

Munroe Center for the Arts
Printmaking Studio Guidelines

Our printmaking studio is centered around the American French Tool Press. This press can handle a range of pressures, allowing printmakers to explore linocut, dry-point, monotype, collagraph, and more! Typically, our studio has a variety of inks and plates and the majority of materials are available for enrolled students, depending on the form of printmaking.

1. All students are expected to adhere to the Munroe Center for the Arts (MCA) behavior guidelines, outlined on our website - munroecenter.org/classes
2. No printmaking student, whether new or returning, is allowed in the studio outside of a registered program, unless previously arranged with MCA staff. Students picking up either completed or in-progress work should first check in with the office
3. MCA operates a **non-toxic** printmaking studio
4. This studio is a cooperative space and should be treated with respect and care!

All students, from seniors to youth, are expected to assist in clean-up. Part of printmaking instruction is learning proper clean-up practices and safety precautions! Any printmaking student is encouraged to bring a spare towel and apron, with extras often available, upon request

Studio Housekeeping

1. Please help us keep our studio and storage organized!
 - All students are expected to mark their name on each piece
 - All students should be touching/moving their own piece; in the event that anything is left out or on the press bed, the instructor should be alerted
 - All pieces must be stored in respective storage units (ex. Flat-file) or hung to dry at the end of class
 - Due to limited storage, any additional personal tools or materials brought cannot be stored in the studio unless otherwise coordinated with staff
2. Safety first! Most equipment in the studio, including cutting tools and the press itself, should be handled with care to avoid any accidents
 - Students are recommended to avoid working with loose clothing or hair when near or using the press.
 - The press bed should only be used after the instructor has outlined basics; do not run the press with anything beyond the plate/paper, and turn the wheel slowly
 - The instructor should be alerted to any incidents in the studio, including spills or injuries; basic first aid supplies are available for minor cuts
3. The studio is not intended for bulk / production printing (creating new pieces at high scale and frequency, with the intent of sales)
 - Due to the nature of printmaking, certain classes may include repetitive printing (ex.

Swapping prints between other students), as part of the lesson / class content

- A student who appears to be producing multiple pieces in quick repetition (outside of specific instruction) will be reminded of this policy and may be required to pay additional materials fees, upon the Programming Director's discretion

4. Our printmaking studio is unfortunately unable to offer independent studio use blocks at this time. If you are interested in using the press independently or in a small group outside of class times, please contact our Programming Director (rebecca@munroecenter.org)

Cleanliness & Materials

1. Printmaking is a messy business! It is each student's responsibility to clean their space and tools at the end of each class.
 - Students are expected to wash hands often to prevent staining on both skin and furniture/tools in the studio
 - Students are encouraged to wear an apron and gloves while working
 - Palettes, glass plates, and all tools (brayers, brushes, etc.) should be cleaned completely of ink and either dried with paper towels or left to dry at the edge of the sink
 - Brayers can be dusted with cornstarch, which helps improve their longevity!
2. Towels/rags used in the printmaking studio will occasionally need to be disposed of
 - The studio has a red disposal bin for thoroughly used and ink-saturated fabrics
3. Certain materials are not allowed in our studio.
 - Under no circumstances should a student bring any toxic printmaking materials to use in the studio
 - Any students interested in bringing and using their own materials must confirm with their instructor ahead of time, especially if said materials would run through the printing press

Printing Press Management

1. The American French Tool Press is a highly valued and powerful piece of equipment. Under no circumstances should a student touch/use the press without confirmation from the instructor during class time
2. At the start of the semester, only staff will be setting the pressure. Depending on the program, students may be introduced to the basics for changing the set screws
 - Students can increase pressure by adding additional sheets of newsprint
 - Different forms of printmaking require different pressures - always ensure the press is set to the correct pressure, as this may be changed in-between classes for other programs
 - If there is significant resistance when turning the rollers / wheel, please check the pressure setting and inform the instructor
3. Only one student may use the press at a time. The instructor may assist as needed
 - When not using the press, all others should keep hands, hair, and other materials away

- Printing should be done slowly and methodically, to ensure quality in work and prevent potential accidents
4. Nothing should be stored or dried on the printing press
 - Please check the press bed before running to ensure no tools or other objects have been left behind - even a stray paper clip can ruin the press steel rollers
 5. At the end of each class, the press bed must be cleaned and covered with blankets to protect the printing press

Blankets/Felts

1. Blankets/felts should be handled gently and with clean hands
2. At the end of each class, the blankets should be taken out from under the rollers and draped across the press bed to cover and protect the press
3. Use cover sheets of newsprint over the inked block/plate and printmaking paper to prevent the blankets from getting inky. Any ink on the blankets will run through *anything* passing through the press rollers
4. There are different types of blankets/felts used for printmaking

A sizing catcher, cushion, and pusher (defined below) are all required when printing an etched metal plate. Potentially not all are needed depending on the type of printing, but students should always confirm with the instructor

[Sizing Catcher]: the thinnest blanket which covers the newsprint, printmaking paper, and the inked block/plate

[Cushion]: thickest blanket which softens the transition as the block/plate is pulled under the roller

[Pusher]: densely woven felt, the toughest and slightly textured blanket that touches the roller itself