

## NOTES ON PRINTMAKING

Prints listed are included *IMPRINTS: 20 Years of Flying Horse Editions* Exhibition at the Mennello Museum of American Art, 2012.  
All prints are published by Flying Horse Editions.

A **PRINT** is a type of art made by printing an image on paper.

**Monotypes** are made by painting a design on a smooth surface, and then pressing a piece of paper onto the wet image. One image results (instead of multiple images). **Nathan Redwood** printed the blue sky in *Like Air* with a monotype process.

### **Relief prints**

**Linocut** (cut from linoleum block) and **woodcut** prints are the most common types of relief prints. A print made using a Styrofoam base where a pencil is used to incise the design is also a relief print. This means that the print image comes from a raised surface; the ink adheres only to the raised areas. A rubber stamp, for example, is a relief print, because the words or numbers on the stamp are raised. A fingerprint is also a relief print, because the raised whorls on your fingers make the impression. In relief printing, the image comes out backwards, so artists often hold a mirror up to a work to see the image in reverse before they carve into the wood or linoleum block. **James Siena** used relief printing to make *Sequence One*, as did **Carmon Colangelo** for some of the prints made in the *O Land O* series.

**Etchings** are made by using a metal tool incising lines into wax-like surface a metal plate. After the design is drawn, the plate is put in an acid bath. The acid “etches” the image onto the metal plate. The entire metal plate is inked, and then put through a printing press. The press applies a lot of pressure to the paper, which is pushed into the incised lines to pick up the ink. **Kristopher Benedict, Matt Nolen and Robert Rivers** all used the etching process in their prints.

### **Other types of prints in the exhibition:**

**Digital prints** are made using a computer and high quality printer and ink.

**Lithographs** are called *planographic* prints because an image is drawn on a smooth stone or metal “plane” and transferred to paper with a flatbed press.

**Silkscreen prints** (sometimes called serigraphs or screenprints) essentially use a *stencil* technique. A different screen is needed to print each color.

## PRINTMAKING VOCABULARY

**Artist Proof:** This is the generally the first print that an artist creates in a series. The artist checks to see what s/he might want to change about the print. It is not counted in the number of prints that make up the edition. Sometimes artist proofs are for sale and they are marked “A.P.”.

**Edition:** An edition is the total number of prints that are made from the same printing plate or block.

**Print Numbering:** There is often a fraction next to the artist’s signature. For example, if you saw a fraction of  $\frac{1}{4}$ , it means that there is a series of four prints, and that this particular print is the first print from the series of four. In a series of four prints, the third print signed by the artist would be labeled as  $\frac{3}{4}$ .



**Tools for making prints in lessons included in these Teacher Resources:**

**Plate:** the surface on which you spread the ink

**Ink:** a pigment that prints the image

**Brayer:** a roller that you use to apply ink to paper

**For more information on Printmaking Techniques, check out this DVD:**

*All About Prints: 500 years of prints and printmaking.* A documentary by Stereoptical Pictures for The Print Research Foundation. (Available from Amazon.)