

## LIU Siu-jane

### Suggested class activities for Junior Secondary

**Artist:** LIU Siu-jane

**Level:** Junior Secondary

**Theme:** Surrealist Collective Memories

**Suggested length:** 3 hours

**Teaching Concept:**

Printmaking is an art form that can be extensively reproduced; with planography, a form of printmaking that the artist feels best incorporates the beauty of painting into printing.

LIU Siu-jane loves using planography as her art medium, interpreting traditional Chinese art through the techniques of Western printmaking. She believes planography is a perfect combination of sensitive painting and rational production, reproducing her ink strokes and tones from the plate to the print. This art form allows her to directly create the effects of Chinese ink and wash paintings on a stone or aluminium plate with diluted paints.

This course aims to introduce planography, a rare art medium, to students through the study of LIU's works, and understand how the artist integrates Chinese and Western culture.

**Required Background Knowledge**

- 1 The students should have learned the technique of collage.
- 2 They should have acquired the skills of transfer printing.
- 3 They should have learned that the art of printmaking is based on the concept of replication.
- 4 They should have learned the characteristics of surrealism.

**Teaching Goals**

- 1 Learn about and appreciate LIU's prints works through her video.
- 2 Learn about different types of printmaking.
- 3 Learn about the process of mutual repulsion of water and oil for producing planography.
- 4 Appreciate how planography reproduces painting effects accurately.
- 5 Learn about the printmaking process using polyester plate.

**Preparation before class:** Students should collect old pictures of Hong Kong.

## Suggested Class Activities

### 1. Introduce LIU Siu-jane and her artistic style. (Suggested length: 5 mins)

#### Show the “Artist Introduction ppt” pp1-3

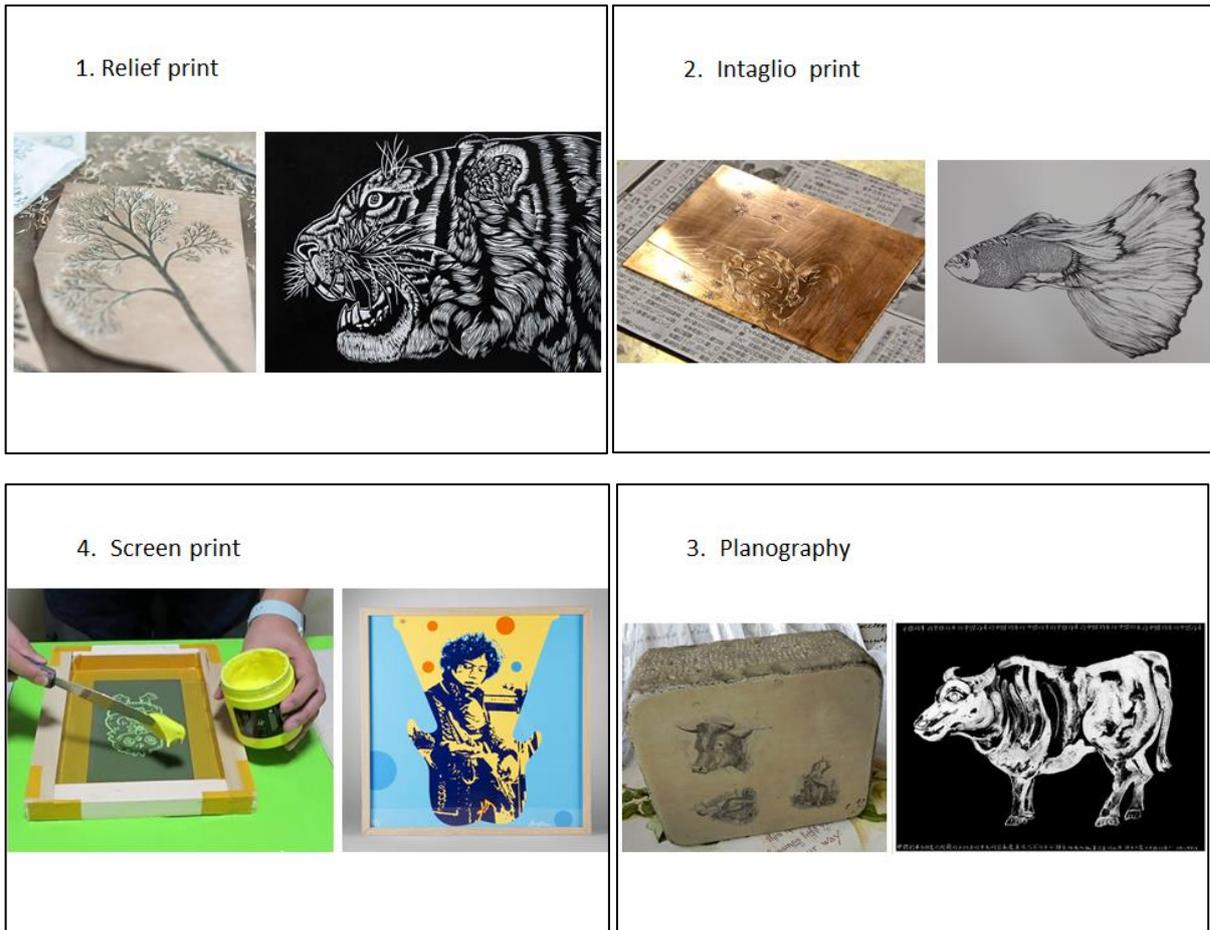
Born in Macau in 1952, LIU Siu-jane obtained a B.A. (Hons.) degree in Fine Arts from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1976. In 1979, she earned the Sir Robert Black Trust Fund Postgraduate Scholarship to study painting and printmaking at St. Martin’s School of Art, London, and went on to study at the University of Illinois in Chicago, obtaining her Master of Fine Arts in Printmaking. LIU received the Urban Council Fine Arts Award – Printmaking (1985) and the Lu Xun Prints Prize (1999), etc. She was also awarded the Hong Kong Arts Development Council Award for Arts Development in 2000.

LIU specialises in lithography, and her artworks demonstrate touches inspired by the traditional brushwork of ink wash painting, successfully incorporating Chinese art spirit into her works.

### 2. Introduction to prints (Suggested length: 10 mins)

#### Show the “Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt” pp2-8

- What is a print?  
(A print is a work of art created by carving on blocks and making copies of the original image.)
  
- Have you ever tried printmaking?  
(Students might have tried potato printing, linocuts, woodblock printing, etc.)
  
- Do you know of any kinds of traditional prints?  
Relief print: woodblock print or linocut print;  
Intaglio print: etching on metal surfaces;  
Planography: lithography or processed etching on metal surfaces (e.g., LIU’s artworks);  
Screen print: silk screen print.
  
- The teacher may then explain that printmaking techniques have evolved with technological advances. Advances in photography and computer art have changed the concept of painting, and the definition of prints has widened as well. Nowadays, prints can be made by computer.



3. **Play the “Artist Video mp4” (Suggested length: 15 mins)**

Through the Artist Video, the students can:

- Learn about the printmaking process of planography;
- Learn that planography is based on the principle of the mutual repulsion of water and oil; and
- Learn about LIU’s creative process, and the meanings, emotions and philosophy expressed in her works.

4. **Appreciation of LIU’s works (Suggested length: 10 mins)**

Show the “Artist Introduction ppt” pp5-10 or have the students to appreciate the printed images of LIU’s works in groups

Image source: Hong Kong Original Print

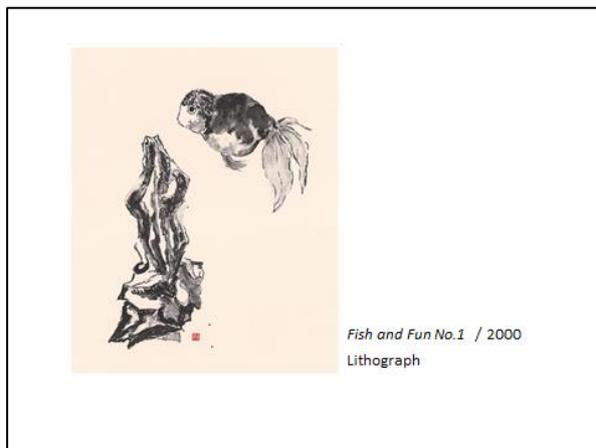
[http://www.originalprint-hk.com/artists/Ljane/Ljane\\_01.html](http://www.originalprint-hk.com/artists/Ljane/Ljane_01.html)

- Divide students into groups of three or four. Each group will get one of LIU’s artworks.
- Have them to observe the image and guide them to appreciate the artwork in steps
- Description: What do you see in the painting?

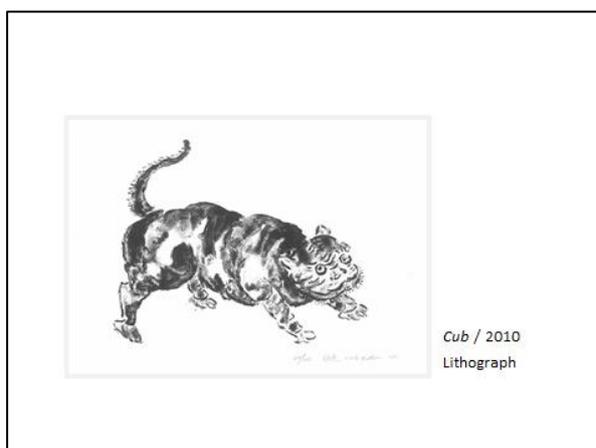
- Explanation: What is the philosophy and meaning behind the artwork?



*Dancing in Water Series:* The theme is inspired by the ever-changing movements of jellyfish. The process of creation explores the artist's unlimited imagination and enjoyment of aesthetic imagery.



Through a series of traditional Chinese symbols, including goldfish, lotus and ox, the artist illustrates her view towards life.



Use the traditional Chinese symbol of a tiger to represent courage, luck and power.



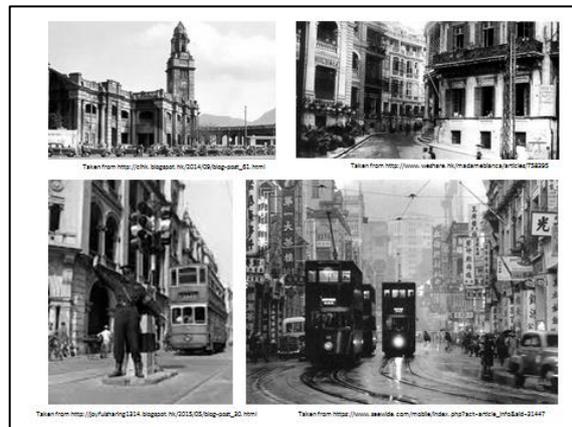
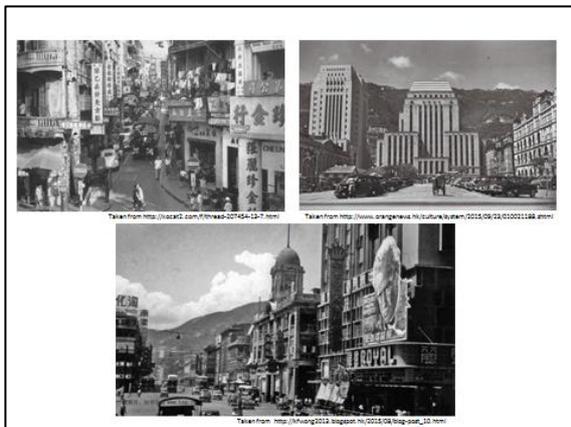
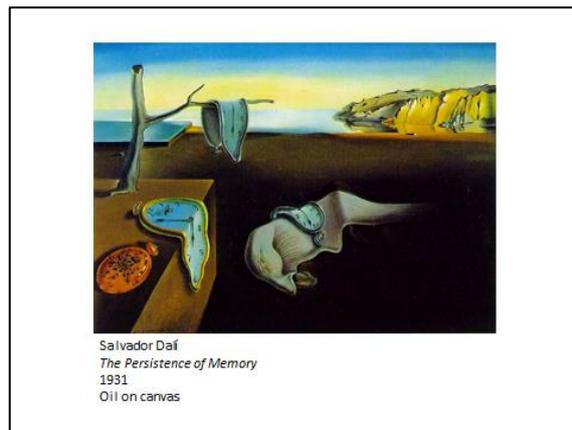
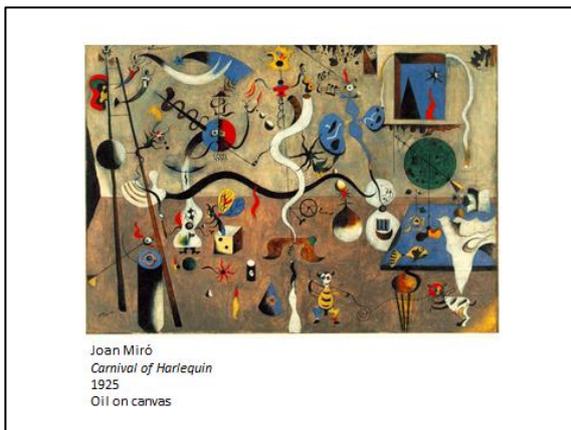
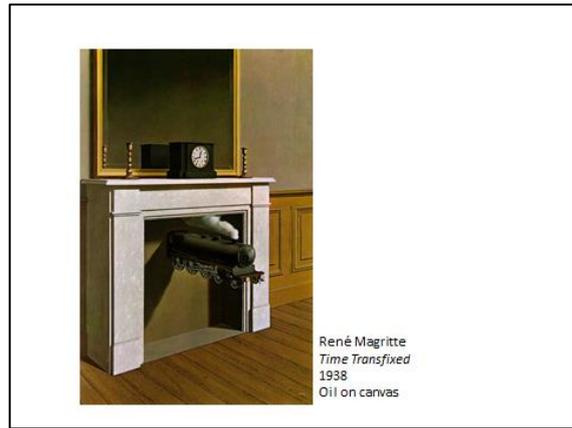
*Longing for Home Series*: Through illustrating the high and dry situation of the Polar animals, these works reflect the severely threatened situation of the Earth and raise the eagerness of reviving nature.

- Conclusion: LIU adopted animals as the theme of her artworks. She expresses Chinese philosophy through lithography. Using Western printmaking, she produced effects similar to those of Chinese ink wash paintings. Her works are hybrids of Chinese and Western culture.
- Explain why artists use lithography to create artworks.

5. **Learn about surrealism and the printmaking processes using polyester plate. (Suggested length: 15 mins)**

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

- What is surrealism?
- What do you think are the messages behind the artworks?
- Explain that surrealism was an artistic movement influenced by Dadaism. Surrealist works portray the world of dreams and the sub-conscious. They often consist of fantastic, mysterious, dreamy or illusory scenes.
- Explain that they are about to learn how to create a surreal painting.
- Explain that they will make prints of objects and images related to Hong Kong to represent the collective memories of the city.



6. Introduce the art-making process (Suggested length: 15 mins)

Show the “Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt” pp17-22 or replay the “Artist Video mp4” from 11:12

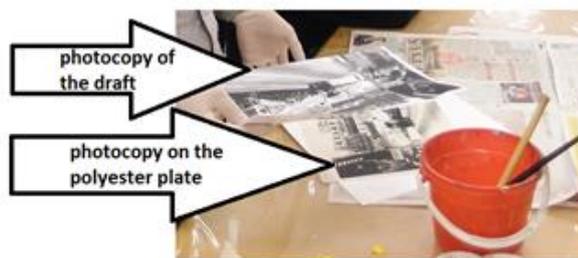
- Explain to the students that in this activity, they will try a new and simple kind of printmaking material, polyester plate.
- Introduce the art-making process.
- If the print is not clear, it may be because of: the photocopy did not have enough carbon; the black-and-white contrast of the image was not distinct enough; the printmaking paper

was too dry or wet; not enough pressure was applied with the printmaking machine or baren; or not enough printmaking ink was used.

- A polyester plate can be used to make only about five prints, so the student should be careful when making a print each time.



1. Collect old pictures of Hong Kong, cut out some objects from the pictures and paste them on white A4 paper to create a collage;
2. Draw on the collage with markers and try to show a link between the objects and create a surrealist artwork representing the collective memories of Hong Kong;



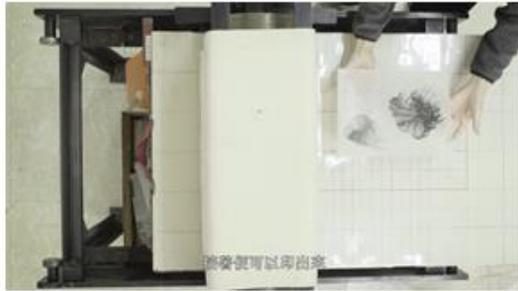
3. Make a photocopy of the draft on an polyester plate (A4 size);



4. Apply water with a wet sponge;
5. The area with carbon and oil-based ink will not absorb water, while other area will;

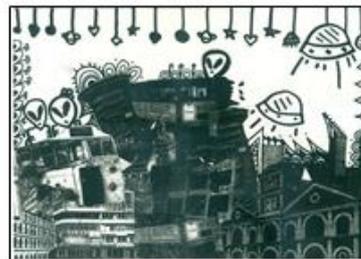
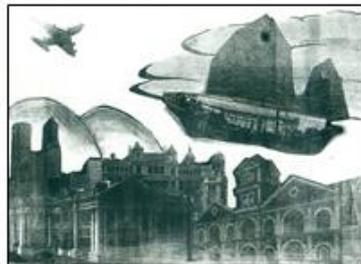


6. Apply a proper amount of water-based printmaking ink on a flat plastic plate. Spread the ink with an ink roller so that a thin layer of ink is evenly applied;
7. Apply printmaking ink to the polyester plate with the ink roller. The area with carbon and oil-based ink from the marker will absorb the printmaking ink;



8. Spray water to wet the printmaking paper, which should be larger than A4;
9. Making a print with a printmaking machine: Adjust the pressure of the printmaking machine. Place the polyester plate onto the machine and cover it with the moist printmaking paper. Then place a thick piece of cardboard and an etching blanket on top and make the print;
10. Making a print with a baren: Place the printmaking paper onto the polyester plate. Use a baren to rub the paper with even pressure.

## Students' works



Po On Commercial Association Wong Siu  
Ching Secondary School

### 7. **Appreciation of the students' works (Suggested length: 25 mins)**

- The aim of this activity is to have the students express in a surrealist way images of historical Hong Kong, and learn about and appreciate the collective memories of Hong Kong through each other's work.

### 8. **Materials**

Polyester plate, pencil, drafting paper, marker, photocopier, printmaking ink, ink roller, printmaking paper, printmaking machine, baren