

The Origin of Resources: Sustainable and Experiential Learning in Italy

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Abstract: Held near Siena, Italy, our 3-week summer abroad program, The Mindful Palette of Stonehill College, combines art, gastronomy, and agricultural studies that strive for cultural mindfulness through holistic and experiential learning processes. A strong belief in sustainability, both philosophically and praxis, underlie these unique experiences. We share the complexities of attaining a sense of mindfulness with modern expectations and preconceptions. We address strategies to convince and support students to not only taste-test but to learn and embrace another culture and the environment through interdisciplinary activities and media formats. Through immersive and hands-on learning, we explore the intersections of food culture and the arts, so that students gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the handmade and the value of personal labor. A nose-to-tail mindset defines how and what materials we use. Until the modern era, art-making, food preparation, and scientific experiments were born out of the kitchen, both as laboratory and studio. The hearth was also the *heart* of the home—and therefore defined the family and cultural identity. Artistic practices that begin with the origins of our resources and have connections to the kitchen fortify our lessons and touch upon many of the aspects we find most important in the act of mindful learning—awareness of the self and the other, and our material's origins and potential uses. They result in seeing how the daily and divine are one and the same.

Keywords: sustainable, art, gastronomy, mindfulness, agriculture, forage, craft, material culture

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Introduction: The Origin of Resources



Bone black pigment made from roast chicken.

He who works with his hands is a laborer.

He who works with his hands and his head is a craftsman.

He who works with his hands and his head and his heart is an artist.

-Nizer (Nizer, L. 1948)

Our work with college students who participate in a short-term study abroad course, *The Mindful Palette*, combines art, gastronomy, and agriculture. Through holistic and experiential learning processes, we strive for our students to discover cultural mindfulness, connecting our 21st-century experiences to those of our ancestors from 35,000 years ago. Multiple modes of learning are employed through the combination of these areas to understand their shared relationships with science, sustenance, and aesthetics. By stressing the importance of local resources, students become responsible for all aspects of production to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the origins of material culture. As the basis of our program is handmade production, students soon learn that there is real and often hidden work behind the final outcome or product. They learn not only about the origin of their resources but also about the evolution of creation. We use Cennino Cennini's *The Craftsman's Handbook (Il libro dell'arte)* as a source text for the course. The text, written in the early 1400's, is one of the earliest treatises on artistic practice and includes recipes for making both tools and materials. It is useful not only for students to access traditional methods of artistic practice, but also in providing a clear connection between the raw materials used and the resources of the landscape. As there were no "art stores" as such until after 1500, (Berrie, B. and Matthew, L. 2010), materials were sourced locally, seasonally, and processed in a domestic setting.

Artistic "work" has, for much of history, involved making tools like brushes, and manufacturing pigments. Production of these "tools" is closely tied to the landscape's resources and, much like food availability, to the seasons. For some students, the act of using found materials and making something by hand is the first time they have an understanding beyond a disposable culture. By discovering that certain activities not only need to be done at specific times of the year and that certain materials have limited availability, students begin to understand themselves differently. Rather than see the world in relation to them, they see themselves in connection to the world.

Although Italy is not the only example, it is devoted to traditional arts and customs that focus on the individual maker and embraces the unrushed process of making and continues to resist homogenization in order to celebrate the bespoke object. To truly comprehend this mindset, our students participate in acts of farming, foraging, cooking, and making art. They visit sustainable models still operating in Italy today to gain a complete understanding of this cultural continuum.

There are complexities of attaining a sense of mindfulness with modern expectations and preconceptions. Students who have been nurtured and encouraged to remain within their comfort zones their whole lives—including their collegiate environment, present unique challenges. During our program, students live together in groups of eight to ten in a shared domestic setting. Chores and living tasks are shared while common spaces become seminar rooms, verandas become studios, and the kitchen becomes laboratory. This environment emulates a fundamental community or family and encourages a conscientious inter-dependence. We purposefully discard the traditional classroom setting in favor of the world being our classroom. Each day is

structured to focus on lessons and activities broken into three areas of studio art, food culture, and agriculture. Two to three mornings a week begin with an early farming session of planting or harvesting. After which, a studio activity such as making handmade paper together outside is followed by lunch being prepared by student teams. After lunch, independent study time is offered and in the late afternoon a studio activity is continued. These activities are alternated with excursions or visiting speakers. To share information and highlight the handmade, digital media can be used to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity. Students create digital presentations, publish blogs, and photograph activities. Research projects and studio work touch upon many of the aspects most important in the act of mindful learning—awareness of the self and the other, our materials' origins and potential uses, and how the daily and divine are one and the same.

Sole Purpose & Like Minds



Prepping vegetables for pickling and fermentation.

The artist is the origin of the work. The work is the origin of the artist. Neither is without the other.

-Martin Heidegger (Heidegger, 1971)

During our Mindful Palette program, the combination of heart and hand is employed to achieve mindfulness. Because the program is 3-weeks long and operates outside of the traditionally structured classroom, we can focus on the lengthy processes and the minute details that the handmade demands. Being exposed to models of artistic production from prehistory through antiquity and the Renaissance and visiting traditional makers in Italy, students comprehend the dedication and devotion inherent in artisanal work. This attention to detail, learning, and mastering a craft leads to a sense of self-accomplishment. Along with the social

bonds and division of labor to work towards a common goal, students understand the dual importance of the individual and the greater community. Similar to the spiritual hermit who steals away in the wilderness to be self-reliant communing solely with God and nature, but then returns to society to gather others together and lead them to goodwill, we bring attention to the critical ideas of quiet introspection but also the need to contribute to the greater good for the community.

Our strategies for engaging students in producing actual artwork focus much on process. We insist that our students paint from life, such as actual objects, living creatures, and landscapes. The connection of working from life is multisensory. The fundamental relationship between artist and subject relies on emotional, intellectual, and physical responses. Attention to a “slow looking” experience affects how our bodies can influence our brains and vice versa. We ask our students to pay attention to temperature, sounds, and scents while working, and whether or not they feel physical discomfort from the elements or long periods of concentration. By also creating tools and materials with natural resources, students are engaged reciprocally with the environment. We have found that many of our students spend little time outdoors, rarely touch soil, and barely see animals up close beyond the average pet. Often, making a simple fire is quite transformative.

To be a *sole author* refers to the act of making from beginning to end. This approach involves sourcing materials, crafting something, and then putting it to use. We find sticks and feathers to make our own pens and brushes and use them to make paintings and drawings on paper that we have made. The processes of papermaking, ink-making, and pen-making provide a different respect for not only making art but of the art object too. The three-part process of sourcing, making, and using provides students a holistic understanding of the challenges of self-expression while gaining respect for the labor involved. Rather than merely utilitarian tools, the “work of art” addresses a primordial spirituality and necessity for communication. The individual and often lonely struggle of creating something from nothing in order to communicate with others can be seen as a humble enterprise or like the shaman, an intermediary between the community and its collective spirituality with the natural world.

To foster a healthy group mentality, each area—art, food, and agriculture, have collaborative assignments. Students are asked to prepare a meal using specific local ingredients that we provide, to recreate a medieval recipe based on historical texts, and to create a meal based on Poverty Index data. This last assignment requires research on current poverty figures, budgeting and shopping, and making an affordable and healthy meal for their “family.” All of these assignments encourage awareness of contemporary and historical food availability and stress collaboration and trust within a group dynamic. Our workshops about bread and pasta making, present the transformation of ordinary flour and water through fermentation, providing one of the most essential, global, and certainly versatile foodstuffs.

In addition to volunteering in farm-related activities/chores, students also conduct group research on an area of organic agricultural production that we encounter during our stay. Many, like olive oil, wine, honey, cheese, meat, are produced on location and others supplemented by

our many visits to local farms and guest lectures. These are compared to standard global industrial methods. Their research is compiled into digital reports that are presented to the group. Because the creation of art tends to be a solitary activity, we make the preparation of materials group dependent. Students are first asked to upcycle a container to make a personal travel watercolor kit. Each student is then tasked to make enough of one color for the group by mixing dry pigments with locally sourced honey. Then each student adds their color to the container to make a complete set. Students are asked to recreate a pigment recipe for the 15th-century artists' manual by Cennino Cennini. By referencing ancient texts, such as *The Craftsman's Handbook*, students can situate their endeavor in a historical spectrum of innovation and shared knowledge. The principal art assignment is to create a portfolio of paintings and drawings. After many other collaborative efforts, the portfolio allows the student to become a sole author and consider more personal solutions to representing their personal experience.

The program includes a variety of lectures and site-visits in all three areas. These provide exposure to small wine producers, cheese-makers, orchards, as well as churches, museums, and archeological sites. These offer a context to understand the functions of art and culture, the strong ties between art and food, and the continuum of materials and technologies. We visit paper makers in Fabriano, paper-marblers in Florence, and the Archeologia Arborea, a historical orchard in Umbria where students learn about biodiversity and paint heritage fruit.

It is essential to note the relevance and need for modern technologies as a means of research, recording evidence, and, most importantly, communication. Even though we utilize pre-industrial techniques, we exist in a high-speed era of data exchange. We take advantage of Wi-Fi, smart phones, and digital documentation. The point is not to limit the tools for making, but to expand available resources. Often, a student finds a piece of burnt bone is more mysterious than the ubiquitous iPhone, and we use smart technology to share discoveries like this. By discussing technologies old and new, and how and why images have been made throughout history, students can gain a better respect for how they can be made and used today. As we introduce students to the history of photographic imaging with anthotypes, cyanotypes, and pinhole cameras, they begin to understand the power of their digital cameras and phones. It is the same with drawing or writing from completely homemade materials that create an awareness of the technological trajectory in all of our tools of communication. While we do not expect our students to use these ancient methods or materials again, we do see that it provides a context for understanding modes and tools for communication today. Students apply contemporary technology to communicate their research projects and course blog, which, unlike their crafted drawings, are available to the world in an instant.

The Nomadic Classroom



Portable studio.

I could not be a poet without the natural world. Someone else could. But not me. For me, the door to the woods is the door to the temple.

-Mary Oliver (Oliver, M. 2016)

As an alternative to the traditional static classroom, our program proposes that students become nomadic learners with no physical separation from a learning environment and the multisensory world. All experiences are relatable—language, architecture, flavor, and quality of light are part of being on-site. While students prepare for class content on their own time, we offer a blended version of “flipping the classroom” (Brame, 2013), and the occasional field trip becomes the routine. Through travel, field trips, and on-site production, we take the classroom with us. Students begin to form bonds with each other through the simple act of moving from one location to another.

This non-traditional learning environment is not without its difficulties and becomes more feasible when the element of study abroad is introduced. Because we operate outside of the regular academic schedule and react to our immediate surroundings, students can find this situation both inspiring and challenging. The choice to study abroad suggests a level of courage to let go of the familiar and embrace the unknown. However, we have American students that are often uneasy about leaving their sheltered lives behind and also bring preconceived and romantic notions of Italy with them. Even though there can be creative freedom when one has no qualitative parameters, many of our students have not been exposed to art-making, critical analysis, cooking, or physical labor. These challenges require the instruction to be directed appropriately to accommodate their lack of experience. Adjusting to new surroundings, creates some stress but also allows for an opportunity for rapid growth. To help students adjust, we focus on group reliability and scheduled times for independent reflection and downtime. For example, requiring everyone to participate in guided cooked meals, setting the table, and cleaning up afterward builds the connectivity of the group. When we make paper, everyone helps with the preparation and works in a rotating assembly line as each sheet of paper is made. This way, each individual relies on another, and the entire group builds on itself to be successful.

Italy presents itself as a perfect location to support a cultural and art historical immersion. There is less of a division between high and low art than in the U.S. In Italy art can be found freely in local churches rather than only in exclusive and expensive museums. The boundaries are less rigid between public versus privileged or common versus elite, and there is an understanding that art is for all instead of just a few. This apparent equity in sharing cultural resources is more than just a sensation; it can be traced back to the Roman Republic with public art projects, access to water, and the formation of the modern Italian democracy.

It is entirely ordinary to have casual conversations about the specifics of art history, materials, techniques, and related professions with many different types of people from all areas of Italian society. The integration of art into everyday life reflects a respect for culture that is part of this shared history and education. The group mentality is cultural and opposes the emphasis on the act of creation as independent from society. The role of the artist in Italy has historically been one in connection to a guild or workshop of lesser artists that support a master and working toward a common goal. In the U.S., the role of the artist as loner fortifies the American importance of heroic individualism. We acknowledge both stances and recognize that the act of creating an individual work of art comes down to oneself and the universe. Nevertheless, we also embrace a collaborative effort for all activities during our program. Both the artist guild and family farm relied on a collective support system, which made the group as necessary as the individual.

Our Stone Soup assignment offers another opportunity for cooperative and individual learning. As the European folk story goes, hungry strangers convince unwilling townspeople to each share a small item to add to the soup pot, and in the end, everyone is fed. This tale describes the value of sharing and how every individual can contribute to the benefit of a community. In times of famine, every bit of food was essential, and the cauldron and the hearth were a locus for

communion. Students are asked to forage, beg, or borrow an ingredient to contribute to the communal soup. This exercise is enhanced with written reflections. We discuss traditional recipes like “Pesce Fuggito,” a soup made by fishermen in the south of Italy when there was no catch, by boiling a rock from the sea. The students create their own “stone soup” from their finds, and the experience is discussed over dinner together. Together with our Poverty Index Assignment, which asks students to spend a specific amount to prepare a nutritionally balanced meal, we simulate an urgency for and create a sensitivity to food resources from yesterday and today. Students begin to recognize the availability of processed foods, geographically and economically, and the general tendency of removing consumers from understanding the origins of production. This alienation, from nature and food sources, is typically American and can be traced to the Industrial Revolution, big farming, and the rise of Capitalism (Benton, T. 2018). The Stone soup fable also speaks to concepts of identity and how one understands their place within and without the dominant culture. Like the American “Melting Pot” of travelers and villagers, immigrants and locals, our Stone Soup activity brings our students together for a meal to share culture and community. Both assignments culminate in a visual journal documented on the class blog.

Palate and Palette



Handmade paper, drawings, books, and fermented vegetables.

Food is neither good nor bad in the absolute, though we have been taught to recognize it as such. The organ of taste is not the tongue, but the brain...

-Montanari (Montanari, M., & Sonnenfeld, A. 2006)

Art is multidimensional, no matter the medium. It combines somatic with the cerebral and is influenced by many external features such as culture, geography, climate, and one's personal story. By looking closely at the examples left to us from prehistory onwards, we can see that art is part of human nature and embedded in our primal psyches.

Equally, it could be said that culture is food, and food is culture. Although cooking is not the only way to prepare food, we are the only species that cooks with fire, and civilization has evolved from this activity (Pollan, M. 2013). Language and communication could be argued to have begun with the earliest “fireside chat.” By participating in the activities of the hearth, students engage in the primordial process of transforming the raw into cooked, and unprocessed materials into tools. These central acts moved beyond basic survival and contributed to the development of art, communication, and, therefore, culture.

Food and art have always gone hand in hand with the environment. Early cave paintings portrayed the hunt and were drawn with the most fundamental of paints—charcoal or charred bone mixed with animal fat from the hearth fire, onto a limestone wall. Red earth ochre silhouetted hands marked one's eternal existence (Mohen, J. 2002). Both art and food provide sustenance and are essential to our physical and spiritual nourishment; there is a metaphysical

urgency to this understanding of being alive. Perhaps simplified to the basic notions of love and hunger.

The "kitchen," both laboratory and studio, was the hearth, and also the heart of the home—and therefore defined family dynamics and cultural identity. Until the modern era when apothecaries became widespread (Bucklow, S. 2009), art-making, food preparation, and scientific experiments were born out of the same location, the hearth. Many artistic practices begin with the origins and availability of our resources and utilize the kitchen. For example, students forage for local oak galls to make ink and collect feathers from geese for quill pens. They prepare and roast a humanely raised chicken together and finish class with a communal meal. The chicken is a perfect example of the union between art and food and the culture of community. Chickens eggs have been used for centuries as a painting medium and their roasted bones for both black and white pigments (Cennini, 1954). These by-products of the final meal draw attention to the importance of using all parts of an animal. Although much of modern Western diets consist of only the breast, thigh, or drumstick, many cultures continue to use the hearts and livers, the neck, and the feet for cooking. Students learn that all parts of the animal have historically been used for practical purposes: intestines as ropes, bladders as containers, hides for glue or parchment, and bones for tools and pigments. From the cuttlefish, we harvest sepia ink for drawing, the bone can be used in jewelry casting, and both ink and animal are combined for Risotto al Nero. Through direct access to and full use of food and art making, students become sole authors and realize their ability to be self-reliant and their mutual connection to history and the environment.

Outside of the U.S., many consumers prefer to be able to see and select a whole animal (sometimes while still alive) to be the judge of freshness and quality. In Italy, market customers pay attention to the eye clarity of a fish and the flesh color of an animal, as well as make good use of the head or tail that is still attached. These "lesser parts" of an animal, like offal and brains, not only are nutritious but exemplify some of the best traditional regional cooking in the world. When we begin cooking with our American students in Italy, they are usually quite shocked by the introduction of an entire chicken-- still with a few feathers, head, and feet; let alone by the act of actually touching the whole body to prepare it for roasting. Modern food preparation has removed our daily association with life and death by plastic wrapping our fears in styrofoam. After recovering from their initial surprise, students begin to value their food differently. Rather than see it as a simple product, they realize there is a dependability between one being's life and their own.

The act of eating and our instinct to survive *physically* is linked with our ability to survive *spiritually* through art-making. Evidence of early humans making adorned functional objects or pictures in caves tells us that creativity is part of our essential humanity. The need to express ourselves and communicate with others runs deep in our psyches. As noted, our students often come without formal art training. By literally starting from scratch, we show them how to make their materials often directly from the earth. We make paper from cotton pulp and processed local vegetation, pens from feathers, charcoal, and inks from foraged plants. We

require them to sit for long periods to look and observe with only the sounds around them. By reducing their outer stimulation to only the natural world, our hope is for them to reconnect to their inner fish (Shubin, N. 2008) and see with fresh eyes.

Foraged and Forged



Harvesting potatoes.

Do not fail, as you go on, to draw something every day, for no matter how little it is, it will be well worthwhile, and it will do you a world of good.

-Cennino Cennini (Cennini, 1954)

To forage and to forge share sentiments of resourcefulness and determination. Both require the necessity of starting with nothing and either acquiring or creating one thing from another. We utilize both methods during our program so that students have as close a relationship to their materials as possible. The incredible feats of pre-Modern technology were used to create

landmarks such as the Great Pyramids, Stonehenge, and other megalithic monuments which involved moving large and heavy resources from distant locations. Generally, the primary materials used for food and art over time have been specific to nearby areas and seasons. Although there have always been trade routes; historically, materials were based on local availability and were foraged until they could be cultivated and exchanged (Stearns, 2001). Pigments were dug from the earth or pulled out of the embers, berries were mashed, and nearby river clay was formed into vessels. The seasonal activities of the wine and olive harvest are set on climatic cycles --and also subject to the will of nature. Italy offers a unique opportunity to practice this mindset with a strong tradition of using local produce to define its regional cuisine. The nationally supported designations such as IGP, DOP, and DOC ratings (IGP and DOP are culinary distinctions linked to region and tradition of production. DOC is similar but reserved for wine production.) carry strict guidelines and determine quality and geographical authenticity. Unlike “American” cheese and its purported inauthenticity (Olmstead, 2012), one can rest assured that Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese is made traditionally with only the essential ingredients of milk, rennet, and time; *and* only in Parma.

Foraging means not only to collect what food is on hand to survive but also to rely on what is seasonally available. This understanding influences how food staples were prepared and preserved to last from each harvest throughout the next year. When we introduce our students to cheesemaking, we also discuss the symbiotic relationship between animals and the land. As the sheep graze, they fertilize the olive grove. They keep the grass low and do not eat the olives. The cycles of cheese production and animal reproduction are co-dependent, as well as tied to the seasons and climate. Students learn that the natural diet of animals affects flavor and how processes such as cheesemaking are ways to preserve and extend milk. Beneficial concepts of traditional preservation without modern preservatives are apparent. However, without direct farming experience, they are often very foreign ideas to most college students, and even taken for granted. Through on-site visits, cooking classes, and tastings, our students discover that besides becoming a popular product, wine, olive oil, salumi, and grain were developed over thousands of years to ensure survival over the winter or in times of famine.

During our program, students volunteer for agricultural activities—in the vegetable garden, the vineyard, and caring for animals. Depending on the season, students may also participate in harvesting grapes for wine, olives for oil, and sheep’s milk for making cheese. More often than not, these first-hand experiences concentrate much less on the glory of the harvest and more on the tedious labor and perseverance necessary to maintain the longer trajectory of survival. Much like the multistep and labored preparation of a gessoed artist’s canvas, the small and repetitive acts of pruning, weeding, fertilizing, and fence-tending help to gain humility and respect for a sustainable community. This volunteer work also sensitizes students to the cost of maintaining a sustainable environment. Though engaged for relatively short intervals, they become aware of the long-term preparation and work ethic involved for a productive season. They also learn about the role of technology, of inherited knowledge, and

innovation and risk. They find that there is precision in the work of the farmer, the butcher, the baker, and that care and attention affect their product.

This idea of *craft* is no different in regard to artistic production, where the object is a measure of careful construction. Heidegger speaks of the *work* of the work of art (Heidegger, 1971), and there is great merit in understanding contemplative labor. While we make use of available cultivated resources, we also encourage students to forage and to experiment with found materials. Many materials found in nature yield colors and food. Apricots are gathered for jam, wild oregano is used for seasoning, and elderberry processed for ink. One of the most essential historical inks is made by collecting oak galls found on the ground and adding iron sulfate to make a permanent black ink. Carbon black pigments are made by harvesting local sources like willow and grapevine, bones, fruit pits, acorns, and pomegranate rinds. Dyes are made from prickly pears, buckthorn, and iris petals. Through natural alchemy, we produce verdigris by suspending copper over vinegar and render soap from lye and fat. Through the work involved and the transformations that occur, students understand the relationships between natural materials, location, and season. As they gain this physical knowledge, their minds are opened to the poetic and artistic possibilities.

Conclusion: Sustainable Structures



The yolk for egg tempera paint.

Give a man a fish, feed him today. Teach a man to fish, feed him for life.
-Chinese proverb

Mindfulness and sustainability go hand in hand. To include experiential learning and studying abroad in an influential location like Italy, students are not only more likely to be affected in the moment but have lasting effects for a lifetime. As we have shared, students benefit significantly through the interdisciplinary connections of studio art, gastronomy, and agriculture when seen through the lens of sustainability. Through the interconnectedness that we propose, they have a newfound appreciation for local and global issues like food security, climate change, and functioning eco-communities.

First, they gain an understanding and a respect for natural resources and historical technology by procuring and manufacturing materials from start to finish. These methods support obvious applications in the artistic and culinary fields, but also provide students with means of problem-solving. Accepting that failure is part of the process, along with experimentation, encourages a positive growth mindset. Second, the historical models offer a window into the past so that students can understand their endeavors, both physical and artistic, on a trajectory of evolution and cultural history. Seeing art and archeology on-site as well as observing artisans at work fortifies their understanding. Third, by reducing familiar comforts—of language first, but also culinary and cultural aspects within a specific study abroad experience—encourages students to take a step back and acknowledge different modes of living.

The program's demands are dually challenging—not only for students but also for ourselves as educators. We cannot always convince our students to eviscerate a chicken or to try headcheese. We can, however, offer exposure to these and other more cerebral activities, like a new culture and language. The experience of contending with a foreign language, a new place, and strange food can all be transformative. The challenge for us is to break down expectations and patterns of modernity and encourage students to overcome their assumptions or disconnectedness with the origins of resources, whether material or cultural.

The challenges of adapting to a new environment are many, especially for students with a “high” standard of living and, at times, an innate sense of privilege. “Country living” with bugs, no dishwasher, or air-conditioning can sound trivial but can seem monumental to some students when initially confronted. When faced with a new definition of culture (and a historic one), our students are asked to question their expectations—and understand not only how ancient civilizations lived, but how contemporary cultures still live in a sustainable relationship with the environment and with each other.

Another challenge that we, as educators, have learned is the difficulty in evaluating the impact of imposed mindfulness on students. How does one measure mindfulness? And, how do short term outcomes affect long term effects? How do we share the complexities of balancing the costs of maintaining a sustainable educational program within the economics of elite gastro-tourism? This additional hyper-awareness can be difficult to comprehend in the moment but is important for a complete appreciation of one’s relation to place.

Short-term results are assessed in a three-page student self-evaluation at the end of the course. The responses are honest and self-reflective, and for the most part, students admit when they needed to rise to the occasion. Even students who seemed difficult or resistant find the experience mostly positive and understand the importance of the course's intentions of attaining a more expansive mindfulness. At the very least, students become more aware of local food resources and production through our course. Long-term effects are more difficult to measure, as we do not yet have an official system of gathering information from all students one or five years down the road. We know there is a long-term influence due to past students staying in touch, requesting letters of recommendation, and telling future students to enroll. Resourcefulness, and the perseverance and dedication necessary for the crafts of art and cooking and agriculture are the most difficult to measure beyond their immediate physical results. The intangible qualities are what interest us most: the courage and humility involved in approaching the unknown and the acceptance of failure as a condition of experimentation. Through an ongoing public blog that is added on by each new group, we hope that readers will strive by example, to leave a more sustainable footprint into the future.

By acknowledging the mutual relationship between ourselves and environment, students understand their impact, both positive and negative, on the future of our planet and its many diverse communities.

NB- *As artist-educators, we are inspired by Cennino Cennini's The Craftsman's Handbook from the early 1400's as a sourcebook. His handbook was and continues to be a guide to artists on how to make studio materials and the 'right' way to do it—according to the laws of nature, and of God, as Cennini knew it. As we began to uncover his information on the origin of our resources, we discovered that ingredients in the studio and kitchen are closely linked and realized that sharing interests in art and culinary practice unites all of us.*



Goose feathers for quill pens and oak galls for oak gall ink.

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