

THE FIVE MINUTES ANTIQUE SCHOOL

A short course in understanding antique prints: Basic processes.

1. **RELIEF** Types: Woodblock, linecut

Examples: Japanese block prints, linoleum prints.

The image or text to be printed is on the surface and the surrounding unprinted area is cut away. A wood block print process is similar to a rubber stamp.

2. **INTALGLIO** Types: Copper, steel, or wood engravings, mezzotint, etching.
Examples: Hogarth copper plate, Nast wood engraving, an 1870 etching.

Process: The image or text is scratched or acid etched into a flat plate of metal or wood. The plate is inked and wiped so that the ink remains in the grooves in a plate. A soft paper is applied under pressure to the plate and the ink is lifted to the paper.

3. **LITHOGRAPHY** Types: Bavarian stone lithos, zinc plate lithos, chromolithographs.
Examples: McKinney & Hall lithograph

Process: In stone lithography, a wax or solvent loving material crayon is used to create the image on a special porous stone. The stone is wetted and ink that has affinity for the wax image, but is repelled by water, is applied. The ink only adheres to the wax image. Under pressure, the image is transferred to the paper substrate.

4. **STENCIL** Types & Examples: Fruit prints, silhouettes

Process: An image is cut from a rigid paper or cardboard. The stencil is placed over the paper to receive the image and ink or paint is daubed or sprayed on the stencil. The stencil is removed and the image remains.

Uses: Decorative prints either black & white or colored can complement any design scheme if chosen with subject and color in mind. Many books are illustrated with prints of the types described above. Rarity in books however is dependent upon many factors including age, content, edition, number published, and who owned or autographed the book.