



TEACHER STUDY GUIDE WINTER 2026

Fifty Shades of Ink: Ink Paintings from the AGGV Collection

ਸ਼ੀਸ਼ੇ 'ਚ ਤਰੇੜ | sheeshe 'ch thareṛ | a crack in the mirror

Dangerous Beauty: The Prints of Albrecht Dürer

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Seventeen rumaley sahib, manji sahib, white fabric | Photo courtesy of the AGGV.

Territory Acknowledgement

The exhibitions, *Fifty Shades of Ink: Ink Paintings from the AGGV Collection*, ਸ਼ੀਸ਼ੇ ‘ਚ ਤਰੇੜ | *sheeshe ‘ch thareṛ | a crack in the mirror*, and *Dangerous Beauty: The Prints of Albrecht Dürer*, are exhibited on the traditional territories of the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples, today known as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations. We extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live and learn on this territory.

Art Gallery of Greater Victoria

Your upcoming Gallery tour includes three distinct exhibitions: *Fifty Shades of Ink: Ink Paintings from the AGGV Collection*, ਸ਼ੀਸ਼ੇ 'ਚ ਤਰੇੜ | sheeshe 'ch thareṛ | a crack in the mirror, and *Dangerous Beauty: The Prints of Albrecht Dürer*. Each exhibition highlights the expressive power of line, texture, and lived experience across cultures and time. *Fifty Shades of Ink* celebrates the tradition of East Asian monochrome painting, showcasing works from the Gallery's own collection that demonstrate the subtle rhythms, tonal shifts, and textures achieved through brush, water, and ink.

ਸ਼ੀਸ਼ੇ 'ਚ ਤਰੇੜ | sheeshe 'ch thareṛ | crack in the mirror is a survey of recent works by artist Simranpreet Anand, including collaborative pieces with artist and ethnomusicologist Conner Singh VanderBeek, organized by The Reach Gallery Museum and guest curated by Sajdeep Soomal. The exhibition brings a contemporary lens to Punjabi and Sikh diasporic life, inviting viewers to consider how personal and collective histories fracture, shift, and reform through art, material, and ritual.

Dangerous Beauty presents twelve prints, engravings, and woodcuts by Albrecht Dürer. The selected prints showcase the artist's extraordinary skill as a printmaker and his fascination with dramatic subjects centred on danger, revealing how crosshatching, line, and value create both form and feeling.

Together, these three exhibitions offer students the opportunity to see how artists across centuries and cultures use their media not only to represent the world but also to transform how we perceive it.

Dear Teacher

In this guide you will find a selection of learning activities that will provide your class with a preview of the exhibitions. The activities require few materials and can be adapted to fit grade level and student needs. We recommend completing some or all of the activities prior to visiting the Gallery as each learning activity is designed to provide students with background knowledge about the exhibition, the featured artists, and their artworks. By completing these activities, students will enter the Gallery feeling confident and excited to explore the collection further with our Gallery educators. Underlined words in this guide are defined in the glossary sections.

Curriculum Connections

This guide was created with a focus on the BC Arts Education curriculum for grades 2–12. Through the activities connected to *Fifty Shades of Ink*, ਸ਼ੀਸ਼ੇ 'ਚ ਤਰੇੜ | sheeshe 'ch thareṛ | a crack in the mirror, and *Dangerous Beauty*, students will develop the core competencies of **exploring, creating, communicating, and reflecting**. Each exhibition encourages students to think critically about art as both process and expression while building technical skills and an appreciation for diverse artistic practices.

Specific content connections include:

- **Studying elements of design**, such as line, value, texture, and space.
- **Exploring artistic processes**, like crosshatching, stippling, brushwork, and abstraction.
- **Observing works of art** from European Renaissance printmaking, Asian ink traditions, and contemporary Punjabi and Sikh diasporic practices.
- **Considering diverse cultures, communities, times, and places** through global and historical perspectives in art.

GRADES 2–12 | GET TO KNOW WU HUFAN

Black & White Landscapes

Objective 1

Introduce students to Wu Hufan and ink painting

Objective 2

Look closely at Wu Hufan's *Untitled (landscape)* to discover qualities in Chinese ink painting

Objective 3

Create a monochromatic watercolour inspired by ink painting

Glossary

- ▶ **ATMOSPHERE** The feeling or mood an artwork creates; for example, misty, calm, or powerful.
- ▶ **NEGATIVE SPACE** The blank parts of a painting that are left untouched. In ink painting, this is an important part of the artwork, not just “nothing.”
- ▶ **MONOCHROME** An artwork made using only one colour.
- ▶ **PERSPECTIVE** A way of showing depth or distance so that things look like they're closer or farther away. For example, objects drawn larger look nearer and objects drawn smaller look farther away.
- ▶ **TONE** The range of lightness to darkness within one colour.

Get to Know Wu Hufan (b.1894 –d.1968)

Wu Hufan (1894–1968) was a famous Chinese painter who loved studying the great artists of the past. Born in Suzhou, he learned from his grandfather, who was also a painter and calligrapher, and grew up copying the brushwork of masters who came long before him. This training gave him a deep understanding of how to use ink and water to build landscapes full of perspective, atmosphere, and feeling. Wu Hufan focused on monochromatic painting using only black ink, creating scenes that he felt were timeless and peaceful, including mountains, trees, and rivers.



Wu Hufan | *Untitled (Landscape)* | 1924 | Gift of Brian McElney | AGGV1998.041.064

His painting may look simple at first, but if you look closely, you'll see many different tones of ink, from the darkest black to the palest grey. This comes from a very old idea in Chinese painting: "Ink has five shades" (墨分五色). This means that even with just one colour, an artist can show many tones, textures, and moods.

By changing the amount of water, the pressure of the brush, or the speed of each stroke, Wu Hufan could suggest heavy stone, light air, rough bark, or morning fog. Blank areas, called negative space, aren't just empty paper; they become sky, stillness, or distance. In this way, ink painting isn't only about copying how things look. It's also about how they feel and about what the artist wants us to sense. Like a signature, each brush stroke carries a trace of the artist's hand and mind.

Wu Hufan's work helps us see how a thousand-year-old art form can still feel fresh and alive. His landscapes invite viewers to slow down, notice subtle shifts of light and dark, and let their imaginations wander into the open spaces. Through his brushstrokes, ink becomes more than black on white; it becomes a language of rhythm, tone, atmosphere, and spirit.

Materials

- **White watercolour paper or heavy cardstock**
- **Black watercolour paint or black tempera pucks**
- **Watercolours**
- **Paintbrush and water container**
- **Paper towels**

Process

- As a class, look closely at *Untitled (Landscape)* by the artist Wu Hufan. What do you see? What part of the landscape do you notice first? What do you see that makes you say that? How has the artist used brushstrokes and shapes?
- Does the "empty" negative space feel like part of the landscape, or just blank paper? Why or why not? Why do you think the artist left it that way?
- Look at how Wu Hufan used value—light and dark shades of ink. Using only one colour in a piece of art is called "monochrome." What kind of mood or feeling does using only one colour create?
- Now it's your turn to make a landscape painting. Artists who work with ink often focus on capturing the most important parts with just a few simple strokes. You will do the same using only black paint.
- As a class, brainstorm landscape elements you might find where you live. What are some ways you can simplify these into shapes? Using a pencil, lightly sketch the basic shapes for your landscape on your paper. Keep it very simple.

- Next, use black watercolour and a brush to go over your lines. Try to show the main shapes with only a few strong brushstrokes.
- Create a variety of values: make some strokes darker by using more paint, or lighter by adding more water. Experiment with how the brush feels: Press harder for thicker lines, or touch lightly for thin, delicate lines.
- You can also use short strokes, dots, or soft washes to create detail for plants and grass, water, or shadows. Leave some areas of paper blank: Empty space can suggest air, water, or light.
- Many traditional ink paintings also include poetry. Poetry can help express what the picture means or how it feels. After you paint your landscape, write a short (two to four line) poem about it. You could describe something special about the place, the sounds you might hear, the temperature, or the time of day.

Example:

*Mist drifts over quiet hills,
A river bends like a silver thread,
Trees whisper secrets to the sky.*

- With a pencil or pen, write your poem somewhere on the page. Make sure it doesn't cover any of your brushstrokes!
- When you're done, display your artwork in the class.

Reflection

Discuss the following:

- Look at your painting and poem together. Do they match the mood you wanted to show? What do you notice when you step back and view your work from farther away?
- What elements did you consider from Wu Hufan's ink painting?
- How are the class paintings similar and different?
- What was the most challenging part of using only black watercolour and a brush? Why?
- How did you decide which lines and shapes were the most important to include?
- How did leaving some areas of the paper blank change how your painting looks or feels?
- What mood or feeling were you trying to show in your painting? Do you think you achieved it?
- How does your short poem add to or change the meaning of your painting?

GRADES 2–12 | GET TO KNOW SIMRANPREET ANAND

Pixelated Food Stories

Objective 1

Discover artist
Simranpreet Anand

Objective 2

Look closely at Simranpreet Anand's piece *insatiable desires of a bourgeoisie* and explore how she abstracts everyday objects through pixelation

Objective 3

Create a pixelated image based on a favourite food or belonging

Glossary

- ▶ **ABSTRACT(ION)** A style of art that can be approached in two ways:
 1. The artist begins with a recognizable subject and alters, distorts, manipulates, or simplifies elements of it;
 2. The artist creates purely abstract forms with lines, shapes or colours that are unrecognizable and have no direct reference to external reality (also called non-representational art).
- ▶ **APPROPRIATE** To take or borrow something from someone else's culture without their permission and/or without understanding its significance.
- ▶ **COLONIAL(ISM)/COLONIZATION** A process that occurs when settlers arrive at a place to establish political control over it for benefits such as resources.
- ▶ **CONTEMPORARY ART(IST)** Artwork that has been created in the last thirty years. Most contemporary artists are living artists. Challenging traditional boundaries, contemporary artists use a limitless range of materials and ideas to reflect, explore and comment on today's world. Contemporary art defies easy categorization in its rejection of historical definitions of what constitutes art.
- ▶ **DIASPORIC** A large group of people who share a cultural and regional origin but are living away from their traditional homeland.

- ▶ **DHURRIE RUG** A style of hand-woven rug from India and Pakistan that is often made of cotton or wool with bright colours and bold patterns. They are an important part of Indian homes and culture, used for sitting, sleeping, or decorating floors.
- ▶ **PIXELATION** Artworks that incorporate or mimic the appearance of pixels, the small square elements that make up digital images.

Simranpreet Anand

Simranpreet Anand is a contemporary artist, curator, and cultural worker who has been deeply influenced by her experiences as a young Punjabi Sikh Canadian raised in a diasporic Punjabi community as the daughter of immigrant parents. Her artwork shows that everyday things, like spices and rugs, are not just objects we use; they carry stories about where they come from, the people who made them, and how they have changed over time. This is the main idea behind her artwork *insatiable desires of a bourgeoisie*: simple items from daily life can hold deep history, meaning, and memory.

This artwork consists of three colourful, hand-woven dhurrie rugs. At first, the designs look like random squares. But if you look closely, you can see pixelated pictures of spice boxes from the popular Indian spice brand MDH, which makes products like curry powder, chaat masala, and butter chicken masala. These spice mixes are traditionally used in home cooking in India, but during the British colonial occupation of India, they were packaged and sold as a way for rich colonists to copy Indian food and show off their worldliness. Today, these same boxed spices are sold worldwide, far from their original homes and stories.

Like the story of the spices, dhurrie rugs have changed over time too. They were originally unique, hand-woven pieces, with each pattern connected to a community. Now, machine-made versions are sold in big stores with abstract designs that leave out their cultural roots.

By putting these two objects together—the spices and the rugs—Anand makes the theme clear: many everyday items we see, buy, and use are not just things: they carry the weight of culture, migration, and history. Her artwork asks us to slow down and notice these hidden stories, and to value the skill and meaning behind traditional, handmade objects even when big companies turn them into mass-produced goods.

Spotlight on Punjabi

Punjabi refers to both a people and their language and culture. For thousands of years, Punjabis have lived in the Punjab region; “Punjab” means “land of five rivers.” Today, Punjab is divided between India and Pakistan and is home to diverse communities. Punjabi culture is vibrant, known for its traditions, music, dance, and cuisine. Key examples include bhangra, butter chicken, paratha, and the festival of Vaisakhi. Many Punjabis practice Sikhism, a religion that began in Punjab over 500 years ago and which emphasizes equality, kindness, and service. Sikh places of worship, called gurdwaras, are found worldwide. While not all Punjabis are Sikh, Sikhism strongly shapes Punjabi history and culture.

Materials

- Blank Pixel Art handout (page 13) or graph paper
- Pencils, crayons, or markers
- Erasers



Process

- Look closely at the hand-woven dhurrie rugs in *insatiable desires of a bourgeoisie*. What do you see? These abstracted squares are pixelated images of boxed spices, specifically curry powder, chaat masala, and butter chicken masala.
- During the British occupation of India, colonists were introduced to Indian cuisine by local cooks. They eventually appropriated these dishes, changing the flavours to suit their palates. The spices were then packaged and sold to British aristocrats so that they could copy Indian food back home, and today the spices are sold worldwide. Similarly, you can now purchase machine-made versions of hand-woven dhurrie rugs in big-box stores. Simranpreet Anand is considering how ordinary things, like spices or rugs, carry stories that make them special to the places, people, or traditions of where they are from. What do you think happens to these stories when they are mass-produced? Do you think it changes the meaning of the objects? Why or why not?
- As a class, share some of your favourite foods or belongings. Why do you enjoy these things? Why do they have special meaning to you?
- Today, you will make your own pixelated art based on your favourite food or belonging.
- Take some graph paper or use the Blank Pixel Art handout on (page 13).
- Choose coloured pencils, crayons, or markers that you think will best represent your item. Think about how you can simplify your item using only squares to build the image. If you chose a complicated food dish, consider choosing one ingredient to represent it.
- Now use coloured pencils, markers, or crayons to fill in each square with colour. Start by colouring lightly. This way, if you want to change the colour, it will be easier to do.
- You may find it easier to first outline the square in colour before colouring it in. Pay attention to how the colours work together and how the shapes come to life.
- Remember, there are no mistakes! If a colour or shape turns out differently than you expected, you can use it to make your artwork more interesting, playful, or textured.
- Once you have filled in the squares to create your food or belonging, choose a background colour to fill in the rest of the squares.
- Write a few short sentences (three to five lines) about what this food or belonging means to you.
- When you're done, display your artwork and sentences in the classroom.

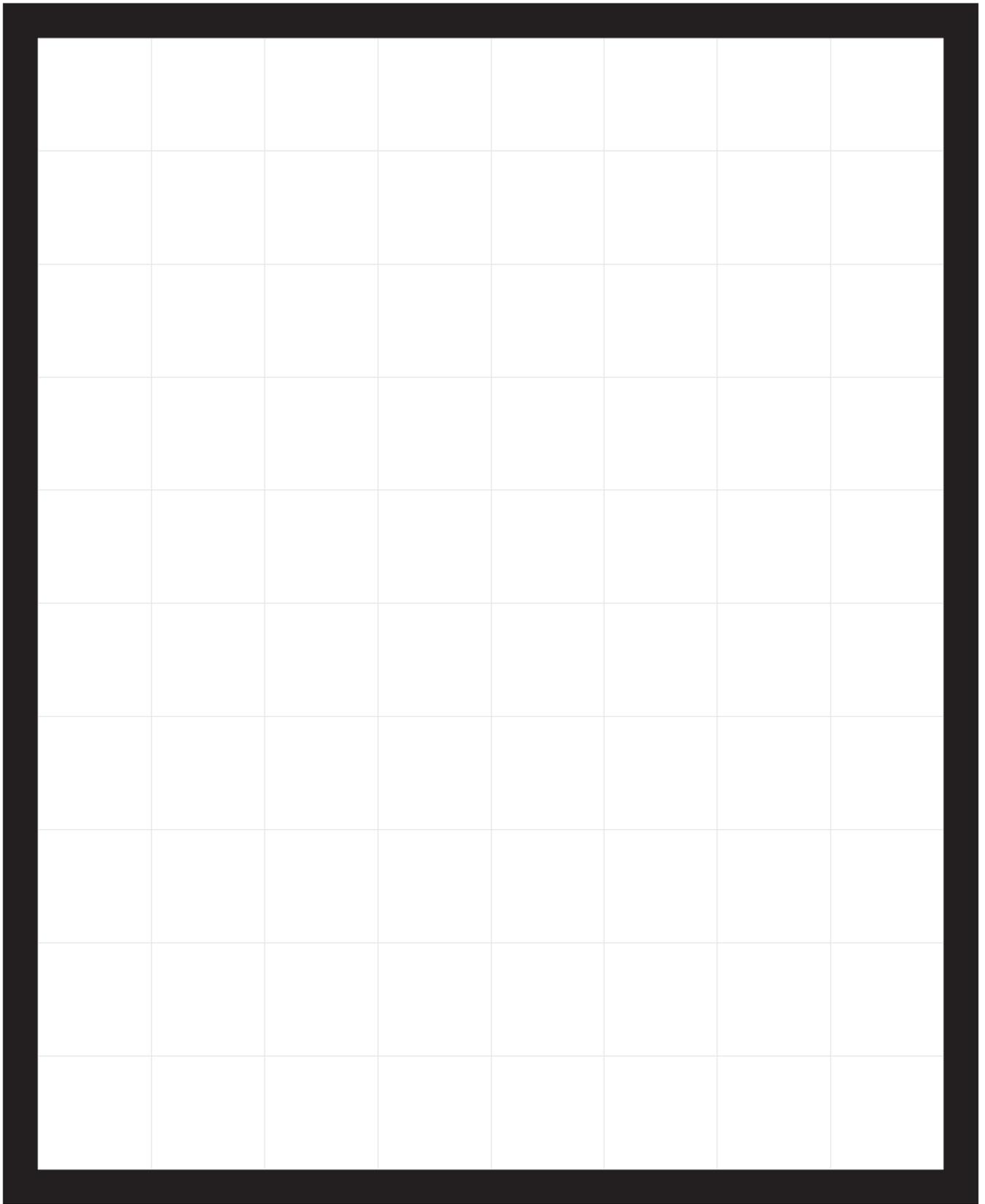


Simranpreet Anand | ਉਚ ਨੀਚ ਬਕਿਰ ਸੁਕਰਿਤ ਸੰਲਗਨ ਸਤ ਸੁਖ ਫਤੁਰ ॥ ਮਤਿਰ ਸਤੁਰੁ ਨ ਕਛੁ ਜਾਨੈ ਸਰਬ ਜੀਅ ਸਮਤ ॥ uooch neech bikaar sukirat sa(n)lagan sabh sukh chhatr ॥ mitr satr na kachhoo jaanai sarab jeeea samat ॥ (detail) | 2021 | Chandoa sahib, Rihal, Chaur Sahib, Plastic Marigolds, Plastic Rose Petals, White Sheet 9' diameter x 10' height | Photograph by Rachel Topham Photography.

Reflection

Discuss the following:

- Share your pixelated art and sentences with the class. Explain the story your food or belonging carries. How does making it pixelated change the way it looks or feels?
- Did simplifying the shapes and details make it easier or harder to create your image? Why or why not?
- How did you handle unexpected “mistakes” while filling in squares? Were you able to turn them into part of the design?
- What aspects of Simranpreet Anand’s artwork did you incorporate in your work?



GRADES 2–12 | GET TO KNOW ALBRECHT DÜRER

Trees & Texture in Ink

Objective 1

Introduce students to Albrecht Dürer

Objective 2

Explore Albrecht Dürer's print *St. Eustace* and share observations and ideas about the work

Objective 3

Discover how line and pattern can create value, form, and feeling to create an ink drawing of a tree

Glossary

- ▶ **CROSSHATCHING** Lines that cross over each other to create shading and darker areas.
- ▶ **DEPTH** The illusion that some things are closer to us and some are farther away, making the image look more three-dimensional and real instead of flat.
- ▶ **ENGRAVING** A print made by carving lines into a metal plate and using ink to transfer the image to paper.
- ▶ **PATTERN** A repeated design or arrangement of shapes, lines, or marks that can make an artwork more detailed and interesting.
- ▶ **STIPPLING** An art technique where a number of small dots in one colour are used to create shading and texture.
- ▶ **TEXTURE** The way something looks or feels, such as rough, smooth, soft, or hard. In art, artists use marks and patterns to make things *look* like they have texture.
- ▶ **WOODCUT** A print made by carving an image into a block of wood, then inking it and pressing it onto paper.

Get to Know Albrecht Dürer (b.1471 –d.1528)

Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) was a German artist of the Renaissance, a period more than five hundred years ago when new discoveries in art and science were reshaping the world. He became famous across Europe for his printmaking skills, creating detailed woodcuts and engravings. Unlike painters who worked in colour, Dürer relied on line, texture, and pattern to bring his images to life. He mastered techniques like crosshatching and stippling to create the illusion of shadow, light, and depth. By repeating lines and marks in different ways, he could suggest textures such as rough bark, soft fur, smooth metal, or rippling water. His prints often feel almost three-dimensional because of his masterful use of shading.

Dürer's subjects were wide-ranging: He studied plants and animals with scientific precision, drew portraits that captured tiny details of expression, and created dramatic religious scenes filled with deeper meaning. He was one of the first artists to see printmaking not just as a way to reproduce images but as a major artform in its own right. By carving into metal plates and wooden blocks, he created works that were admired and collected all over Europe.

Dürer also helped shape how artists think about their own identity. He created a special "AD" monogram (a design made from his initials) that he stamped or carved into almost every print and drawing he made. This wasn't just a signature; it worked like a brand logo. When people across Europe saw the "AD," they immediately knew it was a genuine Dürer print. He was one of the first artists to treat his name and style like a trademark, which is something artists and designers still do today.

Today, Albrecht Dürer is remembered as an artist who revolutionized European printmaking and elevated it to the level of an independent art form.

Who is St. Eustace?

The story of St. Eustace, the patron saint of hunters, comes from Christian tradition rather than historical record. According to the legend, a Roman officer called Placidus saw a miraculous vision while hunting: a stag with a crucifix between its antlers that spoke to him. That experience led him to convert to Christianity and take the name Eustace. Later versions of the story say he and his family suffered many hardships and that he died for his beliefs. Because of this, he is remembered as a saint by the Christian Church. Because many versions of this story were passed down over many centuries, there are small differences in it depending on the source.



Albrecht Dürer | *St. Eustace* | ca. 1500–1502 | AGGV1964.188.001

Materials

- White index cards
- Black ballpoint pens or thin black Sharpies
- Pencils
- Erasers

Process

- As a class, look at Albrecht Dürer's *St. Eustace*. What is happening in this print? What do you see that makes you say that? What more do you see?
- This is an engraving. Dürer created it by carving thin lines into a metal plate, adding ink, and pressing it onto the paper. This allowed him to make very fine lines and patterns. What happens when the lines are close together? Further apart? This is called value.
- Dürer has also used line to create texture. How has the artist used lines and dots to create texture in the fur, bark, cloth, and sky? Where has the artist crossed lines over each other in the print? This is called crosshatching. Where has he used dots? This is called stippling.
- Dürer also makes objects look three-dimensional using lines. How has he made the trees feel three-dimensional? What about the buildings? The bodies of the animals?
- You will create a tree drawing using lines to create value, texture and form. Look at one of the trees in the print. On your paper, draw just the outline of the tree in pencil. Notice how the tree is wider at the bottom and narrows as it rises to the top. Branches and stems do the same.
- Next, shade in your drawing using the crosshatching and stippling you noticed to show light and dark areas. Try to make some parts look bright and some parts look shadowed.
- Experiment with curved lines to create the illusion of three-dimensional form.
- Remember: There are no mistakes! If a line or dot doesn't turn out as you planned, it can become part of the texture or shadow.
- Now that your tree is complete, what other details would you like to add? An animal? A building? What kind of lines will you use to create these details?
- Step back and look at your drawing. Can you see where the darkest and lightest areas are? How does the value help your drawing look more real and interesting?
- Display your drawings in the classroom.



Albrecht Dürer | *St. Eustace* (detail) | ca. 1500–1502 | AGGV1964.188.001

Reflection

Discuss the following:

- What kinds of lines, patterns, or textures did you use in your artwork? How did they help make your tree look more detailed or realistic?
- Which elements did you consider from Albrecht Dürer's print?
- Which parts of your drawing were easy to fill with line or pattern, and which parts were more challenging? How did you solve those challenges?
- How are the drawings in the class similar or different?
- If you were to do this project again, what would you keep the same, and what would you try differently in your use of line, texture, or pattern?

Further learning and Resources



Simranpreet Anand | चैठक (*the blue room*) | 2022 | Digital photograph

Video

- [National Gallery Life of Albrecht Durer](#)
- [What is Value?](#)
- [What is Chinese Brush Painting?](#)
- [Five Basic Inking Techniques](#)
- [Bamboo Tutorial](#)
- [Butterfly Tutorial](#)