

MUI Chong-ki

Suggested class activities for Senior Primary

Artist: MUI Chong-ki

Level: Senior Primary

Theme: Campus Scenery

Suggested length: about 4 hours

Teaching concept:

In today's information age, printed materials are the most common way to deliver information, and the printing quality of newspapers, magazines, books, etc. has been greatly enhanced. As one of the Four Great Inventions of ancient China, printing has evolved from traditional monochrome woodblock printing to polychrome printing, allowing a rainbow of colours on printed products.

MUI Chong-ki inherited the art of traditional Chinese woodblock printing, creating water-based woodblock prints with a taste of watercolour paintings. This course aims to help students understand the principles and techniques of woodblock printing through appreciating the creativity and style of MUI's works. It also allows students to create their own polychrome prints with the use of one block.

Required background knowledge:

1. The students should have learned the skill of drawing lines.
2. They should have basic knowledge of printmaking.

Teaching goals:

1. Learn about and appreciate MUI's prints through his video.
2. Learn about the principles of woodblock printing.
3. Understand the procedures of woodblock printing: finalize a draft, transfer the image to a block and carve it.
4. Understand the techniques of polychrome woodblock printing with the use of one block.
5. Learn about print numbering and signing.

Preparation before class:

Ask the students to collect pictures of campus scenery.

Suggested class activities:

1. **Introduction to the art of printmaking (Suggested length: 5 minutes)**
Play the "Artist Video mp4" 00:00–01:25

Basic information on printmaking: The art of Chinese printmaking emerged as people learned about printing techniques. Traditional woodblock printing has been used to create prints of religious texts, New Year's pictures, menshen (door gods), maps, joss paper, etc. These printed materials are both objects of art and items used in daily life. Woodblock printing involves carving and printing. Common materials for printmaking include lino-blocks, wooden blocks, and even large pieces of eraser.

2. **Introduce MUI Chong-ki and his artistic style (Suggested length: 15 mins)**

Show the “Artist Introduction ppt”pp1-3 and play the rest of “Artist Video mp4”

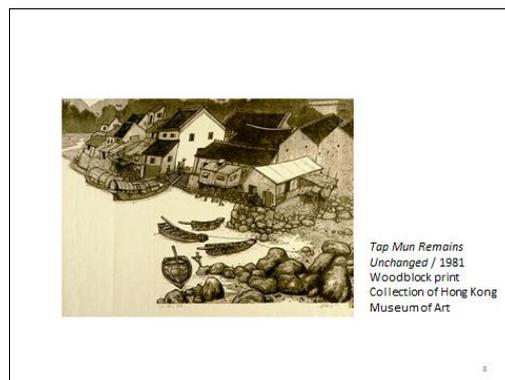
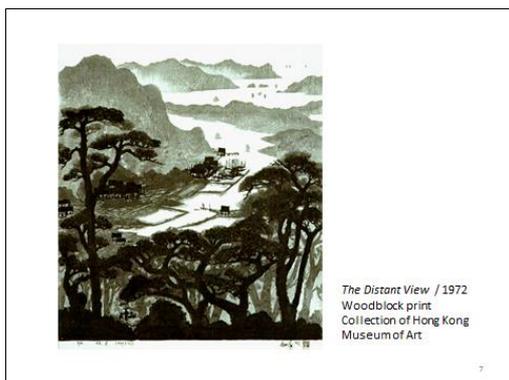
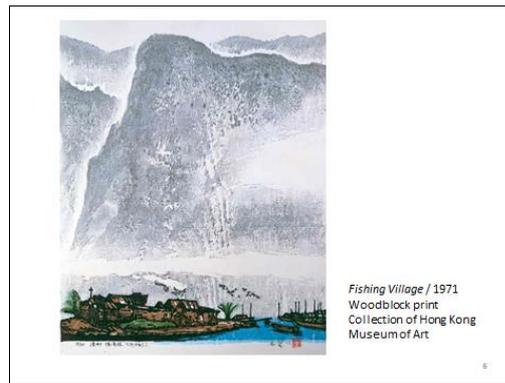
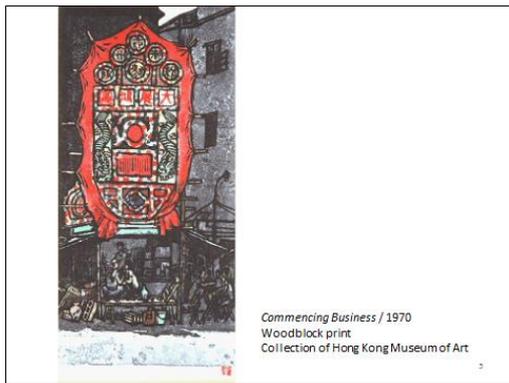
MUI Chong-ki was born in Taishan, Guangdong Province, China, in 1940. He studied in the Department of Printmaking at the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts in 1959 and moved to Hong Kong in 1963. Since 1969, he has participated in many regional and international group exhibitions, held both locally and overseas; and from 1972 onwards, he has held solo exhibitions in Hong Kong, mainland China, Taiwan, Southeast Asia and the United States. He received Gold and Honorary Awards from the China Exlibris Association and the Lu Xun Printmaking Award from the Chinese Printmakers Association. He was a committee member of the Chinese Printmakers Association and vice chairman of China Exlibris Association. He also served as a Visiting Professor at the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, artist-in-residence at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and overseas commissioned artist at the Guangdong Art Institute. Besides specialising in woodblock printing, MUI creates excellent quick sketches and watercolour paintings. He is also fond of creating bookplate and writing art reviews.

3. **Introduction of MUI's water-based woodblock prints (Suggested length: 15 minutes)**

Show the “Artist Introduction ppt”pp4-8

Guide the students to appreciate in the following steps:

- Description: Describe the subjects portrayed in the art works?
(Street views, landscapes, villages, etc.)
- Formal analysis: Describe the medium of the artworks.
(Print)
- Interpretation: What are the characteristics of this creative medium?
(The design/drawing needs to be carved on a wood block; water-based paints are used for printing; each carved block can be used to create multiple prints, etc.)



Conclusion: MUI's water-based colour woodblock prints embody the elegance of Chinese landscape paintings, with subtle colouring like that in watercolour paintings. If we look closely, we can identify the contours created by the carving technique. MUI is good at portraying natural scenery, landscapes and villages scenes.

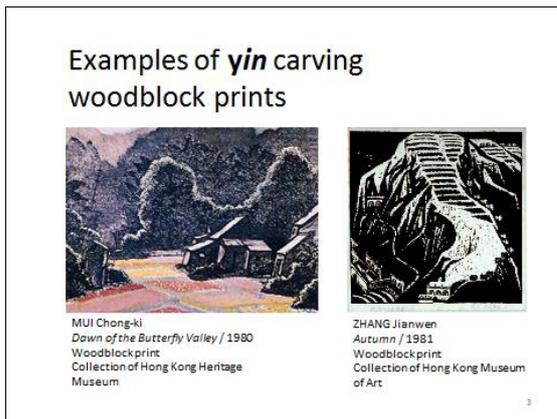
4. Class activity (1): Creating drafts (Suggested length: 35 minutes)

- Have the students should share ideas about their collected pictures of campus scenery and identify the characteristics of the architecture and objects (buildings on or off campus, flower beds, fountains, statues, etc.)
- Have the students use the pictures as a reference to quickly sketch a draft on drawing paper, with “campus scenery” as the theme. The draft will be finalized and used for carving in the next lesson.
- The students should share the information they collected with each other. They may combine or simplify the objects and scenery on their drafts.

5. Introduction of the concepts of *yin* and *yang* carving (Suggested length: 15 minutes)

Show the “**Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt**” pp2-4

- ***Yin* carving:** Lines are engraved in the printing block, so that when paint is applied, the carved lines remain empty. The print will show a coloured background with the lines (the carving) in white.



- **Yang carving:** All other areas of the block are carved away so that the lines of the print stand out. When printing, only the lines will show and the background will remain empty.

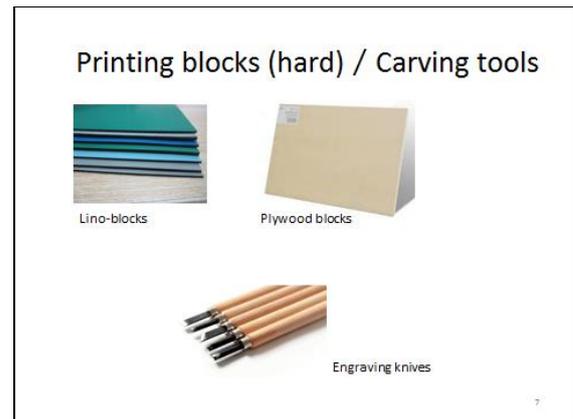
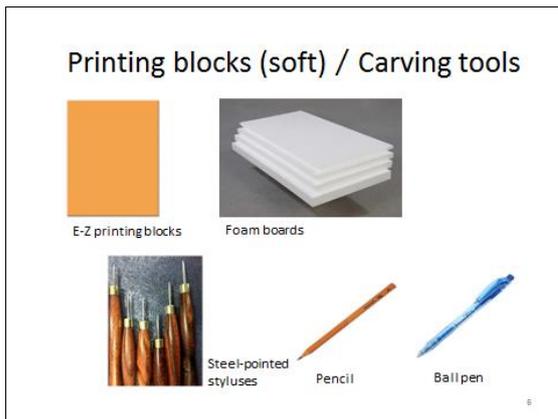


Conclusion: *Yin* and *yang* carving are used to create different styles of lines and textures in woodblock printmaking. Both methods present a strong contrast between the coloured and empty spaces. Using both types of carvings on a work creates a stronger contrast and enriches the visual element of the work.

6. Introduction of the tools and materials for printmaking (Suggested length: 10 minutes)

Show the “**Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt**” pp5-8

- **Printing blocks:** For easier carving, primary school students may use foam boards or E-Z printing blocks instead of plywood blocks or lino-blocks.
- **Tools for carving:** Instead of engraving knives, the students may use ball pens, pencils or steel-pointed styluses for carving.



- **Paints:** Water-based printing ink.
- **Draft paper:** Tracing paper.
- **Paper for printing:** Thick and raw *xuan* paper or cotton paper, since it can more readily absorb water.
- **Paint brushes:** For applying colour to create prints.
- **Baren:** For rubbing the paper for printing.



7. **Class activity (2): Finalizing the drafts (Suggested length: 40 minutes)**

- Have the students share their thoughts on their drafts. They may add human or animal figures to their drafts.
- Then have them place a piece of tracing paper on the draft and use a dark coloured pencil to outline the drawing on the tracing paper.
- Have them keep the draft on drawing paper for colouring later.

8. **Introduce the art-making process (Suggested length: 15 minutes)**

Show the **“Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt” pp10-15**

Note: The Teaching Materials shows MUI’s demonstration on woodblock printing, the process is similar to using foam board or E-Z printing block.

- Drafts: Make two drafts, one on drawing paper and then copy to tracing paper.
- Colouring the draft:



1. Drafts

2. Colouring the draft : Colour the draft on drawing paper to show the expected print.

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- Transferring the image:
- Finishing the design:



3. Transferring the image : Place the tracing paper on a foam board, with its drawn side facing downwards. Use a steel pointed stylus or ball pen to trace the drawing.

4. Finishing the design : Remove the tracing paper. Use a steel-pointed stylus to re-draw on the design to create deeper and clearer lines, and finish the carving.

Note: The image on the foam board is reversed, so that the prints created from it will not be reversed.

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- Fixing the position of the print:
- Colouring the board:



5. **Fixing the position of the print:** Place the foam board in the centre of the *xuan* paper and use a pencil to slightly mark the four corners of the board.
6. **Colouring the board :** Apply water-based printing ink on the foam board with paint brushes. Do not apply too much ink. A thin layer is preferred.

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- Printing:



7. **Printing :** Spray water on the *xuan* paper to make it slightly wet. Place it on top of the foam board according to the marked positions. Rub the back of the paper gently with a baren so that the colours on the foam board are transferred to the paper.

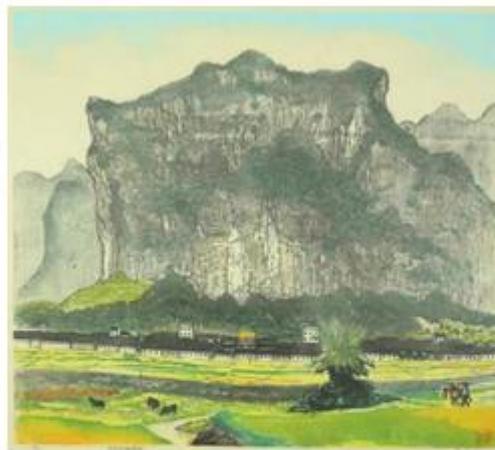
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- Checking the colour:



8. **Checking the colour** : Slowly lift the *xuan* paper half way and check whether the print effect is vivid enough. If not, colour the foam board again to create a more vivid print. Cover the foam board with the *xuan* paper and use a baren to rub the back of the paper again. Repeat the procedure for the other half of the print.

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MUI Chong-ki
Autumn in Gongpingxu / 2000
Woodblockprint

Note: MUI's demonstration work was a water-based woodblock print

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- Creating multiple prints: The students may create multiple prints.

9. Class activity (3): Printmaking (Suggested length: 40 minutes)

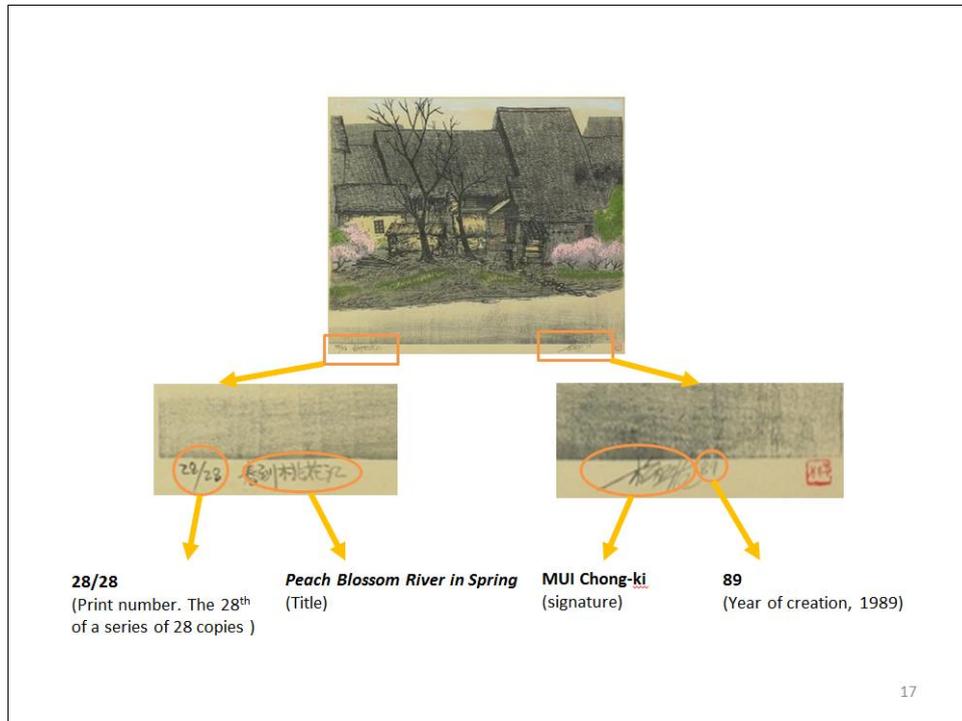
The students should learn the skills of carving from the draft, finishing the carving, colouring and printing.

10. **The method and purpose of creating print records (Suggested length: 15 minutes)**

Show the “**Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt**” p16-17

Artists create limited editions of prints so that every print is valuable. Each successful print will have a print number, title, signature, and year of creation.

Example:



11. **Class activity (3): Creating a print record (Suggested length: 15 minutes)**

Have the students mark the mentioned information in the empty space below their prints.

12. **Appreciating the students’ works (Suggested length: 10 minutes)**

13. **Materials**

E-Z printing block, pencil, ball pen, steel-pointed stylus, paint brush, embossing aluminium sheets, *xuan* paper, drawing paper, water-based printing ink, baren, mixing dish