

Studio Saturdays: Foam Prints

The Seven Trumpets by Albrecht Dürer



Albrecht Dürer

The Seven Trumpets, from the Apocalypse series

1511

Woodcut on paper

Museum Purchase from the Wally Findlay Acquisition Fund

Albrecht Dürer was a very famous German painter and printmaker from the Renaissance (1400s-1500s CE), a period that transitioned the Western world from medieval to modern with advances in science, the arts, and politics. One of the most important inventions from the Renaissance was Johannes Gutenberg's release of the printing press in 1440, which made it possible for copies of books, art prints, and political pamphlets to be made on a large scale. Before the printing press, books had to be hand-copied page-by-page by monks, as they were some of the only people who were taught how to read, and artists could not easily advertise or copy their work to be more cheaply sold to a wider audience.

Printmakers like Albrecht Dürer made their art using the woodcut printing process. First, the artist sketches out the design for their print. Then the artist carves this design into a block of wood. Carving removes the parts the artist does not want to show up on paper. Then the artist uses a brayer to roll ink evenly across their design before stamping the design onto a piece of paper. Be sure to take another look at *The Seven Trumpets* to appreciate the incredible level of detail Albrecht Dürer was able to achieve.

We will be following in Albrecht Dürer's footsteps by making our own foam-block prints! Choose a design inspired by Dürer's work or come up with your own! Think about creating a design that represents you, something you like, or even something that represents your favorite book as *The Seven Trumpets* was created to be an illustration for the Bible.

THINK LIKE AN ARTIST

- 1) What did you choose for your design and why?
- 2) How does it feel to use a process that is over 500 years old?

LIST OF MATERIALS

- Sheet of White Paper
- Foam Sheet
- Brayer (Foam Roller)
- Styrofoam Tray
- Pencil or white crayon
- Paint

INSTRUCTIONS

Take a foam sheet and outline it onto a sheet of white paper. This will ensure your drawing fits onto your foam sheet.

Draw any illustration you would like inside that outline. I will be drawing a trumpet-playing angel inspired Dürer's work.

Once you have finished your drawing, place your foam sheet under your drawing and line it up properly.

Take a tac and make small holes along your lines. This will help you transfer your drawing onto the foam sheet. This is also the same transfer method used to create frescos, or wall paintings, during the Renaissance!

Take a pencil and recreate your drawing onto the foam sheet by connecting your dots. Press firmly to create deep lines into your foam. These deep lines will work just like the cuts Dürer made into his wooden blocks.

Apply paint to a flat disposable or cleanable surface. These foam trays work great as does a piece of plexi or plastic plate. Take your brayer and roll it into the paint with firm pressure to get an even coating.

Roll your brayer over your stamp to achieve an even coat on the foam sheet. I recommend you apply paint to the full foam block to get a more finished look.

Lay your foam sheet facedown onto a sheet of paper and press down firmly and evenly.

Lift your foam sheet carefully so that you do not shift it. You now have a relief print!