

PRINTMAKING TERMS & I N F O R M A T I O N

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Additive drawing: a direct painting onto glass or plastic that is then printed on paper.

Artist's proof: proofs of work in progress, or a few finished proofs reserved for the use of the artist.

Aquatint: a form of Intaglio Printing in which a powdered resin, which is acid resistant, is applied to a metal plate. This complex printing process creates a tonal effect.

Baren: a tool (4 1/2-inch circular tool) used to apply an even, smooth pressure to the back of the paper, causing a transfer of ink to the paper. A spoon may also be used.

Bench hook: a metal or wooden plate with a raised edge to hold a woodcut or linocut in place on a table while cutting.

Blind Embossment: uses no ink and simply creates a sculptural image in the paper. Use a clean blanket against paper.

Block print: a type of printmaking in which the image is printed from the surface of a linoleum or wood block. Non-printing areas have been carved away.

Brayer: a roller for transferring ink to the plate for printing.

Burin (graver): an engraving tool with a wooden knob to fit the palm of the hand on one end and, on the other, a point of a variety of shapes on a short steel rod.

Burnisher: a steel engraving tool with a curved end used for polishing the plate.

Cloth prints: prints produced on cloth. Linen, cotton, and silk are frequently used.

Collagraph: a print made from a specially constructed plate that has been produced in a collage manner, resulting in high and low surfaces which hold ink differently during printing.

Counterproofs: in printmaking, impressions taken from a print or drawing by passing it through a press against a damp sheet of paper. The image appears in reverse.

Drypoint: intaglio technique in which a sharp point is used to incise a line into a printing plate; the line holds ink, as does the resultant burr yielding a soft, smoky tone.

Edition: the number of images printed from the plate, stone, block, or other process. The body of the edition is numbered (for example, 1/100 through 10/100) directly on the print, usually in pencil.

Embossing: a type of printmaking that creates a raised, sculptural image or design in the surface of the print (paper), done with or without ink and while using dampened paper. Also known as collograph.

Engraving: an intaglio print taken from a metal plate in which lines are cut into a plate with a V-shaped tool called a burin; ink is then forced into these lines and wiped from the surface of the plate, which is then printed.

Etching: a print taken from a plate into which the image has been bitten with acid. The plate is covered with a wax or resin ground, which is scratched away to reveal areas of metal. Acid bites into these exposed areas leaving a surface that holds ink.

Facsimile: is a reproduction done to the same scale and appearance as the original.

Gouge: a tool for cutting a wood or linoleum block; V-shaped, U-shaped.

Hard ground: a waxy acid-resistant substance painted or rubbed and melted onto the etching plate; a design is scratched through it.

Inks: oil-based or water-based inks.

Intaglio printing: (an Italian term) the ink is deposited below the surface of the plate which has been corroded, scratched, or incised, and the surface wiped clean; a damp paper forced into the surface by being run through the press under pressure, drawing the ink out of the grooves and onto the paper. Intaglio prints are often characterized by an embossed line around the image, which is made by the edges of the plate.

Limited Edition: a print in which a limit is placed on the number of impressions pulled in order to create a scarcity of the print. Limited editions are usually numbered and are often signed.

Linocut: a relief cut made from an image carved into a piece of battleship linoleum the removed area remains white. Also known as a linoprint or block print.

Linoleum print: a relief print in which the image is carved into linoleum, also called a linocut.

Lithography: (lithography = "stone-drawing") the method of printing from a flat stone or metal plate. A drawing is made on the stone or plate with a greasy crayon and chemically treated so that only the greasy drawing will hold ink while the remaining surface resists it.

Matrix: an object upon which a design has been formed and which is then used to make an impression on a piece of paper, thus creating a print. A {wood} block, {metal} plate, or {lithographic} stone can be used as a matrix.

Mezzotint: a printmaking process of the intaglio family. It was the first tonal method to be used, enabling half-tones to be produced without using line or dot based techniques like hatching, cross-hatching or stipple.

Mineral spirits: a petroleum distillate commonly used as a paint thinner or mild solvent for cleaning oil-based ink. Used as an alternative to turpentine, one that is both less flammable and less toxic.

Monogram: a design composed of one or more letters, typically the initials of a name, used as an identifying mark.

Monotransfer: turpentine put directly on fresh newspaper or magazine prints and placed on fresh paper, then burnished on the back with a pencil to transfer the prints to the clean paper.

Monoprint: one of a series of prints in which each has some differences of color design, texture, etc. applied to an underlying common image. Not to be confused with a monotype.

Monotype: a one-of-a-kind print made in an edition of one, often from a painting made on a non-absorbent glass or metal plate. The image can be transferred to paper by hand rubbing or with a press.

Mordant: acid used in etching: nitric acid, hydrochloric acid, and ferric chloride.

Negative space: empty space, surrounding a positive shape and also the space between two positive

shapes. The interior space or space that surrounds a piece of sculpture.

Needle: a sharp pointed tool used to scratch or remove wax or other resins from the printing plate prior to the etching process.

Numbering: indicates the size of the edition and the number of each particular print. Therefore, 25/75 means that the print is the 25th impression from an edition of 75.

Offset printing: method of printing in which the image is transferred from the plate onto an intermediary, such as a roller, and then onto paper, resulting in a final printed image that is not reversed.

Photography: the art of making photographs for fine art or commercial purposes.

Plate: the basis for a print-can be wooden or linoleum block, cardboard collagraph, acrylic or metal.

Planographic Prints: prints made from a flat surface area on which ink is placed. The lithograph is planographic as are monoprints made from ink spread on a flat, nonporous surface.

Print: a single print is a piece of paper upon which an image has been imprinted from a matrix. In a general sense, a print is the set of all the impressions made from the same matrix. By its nature, a print can have multiple impressions.

Printing Ink: block printing inks are available in two types: water-soluble and oil. Both have the property of good ink transfer from the linoleum cut to the paper.

Printmaking: the production of images normally on paper and exceptionally on fabric, parchment, plastic or other support by various processes of multiplication.

Proofing: after a change has been made on a plate, it is necessary to see what has been done before going on to the next step.

Reduction block print: one plate is printed several times, removing a portion and changing color each time (working from lightest to darkest)

Reproduction: a copy of an original print or other art work whose matrix design is transferred from the original by a photomechanical process. A *facsimile* is a reproduction done to the same scale and appearance as the original.

Registration: placement of the paper and block so each succeeding color in a multicolor print will be positioned correctly.

Relief Print: a printing produced when raised surfaces are inked and applied to paper or other materials. Woodcuts, linocuts and collographs are examples of relief prints.

Resist: the substance applied to a printing ground to prevent adhesion of another substance, such as ink.

Run: the individual times a piece of paper is printed.

State: a trial printing performed while the plate making is in progress.

Screen Print: stencils are attached to porous fabrics such as nylon and polyester. Ink is squeezed through openings in the stencil to produce a print.

Signed Print: a print that is signed in pencil or ink, by the artist and/or engraver of the print.

Stipple: created from a supported plate upon which the design has been produced using different sized small dots grouped more or less closely together in order to create areas of tone.

Stopping out: applying varnish to areas of a metal plate to prevent acid from etching; usually combined with aquatint.

Turpentine: a fluid obtained by the distillation of resin obtained from trees. Two primary uses are as a solvent and a source of materials for organic synthesis. This product tends to be toxic and highly flammable.

Tusche: greasy drawing material used in lithography and screen printing.

Watermark: a design embossed into a piece of paper during its production and used for identification of the paper and papermaker. The watermark can be seen when the paper is held up to light.

Wood Engraving: a relief printing cut with engraving tools into end-blocks of wood, which are more dense than regular woodcut plates.

Woodcut: a relief print made by cutting away the surface of a wooden plate and printing the surface; the cut-away areas remain white.

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- THE ART OF PRINTMAKING -

THE FIVE MAIN TYPES OF PRINTS:

1. **Relief Prints** - The artist draws the design on a block of material that can be cut. Those areas which are to be printed are left untouched and the areas to be left white are cut away. The raised areas are then inked and the block printed.
 - A. **Woodcut** - The earliest type of relief print. In the East it began in the eighth century and in the West in the early fifteenth century. The design is either painted directly onto the wood block or pasted on it. The cutter cuts all the surface away except the design. When cutting is finished, the surface is rolled up with ink and printed with either straight pressure or rubbing.
 - B. **Linoleum Cut** - Same as a woodcut except that linoleum is used to create the block rather than wood.
2. **Intaglio Prints** - Here the areas that print are those which are depressed, rather than those which remain on the surface. A metal plate is cut and ink is forced in the recessed lines. A dampened paper is placed over the plate and run through a press. The press forces the paper into the recessed lines where it picks up the ink to produce the print.
 - A. **Etching** - A metal plate is coated by a material which resists acid, called a **ground**. The artist then draws the design with a sharp tool which removes the ground. The plate is then put in an acid bath which etches or eats away the exposed metal. This produces the sunken line that will receive the ink.
 - B. **Engraving** - The design is manually cut into the metal plate by the artist using a hard sharp tool called a **burin**.
 - C. **Aquatint** - Intaglio method on zinc or copper plates in which tones are obtained by powdered rosin or paint spray.
 - D. **Mezzotint** - Intaglio process in which the entire surface of a metal plate is rocked with a serrated tool to produce a roughened surface which yields a rich print when inked.
3. **Planographic Prints** - This print is produced from a flat surface and utilizes the natural repulsion of oil and water. The artist using a wax crayon to produce the design on a special stone. The stone is then treated with water causing the ink to adhere to the oily areas and be repelled by the water areas. The print can then be produced.
 - A. **Lithograph**
4. **Stencil Prints** - A design is cut in paper or similar material and ink is applied over it. The open areas allow the ink to pass through to the paper creating the print.
 - A. **Stencil**
 - B. **Serigraph or Silkscreen** - A serigraph or silkscreen is a sophisticated stencil process, developed around the beginning of the nineteenth century and first used mostly for commercial advertising and display work. The process got its name from the fine-mesh silk that is tacked to a wooden form and serves as a support for an intricately cut paper stencil. The printing was based on

the simple principle that the open mesh of the silk lets the paint through, while the paper stencil glued to it blocks the painting out. Serigraphs have a wide range from big bold areas to delicate textures. Used primarily for color.

5. Special Prints

- A. **Collagraph** - A fairly recent method of building up a printing surface. The printing plate is created by gluing all kinds of textures (sawdust, wood shavings, ground walnut shells, wrinkled paper, cut out forms, etc.) to a support (cardboard, masonite, zinc plate, etc.). The surface is then inked and printed. The printing may be done by either the relief or intaglio method.
- B. **Monoprint** - A print is an edition of one; a unique print. Actually it is a printed painting or printed drawing. The artist can paint on various surfaces such as metal, plastic, and glass, and then print either by rubbing or on an etching press.

COLOR PRINTING:

Printing in more than one color can be done. A different block, plate, or screen must be used for each new color. The biggest problem with printing in more than one color is "registering" or aligning the print and the new plate. Many ingenious methods have been developed to accomplish accurate registering. The Japanese eighteenth century woodblock artists were particularly adept of this.

THE EDITION:

Most prints are done in an "edition." An edition is the total number of prints produced from the final state of the plate. Most editions are limited in size. All limited editions are numbered. While the artist is working on the plate, each trial print is called a "state." When the artist believes the plate is ready for the edition, some prints are pulled to test the color of ink, the paper, and the state of the plate. These are signed with an A/P which means artist's proof and indicated that they precede the actual edition. Once the edition is printed, each print is numbered with a fraction such as 18/100. The first number tells which print of the edition you have and the second number indicates how large the edition is. 18/100, therefore, means you have the 18th print made out of a total of 100 that were done.

THE PRINTING PROCESS:

1. Put ink on plate
2. Scrape excess ink
3. Move ink over plate in circular motion.
4. With cheese cloth, rub lightly in circular motions.
5. Use heel of hand and rub in a circular motion.
6. Use newsprint and rub in a circular motion.
7. Wipe edge of plate.

**First one lays newsprint, then plate, then print paper, then newsprint on press for printing.

8. Soak paper 1 - 10 minutes.
9. Blot paper.
10. Print on rough edge.
11. Run print through press.
12. Pin up or put on drying rack.