

**Note to the reader:**

Here are four page examples from the 32 entries (many two pages long) from international paper artists. Although this free downloadable example is with images at 72 dpi, the printable e-manuscript has ~ 50 color images at 300dpi.

# **BEATER FINESSE**

## **BEATER NOTES FROM 25 INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

**COMPILED AND EDITED  
BY  
CATHERINE NASH, M.F.A.**

### **Index of Artists:**

Shannon Brock, MJ Cole, Betsy Dollar, Eileen Foti, Peter Gentenaar, Helen Hiebert, Lois James, Natan Kaaren, Michael LaFosse, Tom Leech, Margareta Mannervik, Roberto Mannino, Catherine Nash, Margaret Prentice, Brian Queen, John Risseeuw, Priscilla Robinson, Robbin Ami Silverberg, Asao Shimura, Vicky Sigwald, Gail Stiffe, Lynn Sures, Marilyn Sward, Peter and Donna Thomas, Pat Torley-Gentenaar

### **Table of Contents Listed by Substrate/Media:**

Casting, Digital Printing/Photography, Drawing/Mixed Media, High Shrinkage Pulps, Letterpress, Artist's Books, Origami, Lithography, Relief Printing, Etching, Pulp Painting, Pulp Spraying, Watermarks...more!

# 1

## CASTING INTO PLASTER MOULDS AND EMBOSSING

*MARGARETA MANNERVIK  
MM ART PAPER  
HÖNÖ, SWEDEN*

**Qualities Desired:** keep fibres long as possible, strong enough to withstand a very tough pressing into linoleum with deep cuts in it.

**Fibers used with %s:** cotton or a combination of cotton and linen, up to 50/50. I prefer rags from old out worn fabric.

**Fiber Prep:** Rags cut in small pieces (size of a stamp). If I use rags from new fabric, I soak and boil in a soft solution of caustic soda and rinse the material a lot before beating.

**Hollander used:** I have two hollanders: a Valley and a Fibermax. They both work in a very similar way.

**Ratio of Fiber to Water:** Full capacity

**How Beaten:** I beat the material carefully to handle the fibres softly. The hollander is filled with water, and start running, and half the intended amount of fibres is added a little at a time, lowering the roll just a little. After 30 min., the rest of the rags are added a little at a time again and beating is continued the same way. After beating this way for 1-3 hours, the bedplate is lowered to the roll and continue beating under more pressure for three hours, up to six hours.

**Other Information about Beating:** If there are air bubbles on the surface, give the pulp some drips of flax oil.

**Visual/Tactile/Auditory Cues:** Now and then I make a test, to control the condition of the fibres. I catch fibres by dipping a knife in the pulp. The fibres should hang over the knife's edge evenly. The length of the fibers should mostly cover the blade. Then I make a test by putting this amount of fibers into a glass jar and shake the solution to see how the fibers look. They should move and be spread out even in the water and there should be no clumps. If the test shows clumps, continue beating. Test again after a while...

**Additives/Chemistry:** none



*In printable version, information continues on next page*

# DIGITAL PRINTING / PHOTOGRAPHY

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**MARILYN SWARD**  
**PINE CROFT STUDIO**  
**ST. GERMAIN, WI USA**

**Qualities Desired:** a smooth surface for running through a computer printer and or picking up fine detail in the darkroom.

**Fibers used with %s:** In general, I use several different fibers and combinations and am always trying new things but for this I will describe my “favorite” which is about 50% raw Flax and 50% abaca half stuff.

**Fiber Prep:** Pre soaked.

**Hollander used:** Valley

**Ratio of Fiber to Water:** Full capacity

**How Beaten:** Begin without weight (max distance between plate and roll) and run about ten min. until all is absorbed and flowing smoothly Then apply full weights and run about two hours. “Finish” with weight off for about another ten min.

**Other Information about Beating:** This timing always “worked” for me. From time to time I shorten the beating cycle and it makes some but not a great difference.

**Additives/Chemistry:** When I plan to print digital images I do not use internal size. If I will be using darkroom chemistry, I remove the beaten pulp from the Hollander and internally size the pulp with Hercon sizing using a mixer. I do not add chemicals in my beater.....want to keep from coating the working parts!!!! For some processes, I apply a starch finish to the dry sheets.

**Total time of beat:** Around two and one half hours.

**Sheetforming/Mould Used:** I use laid moulds...I am a believer in good working moulds...it matters.

**Pressed How:** hydraulic press

**Drying Technique:** Dry Box (stacked forced air dryer)...the surface is better, but if in a hurry I also heat dry them in a press.

*After Marilyn Sward received her BFA in painting at the University of Illinois, she learned to make paper by hand and forty years later, papermaking is still her passion. She founded The Columbia College Chicago Center for Book and Paper Arts, and both directed and chaired their MFA program. Sward co-authored “The New Photography”, a breakthrough book that focuses on handmade paper’s use in photography. Receiving many grants and awards for special studies and projects, her work is in museum collections throughout the U.S. and abroad.*

*Note: Marilyn passed away August 5, 2008. Her energy, spirit and generosity will be greatly missed.*



Marilyn Sward  
*Under*, 18x24, 2005,  
Photograph on Abaca Handmade Paper.

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## PRINTMAKING RELIEF PRINTING

**LYNN SURES**  
**SILVER SPRING, MD USA**

**Qualities Desired:** Flexible, receptive to ink

**Fibers used with %s:** 100% abaca preferred

**Fiber Prep:** soak 24 hours

**Hollander used:** Reina

**Ratio of Fiber to Water:** Full capacity

**How Beaten:** Roll high for about 15 minutes, then down to about 6 right away, then quickly lowered to 4 and progressively lowered every 15 minutes to 2. For pulp painting surface on which to block print images: pulp-painting abaca is beaten more aggressively for a total beat of a couple of hours, and results in a finer pulp. Roll is lifted to brush for 10-20 mins at the end.

**Other Information about Beating:** The goal is to create a pulp that has smooth fiber, is not lumpy, not too short, thus allows easy sheet forming and won't buckle too much during drying; for pulp painting pulp onto base sheet I want a short, creamy fiber that takes pigment well.

**Additives/Chemistry:** liquid sizing during the brushing cycle

**Total time of beat:** 1.5-2 hours until it feels right

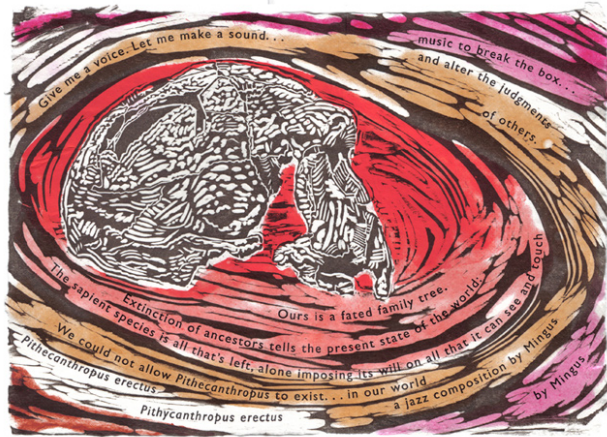
**Sheetforming/Mould Used:** Western sheet-forming technique using a laid mold if available, just personal preference. The screen of the mold and the quality of the pulp have to be in harmony. You need to know what type of mold you are using before you prepare your pulp, so the drainage rate will be what you expect, allowing you to form the sheet well.

**Pressed How:** Hydraulic pressing, a nice firm pressing, gives a strong dense sheet that works well with the woodcut technique. But even a firm pressing using only a cast-iron book press, if that is what you have available, will give a sheet that prints relief very nicely

**Drying Technique:** Production sheets are dried in a restraint system with corrugated board, pelon separators, a wooden board on top, weights to hold firmly, and a fan running constantly for a day.

**Notes:** Overloading the beater, too much fiber, is pretty counter-productive. Beating time goes way up, and results are less predictable.

Maryland artist **Lynn Sures**' recent solo exhibitions include "Frasassi" at Pyramid Atlantic in Maryland and "Body Art" at Fortezza Medicea Girifalco di Cortona, Italy. Her artist's books appear in Penland Book of Handmade Books and 500 Artist Books. Her work is in collections of the US Department of State, Library of Congress, Yale University, and American Museum of Papermaking. In 2006, she was an "American Artist Abroad" in Colombo, Sri Lanka. In 2005 Lynn created a large-scale pulp painting for "Paper Now-2005" in Kyoto, Japan.



Lynn Sures, *Inside 7-8*, 2005, 10 x 14 inches,  
woodcut on abaca paper.

# WATERMARKS/PRINTING

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**NATAN KAAREN**  
**NIGHTCLOUD STUDIO**  
**AMANDOLA, ITALY**

**Qualities Desired:** a sheet that is strong and flexible, but with translucent capabilities



Natan Kaaren, unfolded envelope, lace watermark, cotton rag.

**Fibers used with %s:** Cotton rag fiber, with certain sheets we added a pinch of wheatstraw fiber. Sheets were 110 cm x 135 cm

**Fiber Prep:** cut to postage stamp size pieces and soaked overnight

**Hollander used:** Hydropulper from Lee Scott McDonald

**Ratio of Fiber to Water:** Full capacity

**How Beaten:** Roll is 1/2 mm. from plate when feeding soaked cotton (usually 45 minutes) then roll lowered to almost touching bedplate. Raise roll for 10 minutes at end of cycle to get rid of knots

**Other Information about Beating:** I use my washer roll, a pulp “cleaner” device. It is very effective with pulp made from rags, especially jeans and other colored fabric: the foam, grime and color that comes out is truly amazing. (...Makes one want to wear only natural uncolored clothing!)

**Visual/Tactile/Auditory Cues:** small sample of pulp taken and put into a water filled jar and viewed into a light source to see if the fiber is ready.

**Additives/Chemistry:** none

**Total time of beat:** 3 hours

**Sheetforming/Mould Used:** Suspended mold 110cm X135 cm made of wood -other molds are made of Aluminium

**Pressed How:** in a large screw press

**Drying Technique:** pressed on polyester screens and dried in the sun

**Notes:** usually takes “mental notes about beating that are either forgotten or internalized depending on the realization at the time”



Natan Kaaren in the studio with a freshly made piece of lace watermarked paper.  
Photo by Tom Westerich

*Born in Lodz, Natan Kaaren lived in Israel from age 3 to 10. His family then moved to L.A. where he was educated in the fine arts. Returning to Israel at 25, he spent thirty years on a kibbutz. In 1983, he made hand-made paper for the first time and found his passion. With his paper artist wife, Catharina Sonn Kaaren and children in December of 2002, Natan moved to Italy where the water is cold and pure and the view is spectacular. He says, “From growing plants to the final sheet--magic. Enjoying my flash in time”.*