

Printmaking Times Three - Lino Block - Intaglio - Monotype

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I love printmaking but find it difficult to fit in sometimes with larger classes because I don't have enough tools for everyone at one time. I recently started teaching 2-3 types of printmaking concurrently and while it is a bit crazy, it is very fun and the students really help one another. It also allows us to have fewer tools overall since we are swapping off on projects which saves lots of money. The three types of printmaking that we do allow students to create one image which is more graphic, one that can be very detailed and show lots of value and one that is more loose and painterly. Of course before we start any of them we plan...Plan your work...Work your plan!!

Linoleum Printing - Linoleum was being used as a floor covering beginning around the 1860's. It was first used for printing by artists in Germany around 1905-13. Linoleum block prints are a variant on wood block prints that have some distinct advantages. The linoleum has no grain and so can be cut in any direction. The blocks are much softer than wood and easier to cut. Disadvantages are that you lose some of the really hard and grainy edges you get with wood block prints and the block will degrade faster than the wooden block. With that said, many prints are possible before the print has noticeable changes. Linoleum is inexpensive to work with, especially when bought in a roll and cut down on your own. Many people prefer the mounted linoleum as it is a bit easier to work with and to print. I have recently started using the soft cut or easy cut material for block printing instead of linoleum and find it has reduced the need for boxes and boxes of band aids in my room! Linoleum prints can be done in one color at the most basic level and can work up to multi-color for more advanced students. This is great for those classes where you have multiple classes or levels in the room at the same time. Artists to look at: Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Walter Ingliss Anderson (my personal favorite!)

Prices:

Battleship gray linoleum:

4 X 6 mounted \$1.69 each 4 X 6 unmounted \$8.52/dozen 12" X 25' roll 85.22 for 150 4 X 6 pieces = .57 cents per piece

Soft Cut material:

4 X 6 \$1.35 each 6 X 12 (which can be cut to 3 4 X 6) \$3.90 you can buy larger pieces and cut them down and save a little more but I don't like to do too much cutting as it moves a bit

Lino cutter set 1: handle and 5 blades \$8.35 Set 2: 2 handles and 5 blades

Ink - about \$10 for 16 ounces.

Intaglio - Intaglio engraving, as a method of making prints, was invented after the woodcut print in Germany around the 1430s. It has been suggested that goldsmiths, who engraved designs on much of their work, inked the engravings and printed them to have a record of the design which may have led to the use of intaglio for making prints. Intaglio is different from other printing techniques in that the ink forming the design is printed from the recessed parts of the plate. The design is etched or scratched into the printing plate, ink is rubbed into the grooves and the surface wiped clean and then damp paper is placed over the plate and it is run through a press which applies a great deal of pressure to push the paper into the recessed lines to lift the ink out. In my room, we use styrene (an acrylic like material) for the plates and we engrave them with scribes. The edges of the acrylic must be filed using a bastard file so they don't cut through the paper in the printing process. It is important for the students to work directly over the plate when engraving so that the image does not become distorted. We use etching ink applied with cut scrap pieces of mat board (using gloves..very messy job!) We use tarlatan cloth or cheese cloth to get the first layer of ink off and then continue with newspaper and finally a t-shirt to get the edges clean. It is important not to take all of the ink off; you want some plate tone even in the unengraved areas. We test print

before making final prints and my students are allowed to make up to 3 final prints. The surface wears down quickly on these plates so students must be careful not to rub the ink on or off too vigorously and not to waste the impression on too many practice prints. Artists to look at: Albrecht Durer, Edward Hopper, Kathe Kollwitz, Rembrandt.

Prices:

Clear Styrene Sheets: 5 X 7 \$1.86 each 11X 14 \$4.94 could cut down to 4 pieces

Engraving scribes: We use the twisted etching needle \$6.75 each

Rives BFK printmaking paper 22 X 30 (torn down to about 6 sheets) \$4.90

Rives BFK Lite paper 26 X 40 (torn down to about 12 sheets) \$2.31

Etching Ink (I use Gamblin) about \$15/pound, you may also want some tack reducer as the ink can be VERY thick and difficult for the students to work with!

Monotype – Monotype was first used as a printmaking technique by Giovanni Castiglione, an Italian painter and etcher in the mid 1600's. A monotype is created when inks or paint are applied to a smooth, non-absorbent surface, such as a piece of glass, acrylic, a piece of acetate or a Gelli plate and then printed onto paper either by hand rubbing or the use of a press. (A monoprint differs from a monotype in that on a monoprint, there is something distinctive about the plate, an etched line or some other permanent feature on the plate being used) A monotype can be very painterly, virtually a painting that is printed, or it can be more abstract. Unlike other printmaking techniques where you would make an edition of prints, monotypes produce only one print and possibly a ghost print. Other materials can also be used in a monotype as a mask or for texture, etc, such as leaves, string, templates, etc. Xeroxed images can be added to the plate before printing by wintergreen transfer. Artists to look at: Paul Klee, Edgar Degas, Jaune Quick-to-see Smith, a number of contemporary artists including Kristiane Semar (German), PC Lawson (American)

Monotypes can be done on any smooth surface including the table top. The introduction of Gelli plates makes monotype printing and cleanup very simple and very quick. The advantage I find in using a piece of acrylic is that the painting can be worked on over a period of days and can be put away at the end of class each day. The prints can be made on very nice paper such as Rives BFK or a Strathmore printmaking paper or on regular drawing paper or even copy paper. Many types of paint or ink can be used. Akua inks are really nice, but I have used everything from printing ink to watercolor in tubes to tempera and acrylic. The key is to know how long the color will be liftable (I think I made this word up, I am sure there is a more appropriate technical word!) which you find usually by trial and error. Akua inks stay liftable for a long time (days).

I don't pretend to be an expert at any of these techniques, but I am happy to share what I know and what has worked (and not worked) in my classroom. Feel free to contact me if you have questions or need more information. I hope you enjoy Printmaking Times Three!