

## Drypoint

An **intaglio** process<sup>1</sup>, drypoint is like using a pen without the ink – literally, drawing with a dry point – to create an impression of a drawing which, when inked, can be printed from again and again, however, this is a limited number of times.

**Think of it as an etching without the acid.**



Traditionally drypoint is done on copper plates with a diamond- or carbide-tipped needle. It is then inked (as in all intaglio methods) and cleaned, leaving ink only in the crevices. The process of **incising or cutting** for drypoint creates a slightly raised ragged rough edge to the lines, known as the burr. When ink that has been applied to the plate and wiped off both the incised line *and* the burr, receive ink when the plate is wiped, giving the printed line a distinctive velvety look. The force of the printing press squeezes the damp paper into the inky crevices/burr and the image is transferred onto the paper – this requires tremendous pressure that cannot be applied by hand (hence the necessity of a press).

Owing to the delicate nature of the burr, drypoint is usually made in **small editions**, stopping before the burr is crushed by the pressure of the intaglio press. Drypoint is often combined with other intaglio techniques, such as etching.

### **Equipment/materials needed:**

Apron	Roulette wheel
Gloves	Compass
Etching press	Water tank for soaking paper
Tissue paper	Blotting towels
Newsprint	Rolling pin
300 gsm Cannaletto paper	Tracing paper
Oil paints – Burnt Umber & Prussian Blue	Saral paper - grey
<b>*DO NOT USE ETCHING INKS</b>	Grey board - cut into biscuits to apply ink
Etching needle	Tissue paper - cut into 9cm squares
Cleaning up cloths	Soapy water bottle & vegetable oil

<sup>1</sup> **Intaglio** refers to any printmaking process which involves making incisions or indents in a plate, so when the ink is applied and then wiped off, ink remains caught in the incisions and creates the image.

## **The process:**

1. Sketches and drawings can be transferred onto the plastic drypoint plate using Saral paper in conjunction with tracing paper.
2. Draw into the plastic sheet using the etching needle and create textures with a roulette wheel.
3. Work on a sheet of newsprint to protect the surface you are working on.
4. Using the grey board 'biscuits' take up some oil paint about 3-4 cm in length.
5. Work the ink into the grooves and textures on the surface pushing the ink in all different directions.
6. Use a clean greyboard 'biscuit' to carefully scrape the excess of ink off the plate until the image can be seen.
7. Use a tissue square to polish up the smooth flat areas and also to clean up any more excess ink.
8. Place tissue paper on top of the press bed to protect the registration plate.
9. Put the inked up drypoint plate **FACE UP** onto the press bed.
10. Carefully place a larger piece of damp paper on to the drypoint plate using the registration plate.
11. Place newsprint on top of the drypoint plate/paper to protect the blankets.
12. Roll the blankets on top of the press bed.
13. Wind the press over the plate/papers.
14. Roll back the blankets and check out the print.
15. Leave the print to dry on the drying rack.
16. Cleaning up:

Wear disposable gloves and an apron

1. Throw away the inky newsprint sheet, used greyboard 'biscuits' and used tissue squares.
2. Use vegetable oil and a semi-dirty rag to clean off any excess ink from the table and your plate/s. Place this in the semi-dirty rag bin.
3. Use a clean rag and soap solution to wipe any oily residue from the table or your plates.

## **Finishing:**

Your prints will take approximately two days to dry thoroughly (depending on the oil based inks you have used), longer if on non-absorbent paper.

## **Further Looking/Reading:**

<https://www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/how-to/drawing/228/a-beginners-guide-to-drypoint>

**Belinda Del Pesco's** informative video

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GWAHsL7Yvw&feature=emb\\_rel\\_end](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GWAHsL7Yvw&feature=emb_rel_end)

## **Intaglio Printmaking (Printmaking Handbooks) by Mychael Barratt**

Check out artists:

**Livio Ceschin**- etched zinc plates enhanced with drypoint, giving images a softness uncharacteristic of pure etching.

<https://meshartgallery.com/collections/livio-ceschin>

**Angie Hoffmeister**- there are lots more incredible prints to look at on Pinterest

<https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2011/12/drypoint-prints-by-angie-hoffmeister/>

### **Useful Resources:**

Hawthorn oil based inks, rollers, etching presses

<https://hawthornprintmaker.com/>

For papers

<https://www.jacksonsart.com/>

### **Suggested Courses for Further Development:**

Gelli Printing, Collagraph Printing, Introduction to Printmaking and Explore Printmaking courses at Leeds Print Workshop.