

Glossary of Processes

Aquatint - An intaglio printing process using a fine dust-like particle as a resist so that when the plate is immersed in the etching acid, a fine texture is created on the plate.

Archival pigment inkjet print - A digital print using pigmented ink laid down on a surface using an inkjet printer with nozzles. The most common type of digital print for exhibition. Also called, "inkjet print", "giclée, and "pigment print".

Block print - A relief print, either from linoleum or wooden blocks. See "relief print", "woodcut/ woodblock", and "linocut".

Carbon transfer print - A photographic process using sensitized pigmented gelatin tissues. Each color of tissue is exposed to UV light, hardening the pigmented gelatin according to the negative. The exposed gelatin layer is then transferred to another substrate - usually high quality paper. Colors can be exposed and layered to create full-color images.

Chine-collé - A printmaking process using tissue or thin paper between the ink layer and the main substrate. Usually used in etching but can be used with other printmaking processes. .

Chlorophyll print - Chlorophyll prints are done directly on a leaf or flower petal as opposed to using an emulsion derived from plants and coated on paper as with anthotypes.

Cyanotype - Also called a "blue print". A contact printed photographic process using ferric ammonium citrate and potassium ferricyanide to create an iron-based emulsion. The emulsion is applied by hand to paper and exposed using a transparent negative to UV light. The UV light reacts with the iron to create a blue print. The print can be toned using tannic acid or a number of other substances.

Drypoint - An intaglio printmaking process that is simply direct etching by hand onto a plate using a sharp utensil. The etched lines are inked and transferred to paper using a press.

Engraving - A printmaking term used to describe an intaglio process by which the artist makes marks directly on the plate by hand, as with a needle, burin, rocker, or other tool.

Etching - An intaglio printmaking process that uses a strong acid to cut into unprotected areas of a metal plate. The plate is coated with ink and wiped off to leave ink in the cut areas of the plate. The plate is then passed through a printing press and the image transferred to paper.

Gum Bichromate - Also sometimes called, "gum printing" and "gum dichromate". This technique is a contact printed photographic process using gum arabic mixed with pigment (usually watercolor pigments) and light- sensitive dichromates (usually ammonium or potassium). The emulsion is coated on the paper and exposed to negatives under UV light. Multiple colors can be built up using different pigments. Negatives are color balanced to accommodate these different colors.

Gum Dichromate - See above, "gum bichromate" . "Bi-chromate" is an older term for the same compound, potassium or ammonium dichromate.

Intaglio - A printmaking term used to describe processes that involve ink settling into a cut or etched area of a plate; in essence, the opposite of relief. See "engraving", "etching", "mezzotint".

Kallitype - A photographic contact printing process using a sensitizer made from ferric oxalate and silver nitrate. The tonal range can vary from sepia, to reddish-brown, to cool black tones depending on the type of developer being used. Kallitype prints are often toned with platinum, palladium, or gold to achieve even deeper, richer tones and to enhance permanence.



Sara Beth Messemore, *Spe-ider*,
Chiaroscuro woodcut relief, 14" x 11", Instagram @sara_bee_art

Linocut - A relief printing technique that uses a linoleum block instead of wood. See, "relief print"

Lith Print - A variation of silver gelatin print using a special "lith" developer. The developer generally works more slowly than traditional developer and creates a wide variety of effects depending on the type of paper, the temperature and age of the developer, and the chemical components of the developer being used. It has nothing to do with lithography in printmaking.

Lithograph - A printmaking process that uses a block of stone as a plate. An image is applied to the stone using wax or oil- based crayons. After the image is applied, the stone is treated with an acid and gum arabic mixture. The stone is then rolled with ink, however, the acid/ gum arabic mixture allows the parts of the stone not covered in wax to repel the oil- based ink, thus leaving the ink only on the original drawing. There are many versions of lithography that do not use a stone, but use the same basic, "oil and water don't mix" concept.

Lumen print - A variation on silver gelatin photograms in which objects (usually plant-based but sometimes not) are placed in contact with the paper and left to expose in UV light for a long period of time. As UV affects the silver in the paper, different colors and effects are achieved. Rather than developing the image, the exposed paper is placed in the fixative, which changes the colors usually to more neutral tones. As a result of this change, most lumen prints are digitally scanned to retain the pre-fixative brighter colors.

Mezzotint - A kind of intaglio print that uses an etched plate and a rocking tool to work the plate from dark to light, rather than the other way around, which is more common. It is very labor intensive and requires many hours of building up layers of tone.

Monoprint - A printmaking term for a one-off print. Similar to a monotype; the distinction being that a monoprint is taken from a plate that includes some features, i.e. etched or engraved areas, while a monotype is taken from a plate that is completely featureless.

Monotype - A printmaking term for a one-off print. There are many different ways to create a monotype, but essentially an image is applied to a clean plate- usually copper or zinc, but possibly Plexiglass or even thin Mylar or acetate - and then transferred to another surface via a press or hand- pressed technique. The term could also be used to refer to any one-of-a-kind image made with a printmaking technique.

Mordantage - A silver gelatin print technique that uses a chemical combination to detach the silver from the substrate, allowing the artist to arrange the silver and create veils and other effects.

Photogravure - A traditional photogravure is done on a metal plate. A sheet of carbon tissue is used in between the plate and a phototransparency. The image is exposed, creating a carbon-based image on the plate that can be etched in acid like a traditional etching. The plate is then inked and printed. In contemporary practice, a photopolymer print (see below) is often called a "photogravure".

Photo-lithography - Uses a photosensitive aluminum or zinc plate. The image is printed onto a transparency and then exposed to the plate much like any other photographic contact printing technique. After exposure the plate is developed in water, removing the unexposed photosensitive film. The remaining image can be inked up and printed in the same manner as a traditional lithographic stone. See "Lithograph"

Photopolymer gravure / etching / photo intaglio - Similar to a photogravure, except the image is transferred onto a thin metal plate coated with a light-sensitive polymer. The plate is exposed to UV with a transparency, with the polymer hardening where light hits it. The plate is then etched using regular water, which washes away the unexposed- and hence softer- polymer. After hardening in another UV exposure, the plate can be inked and printed like any intaglio plate. "Solarplate" is a brand of photopolymer plate.

Platinum/ palladium print - A photographic process using platinum(II) and palladium in combination with ferric oxalate to create the emulsion. After sensitizing the paper, a UV exposure is made by contact printing with a negative. The exposed print is then developed in ammonium citrate, fixed, and rinsed. As platinum gives more contrast and palladium adds warmer tone, the proportion of platinum to palladium in the sensitizing solution can give varying results. The process is considered to give the widest range of tones of any contact printing process. Prints can also be toned to give further variants. Also called, "platinotype", "palladium print" or "platinum print", depending on the predominance of one metal. See "Wet plate collodion on Plexiglass or clear acrylic sheet. See "wet plate collodion".

Pressure print - A versatile, low-cost letterpress technique that creates images by placing a textured, flexible "pressure plate" (like paper, lace, or leaves) behind the paper rather than inking a block directly.

Reduction print - A relief print that uses one block (woodblock or linoleum) to create a multicolored print. With each successive color, the artist carves away or reduces the amount of surface space that gets inked.

Relief - A printmaking term used to describe processes that involve ink remaining on the raised surface of the print; in essence, the opposite of intaglio. See. "woodcut/woodblock".

Salt print - Also called "salted paper print". The paper is first soaked in or coated with a salt solution before being coated with a silver nitrate sensitizer. The salt allows the silver to bind to the paper when exposed to light. The exposed paper is developed in another salt solution. The print can be toned using gold or other toning solutions to achieve tones ranging from warm browns to cool black tones.

Screen print - Also called a silkscreen or serigraph. A planographic printmaking process that often uses light-sensitive emulsion to create an image on a screen mesh. The sensitized screen is exposed with a positive image to UV light, which hardens the emulsion in specific areas. The unhardened emulsion is washed out, leaving those areas of the screen open. Ink can then be pushed through the open parts of the screen to print the image. Screen printing is often done without any photographic emulsion and simply using screen filler, tape, or other adhesives to block areas of the screen that will not have ink.

Silver gelatin print - A photographic print using a paper coated with silver nitrate suspended in gelatin as an emulsion. This type of paper is more sensitive to light than other hand-coated emulsions, giving the artist the ability to use an enlarger to create enlarged positive prints of negatives. Also sometimes called, "Gelatin silver". Also see "Lith print" and "Mordantage".

Tintype - See "wet plate collodion"

Vandyke Brown print - A photographic print whose sensitizer combines silver nitrate with ferric ammonium citrate. The sensitized paper is contact-printed with a negative and developed in acidic water. The result is a brown-toned print. The name is derived from the color of the print being similar to the brown color favored by the painter, Anthony van Dyke.

Wet plate collodion - A photographic process that uses collodion as a substrate to accept silver nitrate, thus sensitizing the plate. The plate is placed into a camera, and the plate is exposed, developed and fixed while the silver/ collodion emulsion is still wet. There are three main types of wet plate collodion plates: 1) An **ambrotype** is a positive image made on glass. The image is backed using some type of black substance- ink, asphaltum, or black fabric, for example. 2) A glass negative can be made and then contact printed using a wide variety of hand-coated photographic processes, traditionally, albumen. 3) A **tintype** is a positive image made on a piece of metal. Traditionally tin was used, but modern practitioners usually use aluminum. Therefore, these plates are sometimes called aluminotypes or ferrotypes, referring to the aluminum substrate.

Woodcut / woodblock- A relief printing technique using carved wood blocks as the printing plate. The ink is rolled onto the raised surfaces of a carved block and paper is placed on top. The ink transfers to the paper. See "relief print"



Mary Salen, *The Preparation*
Lumen/ chemigram hybrid of underwater photograph, 10" x 7.7". groovyeyear.com