LESSON PLAN

Screen Printing: Paper Cut Stencils
Inspired by Andy Warhol’s from Joslyn’s In Living Color exhibition (October 11, 2014–January 11, 2015)
Created by Joshua Norton, printmaking artist & facilities coordinator at The Union for Contemporary Arts
Grade Level Jr/Sr High School

Overview
This process helps introduce students to the art and process of screen printing. Students will learn about color layering, shape, line, transparency, and positive/negative space. Bold, graphic forms will be easily cut out and printed multiple times to create exciting, repeatable imagery. Our class will focus on portraiture.

Anticipatory Set
Andy Warhol was a pop artist who created vivid, colorful works. Emulating some of his techniques, we will explore some of the bright colors, flat shapes, and strong compositions that make Warhol unique.

Objectives
• Students will create a 2-3 color screen print
• Students will learn about positive/negative space
• Students will learn proper printing technique
• Students will engage with printmaking equipment/processes

Materials & Resources
• Paper
• screen ink
• freezer paper (wax paper)
• X-acto knives with sharp blades
• masking tape
• clean & open screens
• squeegees
• hinge clamps
• tables
• pencils
• clear mylar sheet
• source material

Vocabulary
• silkscreen
• squeegee
• positive/negative
• pop
• flat
• open/closed
• shape
• transparency
• registration

Lesson Outline
Create imagery. Use a photocopy of a portrait or create a drawing on a sheet of paper (approx 8” x 10”)

Cut stencil:
1. Tape down your drawing to the table with two pieces of tape, then tape a piece of freezer paper (at least twice the size of the drawing) on top of your drawing.
2. Using a sharp X-acto knife, gently cut out the outline shape of your form and remove. The first stencil is complete, untape it and set it aside.
3. Tape a second sheet of wax paper over your drawing and cut out the detailed areas. Since we are cutting our stencils out of paper, any interior spaces must be connected to the outside space (connect an island to a peninsula) so they don’t fall out (think military stenciled letters).
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Printing:
1. Before we print on paper, we must first register our print (make sure it lines up properly).
2. Put clean/open screen in hinge clamps. Place your clear mylar sheet underneath the screen and tape one side of the mylar to the table. Place your printing paper underneath the mylar. Place your first wax paper stencil directly UNDER the screen and on top of the mylar. The proper order should be (from bottom to top): Table, printing paper, mylar, wax paper stencil, screen.
3. Place ink on top of screen. Using downward pressure and a slight angle, drag the squeegee towards you and print the ink through the stencil on to the clear mylar sheet. Tilt screen up, the paper should be adhered to the screen with the ink. The image should be printed on the mylar. From here, we can REGISTER the print, or make sure it prints to where we want it! Position your printing paper under the mylar. Using masking tape, place small pieces of tape on the table, surrounding two different corners of your printing table. We are making little corners that we can slide the paper into so it prints in the same area each time. When this is positioned, simply remove the mylar, position your paper in the taped corners on the table and print off five prints of your first shape.
4. Clean screen with hose.
5. Take new, clean and dry screen and repeat the previous step using a second stencil. Register it the same way, using your previously printed paper. On this run, we print the details of the image.

Additional ideas / considerations
Adding transparent medium to inks allow additional colors to be created when color layering occurs. Encourage your artists to explore this possibility.

Academic Standards
Available on online version at www.joslyn.org/education/teachers/ [select Lesson Plans, then Modern & Contemporary]

About the Artist

Andy Warhol (1928–1987) once famously quipped, “I like boring things.” Indulging this predilection throughout his career, he depicted the mundane, the everyday, the obvious, and the overused:

“The pop artists did images that anybody walking down Broadway could recognize in a split second — comics, picnic tables, men’s trousers, celebrities, shower curtains, refrigerators, Coke bottles. All the great modern things that the Abstract Expressionists tried not to notice at all.”

The leading figure of American Pop Art, a movement that took shape in the 1950s, Warhol focused his attention on the social and political turbulence and unprecedented consumerism that emerged as the United States began to recover from World War II. Drawing inspiration from the rapidly changing world around him, Warhol pursued an approach to making art that was more inclusive and aware of the day-to-day conditions of contemporary life.