

# PRINTMAKING GLOSSARY

- 3D Printing:** Using a digital document a 3D printer will build up a three dimensional object in resin or plastic polymer by over printing it layer by layer. Often used as a way of producing intricately detailed intaglio plates.
- Artist's Proof (A.P.):** A print/prints reserved for the artist and not included in the numbered edition.
- Aquatint:** *Intaglio process.* An etching technique that creates tonal areas using powdered rosin.
- Baren:** A tool for hand printing, used to rub the back of prints to transfer the image.
- Bon à Tirer (B.A.T.):** Not part of the numbered edition. The print which all following prints are checked against when producing the edition to make sure they are identical. From the French meaning 'Good to pull'.
- Brayer:** A roller used to transfer ink to a matrix.
- Burin:** A very sharp and precise V-shaped tool used in engraving.
- Burnishing:** The act of applying pressure to hand print an image.
- Carborundum Print:** *Intaglio process.* Varying grades of carborundum grit (silicon carbide) glued to an intaglio plate to create a roughly textured surface to hold the ink. Prints velvety black.
- Chine-collé:** A technique in which the printable image is transferred onto a surface, often tissue paper, that is bonded onto the printmaking paper during the printing process.
- Collagraph:** *Intaglio & Relief process.* A block is created using a combination of found materials of varying thicknesses and textures. These are glued to the block and sealed. When printed in intaglio the ink will be held in varying degrees determined by the texture/roughness of the found material or the height of the inkable surfaces.
- Cyanotype:** A photographic process which produces cyan-coloured prints using minimal chemicals and sunlight.
- Debossing:** The indented surface of the paper, leaving a depression of an image or plate mark.
- Deckle Edge:** The uneven untrimmed edge of handmade papers.
- Direct press:** As the bed and matrix move through the press, pressure is applied by a rigid scraper bar. Used predominantly with planographic processes such as lithography where the flat surface of the matrix meets the flat surface of the paper and so minimal cushioning is needed.
- Driers:** Ink additives used to speed up drying time.
- Drypoint:** *intaglio process.* Marks are incised directly into a metal or plastic plate using sharp tools. These marks displace ridges of metal/plastic called burrs. The ink is held in both the incision and the burr, resulting in the drypoint's characteristic fuzzy line.
- Edition:** A set of identical prints produced from the same matrix. Limited in number, not including the proofs. Numbered on the front (or sometimes back) of the print.
- Embossing:** The raised surface of the paper from behind, leaving an image in relief.
- Etched lino:** *Relief process.* Caustic soda solution is used in combination with acid resists to corrode the surface of a lino block to create organic and unpredictable marks.
- Etching:** *intaglio process.* The use of acid and resists are employed to corrode the metal plate to create the recesses in which to hold the ink.
- Etching Press:** Printing bed travels underneath a metal roller, applying large amounts of pressure. Uses blankets to push dampened paper into recesses of intaglio plates. Used for intaglio processes.
- Extender:** Ink additive used in small quantities to increase ink usage and in large amounts to increase transparency of the ink.
- Gouges / Carving Tools:** Various shaped chisels used to carve into a relief matrix.
- Halftone:** Photographic method in which the various tones of an image are translated into varying sized opaque dots. Used in making positive/negatives where tonal areas are ignored by UV light.
- Hors de Commerce (H.C.):** These prints are not part of the edition and are not for sale. From the French meaning 'before trade'. These prints are often reserved as gifts or used as sales reference at exhibitions or galleries.
- Inkjet/Giclée print:** Giclée prints use a professional standard inkjet printer. The quality and longevity of the image is dictated by the standard of pigment based inks, and the quality of archival coated papers. Often used to reproduce original prints and paintings for commercial purposes.
- Intaglio:** The family of printmaking where the ink is held in the incised lines and the rough marks on the plate.
- Kitchen lithography:** *Planographic process.* A non-toxic variation of lithography using aluminium foil as the printing matrix and cola or lemon juice as the etch.
- Lasercut:** Often used with relief print, intricately detailed digital images are cut out of or engraved into woodblocks or lino blocks.
- Letterpress:** *Relief process.* Movable metal/wood type is inked and printed often in combination with carved blocks in a press. Recognizable for their embossed characteristics.
- Linocut:** *Relief process.* A sheet of linoleum is carved into and then ink is rolled on to the surface of the block. Available in linseed oil based & hessian backed form or plastic.
- Lithography:** *Planographic process.* Utilising the immiscibility of oil and water, an image is fixed to a stone/metal plate using an acid etch, making the non-image area water attracting and the image area oil attracting. When the dampened plate is rolled up with oil based ink the ink only attaches to the image area.

**Magnesium Powder:** Ink additive used to stiffen the ink and reduce viscosity.

**Manier Noir:** Subtractive drawing process where the surface of a dark matrix is smoothed or scratched away to create areas of light.

**Matrix:** The surface which holds the printed image e.g. wood block, etching plate.

**Mezzotint:** *Intaglio process.* A subtractive intaglio technique in which a copper plate is first given a uniformly rough/dark surface using a rocker. Areas of light are then brought out of the plate through gradual smoothing of the roughness using a burnisher.

**Monoprint:** Umbrella term for a unique print taken from a matrix which has permanent and repeatable characteristics e.g. an etching plate inked in a uniquely different way to the rest of a series.

**Monoprint drawing:** *Planographic process.* Paper is placed on top of thinly rolled out ink. Drawing on the back of the paper forces this area in contact with the ink underneath, transferring it to the paper.

**Monotype:** *Planographic process.* An image is created in ink on a featureless flat surface (a metal plate, sheet of plastic or wood block) often in a painterly way and then transferred to dampened paper through a press/burnished by hand, creating one distinctive print.

**Offset press:** Commonly used in commercial printing, the image is transferred from the plate to a rubber cylinder on the press and is then printed onto the paper. It does not reverse the image. Often used with lithography.

**Palette Knife / Push Knife:** Tools used to spread and mix ink. Palette knives are rounded and flexible whereas push knives are flat ended and rigid.

**Paper plate lithography/Gum Arabic transfer:** *Planographic process.* A photocopy is coated in gum arabic which makes the non-image area water accepting. The toner in the photocopied image is oil accepting.

**Photogravure/Photoetching:** *Intaglio process.* A form of etching in which the plate is coated with a light sensitive emulsion and a positive is exposed to the plate. Once developed the coating will act as an acid resist.

**Photolithography:** *Planographic process.* A light sensitive emulsion is applied to the litho plate and a positive image is exposed. Once developed the positive image on the plate becomes receptive to grease. Large scale commercial printers use this process.

**Photo screenprint:** *Serigraphic process.* A light sensitive emulsion is applied to the screen and a positive image is exposed, hardening the non-image area and leaving the positive image open to ink.

**Plate oil:** Linseed oil, found in varying strengths, used to increase the viscosity of ink.

**Planographic Printmaking:** Print family in which the ink is held on a flat surface before being transferred on to the paper.

**Platen Press:** Applies pressure as a flat surface in downward direction. Used for relief printing processes.

**Pochoir:** *Serigraphic process.* The method of stencil-based printmaking, usually using paper stencils with a screen or hand inking with a sponge.

**Positive/Negative:** An image on transparent film, used to transfer on to a matrix during photo sensitive processes.

**Proof:** A trial print that is not part of the numbered edition and is often employed to test varying colours or paper stocks.

**Printer's Proof (P.P.):** Similar to the B.A.T. A print which is not included in the edition but is used by the printer as reference when printing an edition (when the artist is not the one printing the edition.)

**Relief Printmaking:** Print family in which the raised areas of the block are inked, this can either be achieved reductively, by carving away non-image areas, or additively by building up a surface.

**Registration:** The correct alignment or placement of a print on paper, allowing for neatly overlapping colours.

**Risograph Printmaking:** A mechanised printer that creates a stencil from banana paper which wraps around an ink drum. The ink is forced through the stencil onto the paper as it passes through the machine. Each colour utilises a different drum and is printed as a separate layer.

**Screenprint / Serigraphy / Silkscreen:** The family of printmaking wherein ink is pushed through a stencil suspended on a fine mesh screen (traditionally made of silk) directly onto the paper beneath.

**Squeegee:** Tool used to evenly push ink through a screen in screenprinting.

**Tack reducer:** Used to increase transference of ink from the matrix to the paper.

**Variable Edition (V.E.):** Denotes that the edition has intentional variations, often due to the processes used.

**Woodcut:** *Relief process.* A block of wood is carved using gouges and chisels, along the grain of the wood, and then ink is rolled on the surface.

**Wood Engraving:** *Relief process.* Using the very hard end grain of the wood. Very fine lines are incised into the wood using very sharp tools called burins. Stiff ink is rolled on top.

**Wood Lithography/Mokulito:** *Planographic process.* Plywood is used as the print matrix, utilising the features of woodcut and lithography.