



The Stone Soup Institute

Summer Academy 2008

Stone Soup Institute, a non-profit organization
298 Allen Point Rd.
Harpwell, Maine 04079
www.stone-soup-institute.org

Dates: July 7th – July 26th

Tuition: \$120 per week (cost of materials not included)

Accommodations: \$25 per day

Program:

- Self-sufficient life in a community with other people from Europe and the US
- Instructor-guided arts studies and projects, with emphasis on experimentation and individual skills
- Development of an arts portfolio useful for presentations and applications
- Instruction in crafts and farm work
- Regular circles of discussion (“soirees”) about the fine arts and the interconnection between arts, crafts, and farming
- Exploration of Maine’s unique cultural/spiritual life and coastal environment

Curriculum and activities in the field of the arts:

- Basic courses in drawing, painting, sculpting and building (optional: Black & White Photography)
- Hands-on experiences and experiments with the varied materials, patterns, techniques and resources found in the neighborhood of the institute (example: what can you create with, around, or from the elements fire, water, stone, soil, and air?)
- In-depth study of environmental art
- Discussions on appreciation and importance of the arts nowadays and in the future
- Learning about the interconnection and integration of crafts and farming with the fine arts

Curriculum and activities in the field of crafts and farming:

- Construction, including timber framing, chimney building, and building dry stone walls
- Indoor and outdoor furniture making
- Crafts, including forging and weaving
- Farming skills, including gardening, haying, animal husbandry, and logging
- Food preparation, including bread baking

Goals:

- Learn and live in a small, international community
- Exchange cultural attitudes and habits; learn or improve additional languages
- Broaden the knowledge and awareness of fundamental artistic, technical and spiritual aspects of life
- Last but not least enjoy working, talking, eating and feasting together!

About the Arts, Crafts, Farming and Nature:

The arts represent more than an aesthetic preoccupation. On the one hand, the arts provide leisure, esthetic embellishment, and documentation. On the other hand, the arts are at the forefront of innovation and revolution. New ideas and emotions are often first communicated through the field of arts. Attempts at definition often try to bridge this broad reach such as: art means to go one step beyond the line of the ordinary.

Why is it important to reassess the comprehension of the arts today? Why should it be an essential subject of study? And what make the arts a good course of study in connection with crafts, agriculture and nature?

We all share a lifelong journey to understand our creative energy. Striving for this goal requires an awareness of and a willingness to be open to the suggestions which arise from the natural conditions, history, and the myths of our cultures, as well as from our communication with others.

The arts provide cognitive laboratories in which the most original human qualities, namely perceptions, thoughts, motivations, and emotions, can develop relatively freely in an individual and endless stream of creativity.

Culture consists of the meaningful transformation of nature for the improvement of living conditions for individuals and society, while keeping in mind that we are, and will always be, a part of this nature that we aim to transform. Therefore, if we share in and use the beauty and power of nature, we should do so with respect and a commitment to protect it.

In modern, more specialized societies that show growing interdependencies, complicated, ambiguous systems and techniques, we are inevitably condemned to a life experience that will emerge as disconnected, rudderless, ignorant and inwardly empty.

The energy which can evolve from the creative activities in the field of arts, crafts, and the cultivation of nature (agriculture), in conjunction with the fertile communication experienced while working together in a close group will provide students with a new self awareness leading to confidence, a way of "thinking beyond one's nose", and a broader consciousness of the connectedness between nature, products of nature, and human needs.

The preoccupation with a broader variety of activities in the fields of arts in connection with crafts and farming will enable students to gain a richer faculty of aesthetic expression, as well as to gain skills which can help them solve practical problems in their everyday life.

Everybody can be creative. Sometimes the "warming stream" of "creative desire" is only hidden behind the necessities, patterns, and cut and dried opinions in our often time stressed modern life.

"Make the secrets, make your secrets productive!"

Rolf Hamacher