BLICK® art materials

Screen Printed Band Posters

The American rock poster is a genre of art designed to the beat of a different drummer.

(art + music)

In the 1960s, San Francisco was the world headquarters for counterculture: hippies, psychedelic rock bands, revolutionaries, visionaries, and...graphic designers?

At that time, the only way for a band to let the public know that they were performing was to put up posters. Space was limited, so posters fought for attention with dynamic imagery and color. Victor Moscoso, a graphic artist who had studied at Yale under colorist Josef Albers, was one of the artists who pioneered the use of vibrating colors, photo collage, and barely-readable fonts to achieve a psychedelic effect in poster art.

"One of the ways that I did it was by reversing all the rules I ever learned in school," Moscoso said, "... musicians were turning up their amplifiers ... blowing out your eardrums. I did the equivalent with the eyeballs."

Now highly collectable, San Francisco rock art posters rarely featured images of the musicians themselves. Instead, they used images from the past—Art Nouveau in particular.

As a lesson in graphic design and serigraphy, students will use an image from the past (within the public domain) and design a poster about an imagined band or promote an imagined concert. They will use bright screen printing inks and design a logo using a font of their own creation. Music genre is irrelevant; a music poster visually communicates entertainment and enjoyment, whether it represents a symphony or a punk band.

The following instructions introduce Speedball Speed Screens, a fast, easy, and tidy way to create photo emulsion stencils in just minutes without chemicals, mixing, or coating screens. The best part is that Speed Screens expose in one minute!

GRADES 9-12 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Materials (required)

Speedball Speed Screens Starter Kit, Includes 3 screens, lamp, wood frame, squeegee, transparency sheets, black ink and more (45220-1001); need one kit

Speedball Permanent Acrylic Screen Printing Ink, Assorted 8 oz jar colors including Fluorescent Yellow (43229-3825), Fluorescent Magenta (43229-3285), Flourescent Blue (43229-5245); choose 3-4 bright colors to share across class

AWT Plastic Spreaders, 4" (40212-1004); one per student

Arnhem 1618 Printmaking Paper, Pad of 15 sheets, 11" x 14", 250 gsm (13862-1005); share two across class

Speedball Ink Jet Transparency Film, pkg of 6, 8.5" x 11"

Speedball Lettering Nibs, Assorted sizes and styles (20909-) and Standard Pen Holder (20914-1065)

Speedball Calligraphy Inks, 2 oz Black (21124-2023) and White (21124-1023)

Optional Materials

Speedball Speed Screens Refill Pack, 3 screens, 10" x 12" (45220-1003)

Ready to order materials?
Go to **www.DickBlick.com/lesson-plans/screen-printed-band-posters**
to access a product bundle for your convenience.

Step 1: *Expose chosen image onto a Speedball Speed Screen. Rinse, dry, and set the screen.*

Step 2: *Create a colorful background using fluorescent inks.*

Preparation

1. In many classroom settings, it will be unrealistic for each student to design their own screen due to time and the expense of materials required. To speed up the process and use fewer screens, select 1-3 images that are in the public domain or open access (without protection of copyright). Major art museum websites, such as the National Gallery, the Metropolitan Museum, or the Art Institute are good sources to find downloadable images.

Process

1. Find an image to use and edit it in a photo manipulation program so that it is black and white only. Areas of gray will not make a good screen. Images that are already high-contrast, such as drawings, etchings, or woodblock prints are particularly easy to adjust. Print the image as large as possible on a transparency sheet using an inkjet or laser printer.

   When working with Speedball Speed Screens, it is not necessary to print it in reverse on the transparency sheet, but it may be preferable. ***Any text needs to be mirrored so when screen printed it is right-reading.*** Most printers have a "flip image" option in print settings.

   For convenience, we have provided a few images on pages 3-6 of this lesson plan for your use.

2. Examine the print by placing on a light table or holding up to a window. Any areas that are not solid black, or any lines that are jagged with pixels can be cleaned up using an opaque black marker.

3. Have the printing (exposure) area ready prior to taking Speedball Speed Screens from their protective black. The room does not have to be completely dark, but lights should be turned off and sunlight should be blocked from windows or doors.

Step 3: *Design graphics, including a band logo and poster information.*

Process, continued

The screens will be exposed by the lamp that is included in the kit. Position the lamp so that it is suspended 14″ above the table surface where the exposure will be made. The lamp may be suspended from a ceiling or positioned to hang between two table easels, stacks of books, or on a dowel rod.

Place a sheet of black paper beneath the lamp to block any surface reflections. A plastic overlay is included in the kit, but a piece of non-UV blocking piece of glass may also be used.

4. Remove one Speed Screen from the black bag. The screen has two sides, an exposure side (shiny, thick and bright red) and the squeegee side (dark pink). When it's removed from the bag, the white carrier sheet will be on top of the exposure side of the sheet to protect the emulsion. *This carrier sheet will need to be removed before exposing.*

5. Place the Speed Screen on top of the black paper, shiny side up. Place your printed transparency (make sure you mirrored the artwork) on the exposure side of the screen. Make sure the non-printed side of the inkjet transparency is in contact with the shiny side of the Speed Screen.

   The printed side of the transparency sheet CANNOT meet the exposure side or they will stick together.

6. Lay the plastic overlay on top of the inkjet transparency. Turn on your exposure lamp, positioned 14″ above the surface, and expose for 1 minute.

7. Once the screen is exposed, rinse with water in a sink using a spray nozzle and warm water. Follow manufacturer's instructions and tips for rinsing, drying, and setting the screen.

8. While the screen is drying, create a ″split-fountain″ or gradient background design on the printmaking paper using fluorescent inks, such as those popularized by poster artists of the 1960s. To make a multicolor gradient, tape a piece of printmaking paper to a surface that is protected with a plastic or paper covering. Place a pre-stretched screen printing frame over the top. Stir ink colors in the jar until well mixed and smooth, then use a palette knife to place ink along the edge of the frame (either horizontally or vertically; match to the size of the squeegee that will be used). Apply 2-4 colors in lines next to each other. Use a sqeegee to push the ink evenly across the screen to the other side of the page. Pick the squeegee up without turning it and pull it back to the other side one time.

Alternatively, ink can be brushed or rolled onto the paper to create a colorful background.

Dry time will vary according to thickness of application.

9. lace the exposed, dried, and set Speed Screen over the gradient background, determining where the image will print. Tape the edges securely using masking or painter's tape so the screen won't move during printing.

10. Scoop out and add a few tablespoons of ink along the furthest edge of the screen. Do not lay any ink directly on the design.Place the squeegee behind the ink, tilted approximately 45-60 degrees in order to create a sharp print edge. Pull the squeegee forward across the image, evenly applying as much pressure as it might require to open a heavy door. One pass should be sufficient for printing on paper. Return remaining ink to the jar. Allow print to dry.

11. The final step in the poster design is to design the text and band logo. The name, lettering style, and details may be related to the printed image or it may not. Keep in mind that poster artists during the 1960s chose images that were eye-catching more often than images relating to the music.

Depending on the time allotted for this project and the supplies at hand, the graphic elements can be designed digitally and new photo emulsion screens created to continue the screen printing process.

If time and resources are limited, the graphic design portion of the poster can be created using poster markers or hand-applied inking. For best results, plan the text first along with a photocopy of the image and transfer the design to the poster using graphite transfer paper.

Options

— View band posters under black lights along with music for a ″groovy″ 1960s experience.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating
Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Connecting
Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.