

Course program 2025

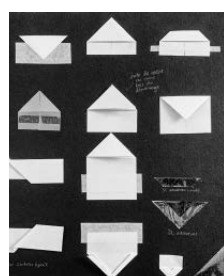
Bookbinding and Design, Book restoration

Suminagashi

Zurich 1

Instructor: Bastien Conus
Date/Location: 28th and 29th March 2025 / Zurich
Language: English
Course fee: CHF 460.00
Participants: open to all

Suminagashi is the precursor of all marbled paper practices. In a tub, the ink will be applied to the water surface and then transferred to the paper from which magical creative moments emanate, inviting contemplation and letting go.



Five Clever Book Structures

Ascona 2

Instructor: Suzanne Schmolgruber
Date/Location: 2nd–4th April 2025 / Ascona
Language: German or English and explanations in a second language
Course fee: CHF 690.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

This is the second part of the well-loved topic: “Ten clever book structures”. Another five techniques – contemporary, simple, and original – will be studied and realized. The main focus is the technical knowledge behind the precise construction of these binding styles.

Exhibiting, mounting, presenting 1 – Graphic art

Ascona 5

Instructor: Florane Gindroz Iseli
Date/Location: 22nd and 23rd April 2025 / Ascona
Language: French and explanations in German
Course fee: CHF 460.00
Participants: restorers, bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

By applying the fundamentals of conservation, this course aims to present the range of techniques, for the Graphic art, available for preparing these works in a durable way. A number of framing and attachment methods and systems will be studied.

Creating a book from start to finish

Ascona 3

Instructor: Matthias Grimm
Date/Location: 10th–12th April 2025 / Ascona
Language: German
Course fee: CHF 690.00
Participants: open to all

Have you always dreamed of designing and binding your very own book? In this course you will learn the basics of book binding, from the choice of paper to folding and creasing and binding of the spine of the book.

Exhibiting, mounting, displaying 2 – The book

Ascona 6

Instructor: Florane Gindroz Iseli
Date/Location: 24th and 25th April 2025 / Ascona
Language: French and explanations in German
Course fee: CHF 460.00
Participants: restorers, bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

By applying the fundamentals of conservation, it will be possible to try out in this course various techniques that respect the books and their individual opening angles. Several custom-made mounting supports in cardboard, Plexiglas or metal will be presented, manufactured and tested.

Book variations and simple slipcase

Ascona 4

Instructor: Matthias Grimm
Date/Location: 14th–17th April 2025 / Ascona
Language: German
Course fee: CHF 920.00
Participants: open to all

The offer is aimed at hobby bookbinders. This course builds on the basics of the beginners course and deepens your knowledge and skills in bookbinding. By working with more sophisticated techniques and materials, your skills will be taken to the next level.

For all cases: Paste Paper from Scratch

Zurich 7

Instructor: Susanne Krause
Date/Location: 23rd–25th April 2025 / Zurich
Language: German and English
Course fee: CHF 750.00
Participants: bookbinders and restorers, designers with previous experience

The basic techniques of paste paper production are: Reconstructions or infills, traditional patterning or free artistic design. The hands-on learning of these techniques will be supplemented by exercises in ‘reading’ paste paper samples and identifying other sorts of decorated papers.

Bookbinding and Design

The centro del bel libro ascona is the leading institute for advanced education around all aspects of the book, paper, bookbinding and design. It offers hand bookbinders, graphic designers, conservators, and interested persons with appropriate experience a forum for learning and engagement that encompasses both technical and creative aspects of bookbinding and design. Course participants have the opportunity to further their education and broaden their skills by learning new techniques and methods from internationally recognized instructors who stand at the forefront of their craft. The unique environment of the cbl allows for unparalleled creative exchange with other professionals in the field, provides new inspiration and fresh approaches to your creative practice, as well as an opportunity for self-reflection away from daily stresses and work-life demands.

Classical box making: a different approach

Ascona 8

Instructor: Roger Green
Date/Location: 5th–7th May 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and English
Course fee: CHF 690.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

Three box forms will be made: a drop back box and slip cases with flat and rounded openings. Their construction is based using some engineering principles for structural stability and robustness, and covered in Buckram book cloth.

Extraordinary boxes: more than just storage

Ascona 9

Instructor: Roger Green
Date/Location: 8th and 9th May 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and English
Course fee: CHF 460.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

Two box forms will be made: a magic box and an Asian folder. The magic box is a multi-compartmental box with a double hinged lid which allows it to be opened in both directions. The Asian folder is a layered structure with flexible, interlocking flaps.

The Franzband

Ascona 10

Instructor: Ireen Kranz
Date/Location: 12th–17th May 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and explanations in English
Course fee: CHF 1'290.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

This binding technique still offers a variety of skills that can enrich daily work in a special way: backing on deep joints, ivory edge colouring, French sewn headbands, and assured leather paring and covering. In six days, all of these techniques will be refreshed and practiced.

The Springback Book

Ascona 11

Instructor: Ireen Kranz
Date/Location: 19th–23rd May 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and explanations in English
Course fee: CHF 1'150.00
Participants: interested persons with or without previous experience

This old binding technique, through its refined technical details, is characterized by being able to open flat, right into the fold. The spine of the book literally jumps up at the user when the book is opened. During the 5 days of the course we will make a half leather binding.

Reliure Origata according to Julie Auzillon

Ascona 12

Instructor: Christiane Grimm-Angelrath
Date/Location: 26th–28th May 2025 / Ascona
Language: German, explanations in French on request
Course fee: CHF 690.00
Participants: interested persons with previous experience

Origata is the Japanese art of wrapping and gift-giving. Drawing inspiration from this aesthetic, Julie Auzillon developed a refined bookbinding technique for binding one to three layers of booklets. This method is ideal for protecting booklet fragments or creating flexible, blank books.



Concoctions: From Concertina to Codex

Ascona 13

Instructor: Lori Sauer
Date/Location: 3rd–6th June 2025 / Ascona
Language: English
Course fee: CHF 1'150.00
Participants: interested persons with or without previous experience

The week will be spent exploring and discovering the various ways to use concertinas (and double concertinas) in a fixed spine to create a codex format. The result is neither a stub nor a concertina but an original format with lots of character.

How to make Strong, Practical and Creative Packaging

Zurich 14

Instructor: Paul Jackson
Date/Location: 3rd–7th June 2025 / Zurich
Language: English
Course fee: CHF 1'150.00
Participants: interested persons with or without previous experience

The course introduces a simple method to create the strongest possible ‘net’ (a box opened flat) for a box of any shape, without any glue. You will learn step-by-step this award-winning method to design and create your own packaging forms.

Fundamentals of One-Piece Pop-ups

Ascona 15

Instructor: Paul Jackson
Date/Location: 10th and 11th June 2025 / Ascona
Language: English
Course fee: CHF 460.00
Participants: interested persons with or without previous experience

An introduction to the techniques of making pop-ups from one sheet of card, sometimes called Kirigami or Origami Architecture. It will focus on the fundamentals of the art, allowing students to fully understand the basics, from which more complex pop-up structures can evolve.

Practical Geometric Constructions with Folded & Cut Paper

Ascona 16

Instructor: Paul Jackson
Date/Location: 12th–14th June 2025 / Ascona
Language: English
Course fee: CHF 690.00
Participants: interested persons with math- and geometry-phobia and/or with a knowledge of geometry

The course will introduce a multitude of fascinating ways in which the geometry of folding and cutting paper can be used to create basic 2-D polygons, 3-D polyhedrons and other surfaces and structures. The constructions are quick, simple and elegant.

I love Japan: good old days?

Ascona 17

Instructor: Veronika Schöpfers
Date/Location: 16th–20th June 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and English
Course fee: CHF 1'150.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous knowledge

The course focuses on a few selected handmade papers that originally served a very specific purpose, such as urushikoshi paper as a filter for Japanese lacquer. The papers used in the course are printed, dyed or embossed according to their special properties, and then bound.

Practical Approaches in Book and Paper Conservation

Ascona 18

Instructor: Renate Mesmer
Date/Location: 23rd–27th June 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and English
Course fee: CHF 1'150.00
Participants: book- and paper restorers and interested persons with previous experience

In this course, participants have the opportunity to review and discuss various techniques and their approaches in book and paper conservation as well as in exhibition related work. It is meant to be an overview of innovative techniques, which will be demonstrated and reviewed.

Course program 2025

Bookbinding and Design, Book restoration



Conservation of Paper: Tradition, Methods and Approaches

Bern 19

Instructor: Renate Mesmer
Date/Location: 30th June – 4th July 2025 / *Atelier Michael Rothe, Bern*
Language: German and English
Course fee: CHF 1'150.00
Participants: interested persons with previous knowledge in paper restoration

Starting with basic methods such as simple tear repairs and filling losses, we progress to damage from mold, brittle paper, and the mechanical stabilization of paper affected by ink corrosion. Participants will explore topics such as humidification, washing, drying, flattening, etc.

Practical and Playful Magnets

Ascona 20

Instructor: Kylin Lee
Date/Location: 7th–11th July 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and English
Course fee: CHF 1'199.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous knowledge

Learn how to integrate powerful neodymium magnets as practical and playful elements in both book and box structures. We will work with a large selection of magnets and integrate them as closures, hinges, or connectors in our work.

Hedi Kyle à la carte

Ascona 21

Instructor: Suzanne Schmollgruber
Date/Location: 18th–22nd August 2025 / Ascona
Language: German or English and explanations in a second language
Course fee: CHF 1'199.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous knowledge

You decide which of Hedi Kyle's extraordinary book constructions will be worked on in this course. The ingenious folding, cutting and stitching techniques, from fanfold to codex and numerous variations, will be determined together in the course group and then carried out step by step.

1x1 of the premium cardboard boxes

Ascona 22

Instructor: Rahel Scheufele
Date/Location: 25th–29th August 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and explanations in English
Course fee: CHF 1'150.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

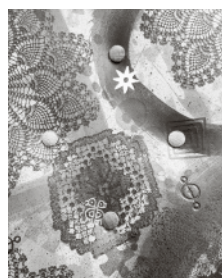
Exclusive and sophisticated, box making has always been part of the hand-book binder's repertoire. Starting from the geometric principles, we will create boxes in different shapes – with the focus on creating a precise basic structure and the flawless treatment of the covering leather.

Hinged binding in parchment after Edgard Claes

Ascona 23

Instructor: Rahel Scheufele
Date/Location: 1st–5th September 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and explanations in English
Course fee: CHF 1'150.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

Using Edgard Claes' method, we will make a full vellum binding with hinges. The covers can be removed at any time. The parchment tapes form the supporting element of the hinge structure. The parchment of the covered boards can be decorated with onlays.



Leather Dyeing

Ascona 24

Instructor: Nicky Oliver
Date/Location: 8th–11th September 2025 / Ascona
Language: English
Course fee: CHF 920.00
Participants: bookbinders with or without previous knowledge, anyone within the Leatherwork industry and artists

Dyeing your own leather can be an extremely creative process and it can enable the binder to produce beautiful and unique covers for their design bindings. The aim will be to develop a different approach. We will be creating numerous plaquettes, utilizing a variety of dyeing techniques.

Double or Triple board binding

Ascona 25

Instructor: Jacek Tylkowski
Date/Location: 15th–19th September 2025 / Ascona
Language: English
Course fee: CHF 1'150.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

The „Double or Triple board binding“, invented by the Czech master bookbinder Jan Sobota, utilises a new binding form without shoulders. The course participants will complete one binding using this method and decorate the top edge with a heated roller and pigment foils.

5 days, 5 techniques

Ascona 26

Instructor: Bernhard Sanders
Date/Location: 22nd–26th September 2025 / Ascona
Language: German or English and explanations in a second language
Course fee: CHF 1'199.00
Participants: bookbinders, graphic designers, interested persons

Bernhard Sanders demonstrates binding styles that come from his forays into innovative techniques using plastic, board, paper and saddlery leather. We will produce 5 non-adhesive contemporary bindings whose roots are anchored in the classical book.

Six Case Styles for the Board Book

Ascona 27

Instructor: Kylin Lee
Date/Location: 29th September – 3rd October 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and English
Course fee: CHF 1'199.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

The board book, also known as the flat book, is a very practical structure that has been used for children's books or printed photo books. In this workshop we will learn the basic techniques for making a board book and construct book blocks with creative case design.

Adhesive-free bindings with magnetic closures

Ascona 28

Instructor: Nadine Werner
Date/Location: 6th–9th October 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and explanations in English
Course fee: CHF 1'990.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

In this course, we will delve into the creative possibilities of adhesive-free bindings. You will have the opportunity to design albums and books, such as the "Steckalbum" and the "Woven rod binding" and learn how to use neodymium magnets for closures and connections.

Danish Millimeter Binding

Ascona 29

Instructor: Suzanne Schmollgruber
Date/Location: 13th–17th October 2025 / Ascona
Language: German or English and explanations in a second language
Course fee: CHF 1'199.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

This subtle half leather binding technique, developed in Denmark, has been constantly refined over the last century and is seen as an extraordinary fine bookbinding. The book is worked on a 90° shoulder and head caps, similar to the German full leather binding.



Half Leather Binding with Floating Spine

Ascona 30

Instructor: Ingela Dierick
Date/Location: 20th–24th October 2025 / Ascona
Language: German and explanations in English and/or French
Course fee: CHF 1'150.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

In this course we will explore a refined technique by Edgard Claes. We will set the joint at 90° and split and pare the leather. The spine consists of thin leather, a leather-covered spine insert and leather straps. The boards will be attached and covered with coloured paper.

Masterclass Design Binding

Ascona 31

Instructor: Luigi Castiglioni
Date/Location: 3rd–12th November 2025 / Ascona
Language: English, French and Italian
Course fee: CHF 1'990.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with advanced experience

This course is designed as an intensive immersion into the world of fine bindings. It offers an indepth introduction to the art of making and designing a traditional French binding. The book-block is worked with stabs and sewn on hemp cords. The book is covered with box calf leather.

Designer Slipcase

Ascona 32

Instructor: Suzanne Schmollgruber
Date/Location: 17th–21st November 2025 / Ascona
Language: German or English and explanations in a second language
Course fee: CHF 1'199.00
Participants: bookbinders and interested persons with previous experience

A designer slipcase fits the book perfectly, like a glove fits a hand and protects it completely from dust and light. The tailored rounded spine shape gives the slipcase a nice and snug feel. Participants can apply the opening horizontally, vertically, diagonally or free form.



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