

About the class. Students in my class find themselves printing right from the start. On the first day, we make simple cut stencils and blend together different colors of ink on the screen to produce multi-color images. Next, we try the photo-screen technique, using transparencies made from students' photos or drawings, or generated on the computer using Photoshop or other programs. The fourth week, we create hand-painted stencils and try overlapping transparent colors. In the remaining five classes, students choose their own projects (which may include printing onto shirts or other fabric) as they continue to gain more control of the medium. Returning students can work independently during the introductory lessons.

Classes are limited to ten students. A typical group includes some who have screen-printed before, artists who want to try a new medium, graphic designers looking for a hands-on way to use their computer skills, and beginners new to the Art League. Our classroom at 305 Madison Street has Formica-topped plywood work stations, clothespin-style drying racks, sinks for washing the screens, and a place to expose photo-screens. All our stencil-making materials and inks are water-based. The \$50 supply fee gets each student a 23" x 31" screen (to keep) plus inks and other supplies, including inexpensive posterboard to print on.

About silk screening. Silk screen printing has many applications, from simple posters or tee-shirts to highly complex fine art. People say about my work, "That doesn't look like a silk screen," often intending that as a compliment. One of my long-term goals as a printer and teacher is to broaden people's ideas of what a silkscreen "looks like." Wherever students wish to go with the medium, I will try to help them on their way.

Silk screening has plenty of technical challenges, but also many rewards. Filling a whole page with color in a single stroke is always a fresh pleasure.

About teaching at The Art League. I've been printing and exhibiting silk screens since 1971, switching in 1987 from oil-based inks to the safer water-based materials.

I began teaching at the Art League School in 1997, and I love it. Because there are no credits, I don't have to grade or judge, and pretty much everybody in the class is there simply because they want to learn what I want to teach.

Beginners may find the medium to involve an unexpected amount of dish washing, and to be more technical and time-consuming than they'd imagined. Experienced artists who took screen printing in college may find our set-up primitive. Yet, one student with a printmaking degree from VCU told me her favorite part of the class was our low-tech set-up, letting her believe for the first time that she could set up at home. (Sometimes once a week is just not time enough.)

In every class I teach, the ideas of the students add to my understanding of just how many ways there are to use the silk screen process to make good art. I hope the classes are half as much fun for the students as they are for me.

Nancy McIntyre, 2014