

Pressing Paint: The Monoprint

CASA Demonstration by JoAnne Hungate

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Supplies:

Watercolors	Speedball Block Printing Inks		
3" to 6" Soft Brayer	8" - 10" Hard Rubber Brayer or Rolling Pin		
Plexiglas Printing Plates (a variety of sizes and shapes) or use Fiberboard or cardboard			
Rives BFK Heavyweight	Oriental Papers 90# or 140# Watercolor Paper		
Soaking Tray	Blotter Paper	Spray Bottle with water	
Brushes	Paper Towels	Scissors	Water Container
Rags	Natural & collected materials	Stencils	
Printing Press (Dick Blick)			

Monoprint vs Monotype

A Monotype is defined as 'a print made from a clean, un-worked surface containing no scratching or carving (as in an etching, woodblock or linoleum block print) and no drawing. It is a singular image and cannot be duplicated.'

A Monoprint is defined as 'a special wiping or printing that might also include direct painting onto an already worked etching plate. collagraph plate, woodblock, screen or lithographic stone.'

The Basic Process of Watercolor Monoprinting:

Prepare printing plates with watercolor or Speedball Printing Inks or a combination of both (printing inks provide texture). Paint or brayer the paint onto the plate. Remove paint with rags or by sketching on the plate with a brush or scratching or scraping through the paint. Another paint color can be added to the marks or left unpainted. Golden Open Acrylics can be printed on dry paper but the printing must be completed before the paint has dried (open up to 24 hours). Like all acrylics once it is dry, water or damp paper will not reactivate the paint. Sand the edges of Plexiglas plates to bevel the edges. Sharp edges can cut the paper.

Use natural, found objects or paper motifs as stencils over the painted plate. Allow the paint to dry completely before printing. Several plates can be prepared in advance. Place the plate face up in the press or on a sturdy, flat surface if hand printing. Water from the damp papers will reactivate the watercolor (gouache) and the Speedball inks.

Soak the paper in water for about 1 hour. This removes the sizing in both Rives BFK and watercolor paper making them more receptive to the paint or inks. Test papers as some papers do not have sizing and soaking will weaken or disintegrate the paper. These papers can be placed in the soaking tray and then quickly removed. Blot the wet paper in Blotter Paper until the shine on the paper is gone. Do not soak Oriental Papers rather place them over the plate in the press and then spray with water to dampen. Very thin papers can be folded in half for printing two collage papers in combination with a print on printing paper.

Place the damp paper on the plate (centering). A register can be used to help position the paper accurately. Cover with newsprint and then the three blankets on the press (or cover with soft material if hand printing). Run the paper through the press. Check the print just as the first section comes through the press. If the print is the right intensity continue the press and lift off the paper. If it is too light run increase the pressure and run through a second time.

To print without a press use a large, hard rubber brayer, a barren or a rolling pin (a marble rolling pin is best since it is heavy and thus requires less pressure).

Altering the Plates:

Special effects can be achieved on the plates using masking stencils or motifs (made from left over paper), tapes and natural and found materials as long as they are flat and can be run through the press. Some of the materials that can be used include:

Packing Tape	Crumpled Aluminum	Flattened Bottle Caps
Skeleton Leaves	Dried Weeds	String

Spraying or dribbling water on the plate can create interesting patterns. Use texture plates to texturize the paint on the plate before it dries. Any printing errors can be corrected using Caran d'Arche water soluble crayons while the paper is still damp.

Several plates can be painted and then stacked for pressing. Use different colors on a various sizes of plates. These can be used in combination with natural and found materials.

The press can also be used to impress or emboss damp papers using found and natural materials without printing.