

PRINTMAKING

OPEN STUDIO

WHAT IS PRINTMAKING?

Printmaking is an artistic process that involves creating an image and then transferring that image onto another surface. Printmaking differs from other forms of artmaking in that it allows an artist to produce unlimited copies of the same image

A very basic example of printmaking that you might be familiar with is a rubber stamp. You can make hundreds or even thousands of identical marks using that one stamp, as opposed to drawing that same design over and over again.



Walter R. Locke (1883–1983)
Rival Fisherman
Etching, ca. 1939

The Associated American Artists once said of American printmaker Walter Ronald Locke: "He spent twelve years actually living and working in the woods, without ever once coming out to a civilized center . . ."

His complete immersion in nature yielded an ability to accurately capture the natural world. Most striking is not the distant fisherman, nearly blending into the rocks and trees behind him, but the enormous, vibrant tree whose limbs extend in every direction.

Think about the title. What does "rival" mean?

Who is the "rival fisherman" in this etching? The man, or the beaver?

Noon Hour depicts two working class women, arms linked, enjoying a casual lunchtime conversation before returning to the office. Bishop's women exist outside the home, exploring new roles as workers, consumers, and women at ease in a busy metropolis.

Noon Hour and *Rival Fisherman* are etchings. The image you see is the result of lines cut into a metal plate through a chemical process. These marks then are filled with ink and pressed against paper.

How would you describe the lines in this image?

Isabel Bishop (1902 –1988)
Noon Hour
Etching, ca. 1935



Thomas W. Nason (1889 –1971)
Little Farm
Wood Engraving, ca. 1955



Thomas W. Nason was born and raised on a Massachusetts farm, with very little formal artistic training. He was known as “the poet engraver of New England,” and was widely respected for his woodblock prints that captured the beauty and grace of the New England countryside.

This is a relief print, meaning the white of the paper are areas that have been carved out of wood, and the black areas are the untouched surface of the wood block. From the barn to the leaves on the tree, the exquisite details in this piece reinforce the sense of naturalism.

Stand back from the work of art and see if you can notice the wood grain of the carved surface. Now, move in close to the print and notice all the fine details of every cut.

ART ACTIVITY

YOU WILL NEED:

1. Styrofoam sheet (provided)
2. Paper (provided)
3. Brayer (a rolling pin, or a foam brush)
4. Plexi sheet (or cookie sheet)
5. Speedball Ink (or tempera paint)
6. Pencil (not pictured)



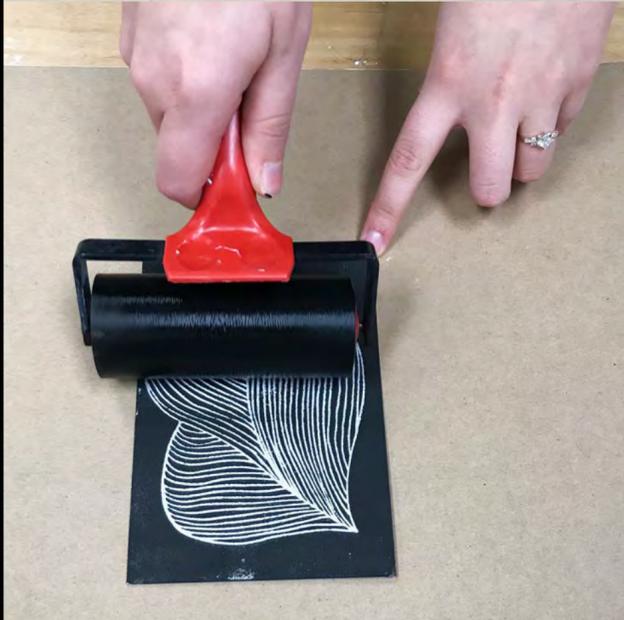
INSTRUCTIONS



1

Carve your design

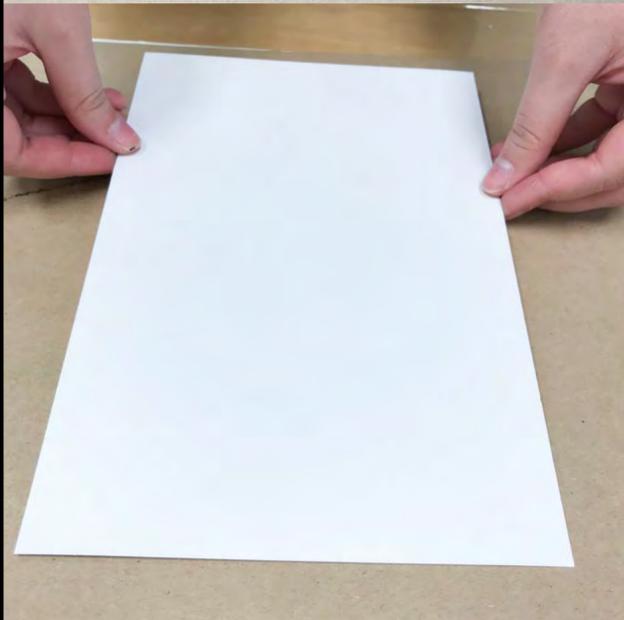
Draw a picture or design directly onto the Styrofoam sheet with a pencil. The act of pressing with the pencil will carve, or "engrave", your image into the Styrofoam.



2

Roll out the ink

Put a small amount of ink on your plexi sheet or cookie sheet. Using a brayer, roll out the ink creating a thin layer of ink. It should feel more sticky than smooth.



3

Apply ink

Carefully apply an even layer of ink onto your Styrofoam sheet. Try not to get too much ink into the lines of your carving, but its ok if it happens a little bit.



4

Apply pressure

Place the paper over the Styrofoam sheet and press down firmly. You can use your hands, or you can rub with the back of a spoon.

5

Remove paper

Once you've put enough pressure on the paper, gently lift it away to reveal your finished print!



Tips and tricks

- The print is a mirror image of the drawing, so any words need to be written *backwards*
- Since Styrofoam is water resistant, you can wash and reuse your sheet!