

# HOW TO

## DRY-POINT PRINT

This intaglio method of printing lends itself to drawing as a variety of delicate lines and velvety black tones are possible. It is a simple process requiring few tools and has been used by the old masters to highlight their incredible draughtsman-ship. Both Rembrandt and Rodin favoured this printing method.

### YOU WILL NEED:

- Zinc or copper plate
- File
- Medium or heavyweight paper
- Dry-point needle
- Burnisher
- Scrim or cotton cloth & kitchen towel
- Printing ink (oil or water-safe)
- White spirit and rag

### METHOD:

- If not already beveled, file the edges of the plate to 45°

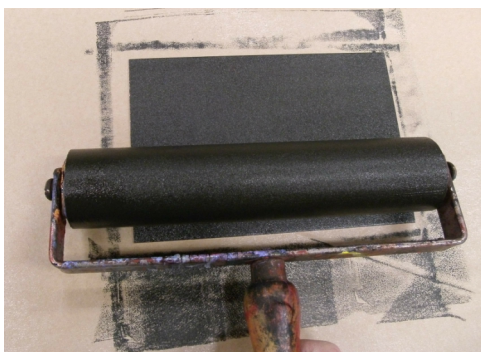


- Use the needle as you would a pencil and draw your image directly on to the plate. Make marks with the needle by

scoring and picking at the metal, creating a 'burr' that will print as a soft, furry line. Alter the pressure and angle of the needle to vary the marks made; a deeper line will print darker. You should be able to feel the lines made by running your fingertip gently over the surface of the plate. If you can not feel anything, you have not made a deep enough impression



- When you have finished drawing, you can take a print to check for errors and continue working in to the plate until you are satisfied with the image
- Use a roller to cover the plate with a fine layer of ink. With a piece of scrim, rub in the ink all over the surface of the plate, make sure it is pushed in to all of your drawn lines



- With a clean piece of scrim, smoothly wipe away the excess ink. Do not pick out the ink from the burred lines – you need these to print

- Use a piece of kitchen towel to polish areas for a cleaner finish. The less ink left on your plate, the cleaner the image will appear; although, you may want to leave some 'cloudy' areas of ink for effect



- Place the plate on the press, image side up, and lay a piece of dampened paper over the top. Once the paper is in place, do not move or touch it as this will smudge your print and leave finger prints

- Lay the press blankets over the paper and turn the wheel to move the roller across the full length of the blankets

- To reveal your print, hold the paper down on one corner and peel away from the opposite corner – so that if there is a problem with the print, you can now easily put the paper down in the same place, adjust the press and print again



- Clean everything you have used with soapy water, including the metal plate, and dry properly to avoid rusting. If you

have been using oil-based inks or paints, use a rag soaked in white spirit for cleaning

#### TIPS AND TRICKS:

- When drawing your image: To create varied texture and tone, use close lines, stippling, and cross-hatching. The closer the dots or lines, the darker the printed tone
- To rectify mistakes in drawing, use a burnisher to smooth areas away, just like an eraser; although this may not work on particularly deep lines
- For a splash of colour, glue pieces of tissue paper and lay them glue side up on top of the plate before taking your print. Lay your printing paper over this as usual and pull through the press. The tissue paper will stick to the printing paper and your print will appear on top



- To keep both your print and the printing press blankets clean, always use two clean sheets of thin paper: one positioned underneath your plate, the other over the top of your printing paper/under the blankets. If ink gets on to the blankets it can be transferred on to your print



- Similarly, keep your hands clean by washing them after you have inked up the plate. This avoids transferring ink to the press and on to your clean printing paper
- Remember that the image drawn on to your plate will appear in reverse on our print. If you want to include text, write it on a piece of transparent paper first, turn this around, then copy it by hand on to the plate

