

Chine Colle

In this method, you place thin pieces of colored paper, cut or torn to a desired shape into position on your plate. You then glue the paper and print the image with one roll through the press. The intaglio plate will impress its textures and forms into the colored or chine colle paper.

The procedure for chine colle is simple, but it must be done without wasting time at the critical point of gluing.

- (1) cut or tear the colored paper (this should be a thin paper such as a rice paper – thinner than the intaglio paper it will be glued to). In some cases the chine colle paper may need to be dampened briefly and blotted well so that excess water in the paper will not dilute the glue and compromise the adhesive bond. In most cases it may be used dry.
- (2) tear down your support sheets of paper – these are the heavier papers such as Rives BFK, Arches, etc. that will carry the entire image.
- (3) ink and wipe the plate and have it ready to print.
- (4) blot the paper and keep it close at hand just prior to printing
- (5) Brush the adhesive in a THIN layer on the back of the chine colle (thin, rice) paper and place it glue-side up on the plate in the proper place.

Traditional adhesives include potato starch, arrowroot paste, methylcellulose, and PVA (polyvinyl acetate which is an archival glue similar to Elmers or other all-purpose white glues, but it is more flexible and will not crack or harden with age). Use a soft brush to apply liquid adhesive in a THIN coat.

In some instances, powdered adhesives (such as dried methylcellulose or wallpaper paste) can be lightly sprinkled on dampened paper, lightly misted with water, allowed a moment to absorb the water then run through the press.

- (6) Quickly place your full sheet of Rives or Arches on top of the plate. If you wait too long, the glued pieces may dry out.
- (7) Run the entire packet through the press at a normal pressure for intaglio (some folks prefer a notch more pressure, but be aware this could lead to glue oozing out the sides of the chine colle paper and obliterating the areas that should print with ink

As with all printmaking techniques it is helpful to practice the technique a few times to get a sense of the specific materials you are using as paper thickness and absorbencies vary widely and will require different treatments.

Have fun!