CONTEMPORARY PRINTS: HYBRID PROCESSES.
BETWEEN TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES AND PHOTOGRAVURE

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UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID | UCM
Benveniste Contemporary workshop, Madrid
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1. The Workshop

The research in printing processes is performed systematically all around the world by different workshops.

The collaboration between the artists and the print workshops strengthens this investigation: the artist needs effective solutions for expressing his/hers own pictorial message through the media, and often these methods have to be discovered for each project.

There is a solid tradition in the modern and contemporary workshops for developing new ways of working with prints. All of these workshops open up to the possibilities that new materials and new technology may offer. Hybrid processes are a main part of this process.

A hybrid process means that the artists require the use of more than one sole technique to build their image.
Relevant workshops (selection)

**Atelier 17** (Paris and later New York) 1927-1988  
**Director**: S.W. Hayter  
**Artists**: Pablo Picasso, Alberto Giacometti, Joan Miró, Alexander Calder, Marc Chagall, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Mauricio Lasansky, K.R.H. Sonderborg…  
**Book**: The Renaissance of gravure, 1988
Relevant workshops (selection)

ATELIER MOURLOT: 20/80 Paris
Director: Fernand Mourlot
Technique: Lithographic artistic poster
Publisher: Tériade
Artists: Bonnard, Matisse, Miró, Picasso…

Joan Miro with Fernand Mourlot
Henri Matisse at the Mourlot Studio
Relevant workshops (selection)

TAMARIND WORKSHOP: 1960 Los Angeles, California. Today linked to the Universidad de Nuevo México.
Director: June Wyne. Since 1985, Marjorie Devon
Technique: Lithography
Artists: Ed Ruscha, Kiki Smith, Jim Dine, Josef Albers…
Books: Tamarind Techniques. The art of Lithography
Relevant workshops (selection)

**UNIVERSAL LIMITED ART EDITIONS – ULAE**: 1957, New York

**Director**: Tatyana Grosman

**Technique**: Lithography

**Publisher**: Leo Castelli (Abstract Expressionist)

**Artists**: Larry Rivers, Sam Francis, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg…
Relevant workshops (selection)

**CROWN POINT PRESS**: San Francisco, 1962
**Director**: Kathan Brown
**Techniques**: Calcographic and oriental woodcut procedures
**Publisher**: Minimal and conceptual art
**Artists**: Sol LeWitt, Brice Marden, Vito Acconci, Chris Burden, Tom Marioni, John Cage…
Relevant workshops (selection)

GEMINI.GEL: Los Angeles, 1966
Director: Ken Tyler (ex assistant of June Wayne, Tamarind)
Techniques: Etching, woodcut, lithography, silkscreen and sculptural processes
Publisher: American artists since the 60’s
Artists: Robert Rauschenberg, Isamu Noguchi, Robert Motherwell, Roy Lichtenstein, Willem de Kooning, Claes Oldenburg, Ed Ruscha...
Relevant workshops (selection)

NIELS BORCH JENSEN: Copenhagen, 1979
Director: Niels Borch Jensen
Techniques: Intaglio, woodcut and photo gravure
Publisher of print editions by international artists
Artists: Georg Baselitz, Tacita Dean, Thomas Demand, Olafur Eliasson, Elmgreen & Dragset, Douglas Gordon, Carsten Höller, Keith Haring, Per Kirkeby, Tal R…
Basic principles on experimentation:
creating a system and controlling the materials
• Control based on knowledge: understanding materials and processes
• Planned outputs
• Economy of resources, materials and time
• Profit-earning capacity between the execution process and the final results
• Sustainability of results
2. TRADITIONAL PRINT TECHNIQUES

- **Intaglio / Etching.**
  - Plate: copper
  - Principle: intaglio
  - Final support: paper
  - Printed by: press machine

- **Woodcut**
  - Plate: wood
  - Principle: carving surface
  - Final Support: paper
  - Printed by: press machine / vertical press / barem / spoon

- **Lithography**
  - Plate: limestone / aluminium (algraphy)
  - Principle: hydrophilic / encrophilic properties
  - Final Support: paper
  - Printed by: planographic press (stone) or press machine (aluminium)

- **Serigraphy**
  - Screen: silk / synthetic fiber
  - Principle: permeography
  - Final Support: paper / fabric / various
  - Printed by: scraper
Troels Wörsel, *The Spanish Set, 1993*

Suite of 25 etchings printed from copper plates with different direct and indirect intaglio techniques
Papel Zerkall-Bütten, 225 gr.
32 x 24 cm. each
Abraham Lacalle
*Sicoeco*, 2008
Woodcut
Plywood of 160 x 120 cm.
Paper: Somerset, 410 grs. of 160 x 120 cm.
Edition of 7
Jim Dine
Fragile Boy, 2011
8 colour lithograph
130 x 90 cm.
Edition of 12
Damien Hirst
Faithless, 2006
Silkscreen on Somerset, 410 gr. paper
78.7 x 150 cm, 2006
Edition of 55
3. BASIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A PRINT AND AN INK-JET

The fact that these first artistic impressions were called **Fine Prints** (print in English means both *impression* and *print*), based that ink-jet impressions has caused some confusion. Today it still produces a lot of debate about whether or not an impression is a print.

According to William M. IVINS on his book “Printed image and knowledge. analysis of the pre-photographic image” these are the specific reasons why an *impression* is not a *print*:

• A print needs a plate
• A print needs to be inked (manually and directed by the artist)
• A print collects the ink that composes the images by pressure

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**Kiki Smith**

*Nest and Trees*, 1997

Iris print

50.8 x 55.9 cm

Edition of 20

© 1997 Kiki Smith
How does the plotter work?

Two essentially different systems prevail in what is known as digital impression. This type of impression works with computers that receive either an scanned image or a generated image directly from the computer.

The color is applied by liquid or dry toner (depending on brand and type of the digital equipment).

It includes the full range of systems and equipment for digital impression: electrographic, magnetographic, ionographic, etc.

**Direct imaging impression.** – In order to transfer a direct image (DI) with fixed data a mainly dry Offset style system is used, where the plate CTP (Computer to Plate) receives the image directly in the press. It is still not possible to edit on the go. To change the information you must change the plate and provide the information again.
Photography and digitalisation of images in order to be printed on a plotter / printer

Original

Proceso Digital

Diapositiva

Negativo

Transparencia

Copias láser

Translúcidos Luminosos

Copias Murales Color y B/N

Carteles Color y B/N Plastificados

Fotografía

Película Expuesta

Revelado

Negativo - Diapositiva - Copia en papel

Escáner

Impresora

Grabadora CD

Copia en papel

Máster CD
Possibilities of hybridization between a print and an impression

If we *impression* a paper in order to, at a later state, *print* one or several supports, we would achieve a print made from hybrid processes: impression and printing.

*Manolo Valdés*

*Desnudo*

Etching printed on japanese *chine collé* impression

50 x 40 cm.

Edition of 50
Xerography

**Xerography** ( Patent No. 2,297,691) is defined as a contact impression process that captures images using electrostatic systems. This term is also used to define the xerocopy -or photocopy- on paper obtained by this method.

The invention of the first photocopier is a result of the research of the American Chemist Chester Carlson (1906 -1968) The first photocopie says Astoria, October 22, 1938, the place and date of the discovery. Other authors consider that the real father of the photocopy was the German Professor Johann Heinrich Schulze, who invented something similar to the first "photocopy" in 1727 in Altdorf (Nuremberg).

**Xerography**: The word derives from the Greek *Xeros* which means dry and *Graphos*, which means writing. **Xerography** is a printing process that uses dry electrostatic for the reproduction or copying of documents and/or images.
Sample of a work by Sonia Landy Sheridan
Sample of manipulation by photocopy from 2 copper supports.
Final proof
Sample of manipulation by photocopy from 2 copper plates.
Final proof
4. PHOTO GRAVURE

Photogravure is a process for obtaining the information on to a plate via insolation, using a transparent film, a light sensitive emulsion, a contact system and an actinic light source that provokes chemical changes due to the radiation and luminous effect on a sensitive material (a polymer plate).

With this process it is possible to achieve a great variety of halftones (obtained by dots of different sizes according to the percentage of lighter and darker areas in the image).

Pat Andrea
Headlines, 2009. Process at Benveniste Contemporary, Madrid
5. EXAMPLES

A *tour* of various artists. Examination of how languages of traditional printing combine with the new narratives when processing supports.
Carsten Höller
Birds, 2006
10 photo gravures in color on Somerset 300 gr.
75 x 58 cm each
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Birds, 2006
10 photo gravures in color on Somerset 300 gr.
75 x 58 cm each
Carsten Höller
Canaries, 2009
Fotograbados
Somerset 300 gr.
108 x 78 cm c/u.
Edición de 24.
Ann-Sofi Sidén,
*After the Fact*, 2007.
Suite of 20 full colour (4 plate) photo gravure prints.
Paper Somerset, 410 gr.
Django Hernández
*Full colors of tomorrow*, 2011.
Photo gravure and perforated plexiglass
4 plates of 53 x 41 cm.
Zekall-Bütten, 300 gr. of 108 x 78 cm.
Edition of 7
Federico Guzmán
Semillas, 2008
Monotype
4 plates
Somerset, 410 grs of 120 x 156 cm.
E/U
Pat Andrea
Headlines, 2009
Photo gravure and chine collé
Somerset, 310 gr. de 38’5 x 50
Edition of 9
Rita McBride
Mae West, 2010
13 color aquatint and woodcut
Somerset, 410 gr of 180 x 135 cm.
Edition of 7
Sabine Hornig

Untitled (Computer), 2010

Photo gravure

Somerset, 300 gr. Of 57 x 76 cm.

Edition of 9
Tacita Dean
The Russian Ending, 2001
Photo gravure in b/w
Hahnemühle Bütten 350 gr. Of 54 x 79.5 cm
Edition 35
Thomas Demand
Black Level, 2009
Photo gravure from 5 plates
Somerset, 300 gr. Of 76 x 56 cm
Edition of 18
A.K. Dolven
When I leave the world behind, 2006
Photo gravure
Somerset White Satin 300 gr.
57,5 x 42,5 cm
Edition of 12
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