

## **Intaglio Printing Process – (Italian for "cut in")**

A method of printing in which the image is carved or bitten by acid into a metal plate, usually copper, so that the areas to be inked are recessed beneath the surface of the printing plate. For intaglio printing, the ink is forced into this cut or bitten image, the surface of the plate is wiped clean or evened out, the paper is dampened and both the plate and the paper are run together (squeezed) under pressure through the etching press. The ink fills only the recessed areas of the plate. The printed lines of an intaglio print stand in relief on the paper. Intaglio prints have platemarks.

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The main intaglio processes:

- **Line Engraving** - The image is produced by cutting or gouging a metal plate directly with a sharp tool.
- **Drypoint** - Drawing on the metal plate with a hard steel "pencil" that produces a burr by displacing, rather than removing metal, causing the printed line to be somewhat fuzzy thus adding a richness to the image. Because this wears during printing, editions are usually limited to 50 or fewer prints.
- **Etching** - A metal plate is first covered with an acid-resistant ground, then worked with an etching needle. The metal exposed by the needle is "eaten" in an acid bath, creating the recessed image.