Suitable for grades 5–12, workshops available for teachers and students

Gyotaku literally translates into “Gyo” (魚) meaning fish and “taku” (拓) meaning print. Dating back to the mid 1700’s, it is said that gyotaku was practiced by fishermen as a methodical means of recording the length and girth measurements of trophy fish. Once the Emperor took an interest in it, however, the prints became valued pieces of art.

Recently gyotaku has become popular in the United States, and along the docks in San Francisco, as in other parts of the country, artists wait for fisherman’s boats to capture the image of their prize catches in gyotaku.

Today, gyotaku is an art form and many gyotaku artists from all over the world create artworks using this printmaking technique as a jumping off point to create unique art works.

In this workshop, participants will learn about the history of this printmaking technique, and then using 3D rubber reproductions of fish, create their own gyotaku art prints on “rice paper.” The prints will then be mounted on bamboo rods to take home.

(above left) Gyotaku rock fish

(left) a gyotaku workshop