

Special Project

Print Making

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Approval Sheet

Print Making

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Visual Communication

Special Project

Guide: Professor Raja Mohanty

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Guide: _____

Declaration

I declare that this written submission represents my ideas in my own words and where others' ideas or words have been included, I have adequately cited and referenced the original sources. I also declare that I have adhered to all principles of academic honesty and integrity and have not misrepresented or fabricated or falsified any idea/data/fact/ source in my submission. I understand that any violation of the above will be cause for disciplinary action by the Institute and can also evoke penal action from the sources which have thus not been properly cited or from whom proper permission has not been taken when needed.

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A very special thanks to my parents, and all my friends for doing very special things.

Abstract

This project is directed to explore the possibilities and future of printmaking and setting up a fully functional printmaking setup in IDC, IIT Bombay in order to enable the enthusiasts to express themselves through the feeling of multitude, the core essence of printmaking.

Going by the varieties of the printmaking techniques, the knowledgeable ones know that the technical possibilities are unbounded which includes, but not limited to etchings and woodcuts, vinyl graphics, linocuts, lithographs and complicated, conceptually driven projects intended to raise social consciousness.

Philosophical questions remain. As new mediums proliferate and lines between genres dissolve, you may wonder if there is any value in maintaining printmaking as a separate artistic category.

To answer this question, it is tried in this project to explore the realm of printmaking, as a separate genre of art and art history, as well as the medium through which the artist can probably vent out her/his long due frustration of unfruitful labor, as printmaking comes with the feeling of giving birth, a feeling of long overdue success, of engraving some permanent mark in the roof of the bulldozer of myriad expressions and tools of creativity.

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The evolution of print making practices in India

Print making as an art form emerged in India less than eighty years ago. However, printing, in which lie the origins of contemporary print making, came to India in 1556, about a hundred years after Gutenberg's Bible.

Calcutta, the capital of British India, was the hub of printing and publishing in colonial times. While European printing establishments were at the helm of all printing activities in India, the need for manpower gradually drew in Indian participants.

The printed picture, in the form of the book illustration, developed in early 19th century British India. European printmakers in 18th century India remained entirely disconnected from mainstream, indigenous printing activity since they had little or nothing in common with Indian culture and tradition. Their prints depicted exotic Indian landscapes that tended to appeal mainly to the colonial European sensibility.

With the growing interest in vernacular literatures arose an increasing demand for book illustrations; this, in turn, led to the gradual emergence of an indigenous printing industry. From 1816 onwards, hundreds of illustrated books were printed in Calcutta and its environs by indigenous presses that sprang up in the bazaars. The hitherto anonymous Indian printmaker gradually began to evolve as an 'artist'. In the mid-19th century, art schools were established in different cities in the country, and a new breed of 'gentlemen' artists with Western sensibilities, came into prominence. They established print studios (the Calcutta Art Studio, for instance) that emulated European academic art tenets.

19th Century Bazaar Printmaking

The bazaar print making schools, engaged in making plates for book illustrations, soon started producing broadsides. These schools were influenced by classical and folk painting traditions from Bengal, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Mughal India. In terms of taste and technology, prints emerging from these schools were influenced undeniably by European culture. It is to these schools that the first indigenous evidence of printmaking activity, as we know it today, can be traced.

English-owned presses that had been established in the last quarter of the 18th century employed members of local artisan communities. Here, these artisans learnt to put their traditional skills to new uses and applications. The rudimentary training that they received at these printing and publishing outfits, however, was oriented to equip them with technical skills specific to requirements of the British presses; it did not assist in the development of print making as an art form. With new opportunities, these artisans developed techniques and aesthetic styles that were unique in the history of print making, the world over. While European artists had practically no role in effecting this change, British imperialism played the role of the prime mover in transforming traditional print making practices. Prints made during this time explored folk, religious, social, and political themes, and catered essentially to the semi-educated masses that thronged mofussil towns and suburbs. The most prolific of the 'schools' was the Bat-tala school that grew in the bazaars of North Calcutta. In the second half of the 19th century, many fresh art school graduates pursued careers as illustrators for Bengali books. Though many of them hailed from artisan communities, their education in art had been distinctly influenced by European academic sensibilities. They brought these influences to their illustrations: one can see this in the content, style, and technique of Bat-tala reliefs.

Almost as prolific, though nowhere near as sophisticated, were the Punjab lithographs that flourished in the bazaars of Amritsar and Lahore. Lithography was practised widely and was extensively popularised by the British. There is bound to have been a high degree of interaction between the British lithographers and the Punjabi artisans. However, it is likely that the Punjabi printmakers learnt more from observation and practice rather than from direct instruction, and given the naïvete of the Punjab prints, it is highly unlikely that they were the handiwork of trained art school graduates. The Tughra lithographs (from the Punjab school) that represent the earliest evidence of indigenous polychrome printing in north India, were produced, perhaps, in Lahore and/or Delhi. In Bombay too, there emerged an indigenous school of lithography by the late 19th century. Prints here drew from the classicism of Tanjore painting and the academicism of European art. The artists who executed them definitely had some exposure to the tenets of European academic drawing (including the production of perspective). Soon, with the advent of Raja Ravi Varma and Bamapada Banerjee in the last quarter of the 19th century, the European way of making art began gaining in popularity. Raja Ravi Varma and Bamapada Banerjee held sway over artistic tastes at the turn of the century, spawning innumerable clones countrywide. They constituted the new wave of 'Western-style' art that explored Indian themes. This brand of 'Indian' art found wide patronage among the rich and middle-class Indians, as also among European connoisseurs. Chromolithography and oleography were used to reproduce oil paintings of popular myths, legends, gods, and goddesses, thus making mass circulation possible. This marked the beginning of calendar art and the first instance of 'high' art intermingling with the 'popular'.

The Emergence of Artistic Print making in the Pre-Independence Years

The beginning of the 20th century witnessed the rise of the nationalist art 'movement'-there was a marked shift in the aesthetic preferences of the Indian public at large, leading to the gradual emergence of a group of painters engaged in evolving a fresh, 'new' Indian aesthetic. Slowly, distinctions began to arise between 'committed' artists and 'professional', commercial artists. Soon, artists like Raja Ravi Varma and Bamapada Banerjee began to give way to artists like Abanindranath Tagore and Nandalal Bose.

While this transition occurred most evidently in approaches to painting, and later, in approaches to sculpture, printmaking was by no means unaffected. The implications of the distinction between 'printing' and 'printmaking' slowly began to become clearer, and printmaking as a mode of artistic expression finally began to come into its own. It was only after half a century, that 'printmakers' were spoken of as being distinct from painters and sculptors. The beginning of the 20th century saw the emergence of printmaking as an independent art form with a multitude of aesthetic possibilities and an identity of its own.

Moreover, at the beginning of the 20th century, 'art' and 'applied art' came to be considered, not as two separate spheres, but as two aspects of the same profession. A successful artist was one who had acquired formal training and had inculcated 'high' Western aesthetic sensibilities (which would bring him important commissions and employment opportunities).

As more and more Indians began entering art schools, printmaking began to make gradual inroads into the aesthetic consciousness of the educated and intellectual elite at the forefront of the artistic revolution. The greatest thrust, however, came from the Tagore family in Calcutta. The three brothers, Abanindranath, Gaganendranath, and Samarendranath (nephews of Rabindranath Tagore) transformed the south veranda of their Jorasanko residence into an art mecca.

They began to host regular art salons and their home became the meeting venue for members of the informal Bichitra Club: this was where new styles of painting and printmaking were explored. Works from the Bichitra Studio (despite the Club's informal and liberal profile) were highly respected by the educated Bengali middle classes who were increasingly attracted to art as a possible vocation. For the first time, artists such as Gaganendranath Tagore and Nandalal Bose began to practise printmaking as an interventionist activity. Around this time, the art centre set up at Rabindranath Tagore's new university at Santiniketan began to attract the attention of a new breed of nationalist artists. In 1920-21, Nandalal Bose became the Principal of the newly founded Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan. It was from here that the graphic art movement in India truly began. By the first quarter of the 20th century, Nandalal Bose had introduced graphic art into the Kala Bhavana curriculum. From 1920-30, he experimented ceaselessly with printmaking practices, seeking a new spontaneous language that was concise, simple, and uncluttered. He understood well the futility of trying to translate Occidentally styled imagery into a traditional Oriental format-the resultant vocabulary would undoubtedly be hybrid and confused. Bose rejected the Western mode of representing three-dimensional space on a flat surface using linear perspective: he developed a personal style that employed a relatively flat perspective (i.e. a two-dimensional view) by evenly distributing positive and negative areas. His prints were crisp, the lines were swift and taut, and the blacks and whites balanced each other perfectly. One could say that Bose's graphic work bordered on abstraction. Though he had absorbed many influences while developing his unique vocabulary (Far Eastern imagery, classical Indian art, for instance), he broke free of their static conventions. Instead, he developed a highly original syntax - his prints were always lively. Though Bose rarely drew from Western academic styles, the influence of modern European design interventions is evident in his later works. Also evident, particularly in his figurative and landscape intaglios, is his keen interest in Japanese and Chinese calligraphy. However, the lyrical quality in Bose's work owes a lot to the intrinsic rhythm he discovered in the lives led by local people.

Like some of his predecessors, Bose too used printmaking as a means of mass communication. In the 1930s, Ramkinker Baij and Bose printed political posters for the Non-Cooperation movement. Bose also illustrated Rabindranath Tagore's *Sahajpath* in 1930. These simple yet attractive illustrations are representative of the forms that Bose explored through his graphic work. It is for his ability of abstracting objective reality (and creating a pictorial text), while retaining a distinctly indigenous aesthetic sensibility (despite employing foreign technology) that Bose is regarded widely as the first modern pioneer in Indian printmaking.

Indian printmaking is indebted to him not only for furthering the limits of graphic imagery, but also for spearheading a graphic art movement in Santiniketan. In the early years, his students, namely, Ramendranath Chakraborty, Mukul Dey, Manindra Bhushan Gupta, Biswaroop Bose, Ramkinker Baij, Benode Behari Mukherjee, Surendranath Kar, Ranee Chanda, Jagdish and Kamala Mittal, and many others, were responsible for fostering an active interest in creative print making. Ramendranath Chakraborty introduced graphic art in the curriculum of the Government College of Arts and Crafts, Calcutta, when he became its Principal in 1943. It was here that some of the most significant print makers of the mid-20th century began their journeys. Educated in the strictest traditions of British academic art, Haren Das exemplifies the dilemma that Indian art education is faced with even to this day. Together with some of his contemporaries (Shaffiuddin Ahmed, who pioneered the graphic art movement in Bangladesh, for instance), Das remained true to academic art and craft tenets. While the avant-garde artists of post-Independence India used their skills to evolve a modern idiom, some like Das remained imprisoned within the confines of what they had been taught at the art academies. Others like Zainul Abedin, Chittaprosad, and Somnath Hore adopted a contrary approach: amongst the first few to realise the potential of print making as a medium for the masses, they chose to wield the burin and the bully to depict the wounds of 'Hungry Bengal' and arouse the patriotic fervour of an enslaved people. Active participants in the agitation against the British 'scorched earth' policy

implemented in the Chittagong countryside during the Second World War, and acquainted with the Communist movement, these artists moved from village to village as volunteer workers, commiserating with the suffering and poverty of famine-stricken Bengalis. Led by Chittaprosad, print making now assumed a new role as an instrument of protest.

By the 1940s, printmaking was being intermittently practised in different parts of the country. Modern Indian printmaking got a fillip, however, in the 1950s-when a fledgling nation struggled to create for itself a modern independent identity. Amidst the many political, social, economic, and cultural explorations, the search for a truly modern Indian aesthetic was of primary concern to artists in the early post-Independence years.

India wanted to assert itself globally as a truly 'modern' nation, and artists wanted to be viewed as being empowered by an ancient heritage, not handicapped by it. The early revivalist movements sought to preserve and bring visibility to Indian traditional art forms. The tendency to ape Western aesthetic sensibilities, seen predominantly in the 1940s, soon waned, and a new generation of artists forged ahead with new conceptual considerations, new social concerns, and new mediums of expression.

Modern Indian art, from its early start in the pre-Independence times, was now blossoming. A new breed of artists, successors of the 'gentlemen' artists, educated and socio-politically sensitive, strode on the art scene. The world too had become a smaller place, geographical boundaries were no longer insurmountable. Several emerging artists travelled to Europe and the Far East, thus absorbing varied aesthetic influences and learning new technologies. There was a healthy and energising exchange of cultural influences as artists and exhibits from near and far travelled to India. With greater access to diverse cultural ideas, Indian art liberated itself. Painting and sculpture acquired a fresh purpose, alongside which, sophisticated and artistic printmaking made its appearance. At the helm were stalwarts such as Somnath Hore, Jagmohan Chopra, and Kanwal Krishna.

The Pioneers

Somnath Hore, the doyen of Indian printmaking, had a long and illustrious career as an activist, artist, and academic. He deliberately chose to adopt printmaking as his medium. Works like *Wounds* amply illustrate how he wielded the burin or used the acid on his plates-his was a passionate protest against the wanton violence and devastation that marked his times. Unlike many early printmakers from Santiniketan, it was not merely the novelty of the medium that attracted Hore: he explored it to realise very specific artistic goals. This sense of purpose and passion had not been seen in Indian printmaking, perhaps with the exception of Chittaprosad, who was attracted to the medium because of its reproducibility-quotient, which made it a convenient, wide-reaching vehicle of communication. Hore wanted to bring about a revolution in artistic thought, and not merely explore a new medium. In the 1970s, Hore truly stretched the medium to its limits with his white-on-white pulp prints. He explored new approaches to the medium, liberating it from its traditional technological limits. No longer would printmaking be seen merely as a narrative/illustrative medium/form meant to create works meant for popular circulation. While Hore's versatility is indeed unparalleled, there were others in the early post-Independence years who contributed significantly to the shaping of the graphic art movement in India. In the 1950s, Delhi seems to have been the fountainhead of pioneering printmaking efforts and initiatives. Not only Hore, but veteran printmakers like Kanwal Krishna and Jagmohan Chopra lived and worked there at that time. Chopra, who was a dedicated teacher, was always open to experimentation-he fostered a generation of printmakers who have been greatly indebted to him. Some of his contemporaries include Gunen Ganguli, Jeevan Adalja, and Zarina Hashmi.

In the '50s and '60s, Atelier 17 in Paris, where the renowned print-maker Krishna Reddy and master-printer William Hayter worked, was a popular halt for Indian artists travelling West. The viscosity method of polychrome intaglio was being developed there and Kanwal Krishna was among the first to learn and bring this new 'method' home. While multiple-plate etching continued to be popular in the West, viscosity became the medium of choice in India, perhaps due to the influence of Krishna Reddy who tutored many an Indian printmaker in the '60s and '70s. It was not just Reddy's technical brilliance that attracted Indian printmakers, but also his abstract imagery and philosophy. His work radically departed from the narrative trend that dominated Indian printmaking in the '50s and '60s-it framed a new challenge and a new aesthetic approach. At a time when printmaking was only a fledgling art-form, Reddy opened up unexplored avenues and presented innumerable possibilities. Reddy repeatedly urged Indian printmakers to think, to look within, to take cognizance of their roots, and not to ape the West blindly.

The Moderns

In the early post-Independence days, print makers N.B. Joglekar and Roy Delgado worked in Bombay. Joglekar later shifted to Baroda where he was instrumental in setting up the print making section at the Faculty of Fine Arts at M.S. University in 1950. Under his tutelage, and later, under Jyoti Bhatt's, the city witnessed a flurry of print making activity in the '60s and the early '70s. Before the introduction of post-graduate courses in printmaking, painters and sculptors were often accomplished print makers. From 1962 onwards, in conjunction with the Faculty's annual art fair, many students and teachers made forays into print making. Following Baroda's initiative, Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan, started its own annual art fair, Nandan Mela, in the late '60s, to which, to date, the Department of Graphic Art continues to make a sizeable contribution.

From the '70s onwards, Jyoti Bhatt, Vinod Ray Patel, V. S. Patel, P. D. Dhumal, Rini Dhumal, Jayanti Rabadia, Vijay Bagodi, Naina Dalal, and Jayant Parikh remained active contributors to the graphic arts movement in Baroda. While Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan, emerged as the stronghold of traditional print making practices, the Baroda artists turned their attentions to more innovative print making practices, exploring serigraphy and photographic processes. Jyoti Bhatt used his unique pictorial sensibility to develop a rich and varied visual vocabulary through his prints. Rini Dhumal emerged as an important young print maker-she grew as a colourist thanks to her explorations in lithography and colour viscosity. Naina Dalal used her skill in drawing to address the human predicament through colography. Jayant Parikh's use of the same medium was radically different, as he used it to generate decorative, texturally rich, abstract surfaces.

Baroda continued to be an active centre for the graphic arts. Apart from the Faculty, many printmaking initiatives were set up, especially to further collaborations across media. In the late '80s, the Kanoria Centre for the Arts in Ahmedabad instituted a print making studio that drew fresh art school graduates and upcoming artists to its facilities.

Traditional Print making Techniques

Traditional printmaking techniques fall into four categories: relief printing where the image is created by carving from a flat plane those areas which will not be part of the image, and applying ink to the raised area (e.g., woodblock); intaglio, where the image is created by removing surface and forcing ink into the negative spaces (e.g., etching); stenciling where the negative image is affixed to a fine mesh screen and ink then force through the screen (screenprinting or serigraphy); and planographic printing where the image and negative area are both on the same plane (e.g., lithography).



Suranjan Basu, Virtual War,
1999. Wood Cut

RELIEF

Woodcut

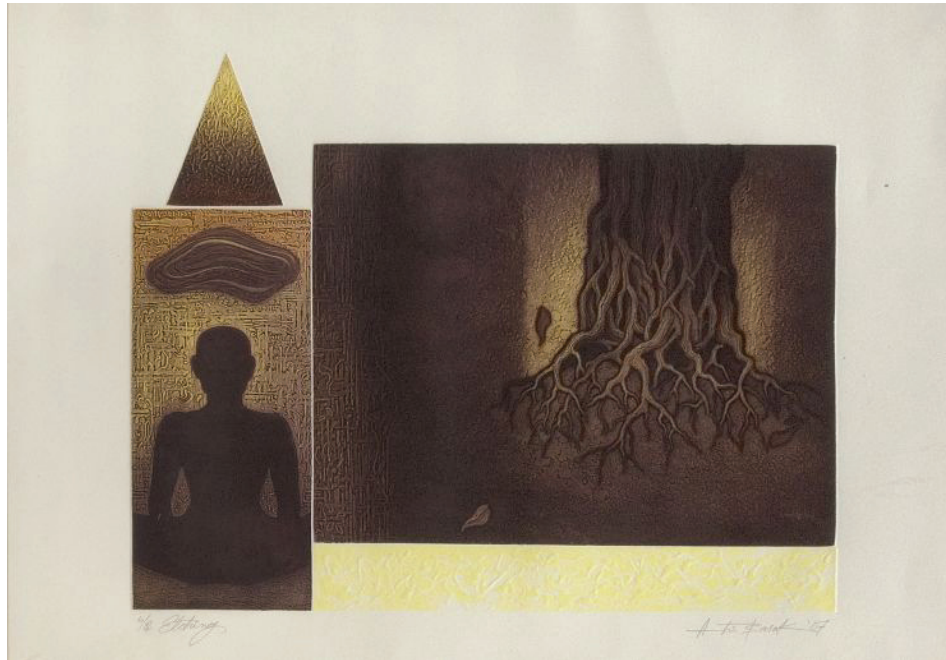
The woodcut is the art of engraving on wood by hollowing out with chisels areas of a plank of usually cherry wood, pear, apple or boxwood, leaving a design on the surface. The transfer of this design onto paper is achieved by inking the surface with typographic ink and applying pressure with a press.

Linocut

The linocut is a printmaking technique similar to that of the woodcut, the difference being that the image is engraved on linoleum instead of wood. Since linoleum offers an easier surface for working, linocuts offer more precision and a greater variety of effects than woodcuts.



Suranjan Basu, Lenin,
1990. Lino Cut



Atin Basak, Bodhi Briksha, 2007. Etching

INTAGLIO

Etching

Etching is a method of making prints from a metal plate, usually copper or zinc, which has been bitten with acid. The plate is first coated with an acid-resistant substance (etching ground or varnish) through which the design is drawn with a sharp tool (burin or other). The acid eats the plate through the exposed lines; the more time the plate is left in the acid, the coarser the lines. When the plate is inked and its surface rubbed clean, and it is covered with paper and passed (between the cylinders of an etching press under high pressure) under a cylindrical press, the ink captured in the lines is transferred to the paper.



Arpan Mukherjee, The Raconteur, 2008. Intaglio

Drypoint

Drypoint is an engraving method in which the design is scratched directly onto the (usually copper) plate with a sharp pointed instrument. Lines in a drypoint print are characterized by a soft fuzziness caused by ink printed from the burr, or rough metal edge lifted up on each side of the furrow made by the etching (drypoint) tool. Drypoint is most often used in combination with other etching techniques, frequently to insert dark areas in an almost-finished print.



Pinaki Barua, "A CITY STAINED WITH BLOOD"
2007. INTAGLIO

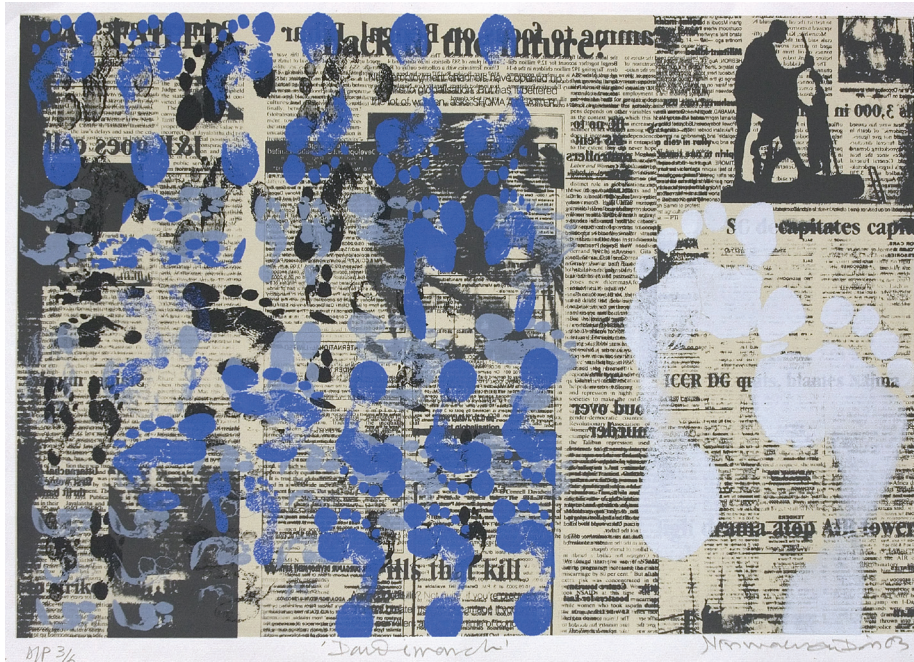
Mezzotint

Mezzotint or "black manner" is the technique which, contrary to the other methods in use, works from black to white rather than white to black. This is achieved by laying down a texture on a plate by means of a pointed roulette wheel or a sharp rocker. The burrs thus created trap a large quantity of ink and give a rich black. The mezzotint artist then scrapes away the burr in areas he wants to be gray or white. The process produces soft, subtle gradations and is usually combined with etching or engraving which lends clean-lined definition

Aquatint

This technique is so called because its finished prints often resemble watercolors or wash drawings. It is a favorite method of printmakers to achieve a wide range of tonal values. The technique consists of exposing the plate to acid through a layer (or sometimes successive layers) of resin or sugar. The acid bites the plate only in the spaces between the resin particles, achieving a finely and evenly pitted surface that yields broad areas of tone when the grains are washed off and the plate is inked and printed. A great many tones can be achieved on a single plate by exposing different areas to different acid concentrations or different exposure times. Aquatint techniques are generally used in combination with etching or engraving to achieve linear definition.

In sugar aquatint, also called "sugar lift," the artist uses a sugar-ink mixture to draw with pen or pencil on a surface treated with resin. When dry the drawing is covered with a layer of varnish and when dry introduced into a hot-water bath that exposes the drawing in the resin. The plate is then bitten in the acid bath and the resulting print has a soft, painterly look.



Nirmalendu Das, DANDI MARCH, 2003. SERIGRAPHY

STENCIL

Silk Screen or Serigraphy

Silk screen, or “serigraphy” as it prefers to be known in fine-art circles, originated in China and found its way to the West in the 15th century. It’s a stencil process based on the porosity of silk (nylon or other fabric) that allows ink to pass through the areas which are not “stopped” with glue or varnish. One or more layers of ink are applied with a squeegee, each one covering the open areas of succeeding screens until the final composite image is achieved. Photographic transfers, both in line and halftone, can also be fixed to the screen with a light-sensitive emulsion.



Kavita Shah, AUDERY GREEN- WEB, 2008

PLANOGRAPHIC

Lithography

Lithography is a technique invented in 1798 by Alois Senefelder and based on the chemical repulsion of oil and water. A porous surface, normally limestone, is used; the image is drawn on the limestone with a greasy medium. Acid is applied, transferring the grease to the limestone, leaving the image 'burned' into the surface. Gum arabic, a water soluble substance, is then applied, sealing the surface of the stone not covered with the drawing medium. The stone is wetted, with water staying only on the surface not covered in grease-based residue of the drawing; the stone is then 'rolled up', meaning oil ink is applied with a roller covering the entire surface; since water repels the oil in the ink, the ink adheres only to the greasy parts, perfectly inking the image. A sheet of dry paper is placed on the surface, and the image is transferred to the paper by the pressure of the printing press. Lithography is known for its ability to capture fine gradations in shading and very small detail.

A variant is photo-lithography, in which the image is captured by photographic processes on metal plates; printing is carried out in the same way.



Avijit Roy, Untitled, 2007. lithograph



Mixed media on paper

MONOTYPE

Monotype is a one-off technique in which a flat surface on copper, zinc or glass is painted with oil colors or ink and then passed through the etching press. The process permits only one copy; thus “monotype.” Modern monotypes take advantage of a wide variety of materials including perspex, cardboard, etc., with artists creating veritable collages on the surface, then printing them for surprising results. The term monoprint is often used interchangeably, but in actual fact a monoprint is a unique image where part of the image is repeatable on a fixed matrix and part is not. Digital prints onto film transferred to a receptor paper are monoprints.



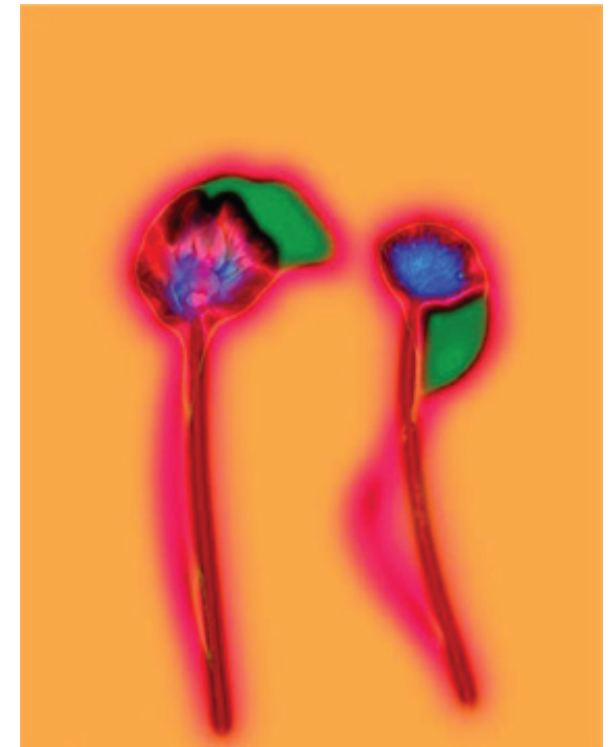
Mixed media on paper



Pascal. Digital print

Digital Print making in India

With computer technology becoming progressively more accessible from the late 1980s, quite a few artists began exploring the possibilities it offered. Senior artists like Anjolie Ela Menon and Gulammohammed Sheikh made digital prints, which they further worked on manually. Jyoti Bhatt, always the intrepid experimenter, added/distorted existing print-imagery, giving a tongue-in-cheek meaning to the notion, 'new and improved'. Akbar Padamsee, on the other hand, exhibited works that were wholly visualized and executed digitally.



Rahul Gajjar. Pitch Trefoil. Digital print

“CONTEMPORARY PRINT MAKING IN INDIA”

Group Show of 90 Artist Print makers by Priyasri Art Gallery.

The exhibition draws out the nuances of printmaking while exposing the public eye and the art viewing cognoscenti to different methods and approaches of the subject of printmaking - the disparate genre that produced intaglio, aquatints, lithography, etching and so on.

Contemporary printmaking in India provides an insight into the condition of contemporary art in India and opportunity for many questions regarding the idea of “identity.”

The fascinating history of printmaking as an artistic medium in Indian art scenario that starts in colonial representation of Indian contents and the evolvement of the medium through Raja Ravi Varma's prints till now has been a neglected segment. There 90 printmakers exhibiting there works. Veteran Printmaker Jyoti Bhatt has taken personal efforts to be a guide and mentor to the curator Priyasri Patodia, in the conceptualization and creation of the show.

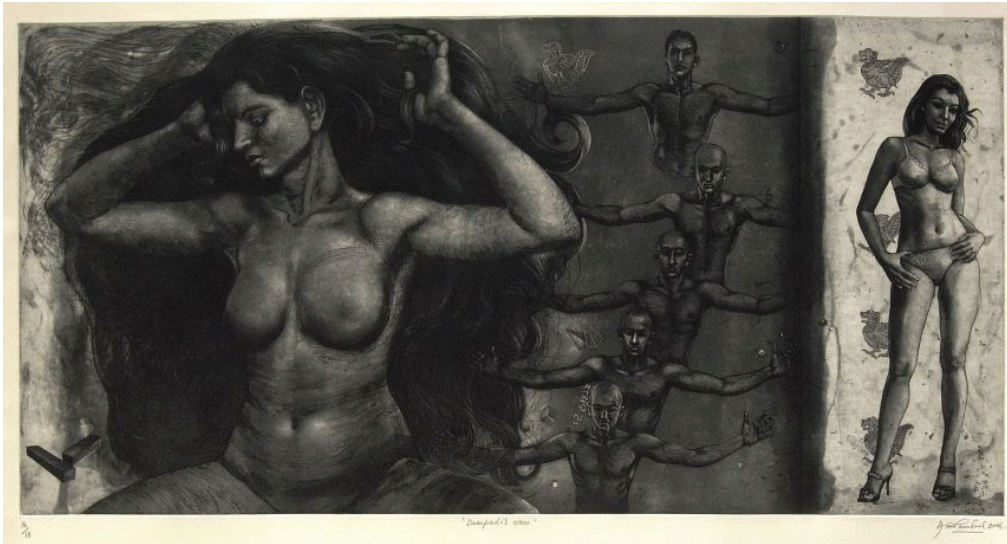
Today even though artist have undoubtedly exposed and used printmaking as their language of expression yet too often the viewer and the buying public is unaware of the difference between photo mechanical reproductions, and original prints made by print makers.

Their effort was to showcase and highlight this unique medium since previously printmaking was a chosen medium of expression by many masters but in recent time fewer artists are experimenting with this medium of art.

The show also hopes to explore questions and understand the Aesthetic, artistic implications of print-making as a genre of Art; it also tries to destabilize the pre-conceived notions about the medium.

Their endeavor was to re-look and involve art lovers in this wonderful space of printmaking.

Work of Artist Print Makers



"Draupadi's Vow" 2006, Etching



My Feminine Side 2007, Etching

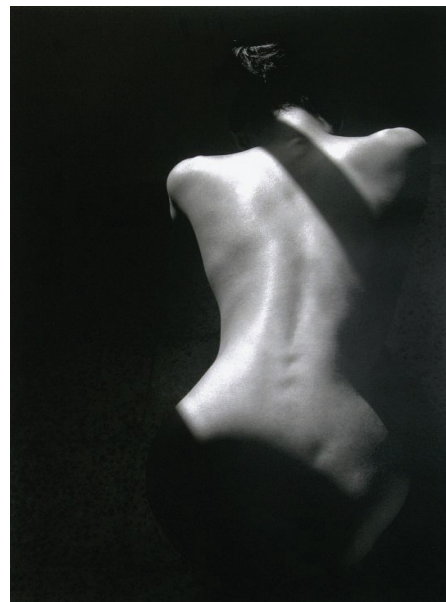
Anupam Sud

Anupam Sud's dedication to print-making for more than four decades, represents a singular contribution to our cultural life that is surely without very few equals.

Sud said "I am interested in inducing a critical outlook. I don't have a rhetorical aim but I do want people to look at my works and see more than just a plain representation of reality. Rather, I want people to be conscious of the fact that they are watching a staging of reality that draws upon my observations of the world around me and with it, the drama of everyday life....It is the intention behind our explorations that needs to be emphasized. What we are going to do was to pull a medium out of its commercial context by pushing its limits beyond the parameters defined by commerce. There was no market for prints in the 1970's and one could push the frontiers of the medium in as a purely experimental gesture. The culture industry did not latch on to print-making for a long time, therefore some of the most interesting explorations: process-driven and conceptual took place in print-making. The aesthetics of print-making was not dictated by market exigencies and this is clearly visible in the kind of work that was produced in that period. The parameters of "original" print-making that emphasize working directly on the plate or matrix, instead of merely reproducing a work made in another medium are very important for me. I work with the medium's possibilities. Ravi Varma was primarily interested in expanding his audience for commercial reasons and therefore the potential of the multiple ways was very important for him. It is only much later in Santiniketan that artists began to experiment with the inherent expressive qualities of the techniques. I am deeply anguished by the fact, that today artists and galleries are complicit in misleading the public about printmaking with reproductions being passed off as originals.



Face, 2008. lithograph



Photography-1 2005, Photography

Akbar Padamsee

Akbar Padamsee never allows the visual text to become inert. There is an element in him that makes his work both resistant to categorization yet intellectually irresistible. From the late fifties to the present, his personality expressed through drawing, painting, sculpture and printmaking has presented a challenging conundrum to the viewer. Regarding his photogravures he says, "I follow a principle - the moment the heart misses a heartbeat, I click. 'Reality' is given. The light which falls on the body belongs to the light, shadows cast by the body in response to light is absence of light" thus reinventing the art of the portrait and the body through lenses, by restoring to the background vast monochrome fields that are carried toward infinity, and by inventing new colours of the flesh that seem to have baked in a kiln, that rival ceramics. "The light is the source of my work, if there is no light there would be no photography and in my case, it is not an artificial light but the sunlight itself." The poetic and structural sign of another immersion that started way back in the late 1953 in Paris at Hayter's studio, under the guidance of Krishna Reddy in an essentially fluid domain, takes us a step further in the exploration of Padamsee's ingenious meditations in computer graphics or photo-gravures.



Jogen Chowdhury

Jogen Chowdhury compositions of moments seized with a visual felicity by an entirely expressive affective surface, but it never gives itself away as external sign - rich in privacy and inwardness. If inwardness is prison, it is also a set of capacities; if the narrative of the self is vital for subjugation. The hierarchies that prevail, the interplay between genders.

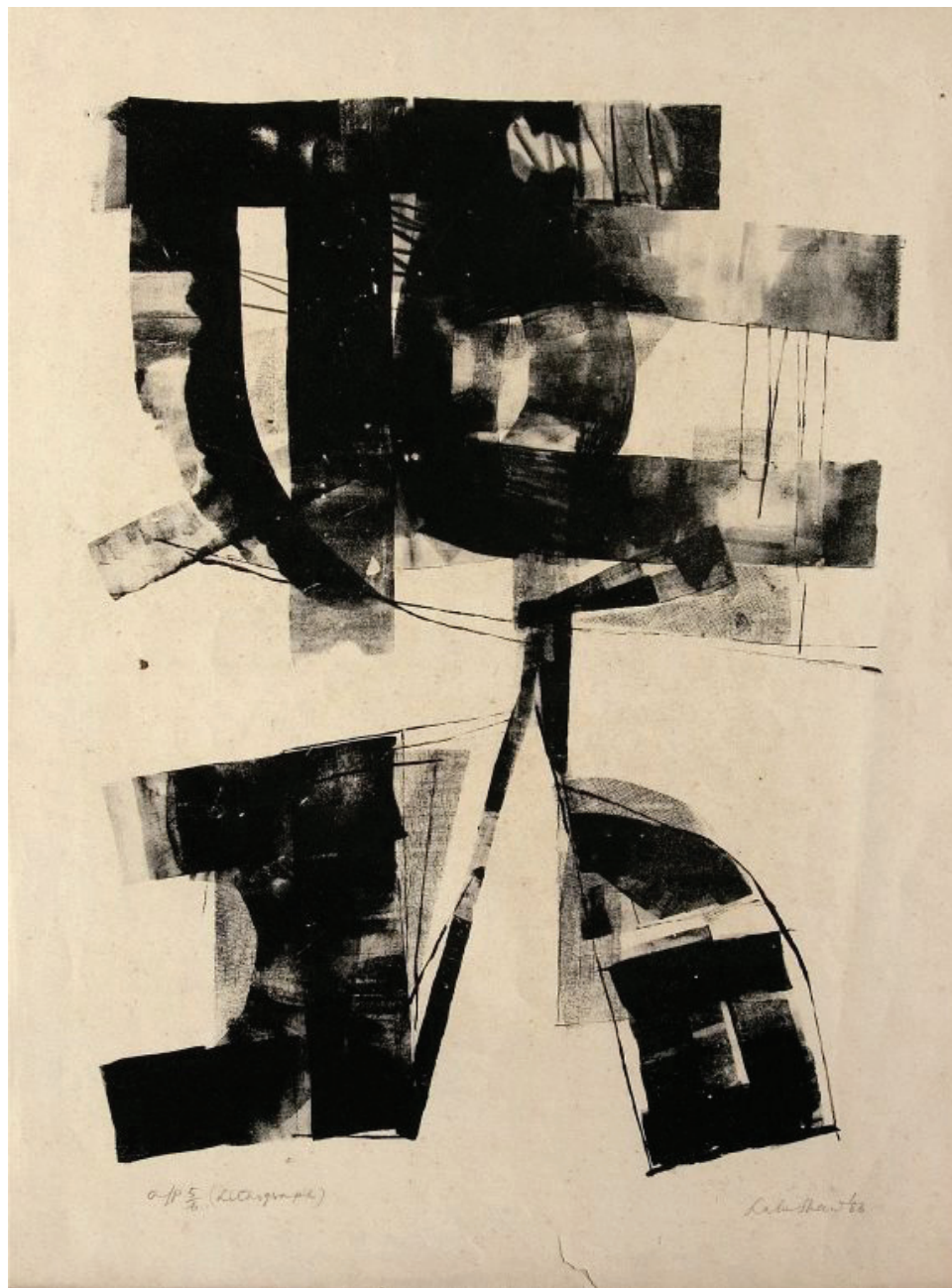




K.G Subramanyan

K.G Subramanyan incorporates representations of one's self alongside his fantastical creations, complicating conventional representations of the self with humor and acerbic wit. Swinging between distance and intimacy, his works deal with the politics of identity, sexual subjugation and gender.





Lalu Prasad Shaw's

In Lalu Prasad Shaw's etchings and lithos, the plotting and the position of objects around the swashes of abstraction, marking the points where their forms reflect, intersect or overlap; the frame within the frame diverges instead of converging. Sharp edged markers intersect with one form in his plate or stone, illuminating areas as vivid streaks of lighting descending into drizzle - his technique encompasses innovations developed over the years. Instead of making preliminary drawings, he draws directly on an industrial zinc plate, a material loved by him. First, he wipes the plate with white spirit to remove the oil film. Then, using a large engraving needle or burin, he jousts with the plate, moving in and around it with staccato motion.

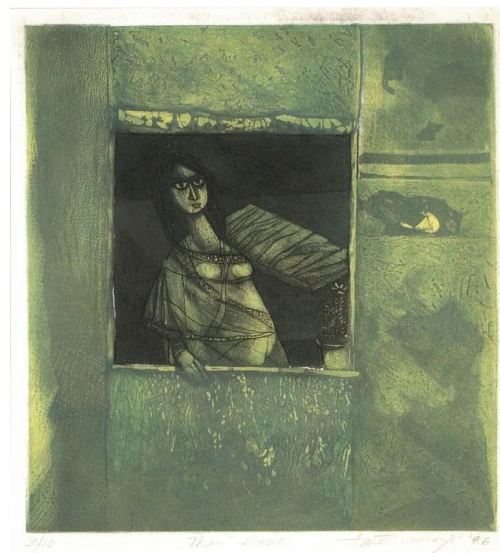




Amitabha Banerjee

Amitabha Banerjee employs a subjective apparatus not as a passive spectator but as a critical insider who controls the 'plot' through the very media of realism which he employs to realize them. As Banerjee's plate evolves in "Night Call", a major and a minor area of concentration usually starts to play off one another as in "Dove". The linear elements run back and forth between these two masses, and occasionally establish distant satellite areas at the end of their sweep.

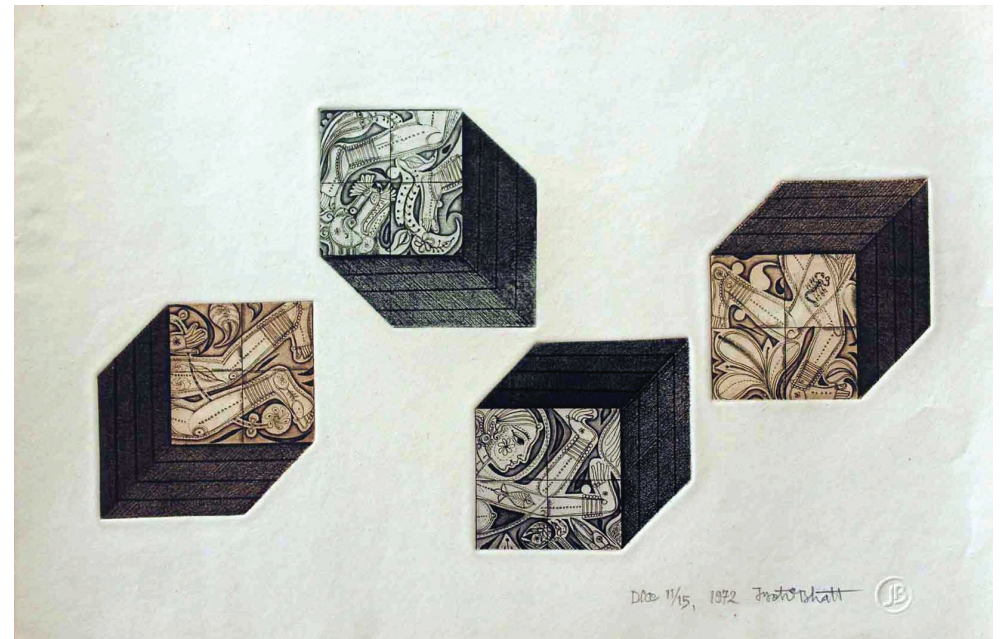
Moreover, the application of color also reveals distinct purposes, whereas the etching 'Dice' produces a kind of textual differentiation enumerating various forms and corresponding traditions. A definite silhouette which encompasses formal structures a sort of monumentality in the mixed intaglio titled 'Tirthankar'.





Jyoti Bhatt

Jyoti Bhatt's studies become unpretentious, the thick paint body seem less important than tone, shadow set against deeper shadow. Bhatt plots the position of objects around the figures, marking the points where their forms reflect, intersect or overlap, the frame within the frame diverges instead of converging.





K. Laxma Goud, Untitled Etching, 1972.

Laxma Goud

For those who wish to engage playfulness, delight, and absence will find them figure decisively in Laxma Goud's etchings. He reacts to the overload of encounters where memory and subterfuge plays a vital part but does not fall into a semantic net. His works are like journals that rally between public and private meanings, provide the impulse for a number of his works and open up an epistemological gulf between the object, its image, and its verbal signs and constructs where the existential meets the topical, erotic and profane.



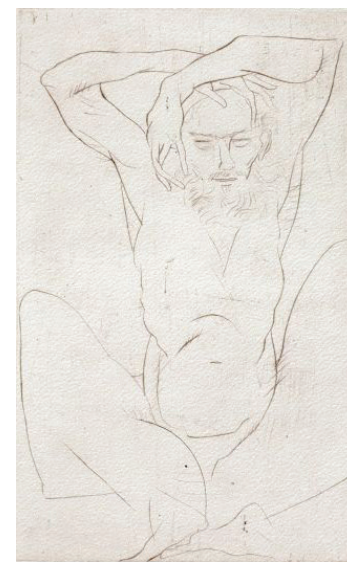
Ghulam Mohammad Sheikh

Ghulam Mohammad Sheikh consciously lives in his times and wishes to engage with historical events rather than withdrawn from them, the times are fraught with new as well as abiding traumas. He depicts them with extreme sensitivity. His language and verve is an act of his mind where the memory mode plays a vital part; the memory of surface values remains with us whether we are looking at his images or not. When the work is not before us the recall sensations stay with us; the interaction between repetition and recollection of past collective has already become a part of the memory - at once dense and nimble, urgent and orderly, light-hearted and dark; about experiences profound and timeless - like a live wire that crackles from start to finish.



Jatin Das

For Jatin Das the process is exciting. "Printmaking is laborious." He says. "You have to plan and think the process and stages because it is negative to positive. One needs to have a lot of patience and be calm. I am a restless person. This is why I like dry point, because there is no acid involved, no etching. It is to penetrate, to butcher and sculpt a plate of copper or zinc. However, one has to be very sure of the line and have great control. Whatever one does is done once and for all. There are no corrections possible. When you do a dry point engraving you have to exert control not only with your fingers and wrist; the entire hand is involved. The subtlety of the engraved line that one gets is very exciting and you cannot make a large edition."





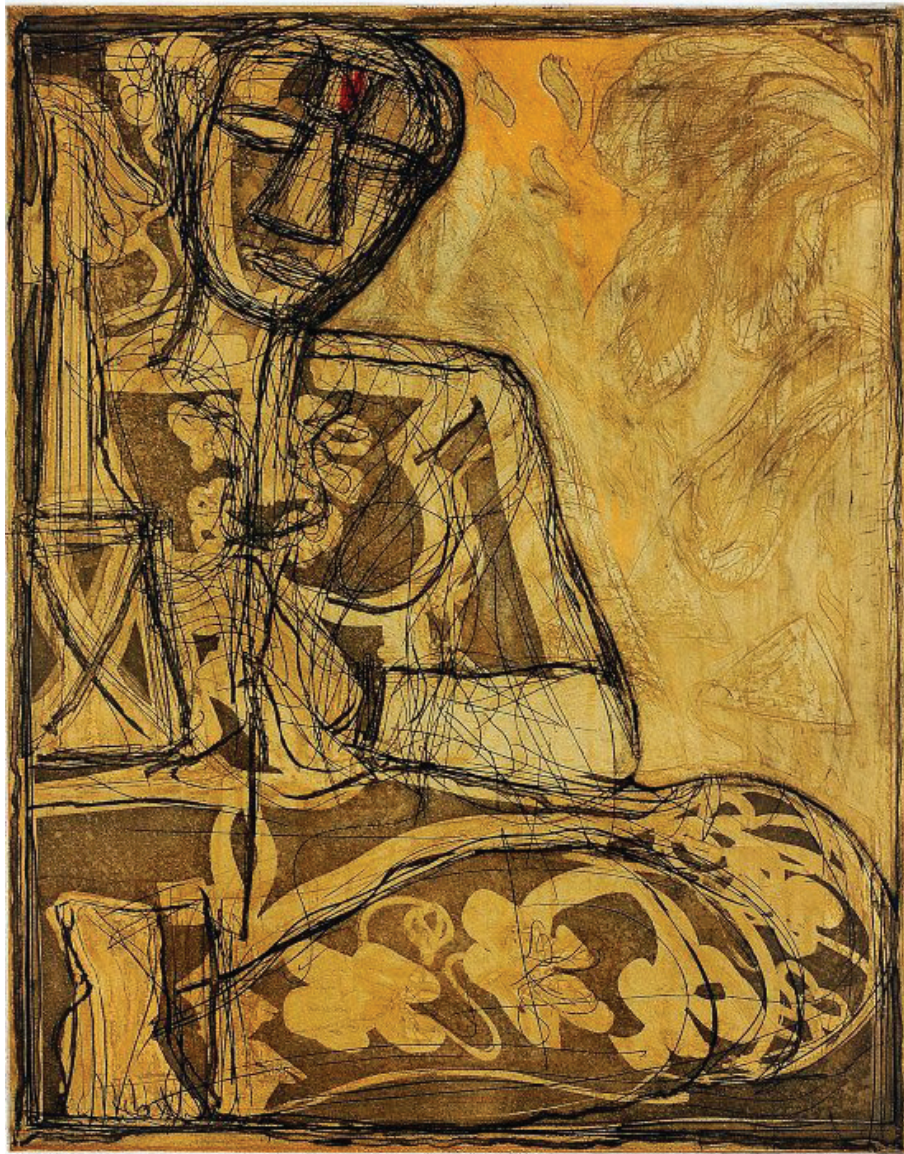
P. D. Dhumal

P. D. Dhumal's long stint as a teacher-printmaker at M.S.U is an arch that links past and the present. Almost single handedly, he built the printmaking department from a scratch four decades back. Even in his work, the use of literary and iconographic references gives a place for recognition of the capacity of meaning inherent in materials and the ways which they are worked, and always have been basic to his work. He has always retained his respect for the intellectual discipline and rigorous honesty of aspirations of his fellow printmakers first as a teacher and then as a contemporary practitioner. Regarding his language, he arrives at themes and images in an indirect personal way, often discovering only after the event that they have precedents. The interrelation of material, printmaking process and image is highly complex, and from this complexity the richness of his work derives.



Rini Dhumal

In Rini Dhumal's work expressionistic markers float through her etching titled 'The Eye of Medusa' - distinctly luminescent. Her performer all shackled on stage, with torture instruments visible in the wings deepened by resulting in a strong affinity towards the unraveling of the innards of a form in her conceptualized space. It becomes interesting at this point how these introspective elements interact with the existing play with form.



A/P 2008 colour Etching 'The Surge' Rini Dhumal



A/P Etching 2016 'The Eyes of the Medusa' Rini Dhumal

Mimi Radhakrishnan

Mimi Radhakrishnan's text provides a salutary reminder that her identity is of a fable storyteller. Her dry point has fragments of evocative concerns because what it does not only reveal but provides instead a wholly indigenous renewal of "self." Her attempts to set up a dialogue between our obsessions and private associations and can be read as an allegory of the artist's calling. She has the wheels of memory to make fitful revolutions. Her kitchen sink narratives are inescapable, constantly intersecting our lives and minds, and produce powerful effects on the viewers. She shares with us her view of a fluid, impermanent reality.



$\frac{2}{6}$

Lithograph

'Mampu'

mimi Radhakrishnan 07



$\frac{1}{8}$ drypoint

mimi Radhakrishnan 07



$\frac{1}{8}$ drypoint

mimi Radhakrishnan 07

Invention of photography has been a very strong force that changed our life in many ways. It especially affected visual art in big way. Most of the then popular methods used for making reproductions became obsolete and this artistic craft, which was done earlier by creative individuals on a small- scale level slowly, got developed into large and high-tech industries.

The printing methods used now for most of the reproductions at industrial level make some use of photography. Such methods are referred as 'photo Mechanical'. It has become possible to make thousands or even a larger number of copies within a very short time. When compared to a hand made print, the cost for such a mass produced reproduction is under standably far less. These besides, such reproduction do not have any easily noticeable characteristics of their own. The main intention and purpose of making them is to make a large number of copies that appear very close to the original image within certain constraints such as, size and whether they are monochrome or multicoloured reproductions, whereas the earlier manual printing process have very distinct attributes. They are quite different from each other.

In spite of the proliferation of Photo mechanical process, artists have preferred the manual methods of print making for their personal visual expression. Although, there are some similarities in the process of making a drawing and such prints, there is a vast difference between methods and implement used for creating images and their final appearance.

Making a print requires that initially an image is made on a piece of wood, metal sheet, screen etc. which is then transferred or impressed on another surface usually on paper.

Most artists make a small 'EDITION'- a number of impressions from the same matrix-by repeating the printing process, so that more people can have the pleasure of owning it. Each print of such edition is specified with its number and 'size' of the edition. This way 7/20 would mean that this print is No.7 from the edition containing 20 impressions of the same image. These also have the title, year of creation and artist's signature are written with a pencil near the bottom edge of the image. Such an impression is considered original print. This is not only because the artists themselves create the initial image and are also actively involved in most- if not all of the technical process but, mainly because such prints are not the reproduction of any other, previously existing paintings or drawings.

A print maker is not compelled to make a reproduction of any other image but has a full autonomy to create the image according to his or her desire through print related process. One can keep on working till the final stage of printing. The image can be improvised by adding, removing or changing the tones, textures and other details on the matrix, and then also by modifying the colours, transparency, Opacity and viscosity of ink during the printing process. Numerous permutations of all these are done till the artist is satisfied with the end result - the print. This is the fairly accurate description of the manner in which artists print makers normally work.

Artists print makers generally employ the following four basic methods-relief process, intaglio, serigraphy or lithography. Either separately or in combined forms. Though most of them know how to use all mediums they prefer to work with one or two and usually stick to that.

- Jyoti bhatt

CONCEPT OF MY WORK

Life for me appears to be very attractive & full of sentiments and emotions. I love to live close to natural things. I want to touch them. I want to feel them. I want to share my experiences to others through my work. Through this I want to bring out the cold war going through my mind and soul. I come across different aspects of life in every interval of hours, sometimes I found myself in high spirits touching the high skies. Sometimes I am cloud, sometimes times I am a bird and what not more... sometimes I am bound to various sentiments and relations & in the other movements I find myself all alone.

Memory sometimes plays tricks on me, I am sure that I saw a thing and then it appears that I never did. I was only told about it or read about it or this thing looks totally differently in reality looking for the source of a memory always inspires me. I am impressed and taught by small things that I pick up on the ground or on the road. I think beauty is hidden in such little things. I used textures in my work to create an atmosphere for my subject. I used cloth, paper, metal, and many natural resources to create an effect as required for the composition on my work I draw all the drawings by my hand and then I arrange the textures related to my subject.

My images seem to stem from a dream world. Yet there are also those that relate to actual flora and fauna.

My imaginative world is charged with emotions, day dreams and reflections, with a soaring spirit and a deep concern. For such values as love, care, sympathy and the capacity for survival as I earlier said that I believe in the words of Immanuel Kant which declare that "Man becomes an artist as soon as he imagines" yet as a youth deeply rooted in a middle class environment and in the day to day problems of the business of living. Man is close to the realities of contemporary existence. For instance, the artist reveals in an informal chat that when someone close to him talks to him of a failed marriage or broken bonds, or a personal tragedy. I seized with ferment which results in works full of tension and dark for biding but relieved by a consciousness of and faith in the possibilities of joy and self fulfillment.

This constantly unraveling drama of everyday life swarms with images from nature, birds and beasts, stars in the overarching sky, and dreams of distant lands beyond the water.

I wish to continue with this idea of my working on print making and will get the identity in the field of print making.



Mid night blues, Etching

Mid Night Blues...

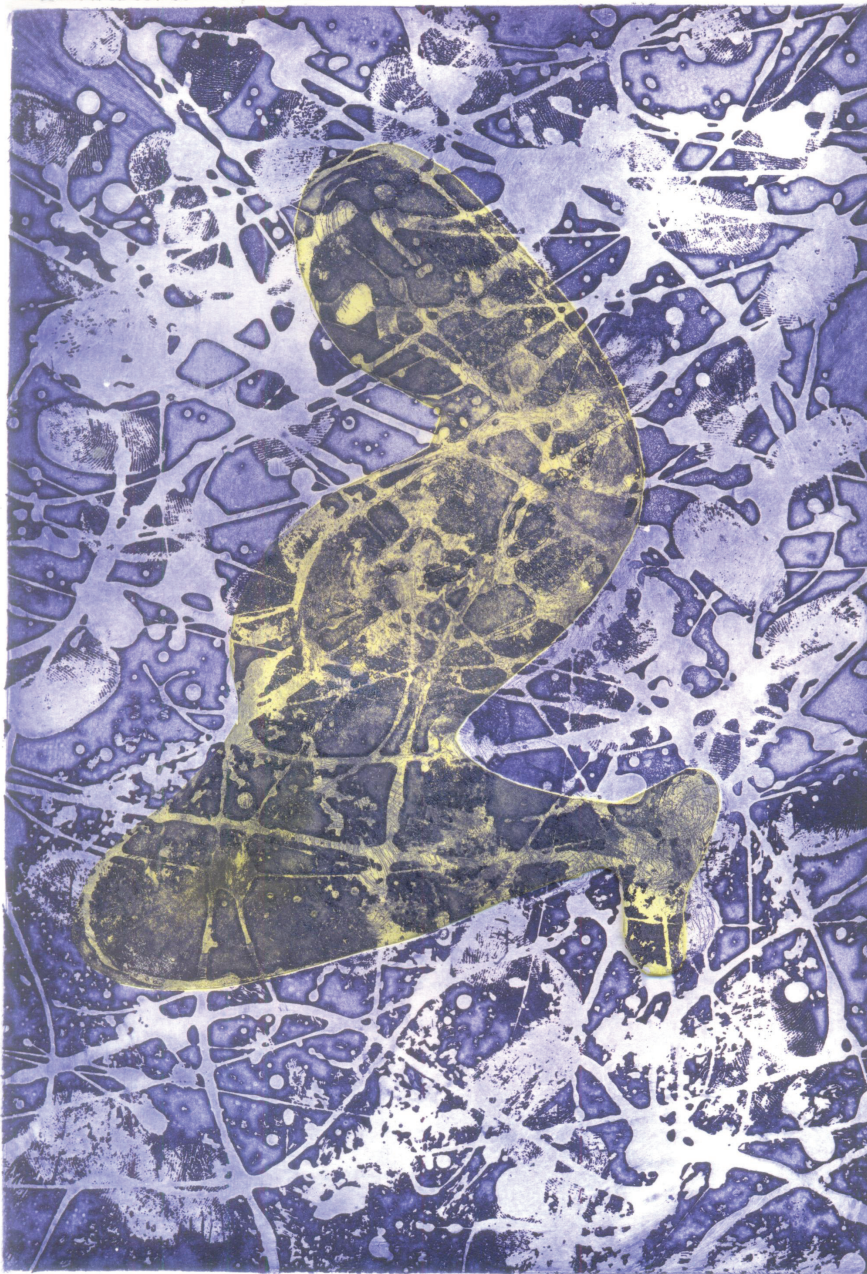
Midnight blue is the color of the sky
When the moon is
Floating in a vast sea of mystery
Shine the brightest.
Midnight blue is the bottom of the ocean
Where horrific creatures reside In blue-black darkness.
It is an enigma both simple and complex,
Drawing me deep within, engulfing me completely.

There are midnight blue shadows
And midnight blue dreams, which will never be understood.
Velvety darkness feels midnight blue.
Midnight blue is the essence of intrigue.

Midnight blue should invoke thoughts
Of puzzlement, curiosity, interest –
Not of horror and fear.

Midnight blue feels like jumping into something new,
Taking a blind leap
And not knowing what will happen.
Midnight blue is the color of the unknown.

Midnight blue should feel like wondrous mystery,
Even though it looks like a shadow
Concealing terror and hysteria.



Colour of my dream is blue, Etching

Colour of my dream is Blue...

All the thoughts pour out of my head
like a river into an ocean.

Leaving only chasms with depths
none have ever known.

And it is from within these depths
that I may try to form a single thought.

Maybe something to null the
loneliness and distastefulness
of having to breathe this painfully
nostalgic substance otherwise known
as a memory.

Dreams keep growing past the clouds,
certainly some of the tallest towers
anyone has ever seen.

To become a fish and drift
downstream and flow with
the rest of the world in
this vast ocean of never ending
confrontation of people and the
rainbow of emotions that lies
dormant just underneath their
skin.

But alas, there is no hope
of achieving this dream,
or any other dream.

The path to the river becomes
longer and longer with each step.

And there's no time for breaks.

As the sound gets louder,
the river grows ever swift.

Fish Pond, Etching



Forcing what's left of my mind to
be in a constant state of
paranoia.
But behind all the trauma
lies a certain peace and satisfaction.
As if the hustle and bustle of life
in the form of surviving almost
completely alone is a challenge worth
conquering. Losing yourself is only
part of the battle. The war lies in
picking up all the pieces.
And for each fish in the sea,
there is a way to succeed into this state
of mind and break free from the school
that they call home and security.
They say it's safer to travel in numbers.
The only problem with that is potential
breakthrough of a single mind in the group.
Keeping in mind that all the others are pawns.
And furthermore, that each pawn is to die before
he does. Using others as puppets,
a 'kingdom' is created.
Nearing the end of the river, for all of those
who made it that far at least, is a vast
deep blue world shared by pawns.
Where everyone can be themselves and expand upon
each other in a harmony otherwise known
as life.
As for the rest.
This land of intense responsibility
and action, of peace and pleasure,
of existence, is nothing more than a
deep blue dream.

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