

Matboard-plate based Collagraph

Step-by-step instructions: (NOTE: Final thickness of plate and image is not to exceed 1/8" if you wish it to print correctly.)

1. As with any Printmaking process, decide on an image (or, for folks who wish to "wing it," an image/texture/material direction.)
2. Decide what size and shape plate you wish to work with. Since heavy-weight paper, the kind of paper you will print Collagraph plates on (such as Stonehenge, Fabriano-Murillo, Arches Cover, BFK Rives, etc.), comes in different sizes you will choose one and you should base the size of your plate on the general "2" Rule of Thumb" that states: "Your paper should be, all 4 sides, at least 2" larger than your plate." You will make it easier on yourself if you work with either a full sheet, a half sheet, or a quarter sheet of the paper you decide to use.
3. Cut your plate from a larger sheet of matboard. Since any plate that will go through an Intaglio press must be beveled at an approximately 30° angle you should do this as you cut out your plate. This also applies to "shaped plates," meaning any plate that is not square or rectangular in shape.
4. Using a 1" or 2", or larger, foam brush and a mix of approximately 20% water mixed with 80% Acrylic Gloss Medium, brush the mixture on the back of the plate first and, when the back is dry, coat the front of the plate with the mixture taking care to make sure the bevels are well covered with Gloss Medium.
5. Brush the BACK of the plate with 100% (full strength) Acrylic Gloss Medium to seal the back from chemicals and ink. Coat the back of the plate as thoroughly and smoothly as possible and, if in doubt, use 100% Acrylic Gloss Medium a second time for a final varnish on the back. The fewer the brush strokes the better, excessive brushing will weaken the Gloss Medium.
6. Create an image or a texture, or both, on the front of your plate and make sure you have no "undercuts," or places that will hold an excessive amount of ink. If you have questions about this, **now is the time to ask.**
7. Finally, when you are satisfied with your image or texture, coat the front of the plate with 100% Acrylic Gloss Medium and allow to dry. Sometimes you will need a second "final varnish" of the plate or you may need to fill some deep "chasms" in the plate, now is the time to do that if needed. When the plate is dry and the Acrylic is cured (approximately over night) the plate is now ready to be "proofed." Print it as you would a Drypoint or a Copperplate etching.

Examples

1. Suggested Materials/Texture:
 - Sewing Thread
 - Copier Paper
 - Thin Fabrics
 - Acrylic Modeling Paste
 - Acrylic Gel Medium
 - Hair or Fur
 - Dried Plant Matter
 - Sandpaper
2. For example: if the paper is 24"x32" it follows that:
 - ¼ sheet will be 12"x16"
 - and the plate would be 8"x12"
3. If the plate is to be 8"x12" cut it from a piece of matboard that is, at least, 9"x13" so you can cut a bevel.

NOTE:

- Collagraph plates CAN be made from many different types of materials, for this class we only use matboard.
- There are other types of glues and varnishes that could also be used for Collagraph, for this class we only use Acrylic Gloss Medium and Varnish.
- The thickness of your plate, plus objects/materials you glue to the plate, is not to exceed 1/8" thick.

■ **Wrinkle-Plate Collagraph**

Follow steps 1., 2., 3., 4., and 5. (Matboard-based Plate Collagraph) above and you will have a foundation for a “more painterly approach to Collagraph.”

Step 6: Rather than gluing objects to your plate, at this step, you will spray-paint the front (printing side) of the plate with Krylon Wrinkle Finish paint. This is a “two-coat” process and you will need to follow the paint can’s instructions to the letter in order for it to work.

Step 7: Once the paint has cured you can transfer your image using white chalk on the back of your drawing (photocopy, laser print, etc.) and by tracing the contours of the image you will paint. Hint: include a contour of all the shadow areas as well as a general outline of the subject.

Step 8: Mix Acrylic Gloss Medium (60%) with Acrylic Titanium White paint (35%) and water (5%) in a lidded jar. Use this mix to develop your image. The more you fill the wrinkles, when the Acrylic paint is dry, the more ink you will wipe off the image. The less ink any part of the image has left on it after the wipe the lighter it will print.