

a lesson in block printing

the FAQ

Q: what kind of ink would you recommend for printing on fabric?

A: these are the inks that I use. They work great on fabric. <http://www.danielsmith.com/categories/printmaking/ds/oilReliefInks.asp>

Q: Is it possible to use good quality oil paints?

A: I wouldn't use oil paint because the pigment might be the same but the filler and binder are different.

Q: I'm wondering how you apply two different colors to the block? Like in that bird print...

A: For the bird block I used two separate blocks. You carve your initial block, and then you print that block on your second block, and then carve the second. There are several ways to do this. I am working on a tutorial on how I do it, you make this corner thing... easier to explain in pictures. But to answer your questions I used two blocks

Q: This is fabulous! You have truly inspired me!! I'd be curious to know if you find a particular kind of paper best for printmaking?

A: The great thing about Block printing is you don't have to use a particular kind of paper. Obviously some paper is going to be better than others, and you don't want to use something with very much texture because that might cause your block to not print flat. I use a Mohawk superfine usually 100lb, or a cover paper 80-100lb!

Q: in the past when I've attempted the linoleum cut, it's been with a tan colored brand, that is really HARD and hurts my wimpy wrists. I see yours appears white. (Maybe I'm over reacting because i'm used to the buttery texture of the stamp carving material?) What kind do you use and do you find that it's better to use a stiffer linoleum, if so why?

A: I always use the speedball linoleum blocks... and it is harder to carve, but I find that I have more control of the image. My wrist really does start to hurt after while, but I know what kind of pressure I need to use to get really really fine detail. If it was softer I don't know if I would have as much control...
printmakers have really nice arms though!

Q: Do you iron the lino before/during carving?

A: I used to put the block on a hot plate, but now I have just gotten used to cutting it at room temperature. Also, replacing the blades for the tool every once in a while helps, as they tend to get dull after several uses. It's a good thing they are pretty cheap!

Q: Is a blender marker the same thing that you use to, well, blend colors from other markers, or is this one that you refer to (that transfers photocopy images) a different kind than the others? This is a question I've encountered before...

A: I use a chartpak clear blender marker. They run about \$3 each... and will last for a little while. You could also use acetone, but I never would recommend that. It's so bad for you! Way way toxic. The chartpak marker says it's "non toxic" but I wouldn't smell it for long periods of time... if you know what I mean.