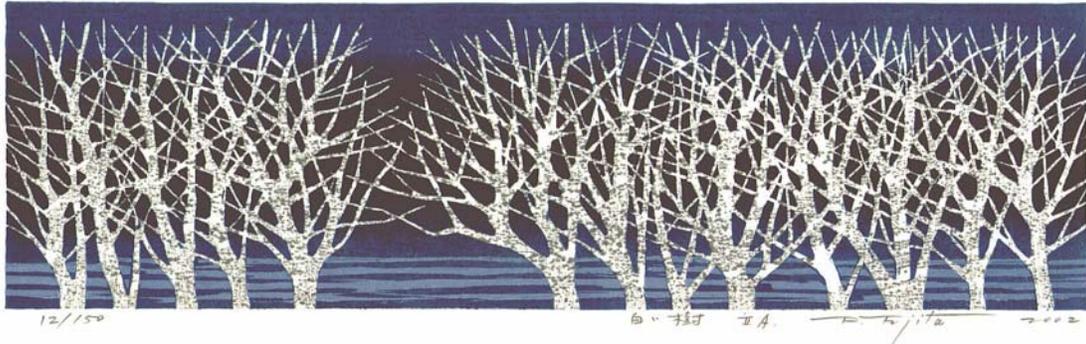


# ~Contemporary Japanese Relief Printing ~

## ~Fumio Fujita~



### **Purpose:**

This big idea for this lesson is to introduce my students to relief printing and to show them that the art of printing is not only an ancient art in Japan but a contemporary one as well.

\*My students are currently doing a semester long unit on East Asian art and we began with Japan.

### **Essential Questions:**

1. What is similar and different about old and new art in Japan?
2. Why would an artist want to create art using antiquated materials?

### **Target Grade Level:**

This lesson is designed for 4<sup>th</sup> grade and we will be using ez-carve linoleum. This lesson could be used in middle school if you used regular linoleum. To increase the difficulty of this lesson for high school you could use regular linoleum on a larger scale or use wood to create the printing plate.

### **Rationale:**

When most students study the art of another country and/or culture it is usually based on historical artworks and this is all well and good, but I wanted my students to see that contemporary artists are alive and well and living and creating artwork in Japan. The focus of this lesson is based on the artwork of Fumio Fujita.

### **Resources ~ Teacher Preparation:**

- Background information of wood-block printing.
- Background information on Fumio Fujita.
- Power point presentation and/or paper presentation of the artwork of Fujita.

## Materials:

- Ez-carve linoleum cut into 4" x 6" pieces
- Lino tools
- Paper
- Pencils and erasers
- Watercolor markers
- Spray bottle
- Acrylic paint
- Variety of papers to print upon
- Sponge brayers
- Carving boards



## Activities:

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Day One: Introduction, demonstration and studio

### Introduce lesson:

The lesson will begin by viewing ancient and contemporary Japanese prints. (Only I will know the artworks are all prints.) The students will try to decide which artworks are old and which are new. Then the students will try to figure out how the artworks were made, for example is it a painting, drawing, or print. From here we will discuss what a print is and how they are created. I will then give a brief explanation of how ancient Japanese wood block prints were first created and how our featured artist still uses the same techniques centuries later. (Refer to teacher resource pages)

### Demonstration and Studio: (teacher will demonstrate process)

1. Create at least two thumbnail sketch of a winter tree like in Fujita's prints.  
Question? Will you work wide or will you work tall.  
Get teachers approval before the transfer.
2. Trace around your ez-carve linoleum on drawing paper so you will know the exact size of the area you have to work in.
3. Draw tree in traced area.
4. Cover the back of the drawing with pencil
5. Tape your tree onto the linoleum, tree side up, and transfer the design by going over your lines with an ink pen. Tip! Raise a corner of the paper to see if the transfer is working correctly.
6. Take paper off of the linoleum and go over your lines with a permanent marker.

Day Two: Carving Day

**Demonstration and Studio:** continued (teacher will demonstrate process)

7. Begin carving out the tree with the lino tools. (Review safety measures – **always** use the carving board and **always** cut into the board with your free hand behind the lino tool!!!!)
8. Create a practice print using watercolor markers and damp paper.
9. Carve more if necessary, ask teacher if needed.

#### Day Three: Printing Day

**Demonstration and Studio:** continued (teacher will demonstrate process)

10. Print using watercolor makers and damp paper.
11. Print using acrylic paint – refer to Fujita’s prints for ideas.

#### Day Four: Printing Day and/or mounting day

**Demonstration and Studio:** continued (teacher will demonstrate process)

12. Mount prints.

#### Day Five:

##### **Final Critique:**

The students will display their prints and we will view and discuss them as a class. We will have an open discussion of the artwork using the elements and principals of design and then the students will write about the process they went through to create their artwork and discuss their artworks successes and where they think they could have improved.

##### **Requirements:**

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- Create a minimum of 4 quality prints using watercolor markers.
- Create a minimum of 4 prints using acrylic paint.
- Use a variety of paper for your prints.
- Artwork must be based on Fujita’s artwork.
- A minimum of 4 prints will be mounted for the final presentation.

##### **Standards:**

- Identify and describe artwork from various cultural/ethnic groups (e.g., Paleo Indians, European immigrants, Appalachian, Amish, African or Asian groups) that settle in Ohio over time.
- Discuss artwork in terms of line, shape, color, texture and composition.
- Give and receive constructive feedback to produce artworks that meet learning goals.

## ~Teacher Resources~

### **Printmaking:**

There are two main types of printmaking techniques, one is intaglio and the other is relief. In intaglio the image is cut into, or incised into the surface with a variety of tools or acid. Then the entire printing plate is coated with ink and then wiped clean. The ink is only in the incised areas. Then a damp piece of paper is pressed onto the printing plate and the print is made. “The intaglio printmaking techniques are engraving, dry point, etching, aquatint, stipple, mezzotint.” (“Printmaking”)

In relief printing everything that is not meant to be printed is carved away. The idea is that the carved away area is the color of the paper it is printed on. In relief printing the raised surface is coated with ink and then the paper is pressed onto the printing plate.

Woodblock printing is a relief method and is the oldest method of printmaking. Woodblock “printing is thought to have originated in China some time during the first half of the eighth century, and the method invented there has altered little over the years.” (Hutt 49) The design is drawn onto the smooth surface and the wood and then all the unpainted areas are carved away with a knife or a gouge. The board is then inked or painted and the paper is pressed and/or burnished on top of the board or printing plate. More colors can be used in one print by creating separate printing plates for each color. (Newman and Ryerson 22)

### **Fumio Fujita:**

Fumio Fujita was born in Japan in 1933. He attended the Musashino College of Fine Arts. He has been creating woodblock prints since 1963. His favorite subject matter for creating prints is landscapes, which he reduces to the “essentials of design and lines, but without getting abstract.” In his more recent work his designs are more stylized. Fujita’s work has “become rather popular and are sought after by art collectors.” (Fujita, artelino)

## Annotated Bibliography Japanese Printing

*Exotic Japan: an interactive introduction to Japanese culture and language.*  
computer program, New York : Voyager Co., c1994

This CD is fun for the students and it best used as a supplemental activity, which they can view and interact with on their own. It is fairly easy to use and has Japanese lessons, quizzes, animations, games, and even wood block printing examples. If you have the capabilities the students can record their voice when they attempt to speak in Japanese.

Fujita, Fumio. Birch Trees in Snow. artelino – Art Auctions, artelino.com (2001-2004) <http://www.artelino.com/contemporary-gallery/fujita-fumio.asp>

This is an excellent site to find old and new Japanese art. The images are very clear and include the title of the work and a brief biography of the artists. One thing to remember when using this site is to capture the work when you see it because this is an active auction site and the work may be gone the next time to choose to use it.

Hagiwara, Hideo. Composition Z. (20<sup>th</sup> century) Floating World Gallery,LTD. floating world.com (2004) <http://www.floatingworld.com/docs/cat>

Hakuho, Hirano. Young Girl. (1936) Floating World Gallery,LTD. floating world.com (2004) <http://www.floatingworld.com/docs/cat>

Hasegawa, Kiyoshi. Paysage De Banlieue. (1928) Floating World Gallery,LTD. floating world.com (2004) <http://www.floatingworld.com/docs/cat>

Nishijima, Katsuyuki. Osaka City Library. (20<sup>th</sup> century) Floating World Gallery,LTD. floating world.com (2004) <http://www.floatingworld.com/docs/cat>

Sadahide, Utqgawa. Courtesan Holding a Doll. (c. 1850's) Floating World Gallery,LTD. floating world.com (2004) <http://www.floatingworld.com/docs/cat>

This is a great web site for finding old and new Japanese art. There are many artworks to choose from and they are separated by medium and also by artist. They also give a brief biography of each artist. The images are clear and with a nice enlargement size for copying and pasting. This is an auction site so you must choose the artwork you like when you are there because it may be gone the next time you visit.

*Handbook of Japanese Printmaking Technique.* (2004) woodblock.com  
<http://www.woodblock.com/encyclopedia/outline.html>

This is a very thorough outline of Japanese woodblock printing. It begins with a general description of a woodblock print. Then it goes on to list all the tools, equipment, and materials that are necessary to print. Then the basic printmaking process is outlined. This is a quick overview of the entire process.

Hutt, Julia. *Understanding Far Eastern Art*. Roxby Art Publishing Ltd., 1987.

This book gives an overview of art, which is categorized by art form. The book focuses mostly on China and Japan. The images are very detailed and the year, artist, and medium are cited. There are also large color reproductions, which makes this an excellent source for art visuals. The information about the different art forms is concise and very thorough.

*Japanese Wood-block Printing.* Chapter 11 "General Information" (2004)  
woodblock.com  
[http://www.woodblock.com/encyclopedia/entires/011\\_07/chap\\_2.html](http://www.woodblock.com/encyclopedia/entires/011_07/chap_2.html)

This chapter gives very detailed information about Japanese wood block printing. It is written from the perspective of an artist and gives an in-depth and philosophical view to the creative process of printmaking. It also gives well thought out directions for the print making process. The author also touches upon the aspect of how to analyze prints.

Newman, Alex R. and Egerton Ryerson. *Japanese Art, A Collector's Guide*. G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1964.

This is a great book for quickly understand Japanese art forms. The section on woodblock printing is thorough and concise. The photographs are mainly in black and white with a few are in color. This book is also broken down by art form and would work well for intermediate elementary through high school.

*Printmaking.* artelino.com (2001 - 2004)  
<http://artelino.com/articles/printmaking.asp>

This site gives you a brief yet thorough explanation of the beginnings of printmaking and some of the different kinds of techniques. The explanations are well thought out and give a real understanding of the process the artist uses. This site is also very helpful in finding contemporary Japanese artists.

