

of Research, and further supported by Imadate Art Field and the Echizen Washi Association.

—Jamie Capps

*Jamie Capps is a multimedia artist and papermaker. She earned her BA in studio art from Mount Holyoke University as a Francis Perkins Scholar and is an MFA candidate at the University of Iowa Center for the Book, where she was a recipient of the Iowa Arts Fellowship. She currently assists Nicholas Cladis at the Oakdale Paper Research Facility. Most recently she participated in the Summer 2022 study-abroad program, Artists & Artisans in a Traditional Japanese Papermaking Village, in Echizen, Japan. Website link: <https://www.jamiecapps.com>.*

## THE MAKER

### Sarah Ann Austin

*In this new recurring feature, The Maker, we look at techniques and problem solving in the field of handmade paper. For this issue, imagemaker and papermaker Sarah Ann Austin develops a paper to use in cyanotype photographic printing. If you want to share how you solved a problem in your practice, email [newsletter@handpapermaking.org](mailto:newsletter@handpapermaking.org).*



I started my artistic practice as an image maker and am now approaching my 10-year anniversary with handmade paper. I blend the two in perfect harmony. My work is mostly photographic in nature, using the cyanotype printing process on different surfaces and substrates.

#### THE PROCESS: CYANOTYPE PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINTING

Common papers used for cyanotype are high-quality, hot-press papers like Arches Platine or Fabriano Artistic. These papers are archival and have internal sizing to withstand the rigors of lengthy immersion times. The cyanotype process requires that the paper

gets wet twice and dries thrice. First, during the prep stage you paint emulsion on the paper, or submerge it in light-sensitive solution. After it dries, you expose the paper to make the print, then you rinse the paper in several changes of water for 10 to 15 minutes. Finally the paper is dried again.

#### THE PROBLEM: FINDING A PAPER FOR CYANOTYPE PRINTING

I started my second year of grad school at the University of Alabama with a problem—not having any money and wanting to make beautiful images. I asked myself how I could make prints with sustainable and readily available resources that aligned with my artist-mother lifestyle. I learned that handmade paper inherently has a neutral pH and can be made in any color, size, or texture you prefer. My graduate mate, Becky Beamer, whose sculptural work with paper and books opened my eyes to creative possibilities galore, suggested I learn to make my own handmade paper. After all, the Lost Arch Paper Mill was just below my studio.



"A Precedence Detached," 2022.

#### THE SOLUTION: DEVELOP MY OWN HANDMADE PAPER FOR CYANOTYPE PRINTING!

Figuring out how to make paper that would withstand the cyanotype process led me towards artistic research in Steve Miller's graduate papermaking course. I learned I could use my children's cotton clothes to make rag paper and also make paper from plants that were readily available in my community.

I did many cyanotype tests on handmade paper I made in the course. Thick rag paper would continue to expose or cloud the highlights. Thin rag paper would rip when least expected. But the abaca, mitsumata, kozo, and gampi papers held up to the washes and displayed the images wondrously. Printing on overbeaten abaca produced an ethereal image, both on the surface and embedded within the paper. With this knowledge, I started to mix different fibers after beating them individually and created a perfect combination to print with. I found that mixing bast fiber with rag fiber creates a paper stronger and more beautiful than any watercolor paper on the market.



"A pack, a spoon, and a candle," 2019.

In *Papermaking: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft*, Dard Hunter wrote, "Japanese papers made of mulberry, mitsumata, and gampi barks...when free of chemicals...remained in perfect condition for over fifteen hundred years." I haven't lived fifteen hundred years to prove my paper's longevity, but I have left it in water for 48 hours after printing on it (oops) and it remained intact and pristine! And here you have it, craftspersons of all kinds—remember there are no set rules to follow, just guides to informed decisions in the process.

**SARAH ANN AUSTIN'S BLENDED PAPER FOR STRENGTH, LONGEVITY, AND BEAUTY**

- 2 lbs. abaca sheet pulp
  - 2 lbs. cotton rag, cut into 1-inch squares, separated by color into two lots A and B
  - 1 lb. kozo bark
- Beat in Hollander (I used a 2 lb. Reina beater).

**Beater 1st round:**

- Beat 2 lbs. abaca for 2 hours
- Remove 1 lb.
- Beat remaining 1 lb. abaca for 2 more hours to achieve an overbeaten quality for sheerness.
- Then combine the abaca again outside of the beater.

**Beater 2nd round:**

- Beat 1 lb. rag (color A) for 1 hour or until it resembles cottage cheese.

**Beater 3rd round:**

- Beat 1 lb. rag (color B) for 1 hour or until it resembles cottage cheese.

**Process by hand:**

- Kozo or another strong, lengthy fiber that will be suitable
- Cook with soda ash 1–1.5 hours
- Rinse thoroughly until water runs clear
- Beat with a mallet; test freeness every 5 minutes.

When I am finished beating the pulps, I create a mixture in the vat: 1 scoop\* rag color A or color B, 1 scoop abaca mix, 1 scoop of kozo, then hog.

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**INTERNATIONAL**  
**PAPER MUSEUM**

**PAPER CURIOSITIES**

Our current exhibition includes examples of paper from around the world made from unusual materials, processed by extraordinary methods, and used in unique ways. We welcome all visitors, but please email to make an appointment.  
[donna@carriagehousepaper.com](mailto:donna@carriagehousepaper.com)  
8 Evans Road  
Brookline, MA

*Farmer's suit, bark of Upas tree  
Xishuangbanna, China*

Note\*: The size of the scoop depends on the size of the vat.

Every two charges I add a little bit of the other colored rag just before the pull to slowly blend the two colors together. My most successful papers have been those with a majority of one-color tone with a pop of the other color that emerges in a swirly cloud formation.



Papers made by the author.

—Sarah Ann Austin

Sarah Ann Austin received her BFA from University of Michigan and MFA from the University of Alabama. After teaching at the college level, she left academia and started working in her home studio in Raleigh, North Carolina. Serving as the Women's Caucus Chair for the international non-profit The Society for Photographic Education, she works with other female-identifying educators and students to create and promote opportunities in photography. Sarah Ann actively teaches papermaking, printmaking, bookmaking, and photography courses for the City of Raleigh. Her work has been shown nationally. You can learn more about her work at [www.sarahannaustin.com](http://www.sarahannaustin.com) and [www.instagram.com/legacyprintsandpaper](https://www.instagram.com/legacyprintsandpaper).

## NEXT UP

### Derick Wycherly

The Winter 2022 issue of *Hand Papermaking* magazine will feature an in-depth interview conducted by Black Writers Fellow Payton Harris-Woodard with the legendary artist Howardena Pindell, and present a selection of "Shop Talk" articles. In anticipation, *Hand Papermaking* Newsletter editor Genevieve Lapp presents a little shop talk herself with Derick Wycherly, one of the contributing authors to the issue.

You may be familiar with that special feeling of chatting with fellow paper lovers. You talk excitedly about craft, sharing techniques, and common experiences, never having to check if the other person is "still interested in talking paper." It's the joy of paper friendships

formed at conferences, workshops, and through online platforms. It's bliss. It's the feeling I received after a bit of shop talk with printmaker and papermaker Derick Wycherly. This article was meant to be in interview format, to bring you into our back-and-forth conversation, to share a little of that bliss. I took a screen recording of our video chat, opened it later to start writing, and discovered there was no accompanying audio file. I sat staring at a 30-minute video of our two laughing faces, lips moving in silence, wondering how I could recreate that fantastic energy from memory. As you walk away from paper conferences or workshops, you may have felt this feeling too.

Derick co-authored an article with Kelsey Voy for the upcoming Winter 2022 issue of the magazine where they discuss technical information about their respective projects and processes. The two met at the University of Wisconsin–Madison where Derick was pursuing an MFA in printmaking in the art department and Kelsey worked towards a BFA in design at the School of Human Ecology. They shared paper studio space and took papermaking courses with Mary Hark. Derick and I talked about the inevitability of being influenced by other artists in a shared studio space. While you work near other artists you discuss ideas and techniques, and witness different approaches and processes. This is the same atmosphere I experience working in the studios at the Minnesota Center for Book Arts. Working alone, our process can be perfected, our product predictable. In a collaborative environment, new ideas are born from unexpected meetings.



Screenshot of Genevieve Lapp and Derick Wycherly having a great paper talk.

The collaborative piece (pictured on the next page) illustrates the curious result of interrupting personal practice to collaborate. Derick describes the experience from demoing with Kelsey at the March 2022 Southern Graphics Conference:

"I was doing blowouts with laser-cut stencils, and then pressure prints on top to finish my edition that is included in the upcoming *Hand Papermaking* portfolio, *Language of Color*. For the demo piece, pictured above, I made a green/brown base sheet (cotton linter and flax, pigmented) which I normally would couch a blowout on top of, but for the demo, I handed it off to Kelsey to finish by demoing her additive process. Notice that since my damp-packed base sheets weren't what she was used to working with, the pulp didn't take as it was supposed to."

Collaborations, like learning a new technique or process, can be fruitful endeavors, but may also result in failed experiments or pieces that don't add to our individual bodies of work. Like working on a big edition or learning a new skill (like how to record a Zoom call), little