep our planet from spiraling into a climate apocalypse. Although trees make great paper, we wanted to demonstrate the strength and beauty of agri-fibers as a substitute.

Furthermore, we wanted to return manufacturing to the Midwest by using what is already here (farming and prairie grasses) to create sustainable paper and paper products. We wanted not to grow crops for paper, but instead capture the by-products from the harvest which would otherwise be unused. Currently, we are still experimenting with different fibers through blend ratios to create repeatable recipes that can be licensed and scaled up to large-scale paper manufacturers in the Midwest and beyond.

The Middle

As our paper studio grew in size and popularity, so did our need for a good space. Originally, we found a home squatting in the old Printing Services Building at the University of Illinois. We had office space in a few rooms on the second floor that were vacated when the University sold off their large

Heidelberg printing presses and shuttered most of their operations. However, our space was only temporary from the outset and we were asked to leave shortly after starting there. We worked hard to locate a more permanent space of our own on campus through the School of Art + Design. Our strategy was simply to raise more money and our profile, so the upper administration couldn't say "no" to our pleas.

In late 2012, we raised another \$68,416 with Architecture Professor Jeff Poss to build a wash and pack pavilion with his graduate students on the Sustainable Student Farm to help the farmer do his work better and store fibers for us. We also were able to make this building completely off-grid solar powered. Eventually, our plan worked and we were given temporary use of the old glass blowing and ceramics studio on the south campus in 2013.

Our paper studio was at full speed after our move into our new space in 2013. We had two research assistants, Megan Diddie and Eva Chertow, who were instrumental in our paper research and commissions. Despite originally starting Fresh Press as a research facility, our paper garnered enough attention from many regional artists, who asked for commissions, that we began to rethink our options to branch out as a business. We worked with the university to set-up a paper sales account to accept any size paper purchases. We were very busy with the studio, teaching, and our personal lives. Every day was a hustle to keep the research moving forward and digging through grant opportunities to locate funding to pay our labor force of students.

We went back to the Sustainable Student Farm and their new partner the Woody Perennial Polyculture site to raise \$79,620 in 2014 to hire more students, buy better farming equipment (to bale our fibers), increase crop production, and expand the cold storage for the farmer on site. Two years later in 2016, we raised \$14,522 with Architecture professor Mark Taylor and Material Science Engineer Sameh Tawfick to collect data on the strength of our paper in two and three-dimensional forms. This grant

idea came from a National Science Foundation I-Corp entrepreneurship class we were invited to take that clearly demonstrated that pulp packaging with our agri-fibers was a big economic opportunity for us.

The now

When Steve Kostell left for the greener hills of Vermont in 2015, I needed to rethink how Fresh Press would work going forward. My idea was to turn it into a more educational opportunity for campus and community (in addition to the research). I raised \$37,695 to start a CSA (community supported agriculture) with handmade paper and art prints on the paper. All of this was run by university students as their part-time employment. I used this project to teach them the art of handmade papermaking, business, and land stewardship/sustainability. The students called the project “Fiber” and it reinvigorated the studio space. At any given time, we’d have eight students pulling sheets and working on their prints for sale. It was a fun and hectic time!

Through this project, we created a nice bank account through sales and developed partners that helped compute the environmental footprint of our papers. Not surprisingly the majority of our sheets were better environmentally than tree fiber papers. The project lost steam in 2018 as students got busy with their majors, but the interest in

papermaking workshops and tours grew in the community. We fielded many questions about workshops for schools, organizations, and individuals weekly. Local painter Veronica Steffen was hired to run the studio in 2019 and we began our latest endeavor creating sustainable case paper for the University of Illinois Conservation Lab in the Library.

This collaboration is an exciting new project for us. We currently have spent over a year testing different agricultural plant fibers in engineering and chemistry labs on campus to create the best case paper for the Library to mend old and damaged book covers. The Library usually purchases case papers from other vendors, but as those companies have slowed or stopped production, they had the idea to come to Fresh Press to create Illinois specific case paper with regional sustainable materials.

Currently, after all the data collection, we have determined a series of fiber recipes and procedures to manufacture this paper. It has transformed our studio from an artist practice to a scientific lab. The chemist leading the project has helped us become very detailed and organized in our craft. We have reorganized the flow of the studio space to accommodate the scientific method. We have also repainted our walls and incorporated informational signage describing the papermaking process as we continue to add paid workshops to our resume. We’re excited about what lies ahead for Fresh Press as we embark upon the Library collaboration full steam this summer. We also look forward to when it is safe to invite the community back into our studio space to teach them more the art of Western hand papermaking and sustainability. ♦



AIGA Student Group
Workshop at Fresh
Press

Small but Efficient!

By Kelsey Pike



Above: The Studio

MY STUDIO IS ONE OF MANY WITHIN THE CHERRY PIT COLLECTIVE, which is a communal studio space for women artists and makers in Kansas City, Missouri. I founded the space in 2016, after working for the years after art college in my parent's garage, and wanting a studio community again.

My studio sits toward the back of our building. Along the brick wall, there are 8-foot tall shelves that store lintens, other fibers, baskets of towels, and stacks of pellons. Along the side, there is a metal shelf where I store moulds, and a few quick access items like my beater record book and paper samples for color comparison. In the back corner, there is a mini-fridge where I keep sizing and other additives. The hydraulic press sits directly to the side of the formation table.

When I'm working at the formation table, I face outward into the studio, where I can see other people entering and we can chat while I work. When no one else is

around, I watch the TV across the room in our classroom space with wireless Bluetooth headphones. (The hours just pass so quickly while watching TNG or X-files. Highly recommend!)

The formation table has a metal top that slants forward slightly and curves into a gutter at the edge. The gutter slants downward and directs all the water from the table into a single bucket. In the bucket, a strainer sits on top, so any excess pulp is held in it, and the water drains through. When the bucket is full, a sump pump clicks on to pump the water outside to water our rain garden or into the utility sink across the room to drain. On top of the formation table, my set-up involves these tools from left to right. First, a concrete mixing tub that I use to soak pellons.

Next, a couching stand. It's constructed from plastic fencing material on the base, with a sheet of thin HDPE plastic bent over the top to form a curved surface for couching. The base is constructed in a way that lets water run underneath it. Above this, there is a 10-bead abacus that clips onto the edge of the table, which I use to count the sheets. (I 3-d printed this guy during a class I took.) After 5 sheets, I put down a towel, so the stack can be separated in half for hang drying. After ten sheets, I pull the post into the press and restart. I find this works best for me to achieve good pressure during pressing and also quick drying when hanging. Finally, right next to the vat, is the draining area. A wooden piece hooks onto the far edge of the table, creating a kind of horn or asp for the mould to rest against. A wooden L shape holds the edge of the mold at the desired draining angle and stays in place against the metal tabletop with magnets. I always form sheets with 2 moulds and 1 deckle. So as I'm working, I pull one sheet, and set it down on



Above: Kelsey working at the vat
Right: Formation table set-up



the edge of the L, creating a shallow draining angle. Then, after it drains slightly, I move it up and into the L shape, creating a greater angle for draining. In the meantime, I cover the previous sheet on the post, couch off the previously drained sheet, move the deckle to the now-empty mould, and pull the next sheet. I find this process smooth, efficient and satisfying!

For beating, I have two Mark Lander Hollander beaters (Hollis and Bert) who fit perfectly in a retrofitted restroom near my formation area. Having them in a separate room with a door that shuts and keeps out the noise is essential for my hearing and the

sanity of my studio mates! Both beaters are situated on rolling carts with wide, tray-like tops. The tops collect any water that escapes and directs it to a single hole that drains into a bucket. The press also collects water in a similar fashion—it has actual house gutters affixed to both sides, which collect the water and direct it into a single bucket, which I reuse for soaking pellons. Underneath the press is storage space for the press boards. The drying space is a series of clotheslines behind my formation area. I can hang about 200 sheets of paper to dry at a time, in spurs of 5 sheets each.

My dad and I built all of my studio tools and equipment from scratch, based on a couple of years of trial and error. For instance, all of my studio furniture is on wheels. This dates back to the time when I worked in my parent's garage, and in between work sessions, we would roll everything to the side so they could park. The wheels are still useful in my studio at the Cherry Pit! Since we host community events, and classes, if I need to, I can roll all of my equipment behind the drying lines, string up some large fabric pieces on the lines, and then my studio is presentable as a craft fair booth, or whatever is needed. I can also remove the metal top from my formation table to make it useful for other purposes.

One of the newest additions to the set-up is a floor blower hooked up to a smart outlet. When I'm done working for the day, it kicks on to dry the floor, then automatically turns off a few hours later so it doesn't bother my studio mates all night or waste electricity.

Overall, my studio space is quite small, only about 150 sqft, but I find the small space between my formation table, press, and drying space makes for a very efficient workflow. I am able to make about 20,000 sheets per year, which add up to almost 10,000 sales in my shop over the past 10 years of business. I've diligently worked to make small improvements that increase the quality of my paper, and the speed of production. ♦

The Studio: An Extension of One's Self

By Joan Hall

My paper studio. Against the wall are the large screens I use to make kozo and gampi sheets for printing. A drier I made uses a hydraulic truck jack to apply pressure on the paper that I blow out while it dries.

A VISIT TO AN ARTIST'S STUDIO IS A JOURNEY INSIDE THE MIND OF THE ARTIST.

Although I was trained as a printmaker, my work is sculptural and combines hand-made paper with printmaking, glass and metal. Because of my mixed media approach to making work I have always had a studio that was flexible. This means everything that I can put on wheels I have done. This allows me to adjust the space for the project I am working on. Until my recent move to Rhode Island my paper and print studios were on different floors in a warehouse. We designed

the studios in my house to be the same.

I work in large scale, making sheets of paper up to 8 feet x 10 feet or cast paper. I have recently been using stencils to do blow out sections for my series "The New Living Reef". I have a printing press that can print 5 feet by 10 feet. Because I work in a modular format, I can produce pieces of any size—and the bigger the better! My preference is to be able to respond to the architecture of a space with my large-scale installation.

I usually work with studio assistants, and like the collaborative nature both in my





Above: Inking up a collagraph plate with several colors that will blend.

Right: Working on taking off mylar stencils with my studio assistants Stephanie Tyson and Michaela Cognese

Top right: There are cut outs on the wood beside me that I printed that were not used for installations but were used as stencils for the blow outs when I was working at Dieu Donn e Paper



studio and in other studios. I am always interested in experimentation and exploration. After working several times at Dieu Donn e, I developed ways of working with the blow out technique to fit how I wanted to adapt it to my work methods. I find it a different thought process when I am working with a time restraint than when I am in my own studio. I also work with a glass studio in Providence and a machine company in St Louis to laser cut plates for me. I find that how I work with different media and techniques help me to think about new ways to work with paper and print. It always keeps me interested in "what's next"!

The video link will give you a more in-depth insight as to how I work.

<https://youtu.be/YyTb94o2SrE>



I am fortunate to be able to have a large studio to work in, but one finds a way to make what they need to make-be it a room, outdoors or in a warehouse. My studio reflects the kind of work I want to make-large scale mixed media installations that reflect my concern about ocean pollution. ◆

A Mother Artist Studio

By Maria Amalia Wood

MY HOME ART STUDIO IS A SPACE WHERE MY CHILDREN CAN BE A PART OF MY CREATIVE RESEARCH. Watching them engage in the papermaking process allows me to learn from their unselfconscious marks, freedom of expression and playful attitude. Many of my pieces document my kids' participation through their color choices. Since moving to my home studio, my work has transitioned from deep blue-green hues, to bright multi-colored pieces. When I work alone, I think about past memories and a journey



While my daughter, Natalia, divides pre-beaten unbleached abaca fiber (I purchased from Carriage House) into buckets, my toddler, Ethan, fills up squeegee bottles with water. We are getting ready to do some serious pulp painting with over beaten cotton linters (also purchased from Carriage House).

made before my children became a part of my life. When I work with others, including my children, their own stories become embedded in the art process through texture and color. The following is a visual guide of making paper from home with my children.

My 182sq ft basement art studio is equipped with all the basic tools needed to make handmade paper. Pictured below are essential pieces of equipment my children and I use throughout the papermaking process:

- Work Table: 72"W x 30"D, 16/300 stainless steel, 2-1/4" raised rolled edge on all sides, stainless steel legs, side & rear adjustable bracing, 1 drain hole, and adjustable bullet feet—Essential for keeping my floors dry!
- A hose with a sink faucet attachment
- Industrial sink: All Mounted 35 11/16" High Pre-Rinse Faucet with 8" Adjustable Centers, 4+ GPM Spray Valve, 44" Hose, 10" Add-On Faucet, and 6" Wall Bracket, Regency 36" 16-Gauge Stainless Steel One Compartment Commercial Utility Sink—36" x 21" x 14" Bowl—The spray valve rinses moulds and deckles within seconds!





Natalia sits at my foldable plastic table and mixes the dispersed pigments (from Carriage House) with water to create her favorite color combinations; her favorite part! Having plastic cups and spoons for this step is helpful, but any kind of container and mixing tool can be used.



We add the pigment to each bucket and squeegee bottle creating a beautiful rainbow of colored pulp! The buckets come with lids, which makes it easier for storing when I stack them on top of each other.



In the winter, I just store them in my freezing garage! But I have a small refrigerator as well where I store wet sheets with my squeegees full of pulp paint.



Over the past four years I've been investing in quality moulds and deckles made by other artists. Other helpful papermaking tools, like the mixing blade and steel strainer sit above my moulds and deckles on a stainless steel wall shelf.



Having wall shelves around my studio save space and help keep my studio organized!



I have large, medium and small vats. The larger vats I use when I am outside or when I am leading a papermaking workshop for a large crowd. In my home studio I mostly use the smaller vats. Ethan finds other uses for them too!



You can make paper with different shapes using materials like, mylar, insulation foam, etc. I had access to a laser cutter and created a plywood mould with 2x2" circles.

When we use this mould, Ethan thinks he is baking cookies!



We couch our formed sheets onto heavy weight pellow (interfacing). Laying down wet felt underneath provides a cushioned surface that aids in the sheet formation process. When the pulp sticks to the screen, adding water helps release it onto the pellow. Pulp painting is Ethan's favorite part!

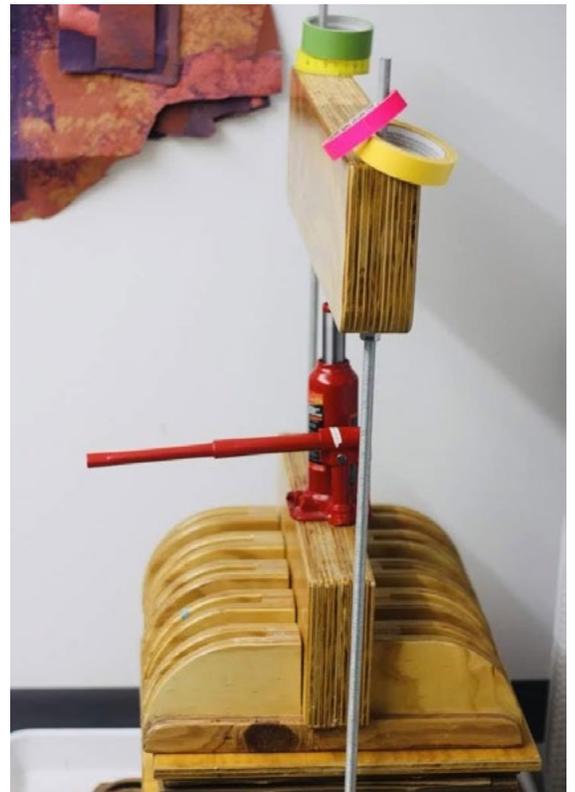




Sometimes we like experimenting with different vats of color and playing with collage techniques while the sheets are still wet.



After pulp painting and collaging, we press and dry our sheets in a small wood press my friend made. I use a 4 ton hydraulic press to create even pressure across the wood planks.



When drying, I wrap the wood planks with a tarp and place a fan behind it, creating an air tunnel. My sheets are usually dry within 24hrs.



The results always surprise me with their color variations, deckled edges and textures! I imagine the abstract narratives embedded within them. ◆

Contributor Bios

Eric Benson is a sci-fi loving, tree-hugging nerd from Michigan who is also the Chair of the University of Illinois Graphic Design Program. He co-founded Fresh Press in 2012 and has been running his 501(c)3 non-profit Re-nourish since 2006. Benson has published and lectured internationally on the importance of sustainable design. His work has also garnered numerous design awards and has been seen in notable venues like The Walker Art Center, the Smithsonian Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum, the Hammer Museum, the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and RISD. www.freshpress.studioebenson@illinois.edu

Amanda Degener is the proprietor of Cave Paper. Degener and her business partner (from 1994–2017) Bridget O'Malley received the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library Book Artist Award, which included the exhibition and catalog Handmade Paper and the Artful Book. Degener earned a BFA degree in visual arts from Bennington College in 1980 and a MFA degree in sculpture from Yale University in 1984. From 1985–1992, she worked at Hand Papermaking, a journal devoted to the art and craft of handmade paper, which she founded/published with Michael Durgin. She taught papermaking, artists' books, 2D and 3D Foundation and sculpture at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design from 1994–2005. At the Minnesota Center for Book Arts (MCBA), Degener was first artist-in-residence (1984–1987) and first Artistic Director (1997–1998). Other accomplishments include exhibitions, publications, collaborations, commissions, residencies and grant awards. Her work has been collected by the Newberry Library and the Library of Congress, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Joan Hall Born in Mansfield, Ohio, lives in Jamestown, Rhode Island. She received her BFA at the Columbus College of Art and Design in Ohio and her MFA at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She studied papermaking with Garner Tullis at the Institute of Experimental Printmaking in San Francisco. Hall works in mixed media and large-scale sculptural installations with an emphasis on the materials of paper, glass and metal. She is known for her innovative approaches to material and process. Hall's work has been exhibited and in collections both nationally and internationally and in the last Venice Biennale she created an installation for the Exhibition Personal Structures.

Mary Hark is a professor in the Design Studies Department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, teaching Papermaking and Textile Design. She is the proprietor of Hark! Handmade

Paper in St. Paul, Minnesota (www.maryhark.com), and co-director of The Kratta Foundation in Ghana (www.ghanapaperproject.com). Hark's work has been exhibited widely; she regularly produces unique editions of handmade paper for fine press projects internationally.

Henry Obeng is a Ghanaian born artist who explores his idea concepts through papermaking and photography. Using materials from the natural world, his works mostly have this organic characteristic, which he employs image-making techniques that invite the viewer to see nature in diverse ways. His interest has been with how nature has its narratives, image relation of that space and time. The passion of papermaking for Henry has led him to offer his MFA in Design Studies at the University of Wisconsin Madison. Henry is now exploring his transitional and growth development as an artist—Sourcing inspiration from nature; he tells his story about the experience of isolation based on diversity in his new environment.

Peter Thomas is a papermaker, letterpress printer, and bookbinder who works both individually, and collaboratively with Donna Thomas, making artist books. All of their books are made with Peter's handmade paper. Peter has been active in the leadership of IAPMA, the Friends of Dard Hunter, the Miniature Book Society, Book Arts Santa Cruz and the Ukulele Club of Santa Cruz. In 2000 he produced a documentary/educational video titled The Ergonomics of Hand Papermaking.

Kelsey Pike is a papermaker, printmaker, and art teacher in Kansas City, Missouri. Through her business, Sustainable Paper+Craft, she creates fine handmade papers and custom, hand-carved rubber stamps. She has been in love with the obscure and tedious art form of hand papermaking since she first tried it in art school, at the Kansas City Art Institute, in 2009. Good craft is important to her and she is continuously studying, practicing and learning to make the best paper. You can follow her on Instagram at [@kelseypikepapercraft](https://www.instagram.com/kelseypikepapercraft) for juicy deckle pics and slow-mo vatperson shakes, or shop her website at Sustainablepapercraft.com.

A native of Honduras, **Maria Amalia Wood** maintains a studio in Middleton, Wis., and enjoys working with textiles, papermaking and community-focused storytelling. With a creative process that embraces a personal and socially engaged art practice, her work delves into the complexities of a life lived between Central America and the Midwestern United States. See more at <https://www.mariaamalia.com>

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*Our first-ever virtual conference,
free to all current members!*

The North American Hand Papermakers enthusiastically announces Paper Currents 2020, will convene on-line this October to stimulate vibrant exchanges regarding papermaking practice, history, scholarship, and teaching. NAHP will host this online conference to foster community, share information, and celebrate research and innovations in the study and practice of hand papermaking. [Join us for Paper Currents 2020!](#)

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and Anne McKeown

As a community of artists and craftspeople working with handmade paper and techniques, we create a wide array of tactile material. Those materials speak to the core of our senses and tie us to a vast tradition rooted in the transformation of natural fibers. We encourage you to investigate the concepts of transition and change that are so inherent in the creation of paper and paper arts.

CURRENTS:

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