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Introduction to Multicolor Printing

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Introduction to Multicolor Printing



Relief Multicolor Prints

Although many classic relief prints use only one color, there are various ways to make colorful relief prints as well! Three common methods are:

- Reduction printing
- Traditional block printing
- **Jigsaw printing**

Today we will be discussing jigsaw printing, as it is one of the simplest methods to get multicolor prints.

Multicolor Prints by the masters...



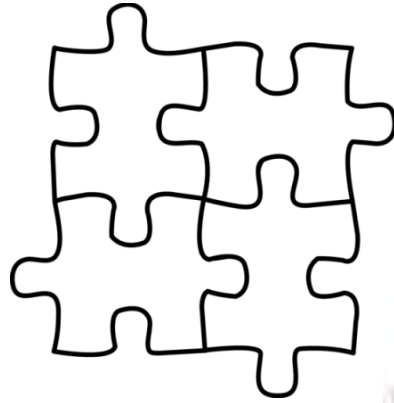
Hokusai



Elizabeth Catlett

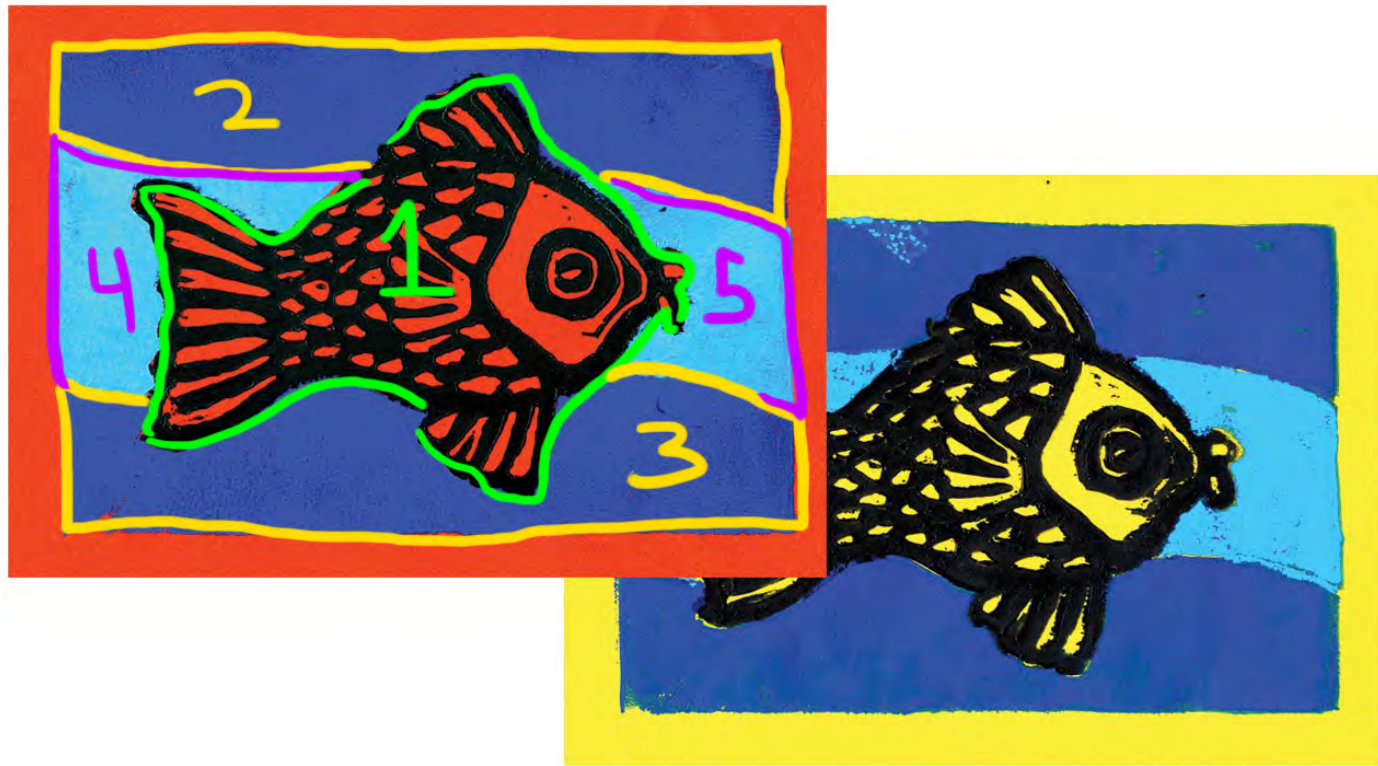
Jigsaw Printing

Jigsaw printing is named as such because it is similar to how a jigsaw puzzle works. The plate is cut into several different pieces, a different color for each piece. After the pieces are inked, they are put back together again and used to print a full multicolor image!





Jigsaw Prints



The plate for this image has been cut into 5 pieces. Each piece is inked separately and put together for a final print. What **colors of ink** did the artist use for this piece?

Thinking about your image...

This process is going to be exactly like your previous lesson in relief printmaking, only we are adding multiple colors. Think about your previous prints and how you could add color or create a new print with more colors. Here are some ideas:

- The subject and background are two different colors
- Two subjects in two different colors
- A landscape with a different color for the sky and ground

When making your prints today, aim for at least **2 different colors**. If you feel like more colors would suit your image, **you can do up to 4.**

Thinking about your image...

When you have decided on an image, label each section of the image as the color you want it to show up as. Show the teacher before you begin transferring it to your plate.

Remember again to always **print in reverse**. Any text or symbols you want to include in your image must be mirrored when you draw them.

Cutting Your Image

Once you have your image drawn and labelled it's time to cut it out! Make sure you show the teacher your plate before you start cutting. You can carve into the plate before or after to cut the plate into multiple pieces.

Inking your Plate

Inking will be the same as in the last relief process but you will be inking multiple pieces of your plate different colors. Ink each section of the plate in quick succession, making sure you get a thin and even layer of ink on each piece. After you've inked each piece, reassemble your plate into its complete form. Take your paper and press it onto your inked plate, applying even pressure all around. Carefully peel back the paper to reveal your first multicolor print!

Refining your Prints

After observing your first print, take some time to decide where you can improve. You may decide that you need to:

- Carve more away on your plate
- Add more or less ink
- Change your color scheme
- Apply more pressure when printing

Keep refining your prints until you have an edition of 5 prints you are satisfied with. Make sure you sign and number them!

Lesson Reflection

- Did you enjoy this process? What did you like/dislike about it?
- How was this process different than the single color process?