

# Screen Printing

by Kathy Miller

## General Description

The silkscreen has developed from the simple stencil. The screen is made by stretching silk mesh over a frame. Areas of the screen are blocked off by various methods and ink or paint is forced through the unblocked areas.

The following directions are an inexpensive way to add printmaking to your classroom.

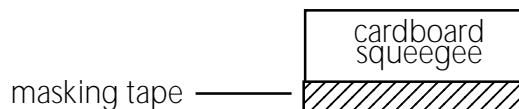


## Materials

- Colored pencils or felt pens and paper for preliminary color pattern guide
- Paper, cut to 3 inches
- One piece of aluminum foil, cut to 9½ x 12 inches
- Lightweight cardboard, cut to 5½ x 8½ inches
- Four, 1 x 6 inch pieces of illustration board, to be used as the frame
- 5¼ x 7 inch piece of organza cloth or commercial silk screen
- Squeegee or two pieces of illustration board, measuring 2 x 3½ inches (The squeegee needs to be a little wider than the design.)
- 3 x 3 inch piece of cardboard, cut accurately
- Masking tape/scotch tape
- Acrylic paint
- Liquitex Acrylic Matte Medium
- Paint brush
- Foam plate for paint palette
- Flour for thickening paint
- Plastic spoon
- Water vessel
- Pencil/ruler
- Rags or paper towels

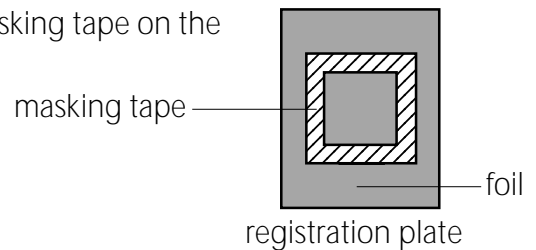
## Procedure

1. Design a preliminary geometric pattern, and draw it on a 3 inch piece of paper. Make a color pattern guide. The background color needs to be light and the geometric pattern needs to be dark. (Avoid detail and delicate lines.)
2. Using a pencil, write your last name on the back on all of the 3 inch papers.
3. Place two, 2 x 3½ inch pieces of illustration board together and wrap a wide edge with masking tape, see below. The masking tape protects the cardboard from becoming saturated with paint. (The squeegee needs to be a little wider than the design.)

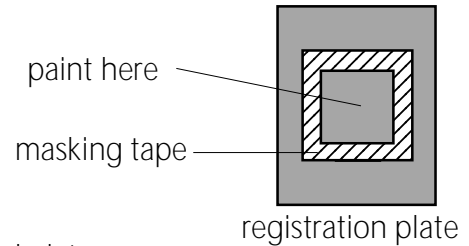


4. To make a registration plate, cover the 5½ x 8½ piece of lightweight cardboard with the aluminum foil with the frosted (non-shiny) side of the foil facing out. (You'll use this to register the prints.) Wrap the foil around to the back of the cardboard.

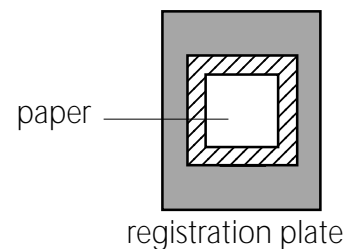
- Outline the boundaries of your printing area with masking tape on the registration plate.



- To make the background color of the print, use a paintbrush and gestural strokes, and paint onto the masked off area of the foil covered plate, using light colors. Work quickly, don't let the paint dry!



- Lay a 3 inch piece of paper face down onto the painted plate.

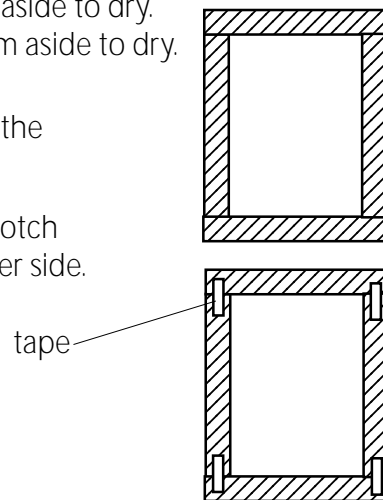


- Rub the back of the paper gently with your fingers, transferring the paint.
- Carefully pull up the corner of the paper, and check to see if you are pressing hard enough to transfer the paint. If so, peel away the paper and set aside to dry.
- Pull all of these background prints now and set them aside to dry.

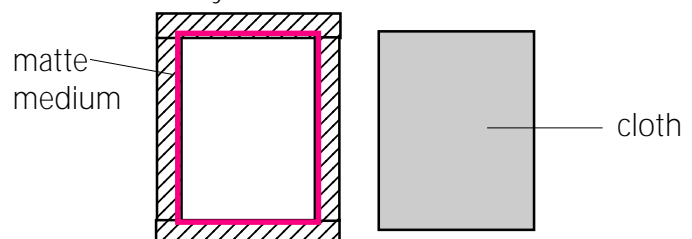
- Assembling the frame:

Line up the four, 1 x 6 pieces of illustration board as the illustration shows.

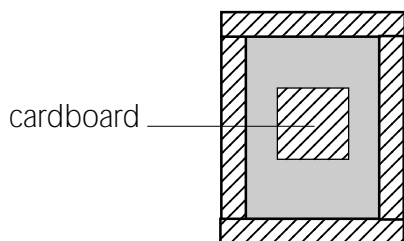
- Tape the 1 x 6 pieces together on one side, using scotch tape and then flip the screen over and tape the other side.



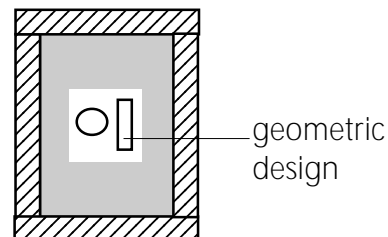
- Cut a piece of organza cloth or silk screen  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7$  inches. Paint a strip of matte medium along the inside of the frame. Lay the cloth over the frame, pulling the edges tight. Paint the edge of the cloth with another coat of matte medium. (Matte medium acts as a glue, but when it dries it is not water soluble, as white glue is. Set this aside to dry.



- With the tape side of the frame facing down, enter the 3" square cardboard template over the silk and draw around it with a pencil. Set the cardboard aside.



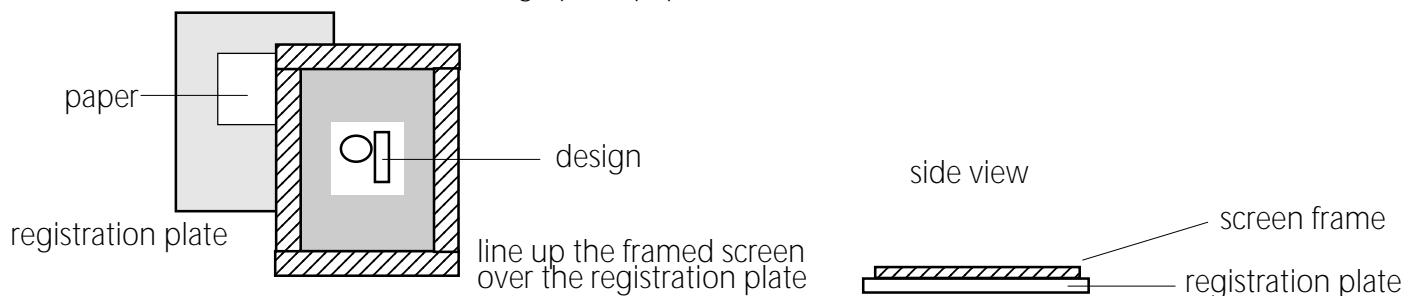
- Center the preliminary sketch under the 3 inch drawn square and trace the design onto the silk using a pencil.



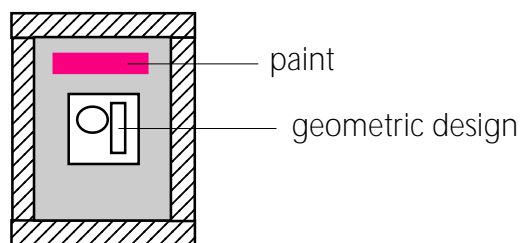
- Turn the screen over.

Use the matte medium and paint the spaces that you do not want to print. Set the screen aside to dry. While the screen is drying, hold it up to the light and check for pin holes, (they will print). Paint out the holes using another light coat of matte medium. Set it aside to dry.

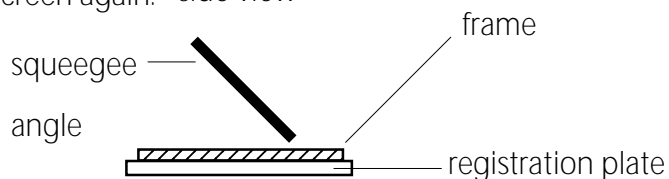
- Place one of the 3 inch printed background papers on the registration plate and place the framed screen over this, lining up the paper with the screen.



- You are now ready to print the geometric design (foreground color). Spoon some paint onto the screen, above the design.



- Hold the squeegee so that the 3½ inch side is against the screen at a 45 degree angle and firmly pull the squeegee across the paint one time. Check to see if the paint covered all of the area. If not, pull the squeegee across the screen again.

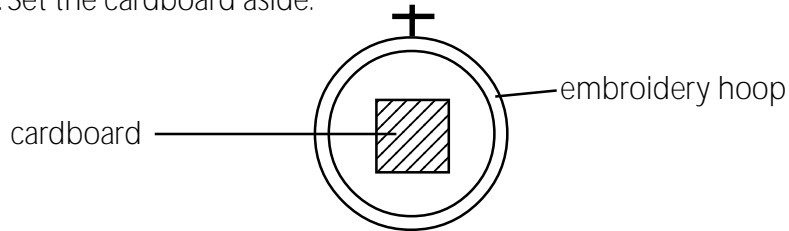


- Lift the framed screen up, and remove the paper. Set print aside to dry, and continue printing all the papers.

- Clean up with soap and water.

### Making the screen from an embroidery hoop.

1. Cut a piece of cotton organdy cloth or silk screen cloth 1½ inches larger than the embroidery hoop.
2. Lay the cloth over the larger hoop, and then lay the smaller hoop over the cloth and push it down inside the larger hoop, catching the cloth inbetween. Pull the edges of the cloth until it is tight like a drum. Trim away the excess fabric.
3. Center the 3" square cardboard template over the embroidery hoop and draw around it with a pencil. Set the cardboard aside.



4. Center the preliminary sketch under the hoop and within the 3 inch drawn square. Trace the design onto the silk using a pencil.
5. Turn the hoop over.
6. Using the matte medium, paint the spaces that you do not want to print. Set it aside to dry. When the screen is dry, go over it with another light coat of matte medium, filling in any pin holes. Set this aside to dry.

