

PRINTMAKING

A print is any impression onto a piece of paper made by ink applied to a block, a plate, a slab, or a stencil that in some form holds an image.

Most fine art prints are produced in an edition (total number printed) of anywhere from about 20 to 100 impressions (single copies). The original block or plate is then destroyed.

Each impression may be titled and signed by the artist in pencil with a set of numbers.

The numbers 15/40 would mean 15th impression / edition of 40 prints total.

(A monotype is a transfer technique that results in only one single image.)

THERE ARE 4 TRADITIONAL CATEGORIES OF FINE ART PRINTMAKING.

Digital processes have created new possibilities. Some prints combine several processes.

1. RELIEF ____

The oldest printing method, in which the parts of the design *not* to be inked and printed (the negative spaces), are first cut away from the block. Blocks may be of wood, linoleum, potato, rubber, etc. (Rubber stamps fall into this category.)

Some relief print types you may see include:

Woodcut____ Linocut____ Colored Woodcut____ Wood Engraving____

2. INTAGLIO (*in-TAL-yo*) ____

The printmaker puts indentations (physically or by acid bath) into the surface of a printing plate where s/he wants ink lines or shapes to appear on image. Deeper incisions make thicker, darker lines. The plate is inked & it fills these cracks, then surface of the plate is wiped clean before printing in a heavy printing press to transfer the image to a dampened paper. (Engraved images on \$.)

Some types include: Engraving____ Drypoint____ Etching____ Aquatint____

3. LITHOGRAPHY ____

Invented in 1798, it is a planographic process on a single surface --neither raised or grooved. The artist draws or paints on the flat surface of a limestone slab. Based on the principle that oil & water do not mix, water & chemicals treat areas to receive or reject the printer's ink. Ink remains only in the positive areas of artist's image. The inked image is transferred to the paper.

4. SCREEN PRINTING ____

The ink is pushed through a hand cut or photo-process stencil attached to a porous screen of silk, polyester or other material stretched on a frame. In this process, the image is not reversed. (Screen printing is often used for T-shirts or posters.)

Some types: Serigraph____ Silkscreen____