



*Call For Entry*

**BIG  
INK**

Woodblock *Printmaking* Events



# Hello *There*

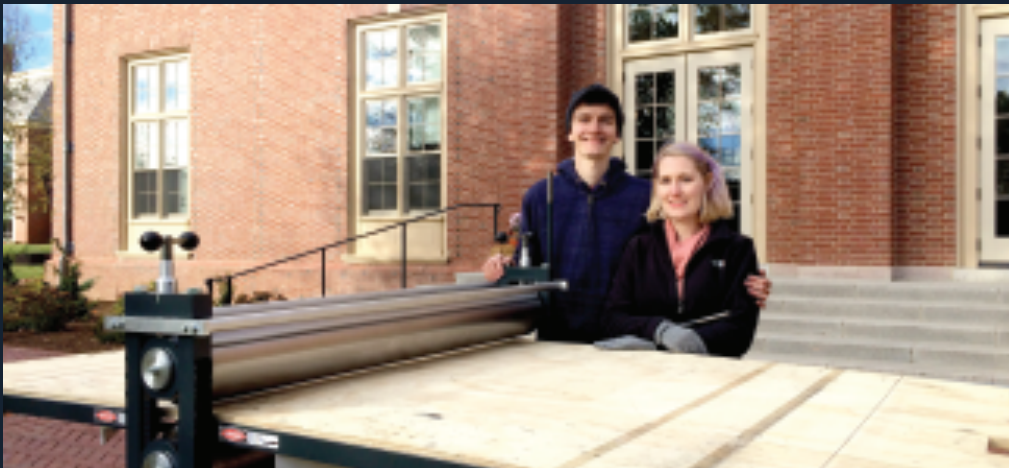
BIG INK is a traveling educational program that teaches visual art and brings people together to celebrate woodblock printmaking.

*Our specialty is printing woodblocks carved at a monumental scale. We organize public events that highlight the spectacle of this process. BIG INK partners with a local venue to host the event and announces a call-for-entry.*

Artists interested in carving a woodblock of at least 24" by 36" inches in dimension, are invited to submit an application to print with BIG INK. Upon acceptance, artists have two months prior to the event to carve their design. No prior experience is required and we encourage emerging, mid-career, and established visual artists to apply. Since the program's inception, hundreds of artists have participated at partner locations across the United States.

# Our *Backstory*

Lyell Castonguay and Carand Burnet founded BIG INK in 2012.



*The program began with Castonguay envisioning a community of like-minded artists who share an interest in large-scale woodblock printmaking.*

Recognizing most artists don't have the technical expertise required for such work, Castonguay began to teach the process. Each year more artists become aware of how satisfying it is to carve and print. Also, the public becomes better informed about the process by viewing the art BIG INK participants create.

# The *Team*



Lyell  
*Castonguay*

Lyell Castonguay's work includes reduction, multi-block, and large-scale printing. He is represented by galleries across the United States and his work is included in international collections. Castonguay has extensive experience working with fellow artists, guiding them through the creative process, and printing their work.

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Carand  
*Burnet*



Carand Burnet is a musician and writer. Her interest in printed media stems from a life long passion for poetry. She's written about printmaking in Art New England Magazine, Art in Print, Printmaking Today and Printeresting.org.

# Equipment

*Gaining access to oversize printing equipment is an obstacle for any artist who wants to produce a large-scale woodblock.*

*We raised \$13,000 through public support to commission The Big Tuna.*

**The Big Tuna is the *only* oversize printing press designed for routine travel.**

Given its lightweight, modular construction, The Big Tuna can be transported virtually anywhere!

It has made a lasting impression when assembled at the entrance to a subway station, in the middle of a flea market or at the heart of a city commons.

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## Destinations

*Make art part of your next adventure!*

Our program compels artists to visit new and inspiring places. From San Francisco to Nashville, the best galleries and art centers in the country host BIG INK calls-for-entry. Participants have the unique opportunity to explore the local sights after a productive day of printing with the BIG INK team.



# Collaboration

BIG INK participants come from a variety of backgrounds and experience levels. An event can include college professors, art school graduates, designers, illustrators, sculptors, painters, photographers, and hobbyists.

*Some participants have never carved a woodblock, others have carved many.*

If your work features contrast, heavy outlines, and patterning, then you should give woodblock printmaking a try!

**Anyone with patience and admiration for quality craftsmanship will thrive.**





# Our *Community*



**BIG INK builds a bridge between artist and audience.**



Event participants captivate the crowd with their artistic skill, while setting a precedent for others to achieve ambitious goals. Community members can watch the Big Tuna in action. Then they can make their own mini print. Volunteers assist the public in inking pre-carved plates and printing on The Anchovy, BIG INK's mini-press.

# Resources

**We strive to make creating a woodblock accessible.**

Our online master class guides participants through the process, imparting knowledge of preferred materials and techniques. Topics include carving substrates, image transfer, creating carved textures, fixing unwanted marks, tool maintenance, utilizing power tools, and more. There are over twenty videos outlining the process.

## *Promotion*

The public is encouraged to attend BIG INK events, which are free and open during the weekend. We work directly with local media outlets and use our social media presence to highlight participating artists.

**Follow @biginkprints on Facebook and Instagram to see what others are carving!**

## Applying

Applications are processed through [BIGINK.org](http://BIGINK.org). We request a JPG image that represents what the applicant intends to carve. Artists may submit a new design or an image from their existing portfolio. Preference will be given to artists that clearly illustrate their concept.



# Impressions

BIG INK creates three impressions for each participant's woodblock, all of which the artist keeps.

Woodblocks are printed on archival paper using traditional oil-based ink. Castonguay directs the operation and maintains a high standard of quality throughout printing.

**The results are comparable to working with a master technician.**

## *Materials*

Masa paper and Speedball Art Products oil-based block printing ink are provided on printing day.

Participants purchase their own 1/2 or 3/8 inch carving substrate. BIG INK recommends Cherry Plywood, Shina Plywood, or Medium Density Fiberboard (MDF).

Participants also purchase their own carving tools. We recommend the Power Grip brand. Our master class goes into greater detail and includes product purchase links.

## Experience

No prior printmaking experience is necessary and artists of all skill levels are encouraged to apply. You'll learn the woodblock printmaking process through a combination of online and in-person instruction.

## *Size*

The woodblock must be at least 24 by 36 inches but no larger than 40 by 96 inches in dimension. We sometimes work with venues that have an oversized press on-site. Please confirm the maximum allowable size under the OPEN CALLS section on our website.

## Jurying

All applications are reviewed internally and a decision is provided shortly following each call-for-entry deadline. Accepted artists receive an email with instructions on how to proceed with registration.

## *Fees*

It is free to submit; accepted applicants pay \$300. Participation highlights include access to our online master class for one year, Speedball Art Products printmaking samples, hands-on instruction during the event, and three prints from your woodblock.

## Attendance

Participants are responsible for attending their assigned printing day. They are welcome, but not required, to attend any other printing days.

# Hosting

*There's no monetary cost for hosting a BIG INK call-for-entry. We have been fortunate to partner with amazing venues that share our vision.*



The hosting venue should have an established presence in the local arts community. They act as a BIG INK ambassador by advertising the call-for-entry through web, social media, and email. We also require a suitable indoor space with handicap access. If your organization is newly established or located in a rural area we recommend BIG INK's Visiting Printer Program.

*Contact us if you know of the perfect venue!*

# The *Process*

A woodblock is essentially a hand-carved stamp. Woodblock prints, aka woodcuts, are made through a process of elimination. First, an artist draws a design onto a piece of wood. Areas to show 'white' are cut away with a chisel leaving the characters or image to show in 'black' at the original surface level. The stamp is coated with ink and pressed onto paper by hand. Large woodblocks require a specialized machine, either an etching or platen press, to exert enough force to produce a quality impression.

# The *History*

Woodblock printing originated in ancient China. It was recorded as a means of printing patterns onto textiles in Japan as early as the 8th century.

*The process appeared in Europe by the early 1400s to illustrate books. The German artist Albrecht Dürer developed relief into a fine art form in the early 1500s. These multicolored prints, called chiaroscuro woodcuts, were developed in Italy at the same time.*

In the 1600s, Japanese artists began creating extraordinary colored woodcuts, using a print technique called Moku Hanga. The resulting ukiyo-e prints forged the European Le Japonisme movement and influenced countless impressionists and post-impressionists. In the 1960s monumental woodblocks were first championed by artists such as Leonard Baskin.

*Artists still carve woodblocks by hand just as they did in ancient times.*

**BIG INK is testament to the medium's popularity today.**

BIG INK would love to visit your location!

Here's the logistical requirements for us to host a successful event:

- Ground Floor or Ramp Entrance Access
  - 26" Inch Wide Minimum Doorways
- 26" x 65" Inch Minimum Elevator Dimensions
- 400 Square Foot Indoor Working Space
  - Loading Zone
- Off Street Parking

Questions about applying or hosting a call-for-entry?  
Email us at [contact@bigink.org](mailto:contact@bigink.org)

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