

The background is a dark, textured space filled with numerous overlapping circles of various colors including pink, yellow, purple, green, blue, orange, and brown. A large, prominent blue circle with a white, glowing border is centered in the upper half of the image. The text is overlaid on this scene in a bold, sans-serif font.

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Glossary of Fine Art Related Terms

Abrasion Resistance: The resistance to scratching of a surface of paper by other paper surfaces or other materials.

Absorbency: The ability of a material to take up moisture.

Acid Free: (Neutral pH of 7.0) During paper production, treatment employed with a mild base is employed to neutralize the natural acids occurring in wood pulp. Buffering may also be used to prevent the formation of additional acids. If prepared properly, papers made from any fiber can be acid free.

Achromatic: Black, white and greys. Artwork that is executed without color. Also called monochromatic.

Alteration: Any change made by the customer after copy or artwork has been given to the service bureau, separator or printer. The change could be in copy, specifications or both. Also called AA, author alteration and customer alteration.

AP: Abbreviation for artist's proof. **Archival:** Term with no definitive scientific meaning **Art:** From the Latin ars, which, loosely translated, means "arrangement" or "to arrange."

Artist's Proof: Traditionally, proofs pulled by the artist over and beyond the regular numbered edition, reserved for the artist's use. Now often used to designate any proofs pulled over and beyond the regular edition, whether printed by the artist or by his printer, but reserved for the artist's use.

Atelier: French term for "Printer's Workshop". **Author's Alterations (AA's):** At the proofing stage, changes that the client requests to be made concerning original art provided. AA's are usually considered an additional cost to the client.

B:

Basis Weight: In the United States and Canada, the weight, in pounds, of a ream (500 sheets) of paper cut to the basic size. Also called ream weight and substance weight (sub weight). In countries using ISO paper sizes, the weight, in grams, of one square meter of paper. Also called grammage and ream weight.

BAT Proof: Abbreviation for the French term "bon à tirer," literally meaning "good to pull," i.e., "print." Traditionally, it represents a particular example of the quality which the printer is to duplicate.

Bind: Usually in the book arena, but not exclusively, the joining of leafs or signatures together with either wire, glue or other means.

Bindery: Usually a department within a printing company responsible for collating, folding and trimming various printing projects.

Bleed: To extend the print image to the edges of the paper.

Blind Folio: A page number not printed on the page. (In the book arena, a blank page traditionally does not print a page number.)

Brightness/Whiteness: Brightness is a measurement originally developed to monitor pulp bleaching. There are two predominant scales for conveying brightness: GE and European. Whiteness is a measurement taken by shining a bright light source onto a sample of paper. An electronic sensor takes a reading of the color of the reflected light—or whiteness.

Bronzing: The effect of seeing a flash of bronze color reflecting off pigment inks. Sometimes confused with gloss differential.

C:

Calendering: The process of smoothing the surface of the paper by pressing it between rollers. Uncalendered papers — those not made smooth by calendering — have a less smooth texture.

Caliper: The measurement of thickness of paper expressed in thousandths of an inch or mils (millimeters).

Cancellation Proof: A proof taken from a cancelled plate to document the act of cancellation.

Carbon Black: A pigment made of elemental carbon and ash.

Cast-coated Paper: High gloss, coated paper made by pressing the paper against a polished, hot, metal drum while the coating is still wet.

Certificate Of Authenticity: is a statement issued originally by the publisher stating the total edition size, the edition number of the piece being sold, the year published, the fine art printer and the medium.

Chop: A printed or stamped symbol used by the printers and print workshop (and sometimes by artists and collectors) as a mark of identification. The chop may be inked or merely embossed.

Chromogenic Print: Technically correct term for color silver halide C-print. Used in marketing for greater perceived value than a C-Print.

Cold-pressed paper: A more textured watercolor paper. Cold-pressed paper offers more “tooth”. **Collate:** To organize printed matter in a specific order as requested. **Colophon:** A printers’ or publishers’ identifying symbol or emblem. **Colorants:** Materials used to produce color, such as dyes, inks, pigments, toners, or phosphors.

Colorfast (Lightfast): A paper color that is resistant to fading due to aging, or the action from external agents such as light, acids, heat, chemicals and other adverse conditions. Lightfast and sunfast are variations of the term.

Continuous-tone: All photographs and those illustrations having a range of shades not made up of dots, as compared to line copy or halftones. Abbreviated contone.

Contemporary Art: Defined variously as art produced at this present point in time or art produced since World War II. The definition of the word contemporary would support the first view, but museums of contemporary art commonly define their collections as consisting of art produced since World War II.

Cotton Rag: Papers of the past which were composed of torn cotton rags.

D:

Deboss: To press an image into paper so it lies below the surface. Also called tool.

Décor/Decorative: Markets that use open editions/unsigned works as furnishings.

Deckle Edge: The irregular edge of handmade paper formed in a deckle by tearing. tearing, a bone knife is used to smooth the edge and create the deckle edge look.

Digital C-Print: Silver halide print exposed with a laser vs incandescent light source. Has same properties as C-Print.

Digitally re-mastered print: Refers to a high quality re-production that is made from an original print or a copy negative. It involves scanning the image, correcting any imperfections, and returning the work to its original look.

Dot gain: Term used to describe the difference between the requested and the actual printed dot size. In inkjet printing, causes are dust on the surface of the paper that causes the ink to spread, and ink bleeding. On presses, a whole slew of mechanical, optical, and chemical factors can cause the dot size to increase, and in print manufacturing, the term “dot gain” is slowly being deprecated in favor of the term “Tone Value Increase” or TVI.

Double Bump: To print a single image twice so it has two layers of ink. **Dull Finish:** Any matte finished paper.

Dummy: Simulation of the final product. Also called mockup. **Dutch:** Any deckle edged paper, originally produced in the Netherlands.

E:

Edition: In visual arts, an edition is a set of duplicate prints or casts of a particular image. The types of reproduction that the term edition refers to can be

offset-lithography, lithographs, serigraphs, etchings, offset-lithography or cast sculpture. If the number of prints to be produced is unlimited, the edition is usually referred to as an open edition, whereas, if the number of prints is predetermined and limited, the edition is then

Edition Size: The size of an edition is the TOTAL number of pieces printed by the publisher and includes all artist proofs (AP), printer’s proofs (PP), “Roman numeral” pieces and all other pieces signed and numbered of that image. Therefore a piece may have an edition number of 150/295, the TOTAL edition size may be substantially higher than 295, depending on the number of AP’s, PP’s, etc.

Emboss: To press an image into paper so it lies above the surface. Also called cameo and tool. **English Finish:** Smooth finish on uncoated book paper; smoother than eggshell, rougher than smooth.

F:

Face: Edge of a bound publication opposite the spine. Also called foreedge. Also, an abbreviation for typeface referring to a family of a general style.

Facsimile Reproduction: Making an exact copy of a work of art

Felt Finish: Soft woven pattern in paper.

Fine Art: A term used to refer to fields traditionally considered to be artistic. "Fine art" is a distinction referring to its aim to be purely aesthetic, having only the purpose of inspiring or stimulating the viewer's emotions. Crafts, on the other hand, are more commonly used as simple decorations or made to serve a practical purpose.

Fine Papers: Papers made specifically for writing or commercial printing, as compared to coarse papers and industrial papers. Also called cultural papers and graphic papers.

Finish: (1) Surface characteristics of paper. (2) General term for trimming, folding, binding and all other post printing operations.

Finished Size: Size of product after production is completed, as compared to flat size. Also called trimmed size.

Fourdrinier: A machine with a copper wire screen that receives the pulp slurry in the paper making process; it will become the final paper sheet.

Furnish: The slurry mixture of fibers, water, chemicals and pigments that is delivered to the Fourdrinier machine in the paper making process.

Fuzz: A term for the fibers that project from the paper surface.

G:

Gallery: A building, an institution, a room or a website used for the exhibition/display and or sale of artistic work.

Gallery Proof: A print set aside for a Gallery's use; usually for Display Purposes.

Giclée: A French word which loosely translates to "little squirt" or "to spray". Its a marketing term with no definitive meaning

Grain Direction: Predominant direction in which fibers in paper become aligned during manufacturing. Also called machine direction

Grain Long Paper: Paper whose fibers run parallel to the long dimension of the sheet. Also called long grain paper and narrow web paper.

Grain Short Paper: Paper whose fibers run parallel to the short dimension of the sheet. Also called short grain paper and wide web paper.

Grammage: Basis weight of paper in grams per square meter (gsm). **Groundwood Paper:** Newsprint and other inexpensive paper made from pulp created when wood chips are ground mechanically rather than refined chemically.

GSM: (Gram per square meter) The gram weight of a hypothetical square meter of a particular type of paper, a good comparative measurement because it does not vary with sheet size.

H:

Hairline (Rule): Subjective term referring to very small space, thin line or close register. The meaning depends on who is using the term and in what circumstance.

Hickey: A term used to describe the effect that occurs when a spec of dust or debris adheres to the printing plate and creates a spot or imperfection in the printing.

Hor commerce proof: (French, “not offered for sale”) A proof of a completed print (aside from the edition) that is not intended for sale and is marked “hors commerc” or “h.c.” such proofs are sometimes retained as archival impressions by the artist or the publisher, or are used as demonstration proofs in marketing the edition.

Hot Pressed: A paper surface that is smooth, produced by pressing a finished sheet through hot cylinders.

House sheet: This is a term that refers to a paper that a printer keeps on hand in his shop. Also called floor sheet.

I:

Ink holdout: A quality of paper to be resistant to ink absorption, allowing the ink to dry on the paper surface.

L:

Laid finish: A parallel lined paper that has a handmade look. Laid lines are close together and run against the grain; chain lines are farther apart and run with the grain.

Lamination: Bonding one product to another by pressure for protection or appearance.

Landscape: Artistic style in which width is greater than height. (Portrait is opposite.)

Lay Edge: The edge of a sheet of paper feeding into a printer.

Legend: Directions about a specific matter (illustrations) and how to use them. In regard to maps and tables, an explanation of signs (symbols) used.

Lignin: Substance in trees that holds cellulose fibers together. Lignin causes papers to yellow if not removed.

Limited Edition Print: An edition of identical prints, numbered sequentially and individually signed by the artist, having a stated limit to the quantity in the edition.

Linen: A paper that emulates the look and texture of linen cloth.

Linting and Surface Contamination: Problems occurring when lint, paper fibers or other surface contamination causes spots or uneven inking when printing.

Lithography/Litho: A printing process in which the image to be printed is rendered on a flat surface, as on sheet zinc or aluminum, and treated to retain ink while the non image areas are treated to repel ink. Also see Offset

M:

Machine finish: A paper finish that results from the interaction of the paper with the Fourdrinier process as opposed to post machine embossing.

Matte finish: A coated paper finish that goes through minimal calendaring.

Machine Glazed (MG): Paper holding a high-gloss finish only on one side.

Margin: Imprinted space around the edge of the printed material.

Media: Primary or underlying material on which other materials (such as ink, coating, paint, or treatment) are applied, or from which other materials are made. Also called Substrate.

Metamerism: Often confused with metameric failure, metamerism is the phenomenon that makes all color matches possible. Sample metamerism is a psychophysical phenomenon commonly defined as the situation when two samples with different spectral reflectance curves produce a visual color match under one light source but fail to do so under another. Observer metamerism describes the phenomenon where two observers see the same sample as having a different color: comparisons of the difference between the way our eyes see a color and the way a camera sees color are examples of observer metamerism.

Metameric Failure: The inability of color samples to maintain a color match under different light sources. Often, when people talk of metamerism, they're really describing metameric failure. Metameric failure is often seen with pigment ink prints where the ink pigment, often yellow, appears green under daylight or magenta/red under tungsten light.

Mock Up: A reproduction of the original printed matter possibly containing instructions or direction.

Modern Art: The general period from 1905 to 1955, when Pop Art ushered in the postmodern period in art.

Mouldmade Paper: Paper made by a slowly rotating machine called a cylinder-mould that simulates the hand paper-making process. Fibers become more randomly intertwined in machinemade papers, producing a stronger, more flexible sheet or roll.

Mottle: A term used to describe spotty or uneven ink absorption. Also called sinkage. A mottled image may be called mealy.

M Weight: Weight of 1,000 sheets of paper in any specific size. **Museum:** A building, place, or institution devoted to the acquisition, conservation, study, exhibition, and educational interpretation of objects having scientific, historical, or artistic value

N:

Nominal Weight: When the basis weight of paper differs from the actual weight, the term nominal weight is used.

Natural: A term to describe papers that have a color similar to that of wood; also called cream, off-white or ivory.

O:

Old Masters: European painters of skill who worked before about 1800, or a painting by such a painter. An “old master print” is an original print (for example an engraving or etching) made by an artist in the same period. Likewise an “old master drawing”.

Offset: In commercial printing, a widely used technique in which the inked image on a printing plate is imprinted on a rubber cylinder and then transferred (offset) to paper or other material.

Opacity: Quality of papers that defines its opaqueness or ability to prevent two-sided printing from showing through.

Opaque: A quality of paper that allows relatively little light to pass through. **Open Edition:** An edition issued without limit, individual number, or artist’s signature.

Out-Gassing: A phenomenon where the humectant or anti-drying agents in inks come out of the print and are deposited on a surface such as the glass in front of a framed print.

Overlay: Layer of material taped to a mechanical, photo or proof. Acetate overlays are used to separate colors by having some type or art on them instead of on the mounting board. Tissue overlays are used to carry instructions about the underlying copy and to protect the base art.

Overprint: To print one image over a previously printed image, such as printing type over a screen tint. Also called surprint.

P:

Palladium/Platinum Print: A palladium print is formed by exposing a negative in contact with paper sensitized with a palladium or platinum (a metal) compound, and developing the exposed paper in potassium oxalate.

Pigment Print: A print made using inks based on pigment instead of dyes. Pigment prints are considered longer lasting.

Pica: A unit of measure in the printing industry. A pica is approximately 0.166 in. There are 12 points to a pica.

Picking: Phenomenon of ink pulling bits of coating or fiber away from the surface of paper as it travels through the printer, thus leaving unprinted spots in the image area.

Plate Finish: Any bond, cover or bristol stock with an extremely smooth finish achieved by calendaring.

Pleasing Color: Color that the customer considers satisfactory even though it may not precisely match original samples, scenes or objects.

Point: (1) Regarding paper, a unit of thickness equating 1/1000 inch. (2) Regarding type, a unit of measure equaling 1/12 pica and .013875 inch (.351mm).

Pop Art: A school of art that emerged in the United Kingdom in the 1950s and became prevalent in the United States and the United Kingdom in the 1960s; it imitated the techniques of commercial art and the styles of popular culture and the mass media

Portrait: An art design in which the height is greater than the width. (Opposite of Landscape.)

Poster: A reproduction of an original work, printed on a large sheet of paper that carries limited value.

Postmodernism: Late-twentieth-century critical, literary, and performance movement that reacts to modern art and literature; postmodernists suggest that truth is no longer verifiable, and that new art forms are best created by freely mixing previous styles and themes.

Preferred Portfolio Edition: Print editions designated by the artist and intended to be presented and contained in a portfolio or folio collection of prints.

Presentation Proof: Proofs pulled over and beyond the regular numbered edition which are distributed at the artist's discretion.

Principal Portfolio Edition: See notation above for Preferred Portfolio Edition. **Print:** Any type of analog or digital output used in any art form. Graphic Print used to connote collectable works of art that have been reproduced vs "Print" which tends to mean a photograph.

Printer's Proof: An alternative term for the BAT proof pulled by the printer in those instances where the artist prefers to refer to the artist's proof which has been supplied as the ultimate BAT. In addition, the term may be used to describe a presentation print given to the printer.

Print Permanence: Print permanence refers to the longevity of printed materials, especially photographs, and preservation issues. Over time, the density, color balance, luster and other qualities of a print will degrade. The rate at which deterioration occurs depends primarily on two main factors: the print itself, that is, the colorants used to form the image and the medium on which image resides, and the type of environment the print is exposed to. For ink jet prints, dye-based inks generally last longest when used with specific paper types, whereas pigment-based inks can be optimal on more types of paper. Ink jet paper types include swellable paper, porous paper, and cotton fiber paper. Environmental factors that hasten the deterioration of a print include exposure to heat, ozone and other pollutants, water or humidity, and high levels of light. Though light-induced fade often gets the most publicity, greater than 90 per cent of consumer prints are stored in the dark where the effects of heat, humidity, and/or pollutants can dominate. While ISO (International Organization for Standardization) has developed standards for the testing of image permanence, those standards have yet to be extended to digital print output, though the organization has signaled its intent to provide such standards.

Proof: Test sheet made to reveal errors or flaws, predict results from the printer and record how a printing job is intended to appear when finished.

Publisher: In the fine art world the publisher is the company who contracts with an artist to print an edition. The publisher is usually responsible for the printing and the marketing of the artist's work. By printing an edition, many art collectors are able to enjoy the same image, and at a greatly reduced price from the original painting.

Published Edition: This is the regular edition of each print, numbered in arabic numerals.

Q:

Quarto: (1) Sheet folded twice, making pages one-fourth the size of the original sheet. A quarto makes an 8-page signature. (2) Book made from quarto sheets, traditionally measuring about 9' x 12'.

R:

Replacement Proofs: These proofs, pulled over and above the published edition, are unnumbered duplicates intended to replace prints which may become damaged in shipment, handling, etc.

Reproduction: The term used to refer to the copy of a fine art piece. A reproduction could be in the form of a print, like an offset-lithographic print, an inkjet print on different substrates or even reproduced in the same medium as the original, as in an oil painting.

Register: To place printing properly with regard to the edges of paper and other printing on the same sheet. Such printing is said to be in register.

Register Marks: Cross-hair lines on mechanicals and film that help keep flats, plates, and printing in register. Also called crossmarks and position marks.

S:

Score: To compress paper along a straight line so it folds more easily and accurately. Also called crease.

Screen Printing: Printing technology that is used to print everything from t-shirts and short-run posters, to novelties like coffee mugs and decals. Screen printing is most valued for its ability to print on a wide variety of materials with flexibility. Also known as Serigraphy.

Secondary Market: A market, largely operated by retail galleries, where limited edition prints are bought and sold by collectors after the edition is sold out at the publisher.

Serigraph: Print made using a stencil process in which an image or design is superimposed on a very fine mesh screen and printing ink is squeegeed onto the printing surface through the area of the screen that is not covered by the stencil. Also called Screen Printing.

Setoff: Undesirable transfer of wet ink from the top of one sheet to the underside of another as they lie in the delivery stack of a printer. Also called offset.

Show Through: A problem that occurs when the printing on one side of a sheet is seen from the other side.

Signature: Printed sheet folded at least once, possibly many times, to become part of a book, magazine or other publication.

Silver Gelatin print: A term encompassing all photographic prints made on a paper sensitized with silver salts. Today used to connote Black and White silver halide prints since those still silver and gelatin is still used where Chromogenic prints use dye clouds vs silver salts.

Size (Sizing): Compound mixed with paper or fabric to make it stiffer and less able to absorb moisture.

Slip Sheets: Separate sheets (stock) independent from the original run positioned between the “printed run” for a variety of reasons such as eliminating out-gassing.

Smoothness: That quality of paper defined by its levelness that allows for pressure consistency in printing, assuring uniformity of print.

Sold-Out Prints: Where a print is shown as “sold out”, this means sold-out at the publisher. “Sold-out” prints are sometimes available from galleries at the original publisher’s price, depending upon the length of time elapsed following publication.

Spoilage: Paper that, due to mistakes or accidents, must be thrown away instead of delivered printed to the customer, as compared to waste.

Stability: The quality of paper to maintain its original size when it undergoes pressure and moisture changes.

Stage Proof: A proof that shows a print in a particular stage of development.

String Score: Score created by pressing a string against paper, as compared to scoring using a metal edge.

Substrate: The material on which an image is printed, usually paper but can be any substance for which a method of adhering ink can be achieved.

Super calendaring: A machine procedure that produces a high finished paper surface that is extremely smooth and exceptional for printing.

Swellable Paper: Paper whose surface absorbs inks to allow quicker drying and somewhat longer display life. However, swellable papers remain sensitive to water and moisture and prints can be ruined by even small amounts of moisture.

T:

Tone Compression: Reduction in the tonal range from the original scene to the printed reproduction.

Tooth: The rough surfaced finish of papers.

Total Numbers of Prints: It is often difficult to determine the total number of existing impressions of any single print unless the edition is carefully controlled and the documentation made public. Because of the complexity of the various trial and state proof series of Milton’s work, absolute numerical accuracy cannot be assured though every effort has been made to achieve this end.

Trial Proof: Trial proofs are taken for various reasons, such as to test various inks, papers, make-ready, and the press. Often they are discarded if the test produces unsatisfactory results.

V:

Vignette: Decorative design or illustration.

Vintage Print: An image printed around the same time as the negative (or original capture) was made.

U:

Unique: To Unique or Enhance an image on a print—usually by painting over, or “highlighting”, the focal points of the image with original paint, thus giving the print “texture”, “dimension” and added “distinction”. (Also known as “Hand Enhance” or “Hand Highlight”)

Uncalendared: Papers that are not smoothed by going through the calendaring process.

W:

Watermark: Translucent logo in paper created during manufacturing by slight embossing from a dandy roll while paper is still approximately 90 percent water.

Weatherability: The ability of a material to withstand the effects of exposure to weather conditions, significant change in physical or chemical properties.

Wire Side: Side of the paper that rests against the Fourdrinier wire during papermaking, as compared to felt side.

With the Grain: Parallel to the grain direction of the paper being used, as compared to against the grain. See also Grain Direction.

Woodfree Paper: Made with chemical pulp only. Paper usually classified as calendered or supercalendered.

Working Proof: A trial proof bearing the artist’s printer’s notes and corrections.

Wove: A smooth paper made on finely textured wire that gives the paper a gentle patterned finish.