

THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF GLASS PLATES IN THE METHODS OF INTAGLIO

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Abstract

Etching, as a printmaking method, refers to intaglio or engraving. It is a method used to produce artistic prints. The image to be printed is engraved onto the flat surfaces of materials to be used as a plate, such as wood, metal or linolium, by using engraving, carving or etching methods, and this surface, then, is covered with paint. The residual paint that remains in the lines and pits after cleansing it from the surface of the plate helps the image to be transferred onto the paper when it runs through the press. The etching art dated back to the 15th century, and today it is a method still favoured by artists and used as metal plates.

Well-known with glass artistry and regarded as the father of “studio glass” in the United States, Harvey Littleton has brought a newly method in printmaking. He has laid the foundations of vitreography with the first glass print that he experimented in 1974. In 1976, he has decided to go after his passion to use glass, his most favorite object, as a distinctive printmaking method. Believing that glass plates could offer much more advantages than the metal ones couldn't, Littleton built a print studio in his own property on the border of Blue Ridge Parkway in Spruce Pine, North Carolina, hired a printer and, invited artists to produce some prints in the studio. With this attempt, Harvey Littleton has pioneered the continuation and development of the discovery of printmaking from glass. Many successful artists from many different disciplines who came to the studio have advanced new techniques and satisfied about the results as they experienced the process. Distinctive skills and personal methods have led this collaborative understanding to increase the extent of implementing vitreography even further. During the years of 1976 and 1988 that we may refer as “the era of origin and progress of vitreography”, over 250 vitreographs have been produced by means of the individual participation of more than 60 artists. Today vitreography has spreaded to the studios as a printmaking method.

In this paper, vitreography method has been briefly discussed. On the basis of the data obtained during its applications, both the advantageous and disadvantageous aspects of the glass printing as a main subject have been discussed by making comparison with metal engraving.