



Policy & Procedures for Self Help Graphics & Art's Printmaking Studio/Workshop Space

SELF HELP GRAPHICS & ART (SHG)

SHG is a nationally recognized center for Latino arts that develops and nurtures artists in printmaking. SHG seeks to advance Latino art broadly through programming, exhibitions and outreach to diverse audiences in East Los Angeles and beyond. SHG seeks to identify and engage young and emerging artists from the community in all aspects of its activities.

PRINTMAKING STUDIO

As a part of its mission, SHG allows access to its workshop print studio to experienced artists. Artists work on an independent basis to produce their own prints. The print studio space is designed specifically for individuals who have demonstrated an appropriate level of experience in printmaking and are granted access to work in one or more printmaking techniques, including etching, relief, monotype and screen printing. While all renters are not required to have extensive experience in their chosen medium, we do require that they can use the facilities correctly, independently, safely, and with consideration for other renters.

Prospective renters need to read and fill out an application form, provide a schedule of proposed working dates, and complete a studio orientation before using the studio. People are encouraged to apply with sufficient time for this process before beginning a project. SHG cannot arrange for an interview and orientation on the spot. Hours of operation are Tuesday through Saturday 10 AM – 4 PM, unless a previously scheduled program is taking place. Please allow ample time for scheduling and call (323) 881-6444.

LAB FEES

There will be a lab fee of **\$20.00/month** for all artists who use the etching print lab. This fee is paid in the beginning of the month and is a flat fee whether you use the lab on all its open days or whether you use it for just one day out of the month. This fee is payable to Self Help Graphics & Art for one month. This lab fee goes towards the maintenance of the presses, the rag cleaning service, the solvent/acid supplies, Simple Green, sponges, paper towels & toilet paper, some printing tools, rollers, and palette knives, and limited inks available.

This lab fee does not cover your personal printing materials (paper, plates, extra inks, blotting paper, etc.)

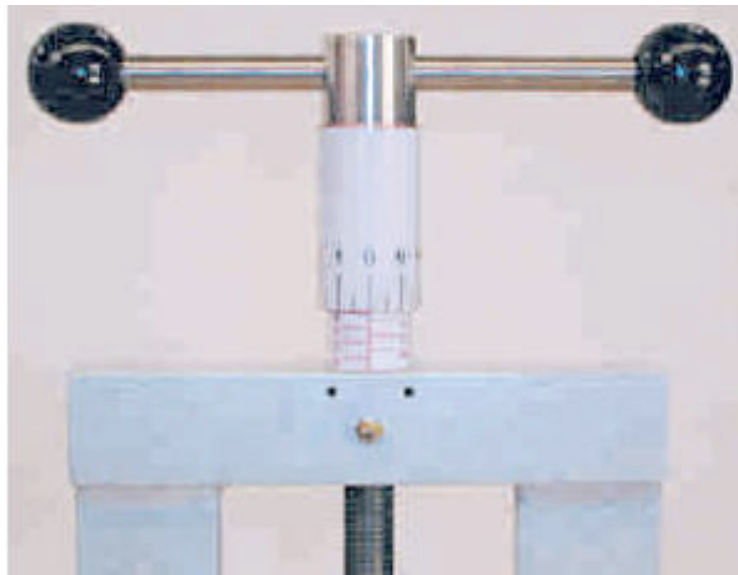
In order to keep the lab fee modest & to give back to the arts community at SHG, each artist that uses the SHG etching lab to print an edition, is also required to donate **20%** of their edition to the SHG archives. It is required that every artist enrolled in the SHG etching lab produce an edition. If in the period of (at least) one year of use an artist does not donate works to SHG, their enrollment will be terminated. If SHG finds that its equipment and

etching facility was used to produce an edition without the required donation being made to SHG, member's enrollment will be terminated.

This is a community space and we ask that it's rules, procedures, equipment, and the property of it's members are respected at all times.

PRESS

1) Setting the Pressure on the Presses: In the Self Help Graphics etching lab there are three etching presses. Each of these presses has a determined pressure, at which it should be set, indicated by an image that looks like:



If you do not see a sign on the press indicating the proper pressure, please ask one of the SHG monitors to guide you in setting the pressure. The pressures are different depending on whether you are printing an etching with a zinc, copper, or plastic plate, or if you are printing a woodcut, linocut, collograph, or monoprint, etc. If you are unsure about the pressure, always set the pressure lighter than indicated, and test it with a blank plate, slowly increasing the pressure. If you are running the press and you feel that it is strongly resisting you, you may have set the pressure do tight. Do NOT force it. With the correct pressure, you should feel a slight resistance, but not a strong resistance. If you are unsure, please contact one of the SHG monitors. Setting the pressure too tight could result in cutting the blankets with the edge of the plate or in breaking one of the presses! In most cases, the damage would be too expensive for SHG to afford to fix. So please treat the presses with care.

2) Experimental Materials. -Collograph and woodcut/linocut printers: When making a print with experimental materials—particularly hard, metal, inflexible materials (coins, stamps, etc.) or with other relief materials, Make sure you place a plywood board over the plate and paper you are printing on to protect the blankets and steel roller drum from being

imprinted upon by these materials.

BLANKETS

Each wool etching blanket costs around \$300 dollars. Self Help Graphics does not have the money to replace these blankets, should they be damaged. Therefore, it is VERY important to make sure we treat these blankets with the utmost care.

1) Releasing the press pressure. First of all the blankets should never be squished in the press under pressure when one is not printing. Once you are done printing for the day make sure you release the pressure from the press.

2) Placement of blankets. There are different types of blankets. The best way to tell them apart is to look at the edge. Two of the blankets look like large pieces of wool felt with no variation in texture along the edge, just different thickness. The thinner looking piece of felt is the sizing catcher and the thicker blanket is the cushion. The third blanket, shows a zig-zag woven texture along the edge, this is the pusher blanket, this is placed on top always, closest to the steel roller drum, to protect the other two blankets.

SIZING CATCHER

The sizing catcher is placed closest to the work on the press bed. This blanket may be cleaned if it becomes soiled with ink. It is the least expensive blanket of the set to replace if it becomes overly soiled. The sizing catcher is 100% wool felt and usually around .062" thick.

CUSHION

The cushion blanket helps to transfer printing pressure from the press to the paper-to-plate contact area. The cushion allows the paper to contact the uneven surfaces of the plate. This contact allows ink to transfer from plate to paper. The cushion blanket is 100% wool felt and is a full .25" thick. It is placed over the sizing catcher.

PUSHER

This pusher blanket is placed over the cushion blanket aiding in cushioning. It is made of a highly durable woven felt. Being woven the pusher resists wear due to abrasion from the upper drum of the etching press. The pusher blanket is .125" thick, and is made of 100% finely woven wool felt. It is placed on top of all the blankets, closest to the steel roller drum.

3) Please keep your hands clean and relatively ink free when handling the blankets to keep them as clean as possible.

4) Please make sure that the pressure is properly set to avoid leaving cuts in the blankets from too tight of a pressure.

5) Also please make sure any experimental hard materials are covered with a board before being printed upon, to avoid leaving permanent imprints or cuts in the blankets or steel drum.

6) Make sure the paper you are printing on is entirely covered by another larger sheet of clean newsprint or scrap paper to protect the blankets from any ink that may be transferred onto them in the printing process.

7) If you are using lacquer thinner (NOT ADVISED SEE BELOW SECTION ON SOLVENTS), to make Xerox transfer prints, please cover the paper you are printing on with a large piece of clean mylar/transparency to prevent the purplish permanent toner ink from printing onto the blankets.

WASHING THE BLANKETS

Do not wash blankets without consulting a SHG monitor. The only blanket that should be washed is the sizing catcher blanket. To properly wash the blankets: It is advised to wash blankets by hand with woolite. To dry the blankets run them through the printing press under light pressure to expel the majority of the water. Do not wring the felts as they are less durable when wet and may become damaged. Lay the felts on a flat surface between layers of blotter paper to finish drying. When drying felt etching blankets do NOT hang the felts on a clothesline or over an edge as this may damage the felts.

ACID

The Nitric Acid used in etching at Self Help Graphics is toxic and dangerous. Therefore, we ask that only authorized monitors be allowed to change and maintain the acid. The acid room will only be open on days when a SHG monitor can be present.

SOLVENTS

Because of the lack of proper ventilation in the etching lab, we try to keep the lab a solvent-free lab as much as possible. This means that we use canola/vegetable oil to clean up the ink, and Simple Green to degrease the oil residue. Mineral Spirits/Turpenoid and Denatured Alcohol are used at a minimum, only when vegetable oil will not work to remove ink/grounds.

Toxic solvents such as Lacquer thinner and Turpentine should not be used unless you have special permission from a SHG staff member. These solvents should be used when the lab is relatively empty of other people and both doors of the lab should be open to allow cross-ventilation, and all the fans should be on during use.

CLEAN UP

Clean up after yourself! This is a self-run lab and we need to make sure to respect it and keep it clean! The lab does not have good ventilation, so we are trying to keep solvent use to a minimum. Canola Oil is the main cleaning agent we use in combination with Simple Green.

- 1) Countertops: You clean off any mixed ink from the glass counters using a razor to remove the excess ink, and then wiping any further extra ink off with the Canola Vegetable oil, and then degreasing the entire surface with Simple Green.
- 2) Press Bed: You clean off any ink marks and residue from printing on the press bed, using canola oil and a rag, and then degreasing with Simple Green.
- 3) Paper Tray: Feel the water in the paper tray. If it has a slimy soapy feeling, the water has too much starch in it to be effective. Empty the water from the paper tray and use a sponge without soap to scrub out this excess starch from the plastic tray. Refill the tray with water and place it in its proper position.
- 4) Drying Rack: Remove any dry prints you have on the drying rack to keep them safe and make room on the rack for other people's prints.
- 5) Clean any other mess you may have made on the tables, hotplates, or other countertops, etc.
- 6) Wipe clean any of the rulers or other tools you may have used. Place them back in the drawers, wall hooks, or closets they belong to.

- 7) Put inks, solvents, and oil into the inflammable solvent cabinet.
- 8) Put all rags that have any amount of solvent on them, even if not fully used, into the red inflammable can near the sink. This is a fire hazard requirement!
- 9) Look around the room. Clean anything you may have overlooked. If someone else has left a mess and forgotten to clean up, please be a wonderful person and help them to clean it up—this is a community effort!

If you have a medical emergency, call 911.

Some nearby hospitals are:

Healthcare Partners Medical

3800 E 1st St

Los Angeles, CA 90063

(323) 261-7520

(At the corner of 1st St. and Gage St., two blocks south of E. Cesar Chavez St.)

Clinica Del Ciudadano Latino

3710 E Cesar E Chavez Ave

Los Angeles, CA 90063

(323) 980-7777

(Between Eastman Ave. & Gage Ave., one block west on E. Cesar Chavez St.-walking distance)