Fine Art Printmaking

Under the Wave off Kanagawa, about 1830–31, Katsushika Hokusai. Woodblock print.

What is Fine Art Printmaking?

▶ Fine Art Printmaking is the process of transferring an image from a plate to paper.

▶ A plate can me made out of many different materials such as wood, metal, glass, plastic Styrofoam or stone.

▶ The prepared plate is inked or painted then pressed onto paper to transfer an image.

▶ Each print is considered a unique and original piece of art and there will usually be slight differences in each print that is made.

Printmaking in History

▶ In China during the 2nd century people started using wooden blocks to print images of flowers on silk.

▶ The Chinese began printing on paper in the 7th century.

Printed and painted silk from the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC–220 AD)


First page of the Diamond Sutra

▶ The Diamond Sutra was the first ever complete printed book. It was created in 868 AD.

▶ The image for each page of the book had to be carefully carved out of a wood block, inked and then pressed onto paper.

▶ Before the invention of printing, books had to be written by hand. This was very time consuming and expensive.

Today we will learn about 4 types of fine art printing:

- ▶ Relief Printing
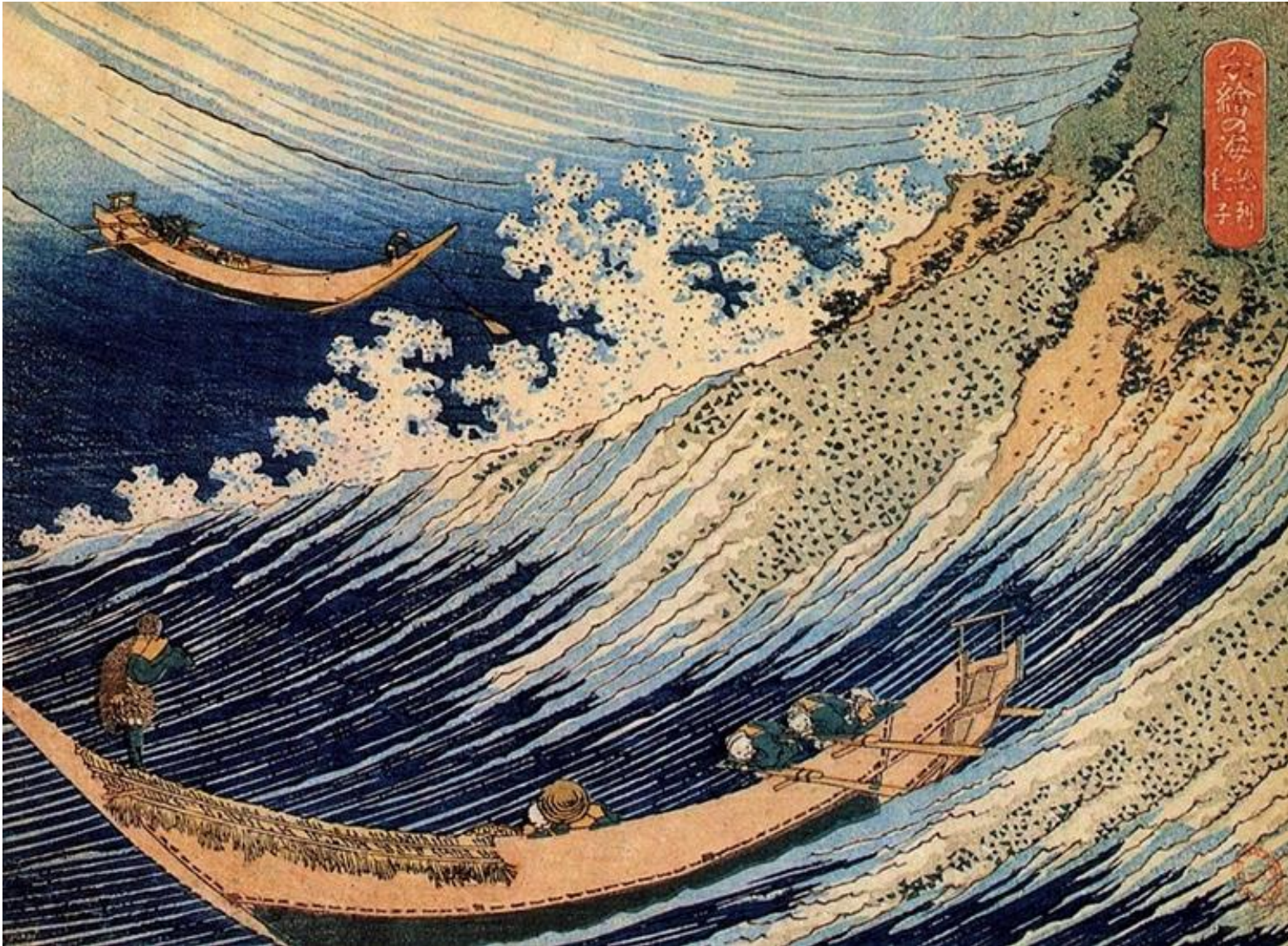- ▶ Intaglio [in-tal-yoh]
- ▶ Lithography
- ▶ Monotype
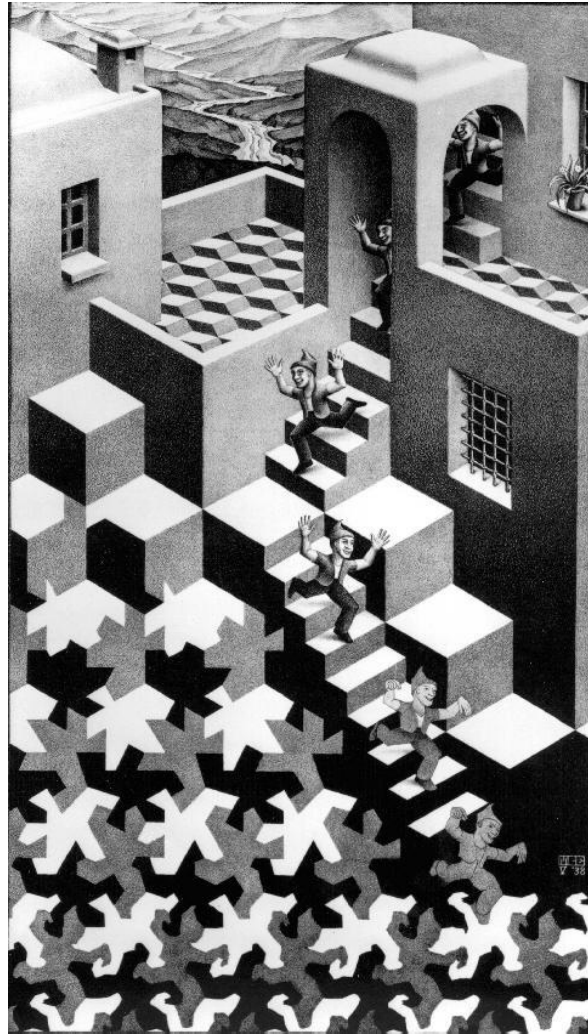
Cycle, M.C. Escher, 1938 Lithograph

Relief Printing

▶ This is printing from a raised surface. A rubber stamp is a good example of relief printing. Wood and linoleum are common materials used for relief printing plates. Sharp tools are used to carve an image. The tools remove the areas of plate that you don't want the ink to stick to.

▶ Ink is then added to the plate with a roller called a brayer.

▶ Paper is laid over the inked plate and sent through a printing press or hand rubbed with a smooth tool called a baren.

▶ Historically relief printing was used for printing on fabric, playing cards, calendars and book illustrations.

Example of Relief Printing

Chōshi in Shimōsa Province, from *One Thousand Images of the Sea* (1832-34) by *Katsushika Hokusai*

Intaglio [in-tal-yoh]

▶ A metal or sometimes acrylic plate is used in this printmaking style. Lines and textures are cut into the plate with a v-shaped sharp tool called a burin or etched into it using acid.

▶ Intaglio printing is the opposite of relief printing. The printing is done from ink that is pressed in to the cuts and grooves that are below the surface of the plate.

▶ Excess ink is wiped from the top surface of the plate and damp paper is laid on top of the plate and sent through a printing press. Enormous pressure must be used to press the paper onto the plate and into the inked grooves.

▶ Intaglio is one of the most versatile of the printmaking methods. It can produce a wide a wide range of effects ranging from fine delicate lines to bold and dramatic lines and textures.
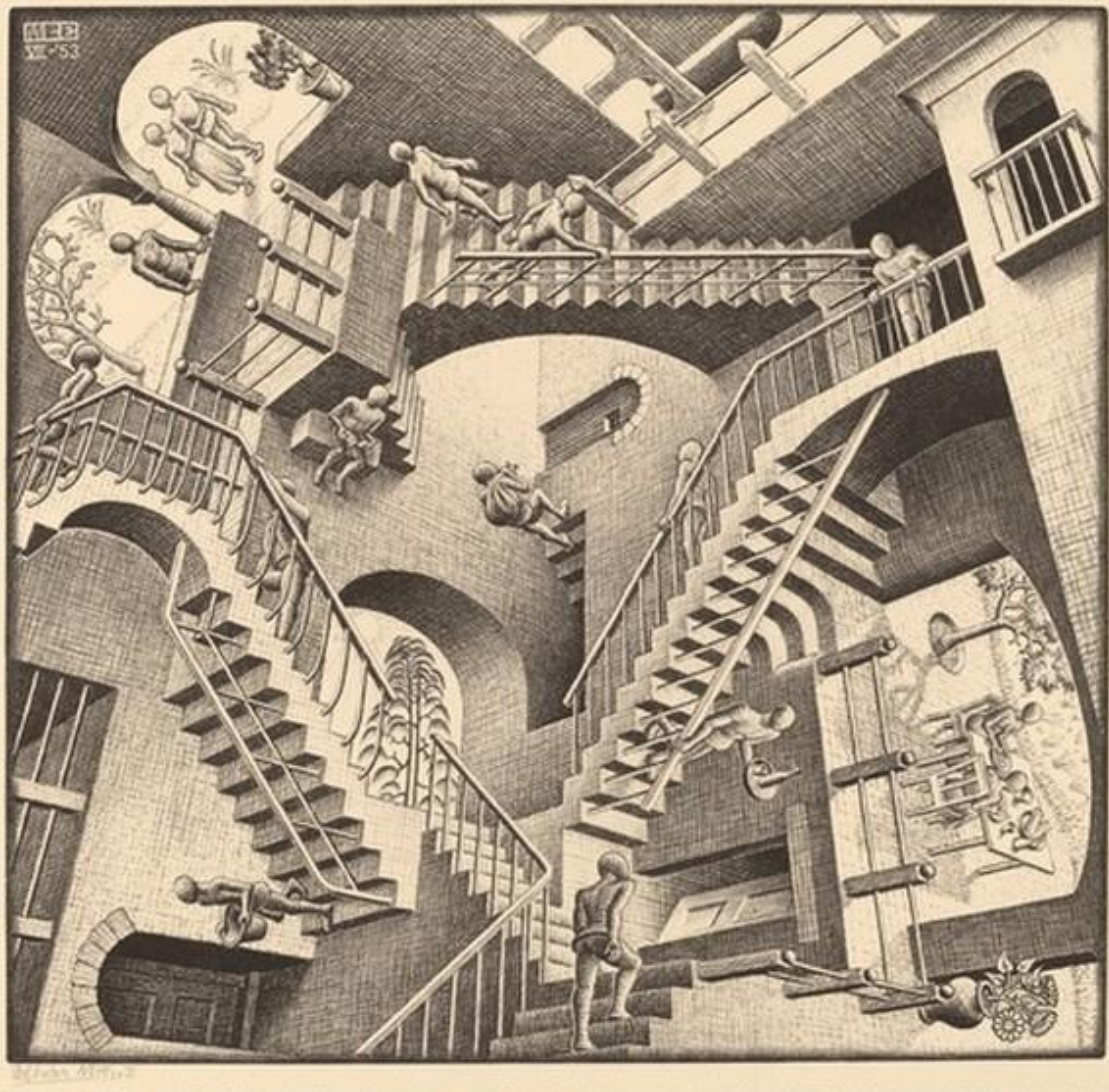
Examples Intaglio Prints

The Soldier and his Wife, by Daniel Hopfer
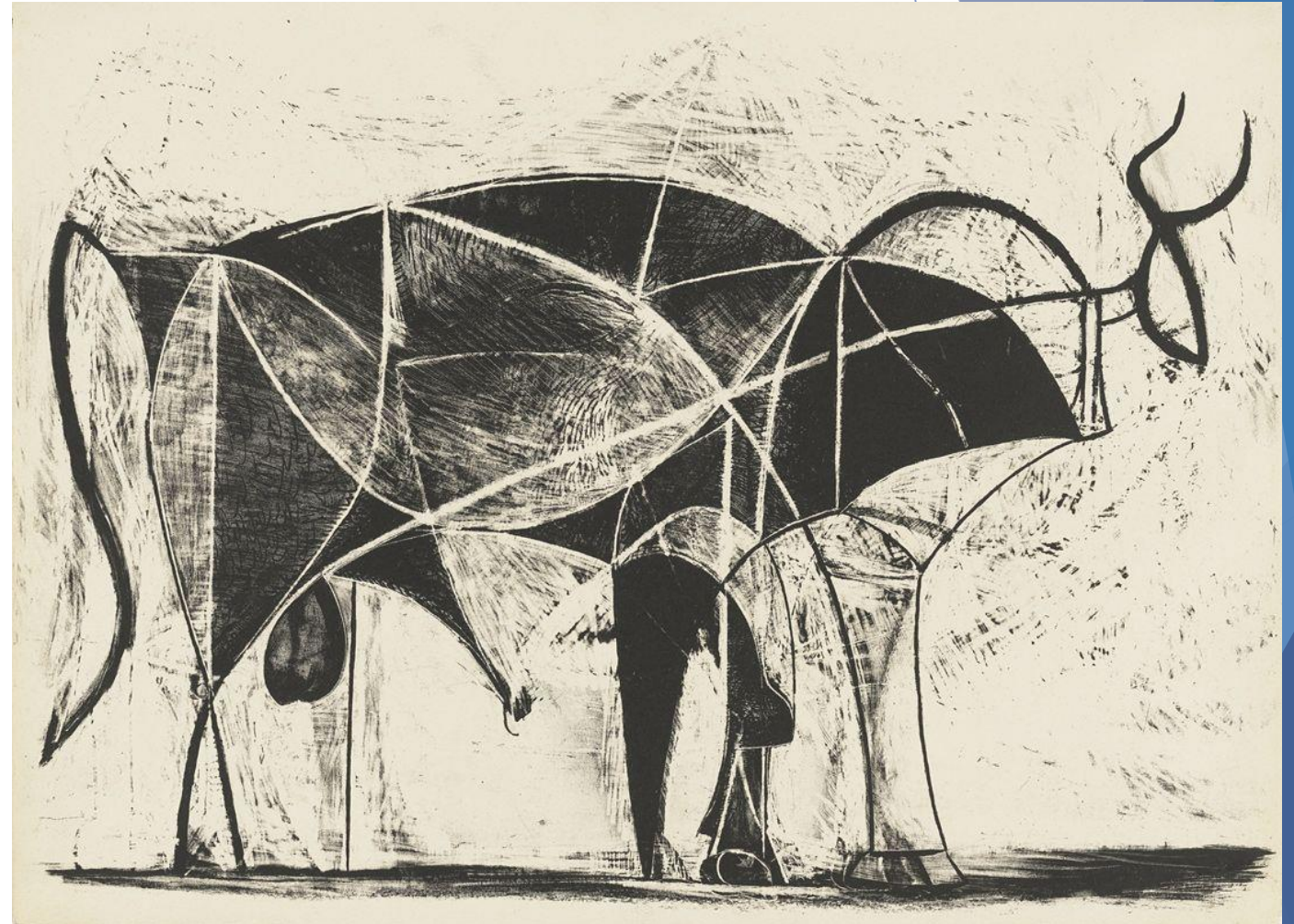
Bull, by Pablo Picasso

Lithography

Life and work by M.C. Escher

- Lithography is the art of printing from a flat stone or metal plate.
- This style of printing is based on the fact that grease attracts grease and grease is repelled by water.
- A design or image is drawn on the printing plate with a grease crayon or ink.
- The greasy parts of the design on the plate absorb the printing ink and the wet parts do not.

Monotype

▶ Mono- comes from the Greek monos meaning: Alone, Single or One

▶ Monotype is a single print that is made from a smooth printing plate.

▶ Ink or paint is added to the plate and sometimes also removed to create a design.

▶ Damp paper is then laid over the plate and pressure is used to transfer the image from the plate to the paper.

▶ A monotype can be made with a light field or a dark field.

Edgar Degas's "Three Ballet Dancers (Trois danseuses)," 1878-80.

Light Field and Dark Field Monotype

A light field is when you start with a clean plate and add ink to the plate by drawing or painting.

A dark field is when you start with a plate that is completely covered with ink or paint. Tools like cloth, sponges, or brushes are used to remove the ink or paint to create the image.

Edgar Degas, From (La Famille Cardinal)

Video
Edgar Degas: A Strange New Beauty

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DC8L2O7I0wk

Today we are making Monotype prints using a light field.

Supplies needed:

- Transparency
- Markers
- Printed shapes for tracing
- Masking tape to secure the transparency to desk
- Extra plain-white paper to place under transparency
- Paper for printing
- Sponge to wet the paper
- Baby wipes for clean-up

1. Lay a transparency on top of a sheet of plain-white paper and tape it to the table on one side.
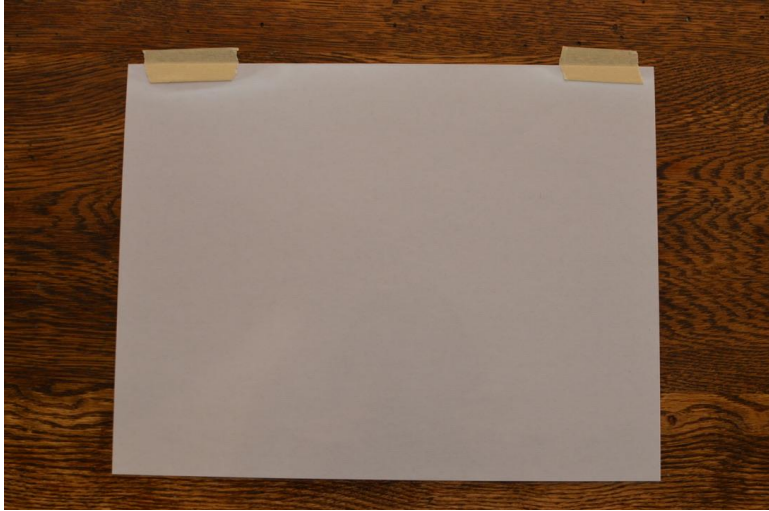
2. Place printed shapes <u>under</u> the transparency.
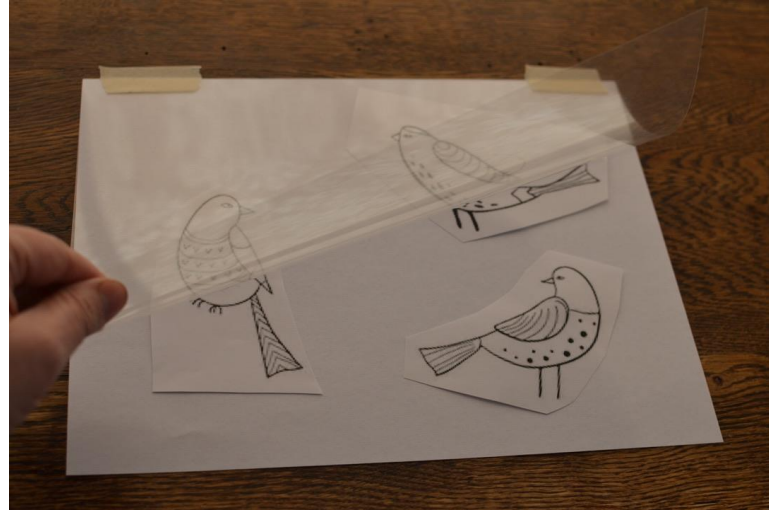
3. Color in printed shapes.

4. Outline shapes with a darker color.

5. You can remove unwanted marks by wiping them off with a damp paper towel.

6. Once you are finished coloring and outlining the shapes take them out from under the transparency.

7. Touch-up any areas that need it. Look for missed lines you want to fill in.

8. Draw in branches.

9. Add some small spring leaves to the branches.

10. With clean hands use a wet sponge dampen both sides of the printing paper.

11. Lay the transparency (ink side down) and rub <u>firmly</u> until the design is transferred onto the paper. A cloth can be used to help your hand glide more smoothly on the back of the transparency. Be careful not to let the transparency slide around.

12. Carefully remove transparency from the paper. Lay completed print on a drying rack to dry.

Edgar Degas, From (La Famille Cardinal)

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