

# PRINTMAKING

A fine art print is considered an "original" work of art when it is printed by a hand pulled method. It may be printed several times so that many people can enjoy it.

Printmaking started hundreds of years ago. At the time, the only way people could pass on stories to each other was by talking or by writing a letter.

In 889AD a monk in China found he could carve words and pictures into a block of wood. When he rubbed colored ink onto the block he could print it onto a piece of paper by rubbing hard on the back of the paper, transferring the ink to the paper. This was the first printmaker.

Printmakers today combine many techniques using new and traditional methods for creating an image. Always experimenting with new tools and processes, printmakers bring fresh and exciting ideas to their work.

## THERE ARE FOUR MAJOR WAYS TO MAKE PRINTS:

### 1 Planographic Monotype/Monoprint/Lithography



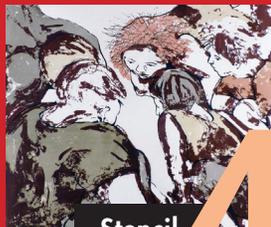
Relief

Woodcut  
Linoleum block

### 3 Intaglio



Etching & Engraving  
Drypoint etching



Stencil

Screen printing  
Serigraphy

## Planographic Printing

Monotypes and monoprints are made by painting or rolling ink onto a flat plate. The plate is then passed through the press with the paper on top of it. This transfers the ink to the paper. Little or no ink is left on the plate after it has been run through the press.

A monotype is a one-of-a-kind print that cannot be repeated. Sometimes there is enough ink left on the monotype plate to make a second print called a "ghost." A ghost print, because it is much lighter, is often used as the basis for another print or mixed media work of art. A monoprint is a monotype with an added element that can be repeated, such as a line scratched into the plate surface. This scratch will hold ink and will appear on every print made from that plate even when the rest of the plate has been inked as a monotype.

A lithograph depends on a chemical reaction between a drawing made with grease marks and a specially treated stone or plate on which it is drawn. The ink is rolled onto the plate and the grease drawing holds the ink, while the ink on other parts of the plate's surface is repelled. Lithography is especially noted as the printmaking process that renders a drawing faithfully.

## 2 Relief Printing

A process consisting of cutting or etching a printing surface so all that remains of the original surface is the design to be printed. Examples of relief-printing processes include woodcut, anastatic printing (also called relief etching), linocut, and metal cut.

## 3 Intaglio Printing

Intaglio is the Italian word for incised. An intaglio print is made by incising or making depressions in a copper or zinc printing plate (or coated cardboard plate). An intaglio print is made by pushing ink into the incised grooves on the plate. Excess ink is then wiped off the top surface of the plate leaving the ink in the grooves. Damp paper is placed on the plate, then both are passed together through the press. Tremendous pressure is needed to transfer the ink from those grooves to the surface of the paper. For this reason

intaglio plates cannot be printed by hand. Etchings, engravings and drypoint etchings are examples of intaglio printing. Intaglio printing gives the artist many ways to achieve beautiful and interesting lines and a variety of textures.

## 4 Stencil Printing

A stencil is a cutout shape from a piece of paper, cardboard or other flat material. Stencils are used by laying them on top of another piece of paper and filling in with ink around or inside the stencil. An artist can repeat this stencil shape over and over again in different locations to create a pattern.

There are several ways to use stencils in printmaking. One is screen printing (or serigraphy), where a piece of silk or other fine fabric is stretched tightly over a wooden frame. The stencil is adhered to the fabric screen. Ink is poured into one end of the frame and squeegeed across to the opposite end, forcing the ink through the "open" silk areas onto a sheet of paper placed directly under the screen. The areas of the stencil left "open" are the areas printed. If a print is going to have many colors, each frame has a separate image on it that will be printed with a different color ink. Most T-shirt designs are printed using this method. A screen print can be printed onto almost any flat surface.

## Mixed Media & Chine Collé

A mixed media print combines two or more printmaking techniques in a single print. Or the artist can add other materials like pastel, paint, or collage materials onto the print at a later date to create a mixed media print. If the artist pastes a thin piece of paper onto their print at the same time their inked plate is printed, it is called "chine collé," French for Chinese collage.

