



## Glossary of Art & Framing Terminology

- A -

### **abstract art**

Any art in which the depiction of real objects has been subordinated or discarded in favor of patterns, lines and color.

### **acid-free foam board**

A board made of foamed plastic (polystyrene) material sandwiched between coated paper from which the acids have been removed or have been chemically neutralized to raise the pH level above 7 (alkaline).

### **acid-free**

A vague term, referring to a material with a pH of 7 or higher. Sometimes used incorrectly as a synonym for alkaline or buffered material. Some acidic materials are chemically neutralized with the addition of alkaline products; other materials are processed to remove the acid-producing elements. (Acid-free materials may become acidic over time due to residual chlorine from bleaching, aluminum sulfate from sizing or atmospheric pollutants.)

### **acid-free corrugated cardboard**

Corrugated board that has been rendered acid-free; may be lignin free and/or buffered to raise the pH to 7 or above (alkaline). Used as a backing board or for making sturdy storage containers for paper art, textiles or other unframed pieces which should be stored in acid-free atmospheres.

### **acrylic box**

A box-like cover constructed from clear acrylic sheet.

### **acrylic paint**

Artists' colors made by polymerizing a methyl methacrylate by emulsification, thus dispersing the resin into tiny particles in water. This fluid is used for a base in compounding polymer colors. Acrylic colors are water soluble when wet, but dry to an insoluble film. Colors are bright, dry quickly and are flexible.

### **acrylic painting**

An artwork executed with acrylic paint.

### **air brush**

An instrument, powered by compressed air, used to spray paint with delicate control and precision. Paint (usually a fine water color) is held in a small cup attached to the side of the pen-like instrument. Paint is drawn through the "brush" by the Venturi effect. The result is characterized by a very smooth, even texture and unbroken tonal gradations.

**animation cel**

A clear plastic sheet onto which a drawing is copied, either by hand-inking or by a xerographic copier process. Colored paints are applied to the reverse side. One or more cels may be placed over a painted background, which serves as a setting for the action. In animated movies and cartoons, twenty-four cels are required for each second of screen time. Cel is an abbreviation for Celluloid (trademark).

**antiquing**

A finishing technique used to give the appearance of age.

**archival**

Broadly used to describe materials that have the least harmful effects on the art being framed or stored and thus preserving such pieces for the longest period of time.

**art**

A form of human activity created primarily as an aesthetic expression, especially, but not limited to drawing, painting and sculpture.

**artisan**

A skillful craftsman. One skilled in an applied art.

**artist's proof - AP or A/P**

Historically, it was a print retained by the artist for his/her own use or sale. Often numbered, these copies of a limited edition print are signed and typically titled "Artist Proof." –Artist proofs originally were the first copies printed and were used to indicate the artist's approval of color reproduction and other mechanical aspects of the printing process. Once prized as best quality copies (see Lithography). Artist proofs now exist solely as part of the printmaking tradition and are of a quality similar to the standard edition print. Artist's proofs are distinguished by the abbreviation AP and are numbered separately; they often represent 10 percent of an edition and are slightly more expensive than prints in the regular edition.

---

**- B -**

---

**barnwood**

Rough, heavily grained wood with the texture and coloring of weathered wood, as on a barn.

**Baroque**

An extremely elaborate and ornate artistic style. This dynamic, theatrical style dominated art and architecture in Europe during the 17th Century.

**bas-relief**

A sculptural relief technique in which the projection of the forms is relatively shallow.

**batik**

Originated in Java; a method of dyeing textiles. Wax is applied to sections of material which are to remain uncolored; the dyes do not penetrate wax. Once dyed, the wax can be removed by various methods, one of which is boiling. Repeated waxing and dyeing results in colorful patterns. The lines typically found in batiks are produced by cracking the hardened wax before applying the dye.

**bevel**

Cutting or shaping the edge or end of a material to form an angle that is not a right angle, such as the bevel cut on the window edge of a mat.

**birch**

A tree that grows in northern countries. The wood is hard and pale brownish yellow in color, dense

and somewhat heavy. Even though hard, it is easy to carve. Birch bark is waterproof because of its natural waxes.

**bird's eye maple**

A North American hardwood valued for cabinet work and frame molding. The hard, strong, heavy, close grained wood is beautifully patterned. This wood of the sugar maple is characterized by a wavy grain causing bird's eye like markings.

**botanical**

Having to do with plants, most often used in reference to artwork depicting plants or flowers.

**bottom mat**

In multiple mat combinations, that mat which is nearest the art.

**bubble-pack**

Lightweight plastic sheet packaging material with air filled pockets.

**bumper pad**

Small self-adhesive pad, made of rubber, cork or felt, used on the bottom corners of the dust cover or back of a frame to hold the frame away from the wall at the bottom, allowing air to circulate. Also steadies the frame on the wall.

---

**- C -**

**calligraphy**

Handwriting as an art. Elegant penmanship with decoration and design of primary importance.

**canvas**

1) A heavy woven fabric usually of cotton or linen, used as a support for a painting. The surface is prepared for painting by applying gesso or rabbit skin glue. 2) Interlocked or woven fibers used as the ground material for needle art.

**canvas board**

Common gray cardboard or pasteboard to which a white cotton cloth, prepared for painting, has been glued or pasted.

**canvas pliers**

Heavy pliers with elongated jaws for grasping the edges of a piece of canvas when stretching it onto a stretcher frame. A square extension at the middle of the lower jaw is called the hammer; its most important function is to supply leverage against the back of the stretcher bar.

**canvas print**

A reproduction in which an image is printed directly onto canvas. These prints can be produced using offset lithography, digital printing or other methods. Sometimes artists will add brush strokes directly onto the canvas after the piece has been printed.

**canvas transfer**

A process which lifts the image on a print off the paper support so that it can be transferred to a canvas mount.

**cast(ing)**

To form into a particular shape by pouring fluid matter into a mold and allowing it to harden, such as making a picture frame ornament.

**cast paper**

Paper made by pressing the pulp into a die or mold used for casting or shaping, becoming a work of art in and of itself.

**catalogue raisonné**

A catalogue which chronicles all known works of an artist, along with pertinent details on each piece.

**certificate of authenticity**

A warranty card or statement of authenticity of a limited edition print that records the title of the work, the artist's name, the edition size and the print's number within the edition, the number of artist's proofs and the release date. It is a guarantee that the edition is limited and that the image will not be published again in the same form.

**cherry**

A tree that grows in the northern hemisphere; the wood is hard and light weight. It is golden brown in color with a hint of green. It can be easily distinguished from other brownish woods by its golden sheen.

**chestnut**

American: A hardwood tree that grows in the northeastern United States; the wood is coarse in texture, moderately light and strong. It is grayish brown or brown in color. It seasons well and is easily worked with tools.

**chipboard**

A board made entirely from recycled paper products, containing a variety of impurities. It is an inexpensive mounting and backing board for non-conservation/preservation framing.

**chop**

(v) To cut picture frame molding, usually at a 45 degree angle, to the length needed for a frame.

(n) The length of molding cut for a picture frame.

**chop mark**

A small embossed seal or impression on a print, generally indicating the printer or artist.

**chromolithography**

A color-printing process in which separate printing plates are used to apply each component color. Often called "four-color printing" because the full range of color tones are achieved with only four plates - red, blue, yellow and black.

**cibachrome**

A color photograph based on the silver dye-bleach system. The necessary colors (azo dyes) are built into the emulsion layers. These colors are bleached out where not needed during developing. Azo dyes produce more brilliant colors and have greater stability and resistance to light than any other current process. Ilford has renamed its process Ilfochrome.

**clear glass**

Glass made with a smooth or polished surface on both sides. It is not etched, coated or laminated.

**climate control**

The control of temperature and relative humidity to produce an environment with little fluctuation, ideally 50 percent relative humidity and 70 degrees F.

**clip frame**

Generic for a method of framing. A set of clips used to hold the glazing, art and backing together for display. Generally made of metal and not to be confused with braquettes or uni-frames.

**coated paper**

Paper treated with clay or other adhesive mixture to improve the finish for printing, color, smoothness or other surface property. This also includes lacquered and varnished papers.

**collage**

Artwork created by securing pieces of paper, fabric or other materials onto a substrate. Though basically two-dimensional, it may have a sculptural effect.

**color**

1) Used to refer to perceived qualities that result from the response of vision to the wavelength of reflected or transmitted light. 2) Describes images that have hues, as opposed to black, white and gray tones only and the processes used to make them.

**color wheel**

A spectrum of colors placed in a circle including the three primary colors: red, yellow and blue, and the secondary colors: orange, green and purple. Colors opposite each other on the wheel are complementary colors.

**complementary colors**

Colors which are directly opposite each other on the color wheel, e.g., red and green, blue and orange.

**compo**

Relief ornaments made from a mixture of whiting, oil, resin and animal hide glue. Pliable when heated, self-adhesive when wet and hard when set.

**composition**

The arrangement of elements, shapes and colors in a work of art.

**condition**

A print's physical condition influences its market value. Condition typically is described as ranging from 'mint' - completely undamaged and original - to "poor." A poor-condition print may be creased, torn, water or tape-blemished, trimmed smaller than its original size or otherwise damaged..

**conservation (preservation)**

In framing, it is the careful maintenance and protection of works of art. Methods of mounting and framing that preserve a print in original mint condition. One important aspect of conservation framing is that all material in actual contact with the print contains no chemicals that might eventually damage the paper or the inked image: these materials are usually described as "acid-free". UV protection is also considered in conservation framing as well as materials that will have no adverse effects on a piece of artwork and will protect the artwork from external damage.

**conservation stamp prints**

Prints that have been reproduced for sale with conservation stamps. Sales of these stamps and prints often benefit conservation programs.

**countersignature**

Signature of someone other than the artist that adds either additional authenticity or historical value to a limited-edition print.

**copyright**

Exclusive rights to reproduce, sell and distribute a work, prepare derivative works and display the work publicly.

**corner samples**

Short molding lengths mitered and joined to form a corner. Used as visual aids during the framing design process. Also referred to as chevrons.

**CPF**

Certified Picture Framer. One who has passed the Professional Picture Framers Association's certification examination.

**dealer**

Galleries, collectible shops or individuals who carry and sell artwork. Authorized dealers are those who, by signed agreement, carry and sell the artwork of certain artists or those represented by certain print publishers.

**deckle edge**

The feathery edge of a sheet of handmade paper, caused by the deckle or frame which confines the pulp to the mold. Also present on some machine-made papers, caused by the rubber deckle straps at the sides of the paper machine.

**découpage**

Decoration of a surface by covering it completely with cut out paper forms. The process used in making collages.

**design**

1) The selection and arrangement of the formal elements in a work of art; the expression of the artist's conception in terms of a composition.

**digital print**

A reproduction in which a digital file of an original painting is printed by a special inkjet printer that sprays ink directly onto the surface of a substrate. These digital prints, sometimes called giclées or iris prints, can match the colors of the original with millions of possible hues. (See Giclée)

**diptych**

1) A set of two prints making one complete image. 2) An ancient writing tablet consisting of two pieces of wood or ivory hinged together, with the inner sides waxed for writing on with a stylus.

**distributor**

A person or company responsible for marketing and selling prints and supplying prints to galleries. Sometimes the publisher and distributor are the same entity.

**dry cleaning pad**

A soft cloth bag filled with erasing powder. Used for removing dirt and smudges on mat board and paper.

**dry mount**

Framing method in which a print is fastened to a stiff backing with non-liquid adhesive. Dry mounting is not recommended for prints of any value.

**dry point**

A free-hand drawing scratched or engraved on a metal plate with a sharp tool. The plate is inked and then wiped to remove all ink except what remains within the cut grooves. Paper is laid over the plate and the ink transferred to it using rollers under high pressure. Dry points are often incorrectly called "etchings".

**easel**

A freestanding structure designed to hold an artist's canvas or panel during painting. Also may be decorative for display.

**edition**

The number of printed copies made of an original work. The standard phrase "edition size" therefore refers to the number of copies, not a print's physical dimensions. Edition size generally does not

include artist proofs or any special edition copies that might be made, these special editions such as printer's proofs, conservation editions, etc., are all numbered separately.

**embellish(ing)**

To beautify by ornamentation.

**emboss(ing)**

An embellishment raised in relief from the surface.

**enamel**

1) A glossy substance, usually opaque, applied by fusion to the surface or metal, pottery, etc., as an ornament or for protection. 2) Any of various enamel-like varnishes or paints.

**engraving**

Lines cut into a plate by hand with a steel burin or graver; no acid is used. The metal which is displaced in cutting is smoothed with a scraper which results in crisp, meticulous lines. Then the entire plate is thoroughly inked, with care taken to force the ink down into all of the lines, completely filling them. The surface is wiped clean, leaving the incised lines filled. A press is used to transfer the image onto paper.

**etching**

A printing process. A metal plate is covered with an acid-resisting ground. The design is scratched through this ground, exposing the metal beneath. The plate is then immersed in an acid bath, causing the scratched or exposed areas to be eaten away. The plate is wiped clean, inked and the higher surfaces cleaned again, allowing the ink to remain in the incised areas. A press is then used to transfer the image onto paper. (n) Art work so executed.

---

**- F -**

**fabric mat**

A mat which has been covered with fabric.

**fade(ing)**

To lose or cause to lose brightness or brilliance or definition of line, form and color.

**fillet (wood)**

A small molding with profile that may be used as an edging on a mat or frame lip. Profiles may differ somewhat. May also be called a slip.

**fit(ting)**

The process of assembling glass, mats, artwork and filler board into a picture frame, including the addition of a dust cover, hangers and bumper pads.

**float(ing)**

A means of securing artwork to a rigid support so all edges are visible.

**float mat**

A window mat raised or elevated off the underneath surface by spacers.

**floater**

A molding designed to give the artwork the appearance of floating within the frame. Floater frames have a rabbet in reverse; the artwork is fitted in from the front.

**folio**

A flat container for holding/storing artwork

**frame**

That decorative or functional element which surrounds an item, providing protection and display

---

functions. Typically made of wood or metal, a frame generally provides the architectural support element for a work of art.

### **frame design**

1) The characteristic appearance of a frame, identified with a historical period or as being that of a particular frame maker. 2) The process whereby the appearance of a frame is planned, designed and executed. 3) The process whereby framing components are selected for a particular artwork.

---

## **- G -**

### **gicleé (*gee-clay*)**

Giclee' - is a French term meaning "spraying of ink." Printing is directly from information obtained from the original painting, Iris Printers spray microscopic drops of color on to a fine art paper or canvas. Displaying the full color spectrum, these artworks have vibrant, brilliant colors and a velvety texture. This gives the finished product the look and texture of an original painting.

### **gild(ing)**

The art of adhering thin metal, silver or gold leaf to a surface.

### **glass mat**

A style of matting, the mat is painted, etched or leafed onto the surface of a piece of glass.

### **glassine**

A semi-transparent paper. A smooth, non-abrasive surface makes it ideal for interleaving or overlaying delicate artwork, such as a fragile etching or pastel painting, and it will not adhere to the varnish on oil paintings.

### **glaze(ing)**

1) A protective interface between the environment and the work of art including glass and acrylic sheets. 2) In oil painting, a thin layer of a transparent coating applied to the dried painting. 3) In ceramics, a thin coating applied to a piece before it is put in the kiln. It functions as a means to waterproof the object, change its color or generally alter its appearance. 4) On frame molding, a thin coat of color applied over a base finish to change its appearance.

### **gold leaf**

A very thin sheet of beaten gold used in gilding. Also referred to as "loose leaf." Gold leaf is available in 12-23 karat gold. Each leaf is cut to a standard 3 3/8 inches square and has a thickness of approximately 1/300,000 of an inch. Gold leaf is packaged in books of 25 leaves, each leaf separated by tissue paper. A pack or box of gold leaf contains 20 books, for a total of 500 leaves.

### **gouache**

1) An opaque watercolor paint. 2) A painting done with such a medium,

### **ground**

The surface upon which a painting is done - canvas, Masonite, and so on.

---

## **- H -**

### **hand-embellished**

A term used to describe prints to which an artist has added color or washes after the piece has been printed.

### **hand-pulled print**

A print that has been manually lifted from the printing plate.

**hickory**

A hardwood tree that grows throughout the eastern half of the United States; the wood is exceptionally tough, heavy, hard and strong.

**hinge**

A small piece of paper or tape generally used to attach paper art to a mounting board.

**hors de commerce**

Similar to an artist's proof. Impressions pulled outside of the regular edition for the use by the publishers.

- I -

---

**illustration board**

A sheet of cardboard with a sheet of drawing paper mounted on one side. Illustration boards are mostly used by commercial artists

**image**

1) The printed or colored portion of a print. 2) A physical likeness or representation of a person, animal or thing; photographed, painted, sculpted or otherwise made visible.

**image size**

Actual dimensions of a printed image. This refers only to the image itself and not to the size of the paper it is printed on.

**imprint**

A mark or depression made by pressure.

**intaglio**

A term that includes all metal plate engraving and etching processes in which the printing areas are recessed, e.g., engraving, etching, drypoint and aquatint.

**international edition**

A series of prints/canvas that are distributed outside the country where the artist resides.

**issue price**

The original price of a limited edition print when first offered for retail sale.

- J -

---

**Japanese paper**

Handmade paper with a web of strong naturally formed fibers; ideal for hinging purposes. The best are made with 100 percent kozo or gampi fibers, which have not been bleached or chemically processed.

**join(ing)**

In framing, the operation of gluing and nailing the corners of a frame.

- K -

---

**key**

A triangular wedge of wood or plastic inserted into the grooves at the inside corners of a stretcher frame. Used to tighten the canvas by expanding the stretcher frame joints.

**kraft paper**

Strong wrapping paper, usually brown, made from wood chips boiled in an alkaline solution containing sodium sulfate. Comes on a roll in different weights and widths.

**lacquer**

(n) A protective coating consisting of a resin or cellulose ester or both, which is dissolved in a volatile solvent sometimes with a pigment added. (v) To cover with a coating to produce a smooth, hard finish.

**leafed**

A frame or object that has had gold, silver or metal leaf applied to it.

**lift mat**

To raise or elevate the window mat off the artwork by means of spacers made of mat board or foam board strips attached to the mounting board or the underside of the mat and not visible.

**limited edition**

A reproduction of an original work of art that is signed and sequentially numbered by the artist. The total number of prints is fixed or limited by the artist or the publisher. Limited edition can be offset lithographs, digital prints, serigraphs or any other type of reproduction. The first number indicates the number of the piece; the second number indicates the total quantity of the edition, e.g., 135/250.

**liner**

1) A frame molding used within the outer molding. May be covered with fabric, often velvet or linen. Many liners are made from fully finished frame stock, including gold or silver. Sometimes called an insert. If over 2 1/2 inches wide, called a panel. 2) Inner mats and fillets are also called liners.

**lithograph**

A generic term used to designate a print made by a planographic process, such as an original lithograph done on a lithographic stone or a commercial print made by a photo-mechanical process

**lithography**

The traditional planographic printing method which involves drawing or painting with greasy crayons or inks on a limestone block. The surface is then moistened with water. An oily ink is applied to the stone and adheres only to the drawing. The ink is repelled by the water which has soaked into the areas around the drawing. The print is pulled by pressing paper against the inked drawing, using a press. Variations of the technique are widely used in commercial reproductions.

**magenta**

A printer's name for red, in the four-color additive printing system which includes cyan, yellow and black. (8)

**mahogany**

A tree which grows in West Africa, South and Central America; the wood is quite soft and light weight; has a coppery-red color. Valued for its color, workability and because it does not shrink or warp.

**maple**

A tree which grows in northeastern North America; the wood is hard, heavy and strong; the color varies from pale grayish to yellowish white. It is not durable for outdoor use, but is the best of all woods for flooring.

**maquette**

In sculpture, a small scale model.

**mat(ting)**

(window mat) A border, usually made from mat board, placed around a print, photograph, etc., to serve as a spacer or separation between the picture and the frame.

**mat board**

A multi-ply board usually comprised of a core, adhesive, facing and backing paper. Commonly four-ply, but available in other thicknesses. May be rag board or made of wood fiber. The surface paper comes in a wide variety of colors. In framing, used to make the window mat and as a mounting board for artwork.

**mat cutter**

A tool for cutting the window opening in a mat. May be a small hand-held tool or include various levels of sophistication with regard to guide bar, measuring devices, fittings for special effects, oval cutting capability and possibly hydraulic clamps.

**medallion**

Cast-metal medallions sometimes are issued in conjunction with the publication of prints, especially stamp prints. Design of the medallion artwork usually duplicates some portion of the print. Such medallions can be gold-plated, silver, bronze or even pewter.

**medium**

1) The specific tool and material used by an artist, e.g., brush and oil paint, chisel and stone. 2) The mode of expression employed by an artist, e.g., painting, sculpture, the graphic arts. 3) A liquid that may be added to a paint to increase its manipulability without decreasing its adhesive, binding or film-forming properties.

**memorabilia**

Collection of objects that have a sentimental value.

**metal sectional frame**

A frame of anodized extruded aluminum sections.

**mezzotint**

An intaglio process in which the plate is pitted all over with a tool called a "rocker." By scraping or burnishing the raised burrs, gradations of light and shade may be produced in the printed image. Mezzotints are characterized by a rich, velvet overall appearance with numerous tonal ranges.

**mint condition**

Describes artwork which is in the same condition as it was when originally finished, printed, etc. Taken from coinage, in the same condition as it was when it was minted

**mirror hanger**

A heavy duty hanging device attached to the back of a frame with screws, characterized by having a holding ring at the top through which a thin, narrow metal strip has been passed and folded in half.

**miter (mitre)**

To cut frame molding on an angle for joining to other mitered pieces.

**mixed media**

An artwork combining two or more artistic media - for example, scratchboard and paint, pencil and watercolor - bronze and wood.

**moiré**

(mwa-ray) A lustrous watermark of wavy design placed on fabric by passing it through heated ridged rollers under pressure. Makes an attractive fabric pattern covering for mats.

**monochromatic**

A painting or drawing of different shades of one color.

**monoprint**

A one-of-a-kind print made by painting on a sheet or slab and transferring the still wet painting to a sheet of paper by a hand method; if the painting is done on a metal sheet, it may be run through a press.

**motif**

A distinctive and recurring form, shape or figure.

**molding or moulding**

Wood or metal which has been refined and shaped and which includes a rabbet for use in the framing industry as frame stock.

**mounting board**

A surface, substrate or secondary support to which any art or object is attached.

---

**- N -****non-glare glass**

Glass which has been etched on one or both sides, which defuses the light, resulting in a minimum of glare and reflection.

**numbered**

Each copy of a limited edition print is marked with two numbers separated by a slash mark. The first number identifies the particular copy, and the second indicates edition size: 42/950, for instance, identifies print number 42 of a 950-copy edition.

---

**- O -****oak**

A tree that grows in northern countries; the wood is hard, heavy, has a strong distinctive grain and is very acidic. Most oak has a yellowish brown color.

**offset-lithography**

1) A process in which the printed image is transferred, or offset, from one roller or plate to another and then transferred to the printing paper. Offset lithographs should be termed reproductions rather than originals prints. This process eliminates the need to draw the image in reverse on the stone or plate. 2) A photomechanical reproduction created by the separation of colors in the original and then the recombining of those colors on a printing press. Most posters and open-edition prints and many limited-edition prints are offset lithographs.

**oil paint**

Artists' colors made by dispersing pigments in linseed oil or another vegetable drying oil and having the consistency of a smooth paste.

**open edition**

An edition having an unlimited number of prints in it.

**original**

A unique piece of artwork that cannot be exactly duplicated, e.g., an oil painting on canvas. While the image may be duplicated as a print, the reproduction is not oil paint on canvas.

**original lithograph**

Original pieces of art created on the printing press by an artist or master printer who creates the master plates and executes the printing process. No original exists from which the prints are reproduced, and each print is an original work of art.

**original print**

Prints, such as serigraphs or original lithographs, that are created without the use of photography. They are original because every print in an edition is created directly by the artist and may vary slightly from the other prints in the edition.

**ornate**

Heavily ornamented, overly adorned, showy.

**oval frame**

A frame with an elliptical shape.

**oval mat**

A mat with an elliptical opening; may have an oval or rectangular perimeter.

**overall print size**

The physical dimensions of the paper upon which a print is made.

**overlay**

In animation art, a portion of a scene, generally a foreground element, painted on or applied to a cel and laid over the action to create the illusion of depth.

**oversize**

Describes the size of a frame or materials that are larger than standard 32- by 40-inch mat board.

---

**- P -**

---

**palette**

1) A non-absorbent surface on which to mix paint. 2) The set of colors on such a surface. 3) The range of colors a given artist or school of art prefers.

**palette knife**

A thin blade of varying flexibility set in a handle; used for mixing paints or applying them to a surface.

**paper**

A substance made from cotton, wood or other fibrous material, usually in thin sheets, used for writing, printing or drawing.

**paper grain**

The direction in which most of the fibers in a piece of paper are oriented and the axis along which the paper tears and flexes most easily. Grain is usually found only in machine made papers, although it is also present in some handmade oriental papers.

**parchment**

1) A translucent or opaque material made from split skins of small animals, usually lambs or kids (goat) that have been limed, void of hair, scraped and dried under tension to produce a fine, thin, strong surface for writing, bookbinding or other uses. 2) Paper with a texture resembling true parchment.

**pastel**

1) A crayon made from pigment mixed with just enough binding agent to hold it together. 2) A drawing (painting) made with pastel crayons.

**patina**

1) A film or encrustation, usually green, appearing gradually on a surface of copper and bronze, due to weathering and as a result of oxidation. 2) An opaque toning used to stimulate aging or to dull the brightness of a gilded surface. 3) A deep, soft polished gleam acquired by wood and metal after years of wear and polishing.

**pecan**

A tree that grows in the warmer parts of the United States and Mexico. It is large with hard, but brittle, wood.

**photo frame**

A frame specifically designed for standard sized photographs, often with an easel backing.

**photo-lithography**

A printing technique in which a negative is exposed to a photo-sensitized lithographic plate, the image is then developed on the plate. Non-image areas are desensitized and the image area becomes an ink attracting surface. The plate is inked and printed in the normal manner.

**picture frame**

A structure, usually of wood or metal in which a painting, print or other object is enclosed to improve or enhance its appearance, to isolate it from a wall or to link it to a decor, as well as to support and protect it.

**picture hanger**

A device attached to the wall on which the frame is hung or attached to the molding of a frame by which the picture is hung.

**picture wire**

A soft braided or solid wire, available in several thicknesses to support various weights, which may be coated with flexible plastic, attached to the back of framed pictures.

**pine**

A tree that grows in a variety of locations around the world. The wood varies from very soft to hard, is light weight and straight grained. It is white or yellowish in color.

**plaques (brass)**

A small metal plate mounted on a frame, usually showing the artist's name and name of the artwork.

**plein air**

Means "Open Air" or "Outdoors". Often done quickly or on the spot. These paintings are usually less detailed and more impressionistic.

**portfolio**

1) An artist's work in total. 2) A Prints by one artist that are grouped together and sold as a set.

**poster**

1) An inexpensive printed reproduction of a piece of artwork. 2) A placard or print intended for posting in a public place as an advertisement.

**PPFA**

The Professional Picture Framers Association. A professional trade association that serves the art and framing industry.

**press proof (PP)**

Off the press proofing can be useful in predicting quality of materials prior to production printing.

Small quantities of ink and small sheet sizes can be studied quickly for physical and optical performance properties.

**primary colors**

Red, yellow and blue. No combination of other colors will yield a primary color; combinations of the primary colors yield all other colors.

**print**

A generic term used to describe an impression made on paper from a block, plate or film negative, for example.

**profile**

1) The outline of the exposed surface of a molding cross-section. 2) An outline of the contour of a face, viewed from the side.

**provenance**

A record of previous ownership and previous locations for a work of art.

**publisher**

A company whose business is to produce and market prints.

---

- Q -

---

- R -

**rag board**

Mat board from non-wood products such as cotton linters or cotton which are naturally lignin free, stable and durable. Made with a non-acidic (pH neutral or alkaline if buffered) sizing.

**rag paper**

Paper with all the qualities and benefits of rag board, but much thinner. Used to make photo corners and for other light weight applications in framing.

**ready made frame**

A frame ready for purchase as is, as opposed to a custom-made frame. Ready made are usually produced in standard sizes, e.g., 8x10, 11x14, 16x20.

**refit**

To remove an artwork from a frame and reinstall in the same or different frame.

**register marks**

In multicolor printing, small dots, circles, crosses, etc., placed in the margin of the key (main) block, plate, etc., and which are transferred exactly to each printing surface made from the key. These marks enable the printer to align all the printing surfaces, so that each color impression will be in register with all the other impressions.

**regular glass**

A designation for standard single-strength window glass (2.5 mm).

**remarque**

1) A small sketch engraved in the margin of a printing plate, usually removed before the final edition is printed. 2) A printing plate with such a mark.

**reprints**

Produced after the original edition was issued and from the original plates or blocks.

**reproduction**

A copy.

**restoration**

Cosmetic repair of an object to recreate its original appearance.

**restrike**

Produced after the original edition was issued and from the original plates or blocks. Often made years after the artist's death.

**rice paper**

A common misnomer for Japanese paper. A smooth, white material favored by Chinese painters; cut off, in a spiral manner, from the pith of the *Fatsia papyrifera* tree. Not a paper, similar to papyrus and tapa in that regard.

**rigiclée**

A printed art reproduction with a smooth surface, free of any pattern, which allows you to see colors, textures and details with a clarity never before possible in a fine art reproduction. Unlike canvases, which must be stretched, and paper prints, which must be protected with glass, a RiGiclée is ready to frame and enjoy and is durable and fade resistant, requiring only occasional dusting with a clean, dry cloth.

**rosewood**

A tree that grows in India, South and Central America. The wood is hard and very heavy. A special feature is the silvery sparkle it gives off when placed under light.

- S -

---

**sawtooth hanger**

A strip of metal approximately 1/4 inch wide with a sawtooth configuration cut into one edge. The hanger is attached to the back of the frame and combined with a nail or hook in the wall to complete the hanging assembly.

**scoop**

A common frame molding shape, a cross section showing a concave or hollowed profile.

**screw eye**

A screw with a head shaped into a loop to which the hanging wire on the back of a picture frame is attached.

**secondary market**

An arena where limited edition prints are resold after the edition has been sold out at the original sources.

**security hanger**

A type of hanger with one section attached to the back of the frame and the other to the wall. When positioned together, the frame is held securely and requires a special tool to separate the hanger parts.

**sepia**

1) A dark brown color. 2) A dark brown pigment, used in paints and inks.

**sericel**

Artwork created to resemble an animation cel, but using screen printing techniques.

**serigraph**

A method of printing using a hand-cut or photographically prepared stencil attached to silk or a polyester fabric through which color is forced. Also, referred to as a silk-screen or screen print.

**shadow box**

A frame made from a deep molding in which three-dimensional objects may be displayed.

**shrink wrap(ping)**

(n) A clear plastic film which shrinks when heated. It comes in various qualities and thicknesses. (v) The act of wrapping an object in this film.

**signed and numbered (S/N)**

A print bearing an original signature and copy/edition numbers. Many of these will also come with a certificate of authenticity certifying the limited edition and signature of the artist. These are supplied from the artist or publisher.

**signed only (SO)**

A print signed by the artist but not numbered.

**silk-screen**

A stencil process of printing in which a cloth (originally silk) is stretched over a heavy frame and the design painted by tusche or affixed by stencil. It is printed by having a squeegee force color through the pores of the fabric in areas not blocked out. The term silk-screen now implies a commercial use, the same process used in fine art is termed serigraph.

**silver leaf**

Silver that has been beaten into thin sheets. Silver leaf is more delicate than imitation gold, but sturdier than genuine gold; can be cut with scissors and picked up with fingers. A very versatile leaf; the color can be modified with a tinted shellac, sometimes known as gamboge.

**spring clips**

There are various types of spring clips, used to hold a stretcher frame in a wooden frame or artwork in a metal frame. The canvas type hook on the stretcher bar and to the inside of the wooden frame. The type for metal frames fits between the back inside edge of the frame and the backing board.

**sold out**

Said of a limited edition print once it is no longer available at issue price and is being sold instead at secondary market prices.

**stamp print**

A limited edition print of an art piece that normally is done for the making of a conservation stamp or a game stamp, e.g., duck stamp print.

**standard size frame**

A frame built to one of a variety of sizes deemed standard in the framing industry, e.g., 5x7, 8,10, 16x20.

**still life**

A painting or drawing of a group of inanimate objects contrived by the artist according to some theme, either symbolic or merely aesthetic.

**stretch**

To pull a fabric taut over a rigid support and secure; e.g., a canvas over a stretched frame or a needle art over foam board.

**stretcher bar**

A strip of wood with tongue-and-groove ends. Bars are joined to form an expandable frame over which canvas is stretched.

**substrate**

A term from substratum meaning a layer lying under another. Generally used to denote a foundation material upon which an item is mounted or otherwise functions as a carrier.

---

- T -

**tapestry**

1) A fabric consisting of a warp upon which colored threads are woven by hand to produce a design, often pictorial, used for wall hanging, on furniture, etc. 2) A machine woven reproduction of this fabric.

**teak**

A tree that grows in Southern India and Southeast Asia. The wood is extremely hard (ordinary nails cannot be driven into it), very heavy (logs sink in water) and uniquely resistant to attack by insects, fungi and chemicals (it is not harmed by acids or alkalis). The color varies from yellow brown to rich brown. It has a coarse texture, usually is straight grained and has an oily feel; excellent dimensional stability and durability.

**tempera**

Pigments mixed with a water-soluble base such as casein, size, or egg yolk. Tempera dries with a flat, dull finish.

**time-limited edition**

An edition whose size is established by the number of orders a publisher receives during a set period of time..

**triptych**

1) A set of three paintings or bas reliefs, related in subject matter and connected side by side. The two outside half-panels (called wings) may be closed over the central panel. 2) A set of three prints that make one complete image.

---

- U -

**ultraviolet (UV) light**

Short, high energy invisible light waves beyond violet in the spectrum with a length of 250 to 400 nanometers.

**united inch**

In framing, the combined inches of one length and one width of a frame; e.g., an 8x10 frame is 18 united inches.

**UV filtering acrylic sheet**

A glazing material consisting of an acrylic sheet which has been formulated to remove the damaging ultraviolet rays from light.

---

- V -

**value**

1) The degree of lightness or darkness of a hue. 2) The general degree of lightness or darkness of a surface.

**Victorian**

1) Pertaining or belonging to the period during which Queen Victoria of Great Britain reigned, c. 1840-c. 1900. 2) Characterized by the presence of heavily carved ornaments, elaborate molding, etc.; use of strong, generally dark colors; emphasis on geometric form rather than on textural effects and frequently by an effect of harshness.

**vignette**

1) An ornamental design of vine leaves, tendrils and grapes, used as a boarder on a page. 2) A small, pleasing picture or view. 3) Small illustration or design on the title page of a book or at the beginning

or end of a chapter. 4) An engraving, drawing, photograph or the like that is shaded gradually at the edges so as to not leave a definite line at the borders.

- W -

---

**walnut**

A tree that grows in Australia, Europe and America; the wood is hard, heavy and exceptionally stable (it does not shrink or warp). The color varies from pink to chocolate brown.

**watercolor**

1) The technique of painting with pigments dispersed in a gum Arabic solution. 2) A work of art so produced. 3) The paint used in this technique.

**watermark**

1) A design, pattern or mark on paper, usually produced by a raised area on which the paper is made. Watermarks on handmade papers are made by very low relief molds or designs of fine wire set on the screen on which the moist pulp collects.

**wood engraving**

A highly exacting technique involving engraving on a piece of polished endwood. Endwood is a cross-cut section of wood which has little or no perceptible grain. This allows for cutting of delicate lines in any direction.