

FA222 Printmaking

Assessment 1: Recipe Book

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[Relevant artist model for screen print]

I'm interested in exploring small prints on large paper in relation to distortion and quality. I am inspired with this idea by Hany Armanious' print for Artspace's [Artspace Turns 21](#) print series, which I have a copy of myself.

It's printed with I think two colours and really commands the viewer's attention with its use of the given paper size, as well as simplicity of colour and choice of image. The image quality is noticeable as it only has so many dots to convey information/the image at that scale. It's incredibly bold despite being understated.

It does not seem that Armanious does much other print work except for this untitled work from [this sales website](#), where no other information is given. His practice seems mainly sculptural.

The colour scheme in this second work is similar to the *Artspace Turns 21* print, and there is a similar emphasis on the quality/legibility of the image. I'm not entirely sure what the image is of, but it's interesting to see how the print interacts with the wiggly lines already part of the dish cloth. The eye reads it as one, except for at the edges where you can realise what it's printed on.



Mon 09/03/26 Screen printing single layer prints

Notes from class on process:

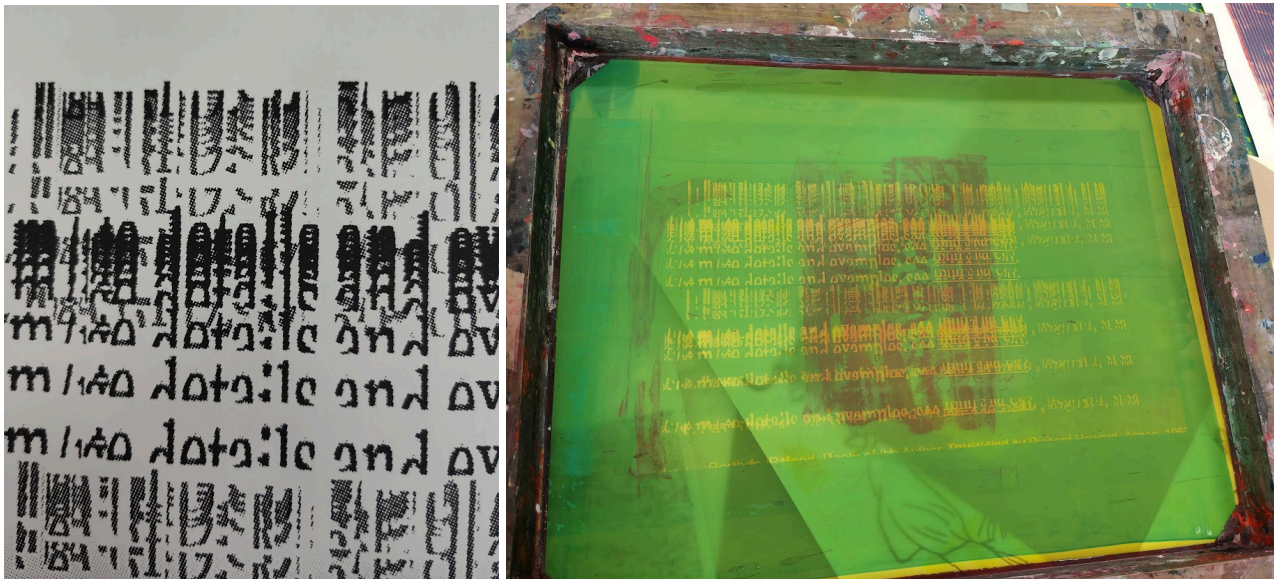
- Coat screen in even coat of emulsion. Set emulsion to dry in the heat rack.
- Print your black and white transparency (is it called that if it's not on something transparent)

IN PHOTOSHOP: Set image resolution to 300. Set image size to A3 420x297mm (these are the dimensions in portrait). Convert to greyscale, adjust levels, create summary layer (shift+option+command+E). Export as .PSD file. IN ILLUSTRATOR: Only using print settings. Send to KIP7170, in JIS_A3 size (see page setup settings). Then edit output settings to have Mode: Separations host-based, Process Black: 40 lip, angle 22.5.

Lpi (lines per inch) dictates how big the Ben Day dots are. The lower the number the bigger the dots are. The maximum this can be is 45, but 40 is good. Angle is the angle at which the dot lines are from the page. In order for the lines to be hidden/less obvious to the human eye the optimal angle is 22.5.

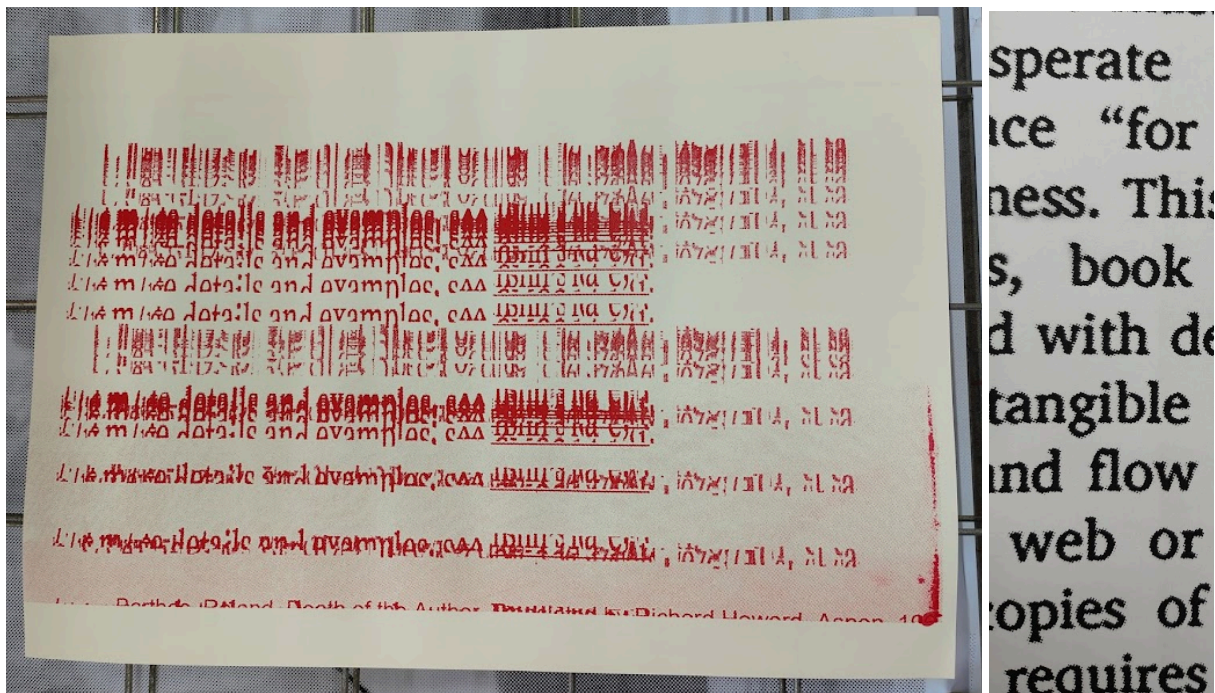
- Place transparency face up on burning machine, place screen on top and adjust placement. Set machine to correct setting for screen colour (different for yellow vs white screens). Enable vacuum, wait for it to seal. Then set machine going, and wait.
- Gently wash emulsion off the back of the screen. Dry with paper on the inside, dry with hairdryer on the outside.
- Attach screen to printing table, place wooden chucks. Get squeegee, get clean cloth. Prepare ink so it's thin and pourable (can add water to thin it out). Align paper under the screen with an arm, then set registration marks. Masking tape off any yellow edges.
- Pour ink across screen so it's just a bit further than either side of the design. Flood screen, move ink back to start.
- Put paper against registration marks. Engage table's vacuum. Set screen down, pull ink down. Lift screen, flood stroke. Disengage vacuum, remove print. Repeat.

In class experiment/first try screen printing:



I used a dot size of 40 and an angle of 22.5 on my image. The image is a screenshot of text on my laptop glitching.

I slightly dislike how the edges of the solid black text are blurred with the dot effect (see example on right, below). I assume the image doesn't have to have dots so long as it's solid black. For some elements in the future I think I would prefer to convert the image to just black and white (thresholding image) to crisp up certain parts. I like the dots when they are a distinct part of the image, not just blurring edges.



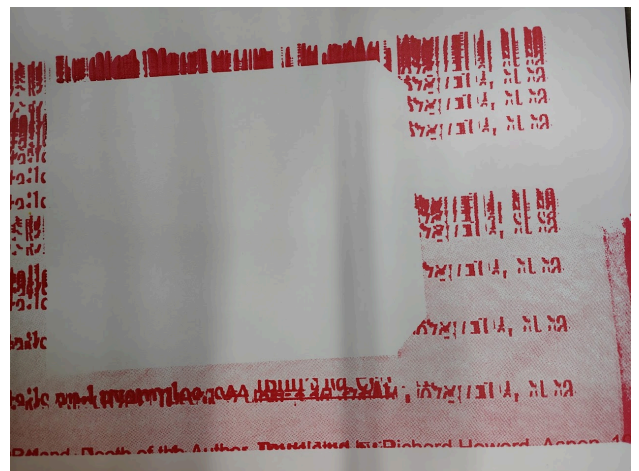
I chose red ink as the image was originally mostly red. Red also evokes danger, and the text already looks like something's gone wrong, so work together in my mind. I contemplated blue as the text can also look like cascading water.

I am very happy with how the slight gradient at the bottom looks, especially on the cream paper. The black paper was not black enough for it to look good. The red on red paper was interesting but not same-y or different enough for it to be particularly interesting.



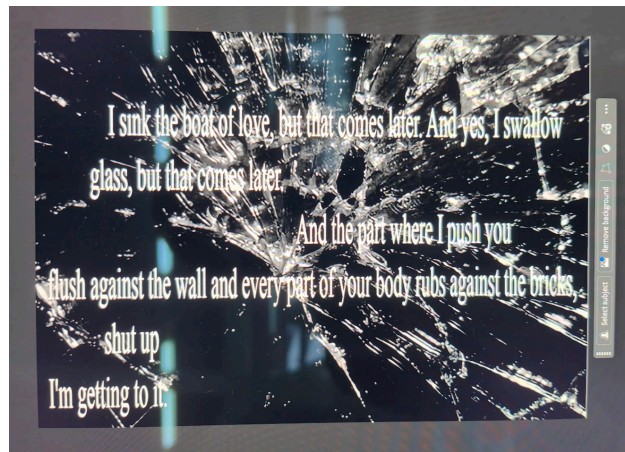
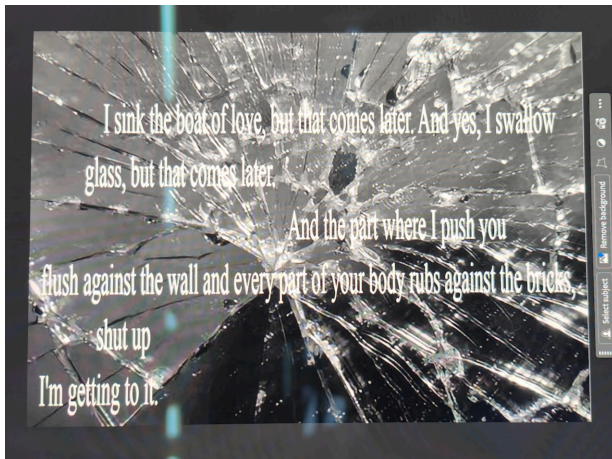
I brought in a couple of found things to print on, (see paper bag and V container on right). These were alright. It will be interesting to reconstruct the V container and see what the print looks like in situ. I enjoyed the crisp outline the paper bag left on the paper I put down underneath it.

There was a problem printing with things smaller than the design size. The vacuum table only pulls down the first layer of paper, so when releasing the print, the smaller part sticks to the screen and the design is more disturbed than the single paper layer prints. This is something to keep in mind if I do this again.

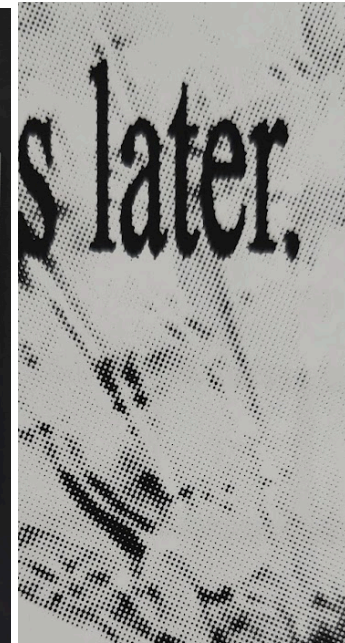
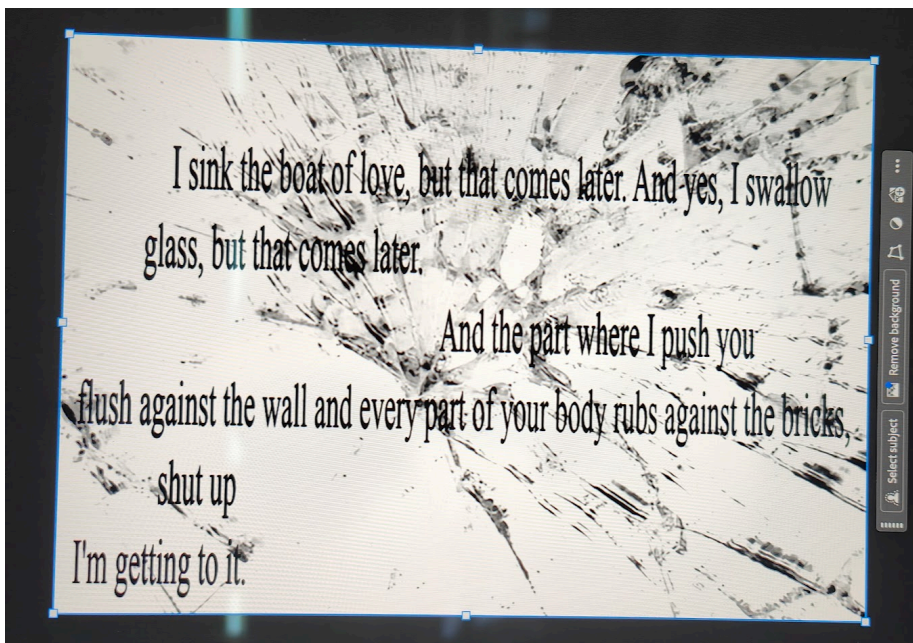


The removed bag print (bottom right, above) is somewhat promising in terms of what could be further explored. The disruption of the image, the layer without layering, the implication of something that is no longer there, the not-so-subtle pointing at the process of making. It could be a window through to something already there on what's being printed on.

Weds 11/03/26 screen printing by myself

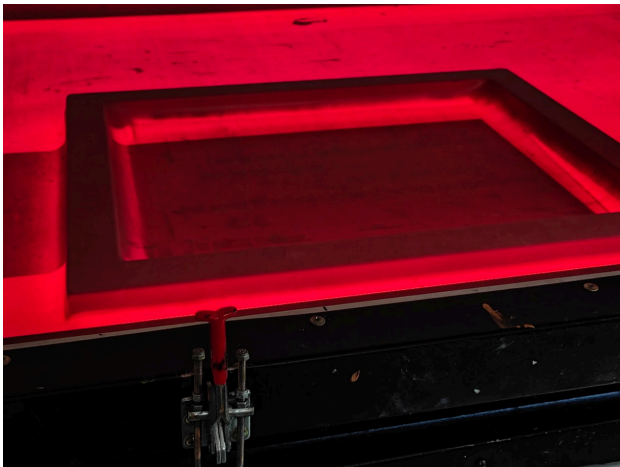


Above is my initial image; a combination of text from Richard Siken's poetry and a photo I found online of broken glass. On the right is the image after playing with levels.



Above is my image inverted, this was the final change I made to it before printing. I thought about where I wanted the colour of my paper to show through, and how many 'marks' so to speak would be made when printing. This more minimalistic approach made sense to me. I think the inversion and simplification of the image also contributes conceptually to the disjointed nature of both the appearance of the text and what it's about.

On the right is a close up of the Ben Day dots making up the smashed glass of the image. I used 40lpi and an angle of 22.5 again, to capture all the detail in the glass.



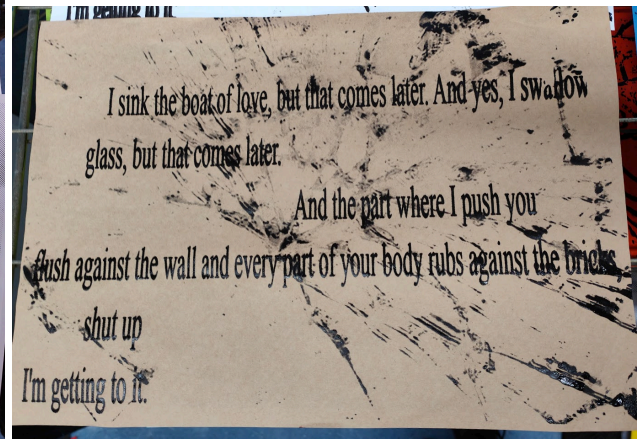
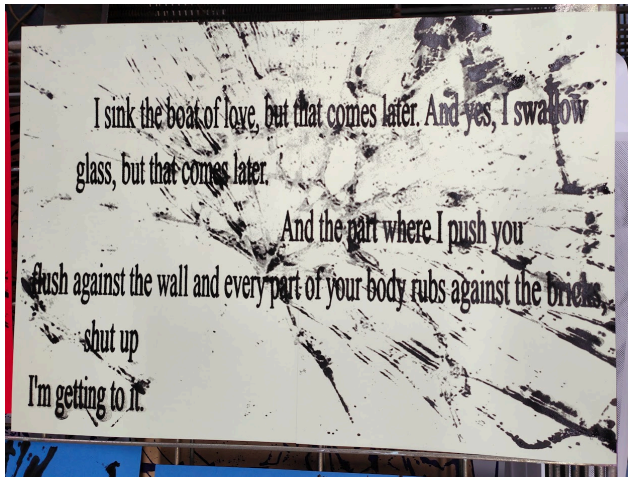
Process photos. The glass shatters are confusing to make out, so I was not totally sure I washed everything out after burning the screen, but printing worked fine.

My outcomes:



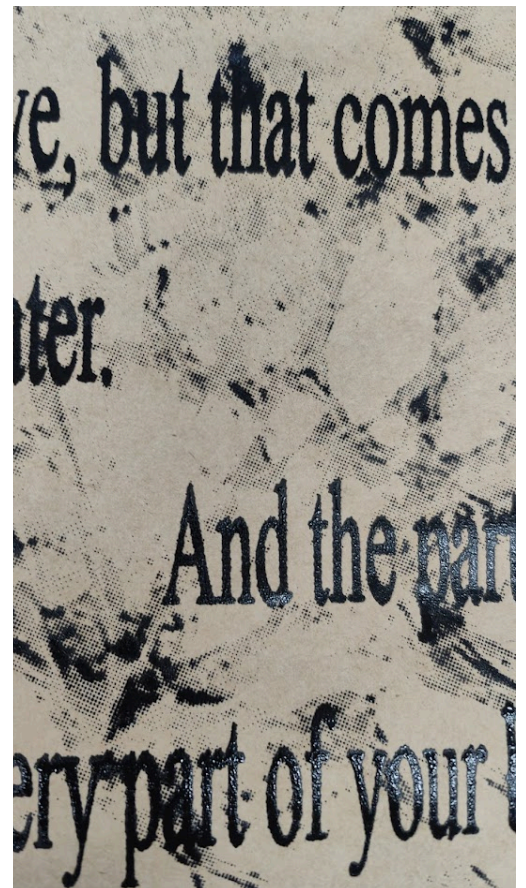
When I was creating my image, I had printing on blue or green in mind, so I brought some of my own coloured paper from home. It was A4, so I taped pieces later together to get an A3 size to print on.

I had a little trouble with ink bleeding during my blue paper prints. I believe this was down to a combination of my flood strokes being weird and my ink maybe not being the right consistency, and maybe the paper? This was resolved in my later prints though.



My most successful prints are the midtone tan paper and green paper (above & close up on the right), and maybe the white paper at a push. They are executed the best, and have a satisfying amount of contrast to be legible. My takeaway for next time is to consider using a border/leaving some white space around the edge. Mainly so the print does not feel so busy; it has space to breathe, but also so if the ink bleeds, it does not end up on the table.

I think something to consider for my final project is also what the relationship between the surface and the content of the print is. Having an answer to this can make the work feel more purposeful and less like a print that's been made just to make something.



16/03/26 Mini critique within screenprinting group

- ★ Black ink smudges are interesting, makes one contemplate if it's intentional or part of the shattered design
- ★ Should try double printing misregistered
- ★ Look into Kelley Walker, Black Star Press (2005)
- ★ Bigger gap between screen and paper for blur effect

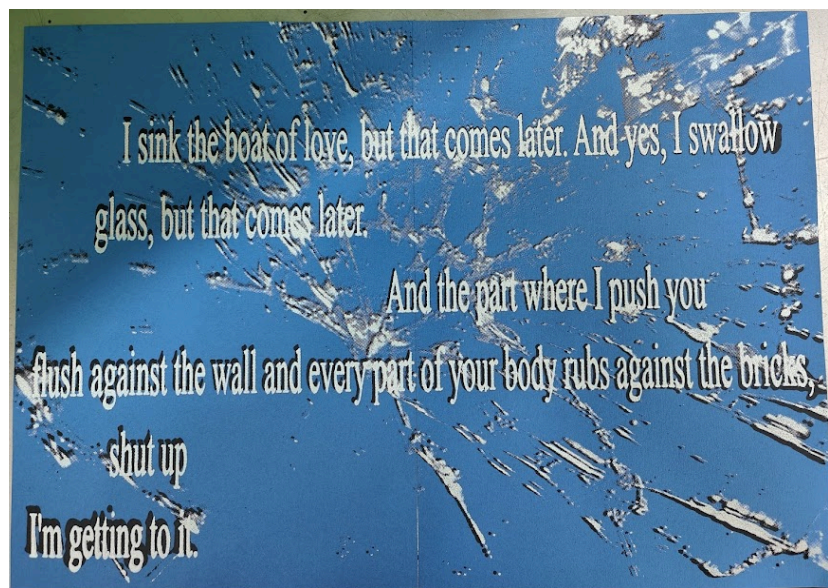
Before moving onto engraving, need to:

- ★ Experiment with registration; perfect, imperfect & what effects these have
- ★ Use at least two colours/layers in a print

The first thing I did in self-directed class time was some further experimentation with my second screen before dissolving both my previous screens in order to burn a duotone image.

The blue is most effective in my opinion. The blotchiness in the original blue print means that despite registering it fairly accurately, the black smudges look like a drop shadow or outline. The White also highlights the design better against the dark blue. It looks more like broken glass, or a thrown snowball. There's more energy in the print.

The red unfortunately looks like a classic coke label with the way the print passes are layered, and I don't love that at all. It also does not have as much of a drop shadow as the print came out much more accurately originally. The white has filled in spots where no black ink covered previously though (see second image of red print over page). There could be something in experimenting with printing multiple colours on one screen at once to see a similar effect, though this would waste a lot of ink if I didn't use it all.



label.

And the part where I

I sink the boat of love, but that comes later. And yes, I swallow
glass, but that comes later.

And the part where I push you
flush against the wall and every part of your body rubs against the bricks

shut up

I'm getting to it.

ater. And yes, I swallow

[Relevant artist model for screen print]

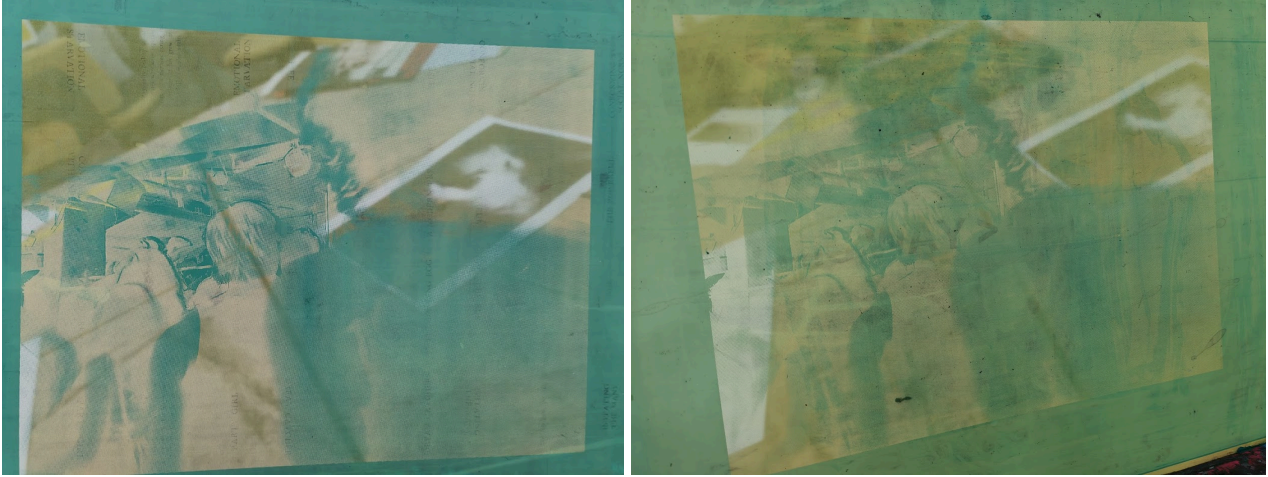


Black Star Press (2005) Kelley Walker

This series uses a limited colour palette. Walker prints the image, then makes interventions in it with the splatter and squiggle motif that can be seen across this series, as well as Walker's other works.

The elements of *Black Star Press* that I'd like to take into my final screen print moving forward are the layering found images and original designs (a more hand-written and -drawn element), and a set colour palette. Potentially for my final project I would also like to use more provocative images.

16/03/26 In class: screen printing duotone images

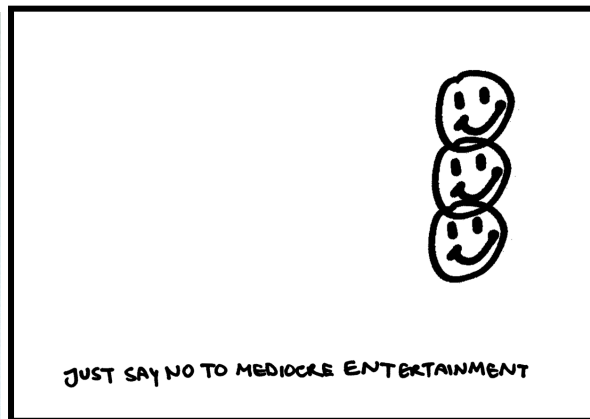


Screen 1 (on the left) sat out in the light for a while as I forgot it in favour of cleaning off my other screen in the hopes that I could waste less time and burn them together. It didn't completely wash out but we shall see how it prints later.

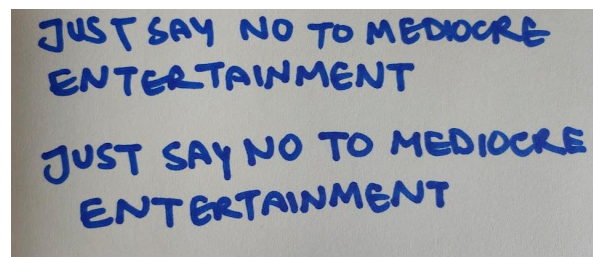
After burning and washing them I labeled them pink & blue so as to not get mixed up later. I chose a bright pink and a dark blue as the original image has many purple elements (see right) that I liked, and wanted to bring to the whole image.



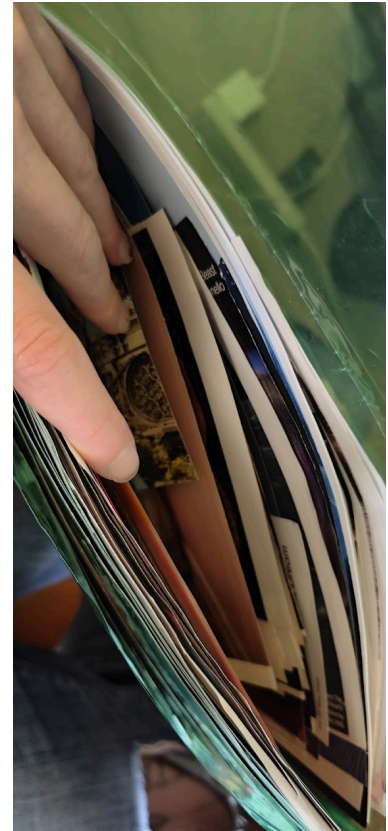
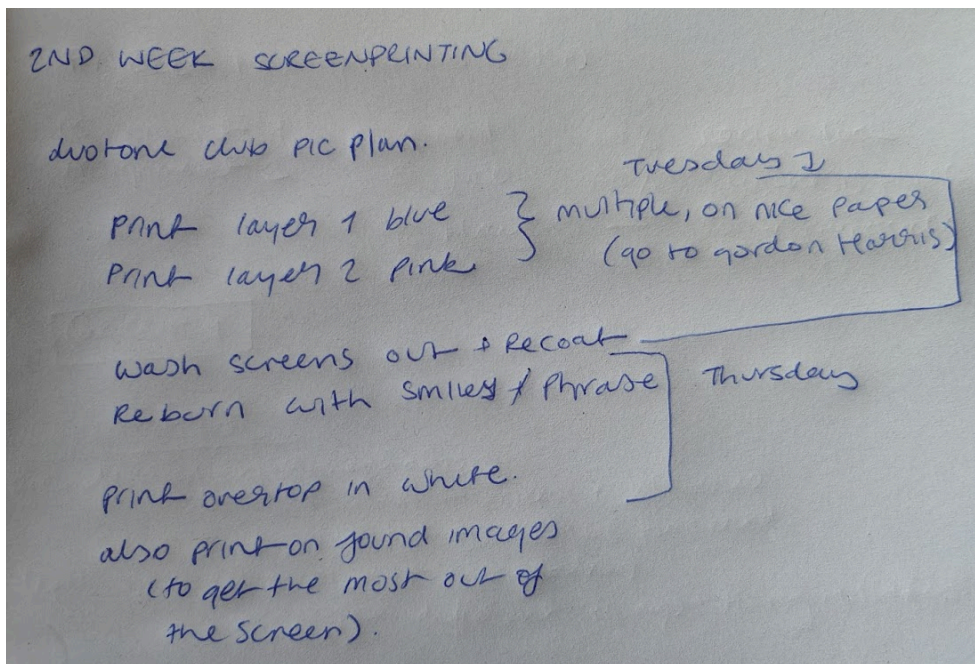
17/03/26



Inspired by Kelley Walker's shapes I've made a motif that I can play with printing over my duotone images in a variety of ways. I went for a smiley face to go with the distorted club atmosphere. Though, looking at my prints I am not entirely sure the glitch/distortions have shown up, but this will be revealed when I print I suppose.



In order to accommodate for having to finish before Friday, when all the screens will be reclaimed for the next group, I did a little planning, as these prints would have many more steps than previous experiments and my free on-campus time is limited.



I also selected a few physical found images from my collage collection (see right) to also experiment printing my repeating smiley motif on. I am interested in the relationship between the image and motif (a sort of Kuleshov effect), so have chosen some positive and negative images: eg. National Geographic images of animals eating other animals, as well as nice ocean views, etc.

17/03/26 Outcomes before incorporating the motif.

I bought some thicker, bigger card to print on in order to get a bigger clearer border. However because of its weight, it doesn't stick to the vacuum table as well. It does dry faster and the ink distributes nicer than thin paper, though.

I talked to Steve about the colours I wanted to do for this print. He ended up mixing some custom stuff for me: a Rhodium (?? this is probably not the right word/spelling) magenta/pink and a process blue, in order for them to look purple when layered together (see second image over page). Steve recommended I layer the pink first in order to get the right purple, so I did this. I could have experimented with layering them the other way around, however due to time constraints, I did not.

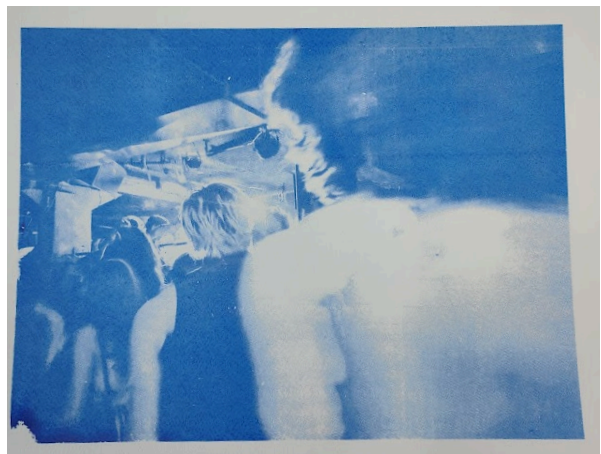
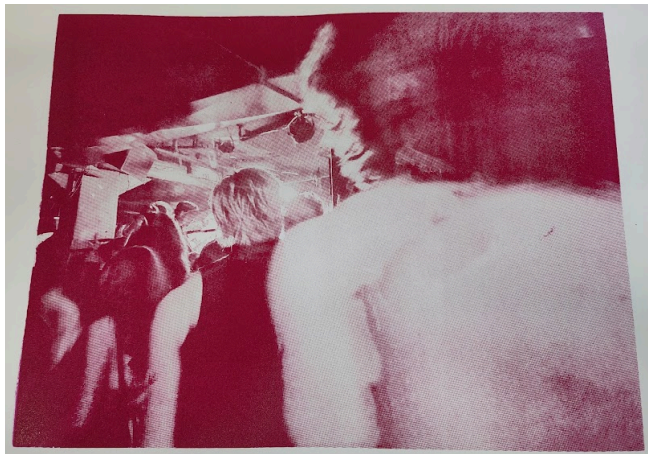


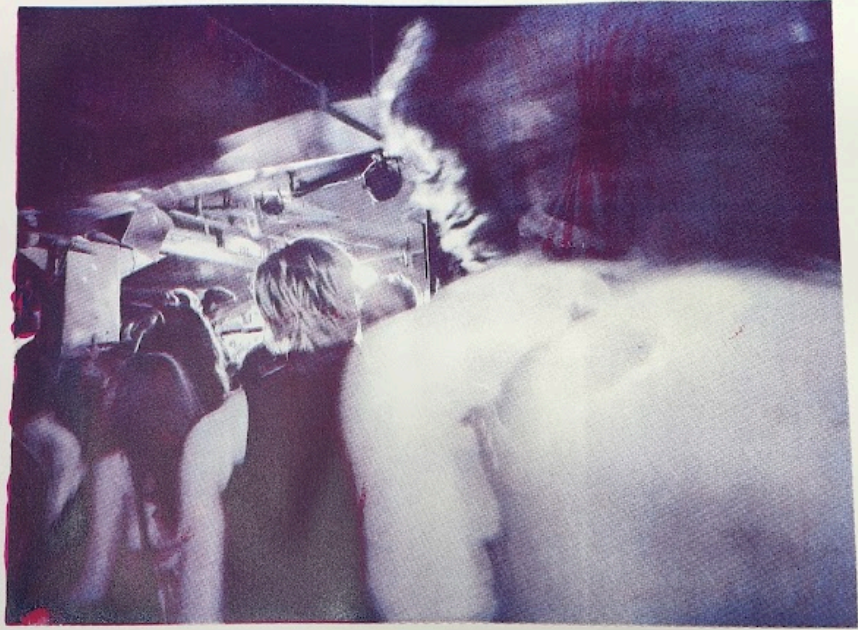
My pink and blue; the two layered to get purple.

When printing my duotone, I experimented with registration: both trying to get it as perfect as possible, and in greatly misaligning it. Both have their merits, however I ended up choosing to present my most well-aligned work once I was done as I thought it demonstrated better technical skill (second image over page). The only downside to the greatly misaligned version is that it looks like you should use 3D glasses to look at it, which is a bit cheesy.

When printing my two screens, I made sure to leave some of my initially printed pink images pink, and printed some just blue ones (see below), just to see what each half of the duotone image looked like by themselves. This also allows me to have a physical record of what the two inks look like separately, instead of just photos.

Ended up looking a bit like 3d glasses pictures when I misregistered by far on the big paper. Not the go, but not as egregious as the coke logo look-alike earlier.





19/03/26

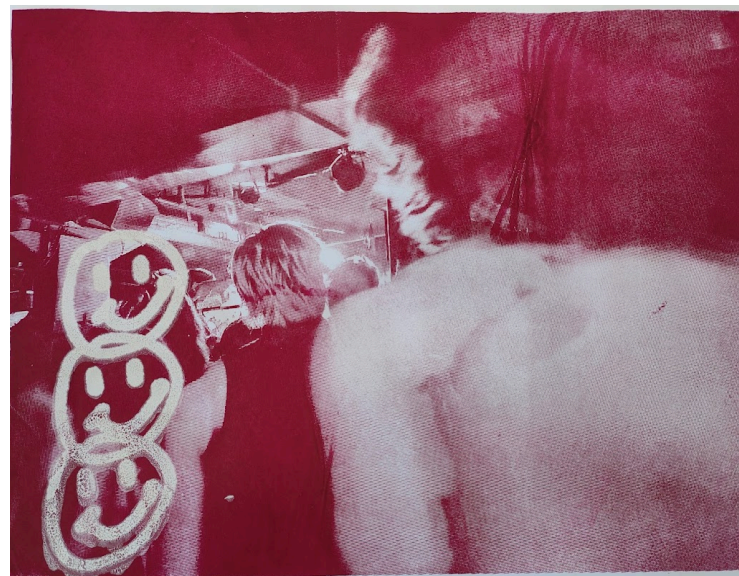
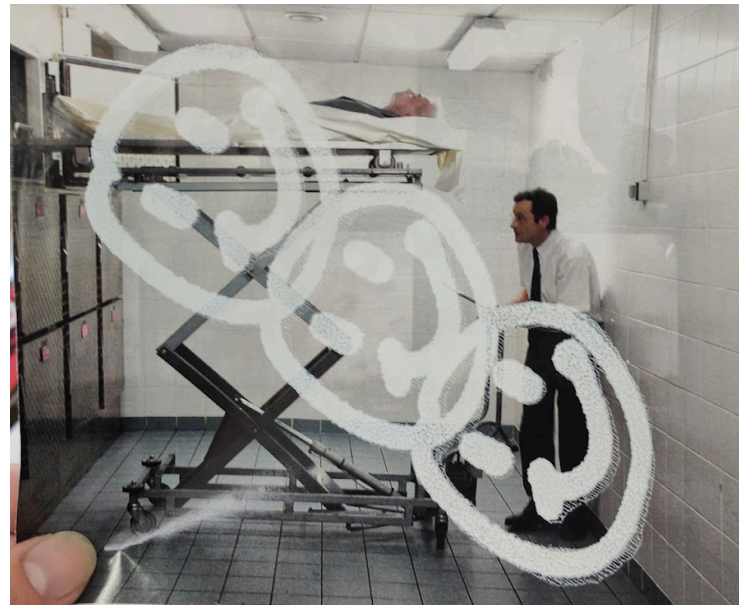
Smiley motif printing

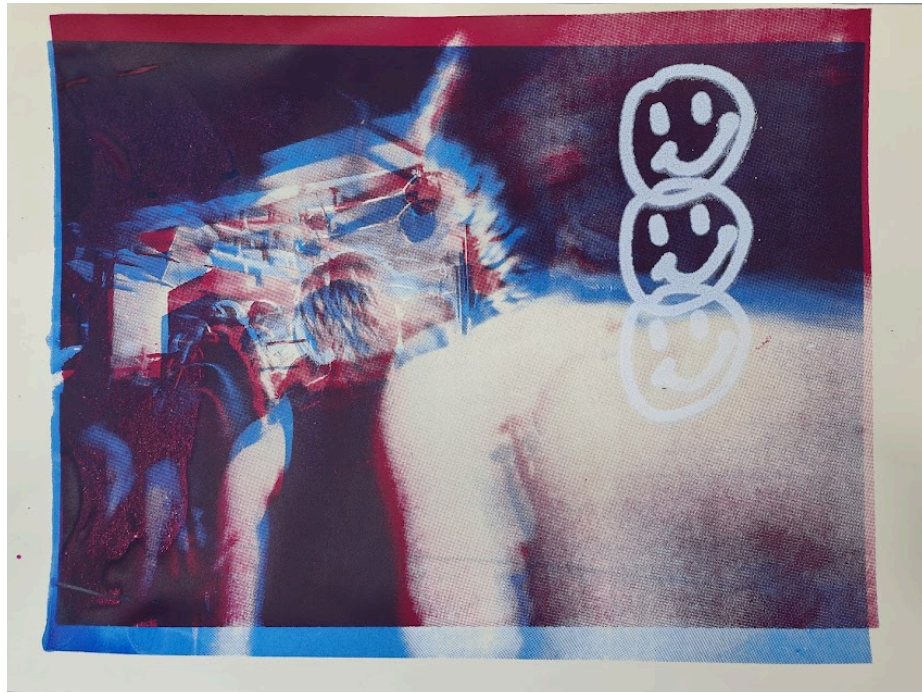
I started by printing on old magazine pages just to get the hang of lining up the screen with where I wanted the design to be, as I could not see through from the top (emulsion and ink made it hard). This involved squatting down to eye level with the paper and eyeballing it, before turning the vacuum table on.

I had a bit of the same problem with the print being fuzzy despite my screen having very clear edges to the design. I think I may have thinned out the ink too far or it didn't like the shiny paper, as after moving to different paper, it was less of a problem.

I experimented with placement on both x and y axis. At one point on the magazine pages I did diagonal, which worked as it was the only way to make the design fit (see right). It looks intentional largely because of the matching sizes. I imagine if I did this on the larger prints it would look random and unaligned with the rest of the work.

Ultimately I came to the conclusion that placement on the left relatively in the middle was best. This can be seen in the first image over the page. On the right here is an example of the bad print quality/smearing, and left placement. In other situations the smearing works, however I am looking for an accurate, detailed print in this situation.





In this work, I'm particularly happy with how clear the white of the smiley motif is against the colour print section. In this print, the relationship between the image and the smiley is more pronounced. If the white of the smiley matched better with the cream/white of the paper I would be more happy with it; currently it looks more greyish/blue than I'd like. I do like how the cream shows through as a more naturalistic skin tone though.



This print is the most accurate and exact version of what I was envisioning when I planned this work. The only error is the blue not having fully covered the red in the corner there. This is the one I will be presenting in the studio on Monday for critique.

20/03/26 drawings for etching next week (see right). Dead swans, and pansies.

23/03/26

Presenting work in the studio.

Comments on my work:

- ★ Effort into registration
- ★ Multiple layers in the print plus smileys

Beginning etching

The making process:

- ★ Scrub plate with Jiff and Brasso, then buff plate with Silvo, then degrease with methylated spirits. Use a fresh rag with each. The cleaner the plate at this point, the less background noise
- ★ Paint 2-3 thin layers of acrylic grounds, drying on the hot plate for a couple of minutes in between.
- ★ Etch desired design. Places that are etched will pick up ink. The design will be mirrored when printed.
- ★ Place in copper sulphate bath for 7 minutes (gently rock intermittently) for solid linework prints.
- ★ Soak in the other solution and scrape grounds off with the Farmers card. Then rinse off the plate with water & dry to get ready to print.

The printing process

- ★ Bevel the edge smooth and straight.
- ★ Apply ink with a cardboard piece. Wipe away excess with rag and then newsprint. The more ink that's gone from the blank spots, the less 'background noise' in the print.
- ★ Soak paper to be printed on for a minute in water until floppy. Dry paper on newsprint and towels.
- ★ Set up printing press with newsprint. Draw registration guides for paper size and plate size to get them straight and aligned.
- ★ Put inked plate and dry paper in, cover with fabric/mat, roll through, uncover, set print to dry.





My in class etching

There was a lot of talking about the process, though this was not shown in full in order at all. We only got to the point of etching our designs, though not putting them in the baths nor printing. One thing I had to do a little differently was my number of layers of ground. I messed up and made the second layer too thin, so I came back and did a better third layer.

After drawing my swan, I am thinking I would either like to print the design twice on the same paper, once in each direction (one up, one down) on top of each other. That, or I add some words in the blank space.

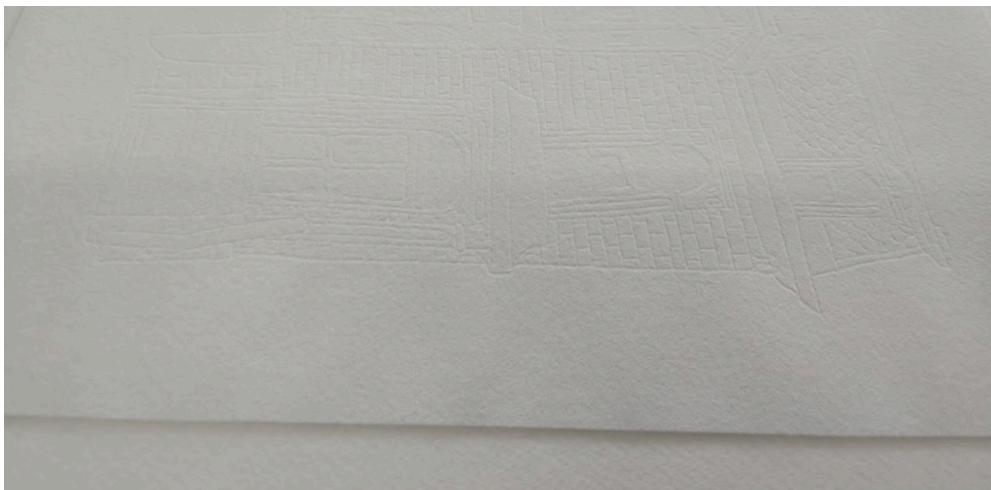
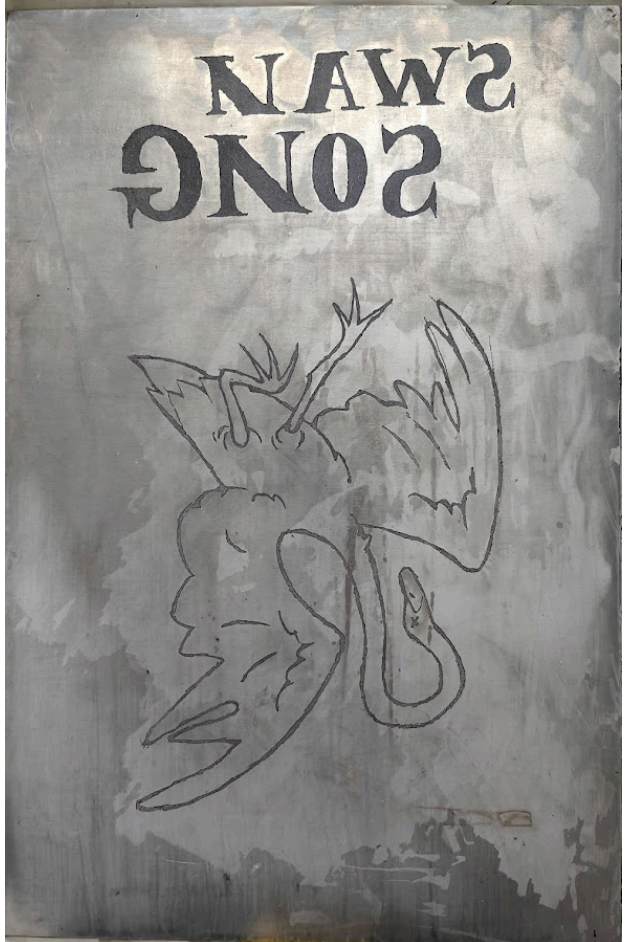
26/03/26

I went back to the print studio after my 9am class with the ambition to finish scratching in my design, prep and scratch in the design of another plate, put them in the chemical bath together and have them clean and ready to print on Friday or Monday.

I finished the design on my first plate, and prepared and began my second. However, the rest of my plan did not happen. I have come to the realization that the whole etching process is perhaps the hardest print method on me in terms of my sensitivities to chemical smells, and chronic pain & fatigue condition when it comes to the exertion put on my hand joints and complete focus required when etching my design.

27/03/26 I continued putting my design into my second plate however overdoing it on Thursday made it even harder to make progress on Friday. I had planned to potentially make my way into Elam if I finished the design in order to etch the plates and potentially print them, but this did not come to fruition. At this point, my aim is to just finish putting my design in by Monday, and do the rest in-class.

30/03/26 Etching plates & printing one

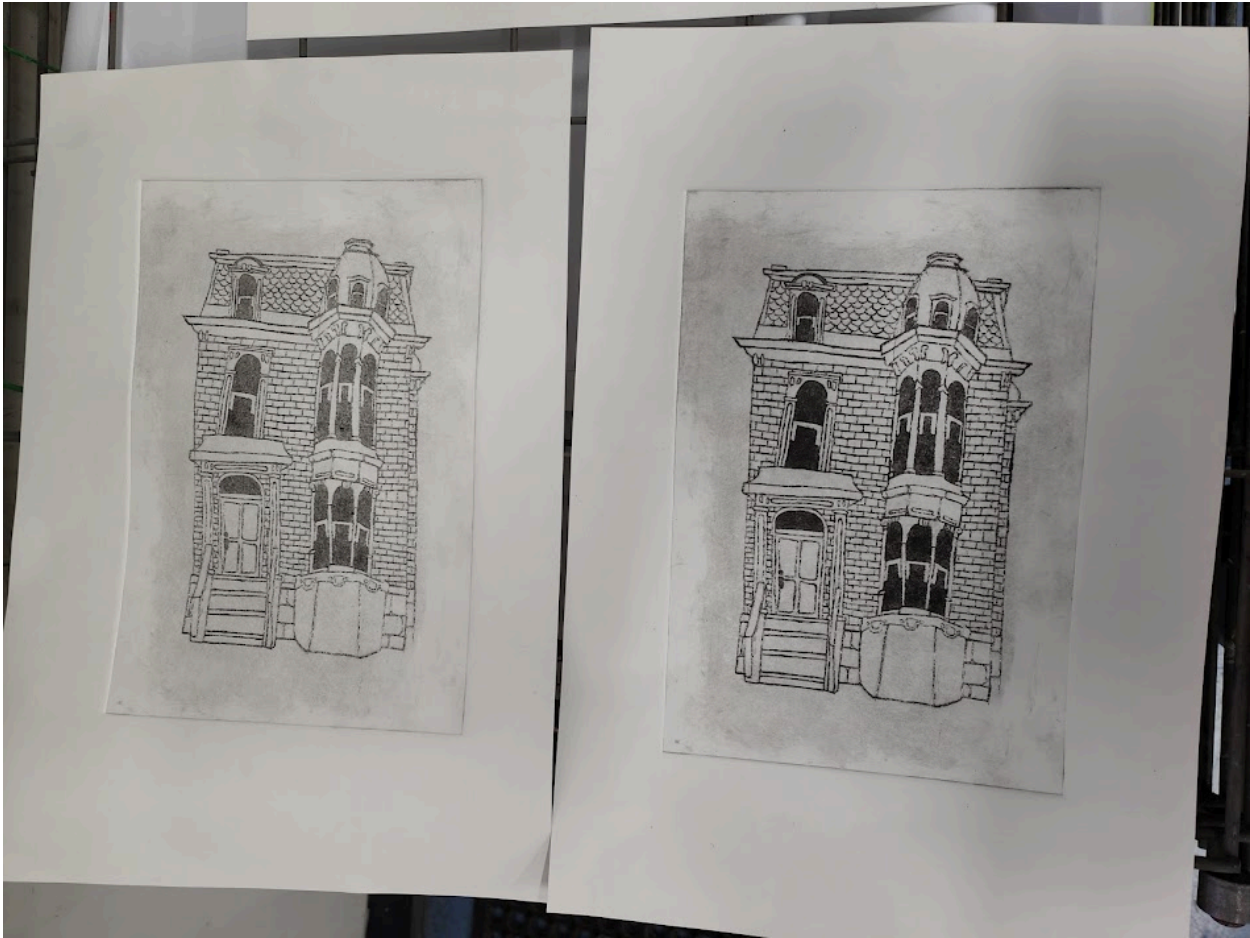




This is what I printed with a fully inked plate. There are a couple of places where the ink didn't print quite right. I believe these are where I did not totally clean off the red stuff when I was cleaning the red and ground off, so the ink did not stick in the same way later.

I am very happy with how the details of this print turned out. They are great to touch, and make the building stand out as its own thing separate from the white space of the background. I only wish I had kept the balance of the fully black elements and had the door open and also black. The texture of the work can be seen in the last picture on the previous page.

I do however, prefer my metal plates as an art object over these prints. The engraved surfaces and the marks from all the chemical processes are more interesting to the eye and the hand. I am interested in using them without ink to emboss the slightly wet paper; a less traditional print.

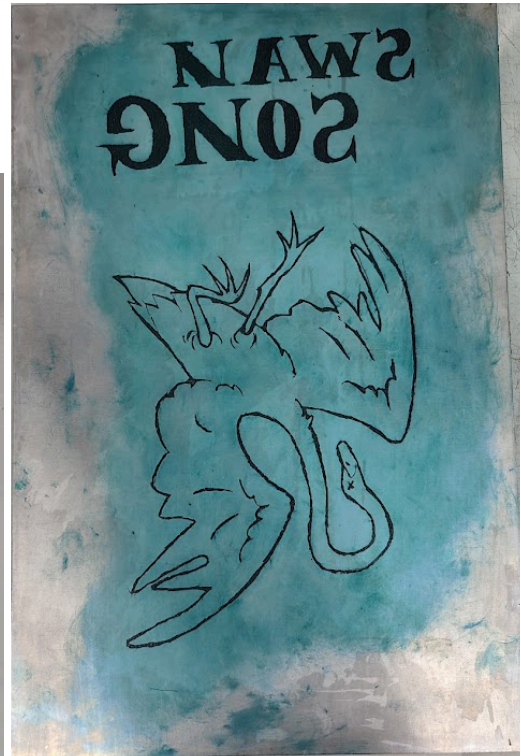


I then wanted to explore how far I could go without re-inking the plate. These are called ghost prints, which I feel goes conceptually hand in hand with the haunted house here. I liked that in the last print (the print on the left), there was less of an inky line around the edge of the plate, just the depression in the paper. That's one of my least favourite things about etching, how you can't really get all the ink off the plate. I suppose I could clean off the edges with some kitchen oil perhaps, or with a whole lot more patience & effort.

Steve also offered to teach us how to incorporate photographs into the etching process. I didn't opt into this in class as my stamina for all of these processes was wearing out (it would be nice if this half of the print studio had stools or an equivalent). If I have time during the break, I may go back to learn that.

13/04/26

I printed my second plate, experimenting with using multiple analogous colours. I chose blue and green to differentiate from the pink/purple/blue of my final screen print. Blue and green are also more nature-themed lake-adjacent colours, in line with the swan.

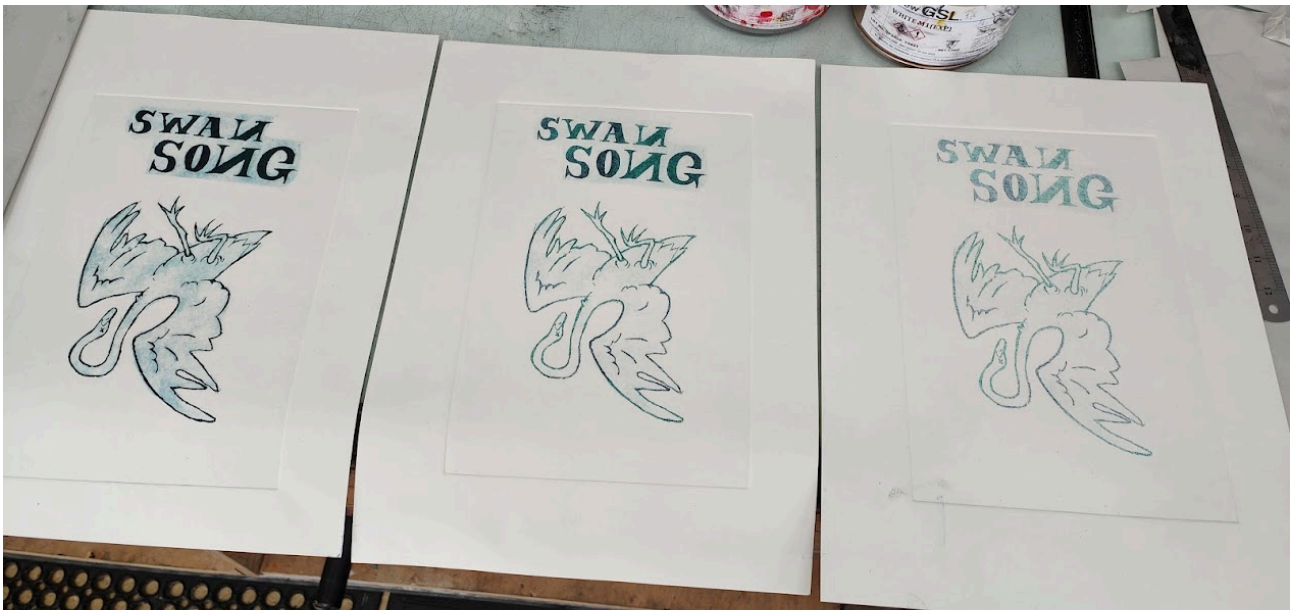


The image on the left is my sheet testing out my different colours. The circled blue and my second attempt at green & blue are what I ended up putting on my plate. The lines on the left of the page are Steve demonstrating how inks with different levels of medium in them can overlap and interact with each other. The right image is my plate halfway through buffing away excess ink. You can't really see where I've put the different colours oh well.

I had an inkling I was doing the N around the wrong way when I was engraving it but I was too tired to check, so here they are printed around the wrong way. Oops.

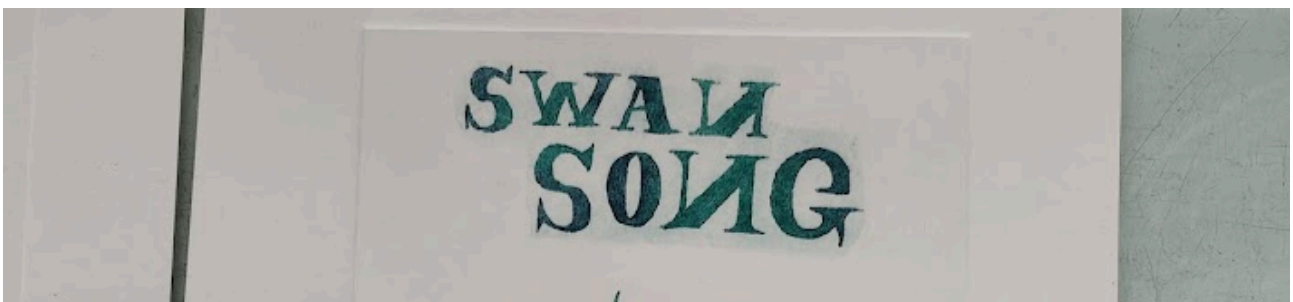
I ended up using oil (I think) to clean up the edges of my swan so there would be no plate tone. I didn't bother getting too close to the title as I didn't mind the plate tone there so much. I much prefer this to the 'messy' look of plate tone. When printing I initially placed the plate lower than centre on the paper to correct for how high the 'swan song' words are to the top of my plate. This looked a little odd, so I placed it higher in the latter two.

My final prints for this plate:



I view these prints as a series. They are again ghost prints, on theme with the 'swan song' concept; an end of life performance before fading away.

In the second and third prints it's easier to see the different (though similar) colours I selected and placed around the plate (see image below, this is the second print). I think it would be easier to read the colours as different if I used a lighter blue instead of one that was basically black. That, or used a neon green. It would also help if there was more linework or large etched spaces where you could properly see it.



Overall I largely prefer screen print and will definitely be going in that direction for my final project in this course.