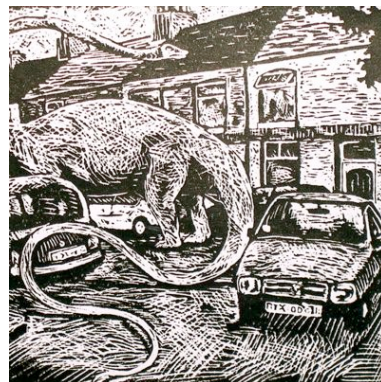


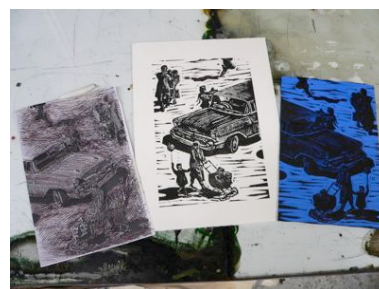
Press-Print



Not to be confused with the polystyrene sheets used by many schools, the press-print process is done using plastic foam board, a material more often used in the sign industry. Foam board can be easily cut into with lino cutting tools or alternatively pressed to produce a very low relief, enough to take a print from. This of course means that it is possible to make a relief block without cutting at all.

Pressure can be applied using any tool that will make an impression. Drawings can be made directly into the board using a pencil or biro. Alternatively, a paper copy can be traced hard with a biro to make an impression beneath.

It is important to press as hard as possible into the foam board. This will ensure that the impression is deep enough to print from.



To trace an image onto a press-print block:

1. Make a photocopy of the drawing or image. This will preserve the original.
2. Tape the copy to the foam board block so that it cannot move.
3. Use a biro to shade in all the white areas of the photocopied image.
4. Remember to press hard with the biro to make as much of an impression as possible. A ball-point pen should be strong enough to do this whilst allowing the nib to pass over the surface of the paper without tearing it.
5. Cross hatching maybe done but remember that all pressed marks will be negative, resulting in a white line on a dark background.
6. For large areas of white it will be necessary to cut into the foam board with lino cutting tools.
7. Use a mezzotint wheel to make other kinds of mark or try out alternative tools.

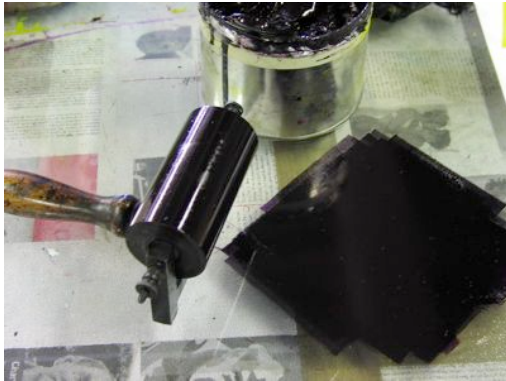


Printing

One of the great advantages of making relief prints is that excellent results can be achieved by printing from the block with or without a press. This means that relief prints can be made at home and that there is virtually no size constraint.

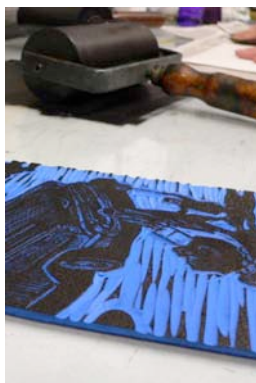
All types of relief block are inked using a roller. The hardness of the roller will determine how much ink is allowed to reach the lower areas of the block. A soft roller will be more likely to press into textures whereas a hard roller will tend to skim over the top.

To apply ink to a relief block:



1. On a clean sheet of glass, take a small amount of ink and scrape it into a line about the width of the roller.
2. Roll the roller back and forth across the ink, picking up the roller periodically to spread the ink into a thin and even layer.
3. If the ink is rolled too thickly remove a section of the rolled out ink and roll the remainder into the space.
4. Take care not to allow bits to contaminate the ink.
5. Once the right amount of ink is achieved apply to the surface of the block as evenly as possible. Knowing the correct amount of ink will come with experience. Too little will result in weak prints but too much will result in splodginess and loss of detail.

To print without a press:



1. Place the inked block face up on top of a clean sheet of newspaper.
2. Carefully lay the paper over the block.

3. Press against the back of the paper lightly with both hands being careful not to move the paper whilst it is in contact with the inked block. This is so that the ink can help to secure the paper against the block by sticking it slightly.
4. With one hand hold the paper still on the inked block. With the other hand use a smooth tablespoon or a wooden spoon to burnish the back of the paper against the block.
5. Check the quality of the results by peeling back a corner whilst keeping the paper in place.

Much can depend on the quality of the paper. A light weight, soft and absorbent paper will yield the best results. With lesser grade papers such as cartridge paper, damping and blotting the paper first can have a dramatic effect. Beware however that though the paper may be softer and more absorbent to ink, it will also be more liable to tear whilst burnishing.

Artists

Albrecht Durer	Ken Currie	Emma Stibbons (RE)
William Blake	Edward Bawden	Paul Peter Piech
Peter Howson	Burt Isaac	The German expressionists

Further information

Westley, Ann, Relief Printmaking. Published by A & C Black Printmaking Handbooks
Walklin, Colin, Relief Printmaking: A Manual of Techniques