

SERIGRAPHY AND SILKSCREEN TECHNIQUES

Screen printing is the only major new printmaking development in the 20th century. Its origin, the stencil process, has been known to artists for centuries. The basic principle is simple. Ink is pushed through tiny holes of a screen. Those screens used to be made from silk (therefore silkscreen printing). Today most screens are nylon or polyester. The areas which should not print are masked or blocked out by stencils or by drawing or painting onto the screen with liquid screen fillers. In Fine Art the technique is also called Serigraphy. The artist paints directly onto the screen, for every colour a new screen. Inks can be opaque or transparent. An artwork can be built up by as many as 50 or more different coloured screens. Most suitable are bold, bright and strong images. This was ideal for the pop artists in the 1960s, such as Warhol, Lichtenstein etc. who discovered screen printing as a popular new art form. Many contemporary artists use screen printing as the most suitable medium for their individual type of artwork. Some rare screen prints can have a price tag of \$ 100,000 and more. Lichtenstein was still working in screen printing shortly before he died. One of his latest "Interior Series" fresh from the press had a release price of US \$ 25,000 each print. This shows that serigraphs are definitely a recognised modern art form with great potential for investment value.