

## MUI Chong-ki

### Suggested class activities for Junior Secondary

**Artist:** MUI Chong-ki

**Level:** Junior Secondary

**Theme:** Scenery in the Community

**Suggested length:** 6 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 two blocks.

**Required background knowledge**

1. The students should know how to draw points, lines and planes.
2. They should have learned the basic principles of composition.
3. They should have basic knowledge of printmaking.

**Teaching goals:**

1. Learn about and appreciate MUI's woodblock prints through his video.
2. Learn about the principles and procedure of woodblock printing.
3. Learn the technique of block separation and alignment to create polychrome prints using two blocks.
4. Learn about print numbering and signing.

**Preparation before class:**

Ask the students to collect pictures of community scenery.

**Suggested class activities:**

1. **Video viewing guide (Suggested length: 5 mins)**

Suggested Q&A:

- Before the technologies of digital printing and photocopying were invented, how did people produce copies of words or images?  
(Woodblock printing, movable type, stone rubbing, copying by hand, etc.)
- What are some examples of printed works in the past?  
(Religious texts, calligraphy, New Year's pictures, etc.)
- What are the purposes of making copies?  
(Promotion, sharing knowledge, etc.)

2. **Introduce MUI Chong-ki and his artistic style (Suggested length: 20 mins)**

Show the “**Artist Introduction ppt**” pp1-7

MUI Ching-ki was born in Taishan, Guangdong Province, China, in 1940. He studied at 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. **Play the “Artist Video mp4” (Suggested length: 30 mins)**

Suggested Q&A:

- What are the differences between traditional printmaking and creative printmaking?  
(Traditional printmaking was used to produce religious texts, New Year's pictures, *menshen* (door gods), maps, and so on, in ancient times. Creative printmaking refers to the artistic practice of making prints to express the artist's thoughts and emotions. It has been popular since the early years of the Republic of China.)
- Where did MUI get inspiration for his art?  
(From landscape drawing.)
- What are the characteristics of MUI's prints?  
(They bear the elegance of Chinese landscape paintings, with subtle colouring like those of watercolour paintings and contours created by the technique of woodblock carving. A common theme in his works is landscape or village scenes.)

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

Show the **“Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt” p2**

- Have the students share their collected pictures of community scenery and identify the characteristics of the architecture and objects.
- Have them use the pictures as a reference to quickly sketch a draft on drawing paper, with “Community Scenery” as the theme. They will finalize the draft and use it for carving in the next lesson.

## Creating drafts



- share the collected pictures of community scenery and identify the characteristics of the architecture and objects.
- use the pictures as a reference to quickly sketch a draft on drawing paper, with “Community Scenery” as the theme.

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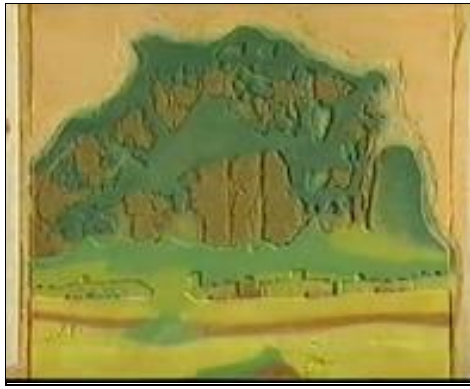
5. **Introduce the functions of different layer of blocks (Suggested length: 15 minutes)**

Show the **“Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt” p3**

Show the students pictures of different blocks. Guide them in distinguishing the different uses of these blocks.

Suggested Q&A:

- What are the differences between these blocks? What kinds of visual elements does each one mainly show?  
(The first and second blocks: they are mainly carved with shapes, to create contours of the landscape. The third block is mainly carved with lines, to fill up the details of the landscape.)

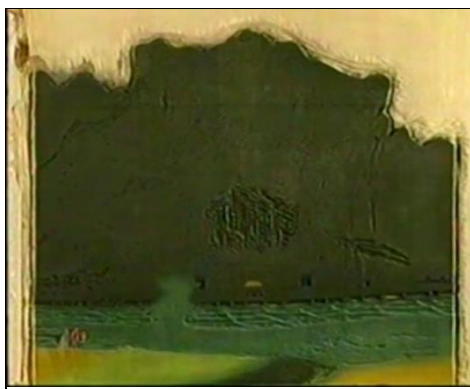


Taken from the artist's video 10:37



Taken from the artist's video 11:35

The first block: it is used for applying different shades of green.

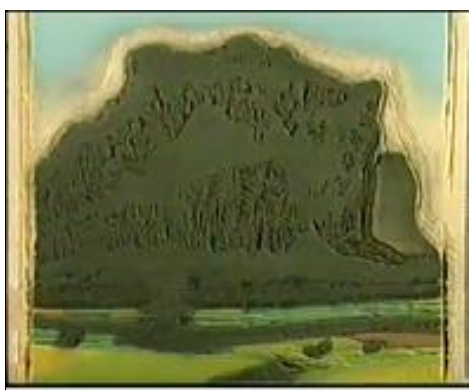


Taken from the artist's video 10:39

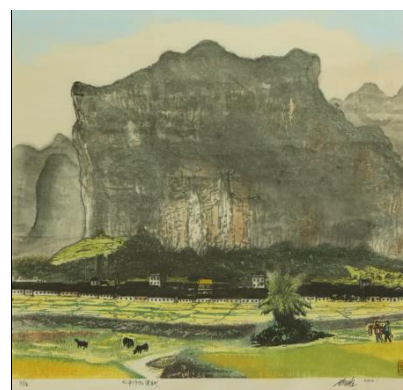


Taken from the artist's video 11:56

The second block: it is used for applying the colours of the mountains and the dimmer foreground.



Taken from the artist's video 10:48



Taken from the artist's video 12:37


The third block: it gives outlines of the scenery, and the vivid colour of the foreground and the sky.

6. **Introduce the art-making process (The students can use lino-blocks instead of woodblocks.)**  
**(Suggested length: 20 minutes)**


Show the **“Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt” pp7-17**

- Creating drafts and two blocks:

## Separating the blocks



The first block




The second block

1. Separate the drawing into two drafts, one for the first block and the other for the second block. Draw the drafts on semi-transparent tracing paper.



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- Transferring the drafts onto the lino-blocks:

## Transferring the images



2. Flip over the draft paper.



3. Place carbon paper between the lino-block and the tracing paper. Trace the draft on the back of the tracing paper.

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## Transferring the images



4. Transfer the drawings onto two lino-blocks.



5. If the lines transferred are not clear enough, use a pen to draw on the lino-blocks.

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- Carving:

- Engraving knife options: choose different knives depending on the contour they want to create.
- The correct way to hold an engraving knife.
- Carving the blocks: Remind the students that the function of the first block is to fill colours, shapes of the images should be carved for colouring. The function of the second block is to create an outline, solid lines of the images should be carved for adding details.

## Engraving knives



Round-bladed knife



Flat knife



Chisels



Pointed knife

6. Demonstrate how to carve various kinds of contours and planes with the various kinds of engraving knives. Also, demonstrate how to create yin and yang carvings to enrich the visual effect.

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## Carving method

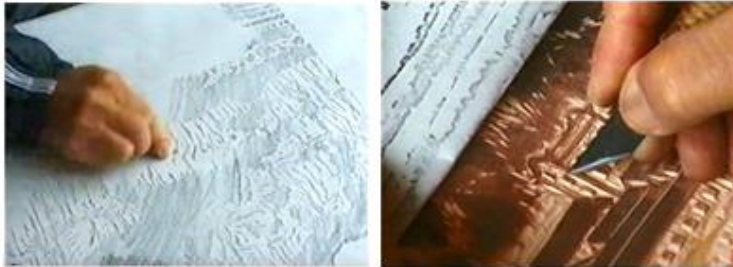


7. Hold an engraving knife as you would a pencil and carve outward.

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- Rubbing and improving the carvings:

## Rubbing and improving



8. After carving, place paper on top and shade with a pencil to check if the carving can produce a good print. Rework the carving if necessary to create a better printed image.

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- Fixing the position of the print:
- Applying colours onto the first block:

## Fixing the position and colouring



9. Place the lino-block in the middle of the *xuan* paper, and use a pencil to slightly mark the four corners of the board.

10. Apply water-based printing ink evenly onto the lino-block with a paint brush. A thin layer is preferred.

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- Printing:

## Printing



11. Spray water on the *xuan* paper so that it becomes moist. Place the *xuan* paper properly on top of the block.

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- Checking the colour:
- Making a print with the second block: Apply colours to the second block. After the print made from the first block is dry, place the paper carefully onto the second block. Rub the paper gently with a baren so that the colours are transferred to the paper.

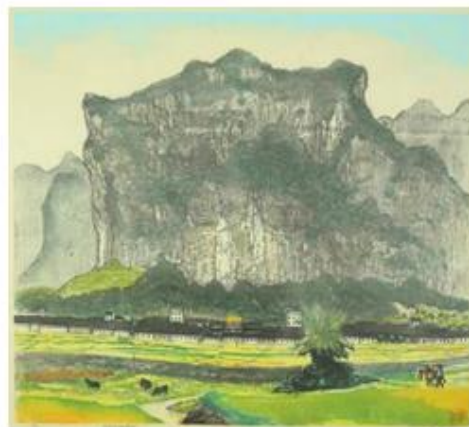
## Checking the colours



12. Rub the back of the paper gently with a baren so that the colours are transferred to the paper.

13. Slowly lift the *xuan* paper halfway to check if the print effect is vivid enough. If not, add more colour on the block to create a more vivid 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 and enjoy.

7. **Class activity (2): Printmaking (Suggested length: 200 minutes)**

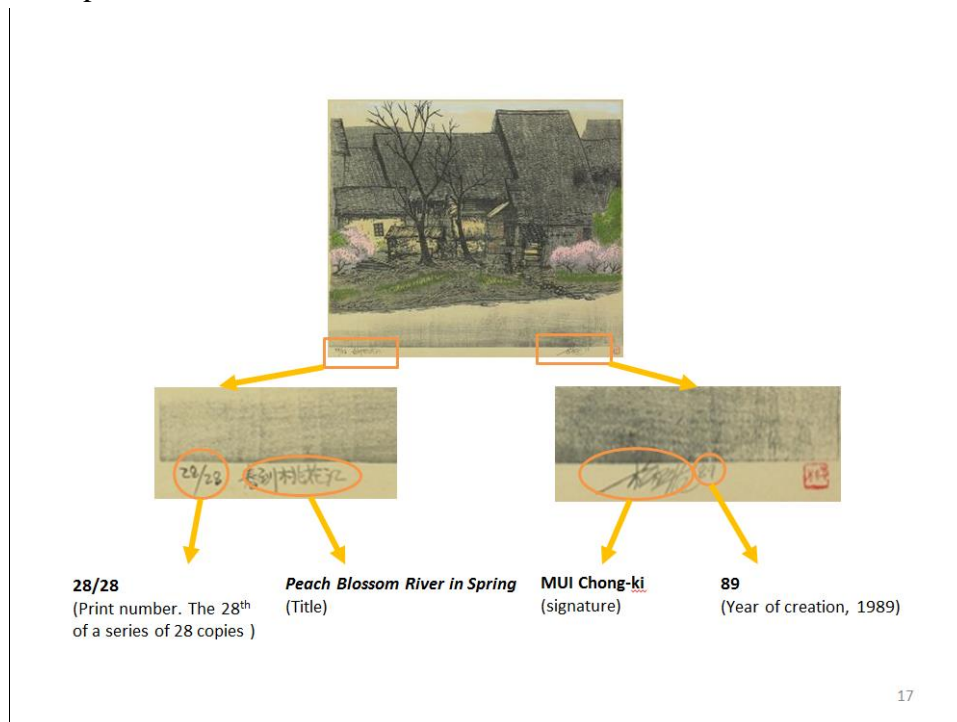
The students should learn the skills of carving from the draft, finishing the carving, colouring and printing.

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

Show the “**Supplementary Teaching Materials ppt**” pp18-19

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

Example:



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

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

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

11. **Materials**

Lino-block, pencil, engraving knife, carbon paper, paint brush, *xuan* paper, drawing paper, water-based colour, spray bottle, baren, mixing dish