

JENNIFER HARPER

ALL KINDS OF RELIEF

- By definition, Relief printmaking implies a texture on the plate that the ink picks up for printing.
- Block printing is another name for it and the 2 most familiar forms are woodcut and linocut
- What you are seeing is the back of a wood block print. Proof that you have an original print.
- We'll briefly explore all the forms of relief.
- Please feel free to ask questions.



TRADITIONAL WOODCUT & LINOLEUM

- Editioning, or making a group of identical prints, under 20 prints in my case.
- An original image is transferred onto the plate and then carved
- Generally made to fit a specific rectangle



THE VARIABLE EDITION

- Not all editions are identical, that used to be the standard.
- Print exchanges still want to see that a standard can be set and met.
- A variable edition allows for color changes and paper changes.
V.E. is written on the print.



NOT SO TRADITIONAL WOODCUT

- I love to see woodcut and linocut used in unexpected ways, for me it is a way to stay interested and challenged.
- Here the same design on three blocks was carved and printed to overlap.



WOODCUT TINY TO HUGE

- Woodcut plates can be made as small as your hands can hold, up to the limit of a 4 x 8 sheet of plywood.
- My prints range from 3 x 5 inches to 2 x 4 ft.
- I've been able to use the same chisels for most of my work



LINOCUT

- Linoleum is a material made from cork and linseed oil.
- Linoleum is easy to carve and buy in sizes or on a roll. It's more versatile and economical and for that reason it's used more often than wood.
- Simple black and white images are iconic and tend to be first projects as well.



CARVING TOOLS

- Several chisels, including a v-tool and u-gouge
- Knife for key lining
- It's nice to have a set for wood and another for linoleum.
- A honing block, chisels frequently dull and need a bit of sharpening
- A rubber mat to prevent plate slipping



CHISEL DIAGRAM



BRAYERS AND ROLLERS

- An assortment of brayers come in very handy in the studio.
- Each color introduced requires a clean and dry brayer of its own
- The large rollers you see are needed for especially big projects, like little/BIG print.



PRINTING BY HAND OR PRESS

- Hand printing can be easily done with only a few tools.
A baren or wooden spoon works well
- Embossing will not be as evident with hand printing as it is with a press.
The results can be very pleasing but softer.
- We use etching presses and a letterpress at the studio.
- A small portable etching press is used for workshops away.



REDUCTION PRINTING

- Reduction uses the same plate repeatedly carved for each color desired.
- It is jokingly referred to as a suicide print, because you can only make a given number of prints as each color possibility is progressively destroyed.
- You begin with carving for light to dark.
- By the time you are at the last and darkest color there is a skeleton left of key lines.
- This is probably my favorite, yes it messes with you!



MULTIPLE PLATE PRINTING

- This is where a new plate is used for each color layer
- I've honestly only made a few so far, since I enjoy reduction more.
- It is more costly to use multiple plates, but the advantage is that you can go back and make more later or change some of the colors.



SEPARATED PLATES

- Here you can see 3 of the 4 plates, plus the drawing that was transferred to the plate
- The Key line print is carved first and then the other plates are printed from that one.
- They must be reversed by first being printed on a sheet of paper.
- It all makes perfect sense when you are doing it



COLLAGRAPH

- I am including this as a relief technique, but it is very different from carving.
- Starting with a flat plate, the image is built up with material both created and found.
- Care must be given to have all material at the same height to print.
- We made some collagraphs for the first little/Big steamroller event in 2017.

The Sad Sack Prince, Donna Burns



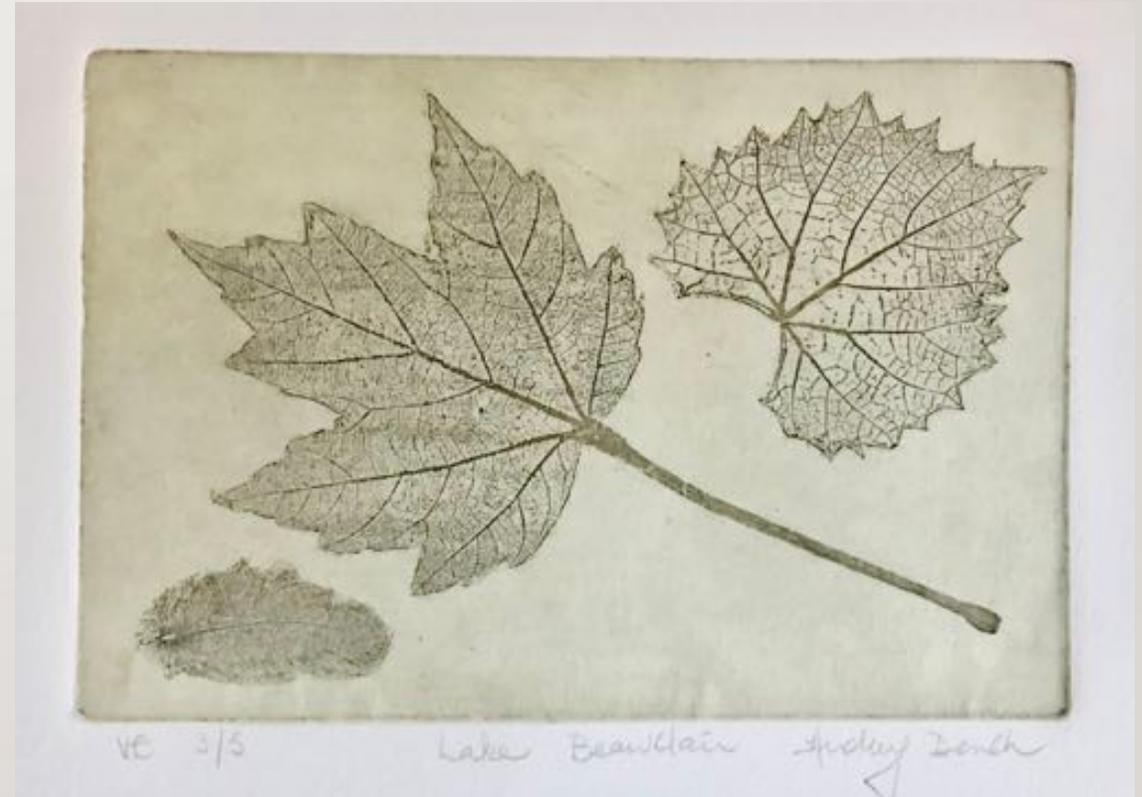
CHINE COLLE'

- Chine Colle' is the addition of thin colored or background papers just before the inking and pressing of the print. The colored paper is between the foundation paper and the ink and becomes inherent in the print
- I have members of the studio who are wonderful at this. These are by Ruth Loescher



MORE CHINE COLLE' SUBTLE, YET IMPORTANT

- Audrey Dench uses Chine Colle' for spot color and here it is the entire background in *Lake Beauclair*



WOOD ENGRAVING

- In this technique the very hard end grain of wood is used.
- Prints tend to be very small given the size of end grain available.
- The tools for engraving are very tiny and are held differently from chisels.
- Early book illustration very often employed wood engraving.
- Marvyn Rivett is our studio pro at wood engraving.



COMBINING TECHNIQUES



- A carved element can be combined with other elements to create a monoprint.
- The same image can float and bleed off the page making something new.
- Each print can stand alone or in series.
- A monoprint is designated as 1/1, or unique, and should be valued like an individual painting.

PLAYING WITH YOUR INKS

- With or without a carved plate, as much design and creativity occurs on the palette
- Thinning ink with an extender gives transparency and allows overlapping color
- A finished piece may take five to ten trips through the press



STYRENE PRINTING SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE

- Styrene is a very thin malleable material.
- You don't so much carve on it as you make marks on it with any number of things.
- The material is easily cut with scissors, to work in odd shapes or color layers.
- You will have a chance to explore styrene in an upcoming workshop.



TO PLAN OR NOT TO PLAN

- When I finish a planned edition, I love to cut loose and make a monotype with the ink still on my palette.
- Monotype is the exact opposite of an edition and restores the spontaneity every artist needs to experience
- Instead of carving, a plexiglass plate is used with brayers and other tools to make marks



COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS?

- A different kind of relief is in the very practice of printmaking. It's the relief of distraction from the outside world and the immersion in something meaningful that taxes your brain a bit.
- I asked my studio friends what drew them to printmaking the most? The community of the studio and the tactile qualities of carving and printing were top of the list.
- Printmaking is very process oriented for sure, but in the discovery of new ways of working there is challenge.
- I am always interested in helping people get started in print. Please email me, jenhpr@gmail.com. I will be teaching more workshops at the Hub and in my studio when the current weather improves. Thank you for attending!