



*Practical guide on how to plan
a Foam Stamp Atelier/Project*

*A brief, flexible teaching guide
for creative, sustainable
printmaking*

By

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Stages presented in this guide :

- 1. Introduction*
What is printmaking/stamping ?
- 2. Research & Planning*
What are you going to print ?
- 3. Practical*
Where/how are you going to print ?
- 4. Final presentation*
What did you print ?
- 5. Reflection*
What did you learn from making this print ?
- 6. Contact Information*



Introduction

What this guide offers

Who it's for (teachers, facilitators, artists)

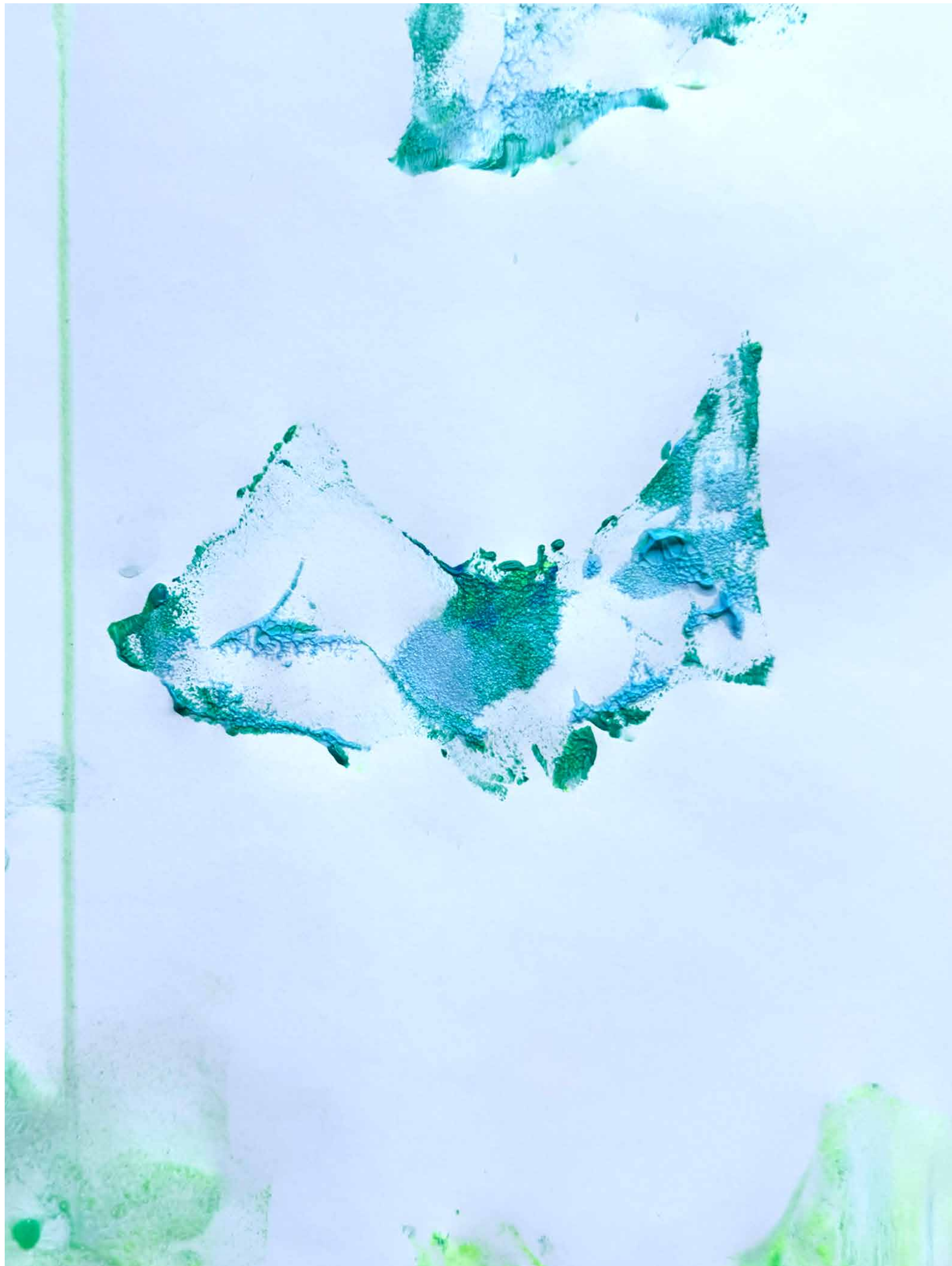
Brief guide on planning a foam stamping project

Welcome to this hands-on exploration of printmaking through foam stamping. This project-based activity empowers students to design and build their own stamps using readily available materials.

It's suitable for both individual expression as well as collaborative group projects.

Foam stamping introduces key artistic concepts: form, repetition, texture, colour, contrast, and composition — while also developing fine motor skills, conceptual rigour and creative confidence. Students will practice planning a print from research to storage, and will demonstrate their learning through drawing, painting, printing as well as how to potentially preserve/archive their creative work.

Whether you're learning art skills, decorating a classroom wall or even creating themed art for a celebration, this guide provides a structured, yet flexible plan for potential outcomes.



Introduction to Printmaking

What is a Stamp?

A stamp is a tool used to create repeatable images or impressions by pressing a form (typically raised or carved) onto a surface with pigment. It relies on relief printing — the parts that are raised receive ink and transfer it to another surface.

Students can research how stamps have been used in the past, and provide examples of how they are being used today.

Stamping is immediate and accessible.

It teaches:

Positive/negative space

Repetition and variation

Texture and contrast

Visual communication and critique through symbols

<<Close up detail of *Bat Signal in progress*, Marseille, 2025

Claire Fontaine 120g, Acrylic paint

100x150cm



How does Foam Stamping work ?

The foam acts as the raised surface

Students carve or cut shapes out of found packaging foam

Paint or ink is applied to the foam

The image is transferred through pressing

Polyurethane foam acts as a sponge and is compatible with a wide range of materials, mediums and surfaces.

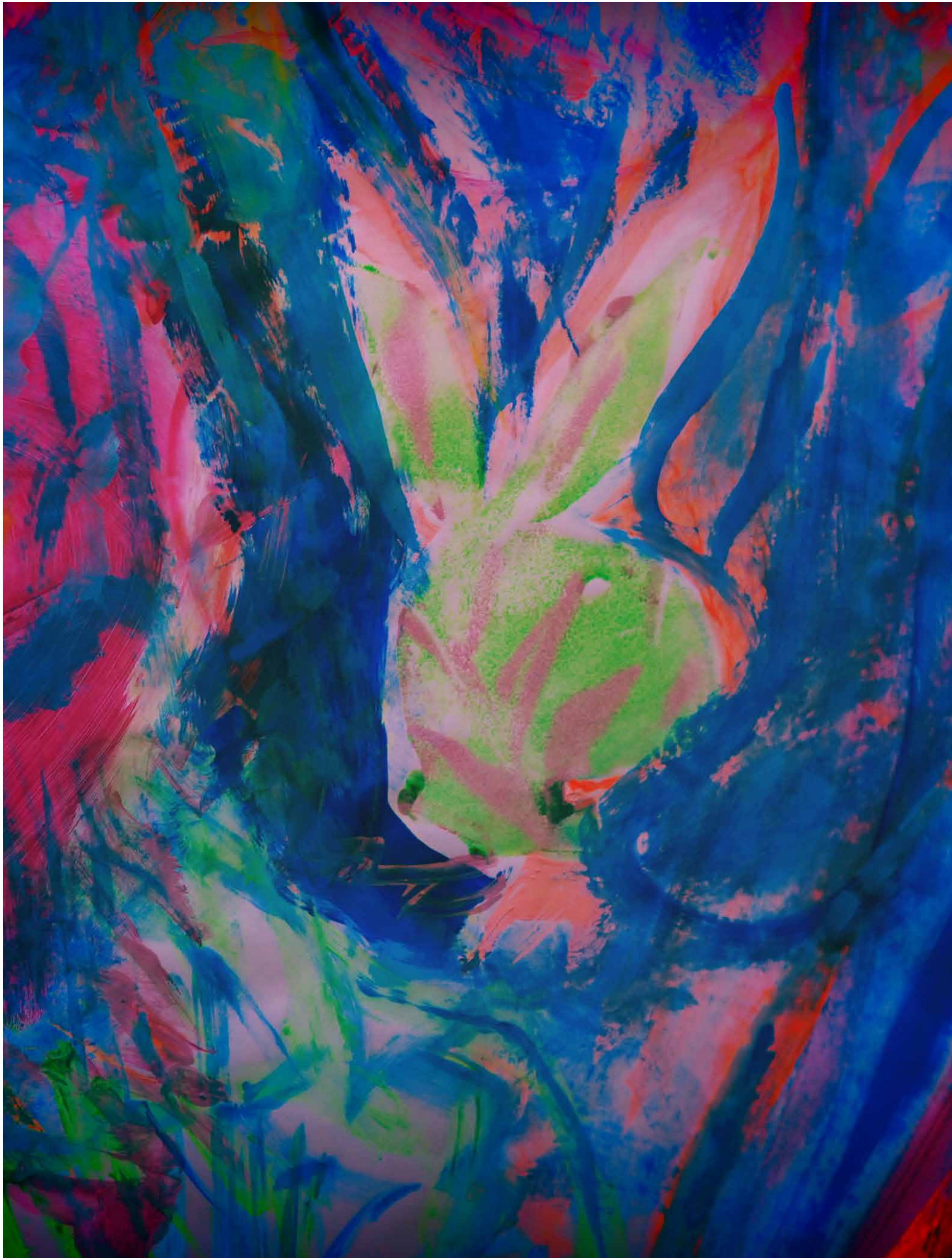
Each time the foam stamp is pressed to create an impression, some of the pigment and moisture is transferred to the surface. This impacts the stamping series, as each print is slightly altered.

Foam stamps create faithful reproductions to the print matrix, however each print varies depending on the pressure applied as well as the amount of pigment transferred.

Therefore foam printing is a hybrid between stamps and monotypes.

<<Studio space after completing *Bat Signal, Marseille, 2025*
ClaireFontaine 120g, Acrylic paint





What is a Monotype?

A monotype is a form of printmaking where only one impression is made — unlike stamps, which are repeatable.

It can be created by:

Painting or drawing directly on a surface (e.g. glass, acrylic)

Pressing paper over it to transfer the image

Why is this relevant?

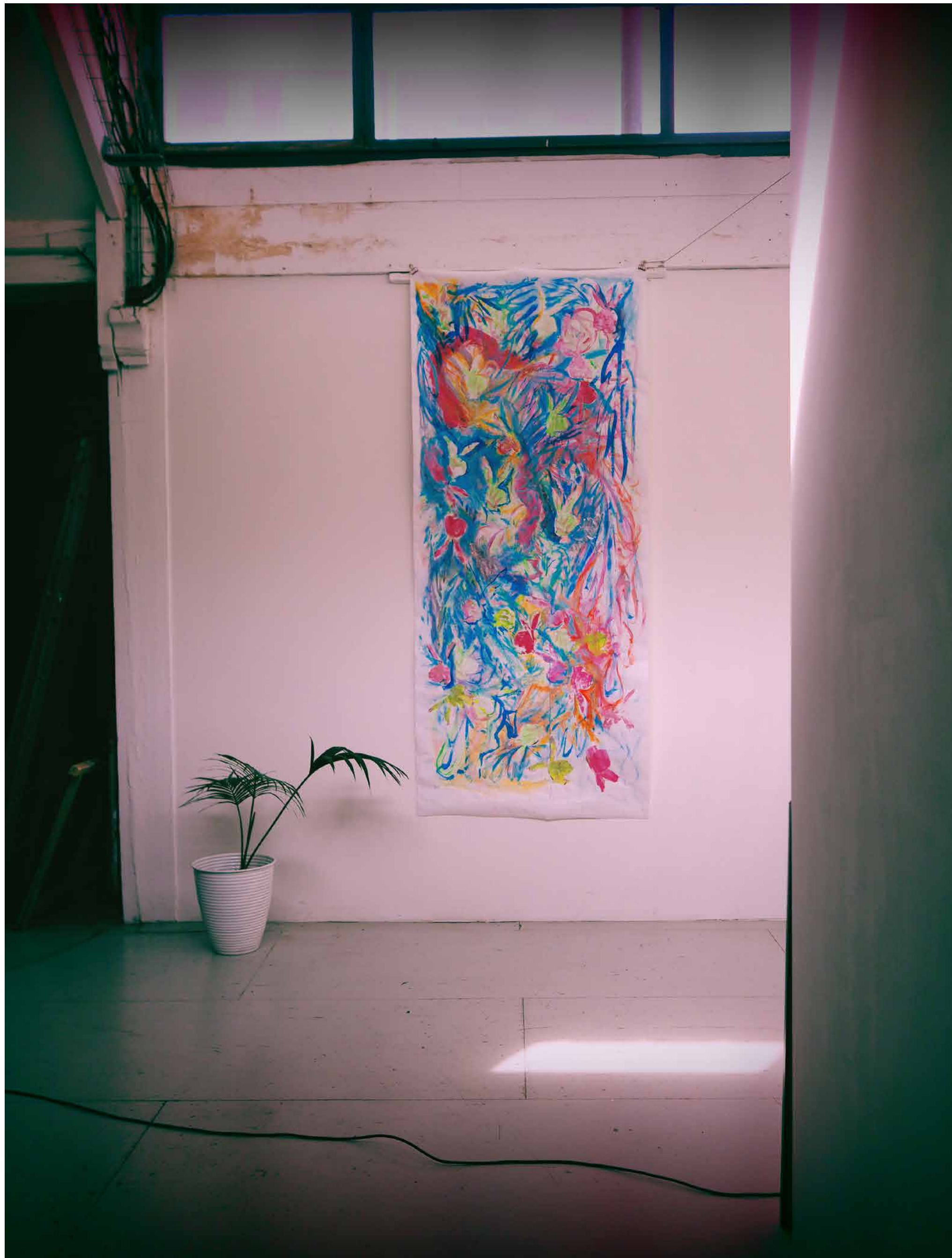
Monotypes share methods with stamping:

Both require thinking in reverse

Both are process-heavy and result-focused

They reinforce the idea that each print — even repeated — is unique

Teachers may choose to combine stamping with monotype techniques to explore texture, spontaneity, and layering.



Historical Context

Stamping and Sealing early printmaking

Circa 3500 BCE – Mesopotamia: Cylinder seals for clay impressions
Ancient Egypt and Rome: Signet rings for sealing wax on letters
Medieval Europe: Wax seals used to authenticate official documents

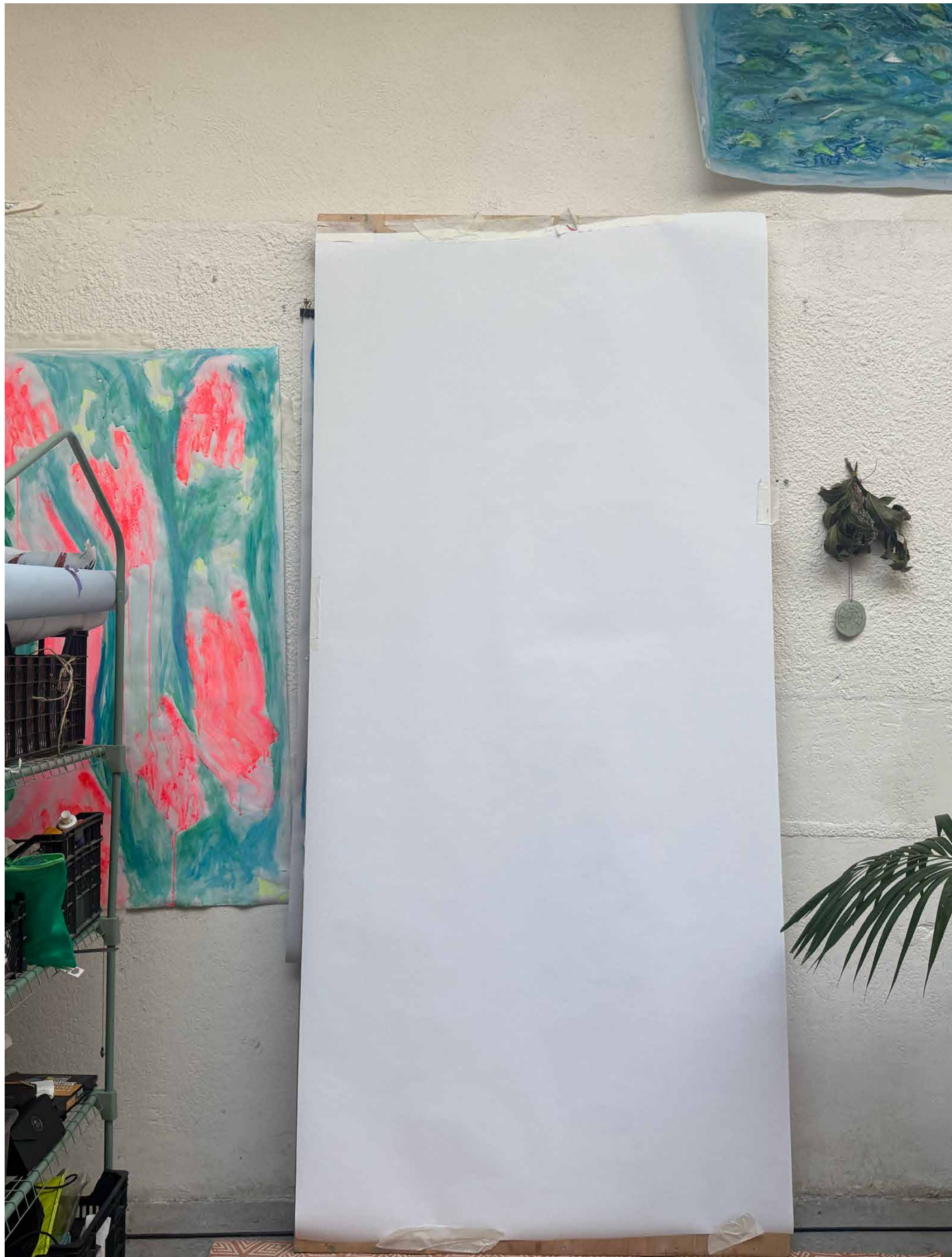
Relief printing : Woodblock to Foam

7th century CE – China: Woodblock printing in the Tang Dynasty
868 CE – China: Diamond Sutra printed — the world's oldest dated book
1600s–1800s – Japan: Ukiyo-e colour woodblock prints
15th–19th century Europe: Etching and engraving as fine art techniques
1866 – USA: Rubber stamps patented and widely adopted
Early 20th century: Linocut introduced as a classroom-friendly method
Today: Foam stamping using non-recyclable materials continues this tradition.

<<Playboy Z, 2022

Ikea Paper 100g, Acrylic paint

100x150cm



Planning Stage

Step 1: Choosing a Theme

Themes can be:

Topical or seasonal (e.g. Earth Day, Lunar New Year)

Curriculum-connected (e.g. ecosystems, ancient civilisations)

Abstract or symbolic (e.g. dreams, emotions)

Graphic and media-based (e.g. signage, emojis, branding)

Step 2: Co-Create the Visual Language

Encourage students to:

Build a reference library of images

Brainstorm in groups using moodboards, films, or discussion

Take on roles (drawing, cutting, inking, printing)

Choose a shared palette or rhythm

Decide on a final format (murals, banners, T-shirts, zines)

Introduce stylistic strategy:

Will we use a limited colour palette?

Will prints be layered or isolated?

Will we outline or connect shapes?

<<Studio space Marseille, 2025

ClaireFontaine 120g



Step 3: Plan the Process

Here the shared and individual outcomes are defined and the expectations for the final presentation are set:

Each student should complete one foam stamp and one or more prints.

The group should co-create a collective outcome: a mural, banner, or installation. Emphasise how individual contributions will connect visually and conceptually within the group's theme.

Agree on a format: flat display, hanging banner, wall mural, digital scan.

Prepare a short explanation or label for each student's stamp and print.

Discuss how the group will introduce or explain their collective work if presenting publicly.

Students can learn about and take turns sharing different responsibilities of printmaking assistants who aim to ensure efficient working space and minimising waste

Materials (ensures supplies are ready and shared fairly)

Print Station Manager (supervises use of ink and printing surface)

Clean-Up Coordinators (lead rinsing, drying, sorting tools)

Layout and Display (arranges prints for final presentation)



Practical stage : Stamp with foam

1. Prepare the Workspace

Set up stations: drawing, cutting, gluing, painting, printing, and cleaning.

2. Design and Transfer

Sketch multiple ideas.

Choose a final design and create a paper stencil.

Trace stencil onto foam using a marker.

3. Cut and Mount the Stamp

Cut the foam carefully using scissors or craft cutters.

Mount the foam onto cardboard or wood to create a stamp base.

4. Test the Stamp

Lightly moisten the foam. Apply paint with a sponge or brush.

Make test prints to check design clarity and pressure.

5. Final Printing

Print on chosen surfaces: paper, textile, walls, etc.

Adjust colour and placement based on feedback and layout.

6. Clean-Up and Storage

Wash tools and organise reusable materials.

Store damp stamps in sealed containers or dry them for archiving.



Presentation stage - discussing the process

Students can reflect on the different process stages, what they learnt

-Source Materials Found images or visual references used in development

-Initial Drawings Sketches showing variations and idea progression

-Paper Stencils Planning step between sketch and final foam stamp

-Foam Stamp Finished and mounted, labelled if possible

-Test Prints Early tests to explore pressure, ink, and clarity

-Final Print Work Final works on chosen surface (paper, wall, textile)

-Process Narrative Verbal or written explanation of design intent

-Collective Outcome Collaborative mural or group arrangement showing how designs connect

-Display Choices Decide how the work will be presented:

-Mounted on boards or walls / Photographed and exhibited digitally

-Encourage students to discuss layout and arrangement as part of the group decision-making process for the collective work or exhibition



Reflection + Feedback stage

Use discussion or writing prompts to reflect:

What does your image represent?

What part of the process is not visible in the final print?

What surprised you while printing?

How does your design relate to the group's theme?

Would you try this at home?

Are handmade prints an effective way to communicate ideas?

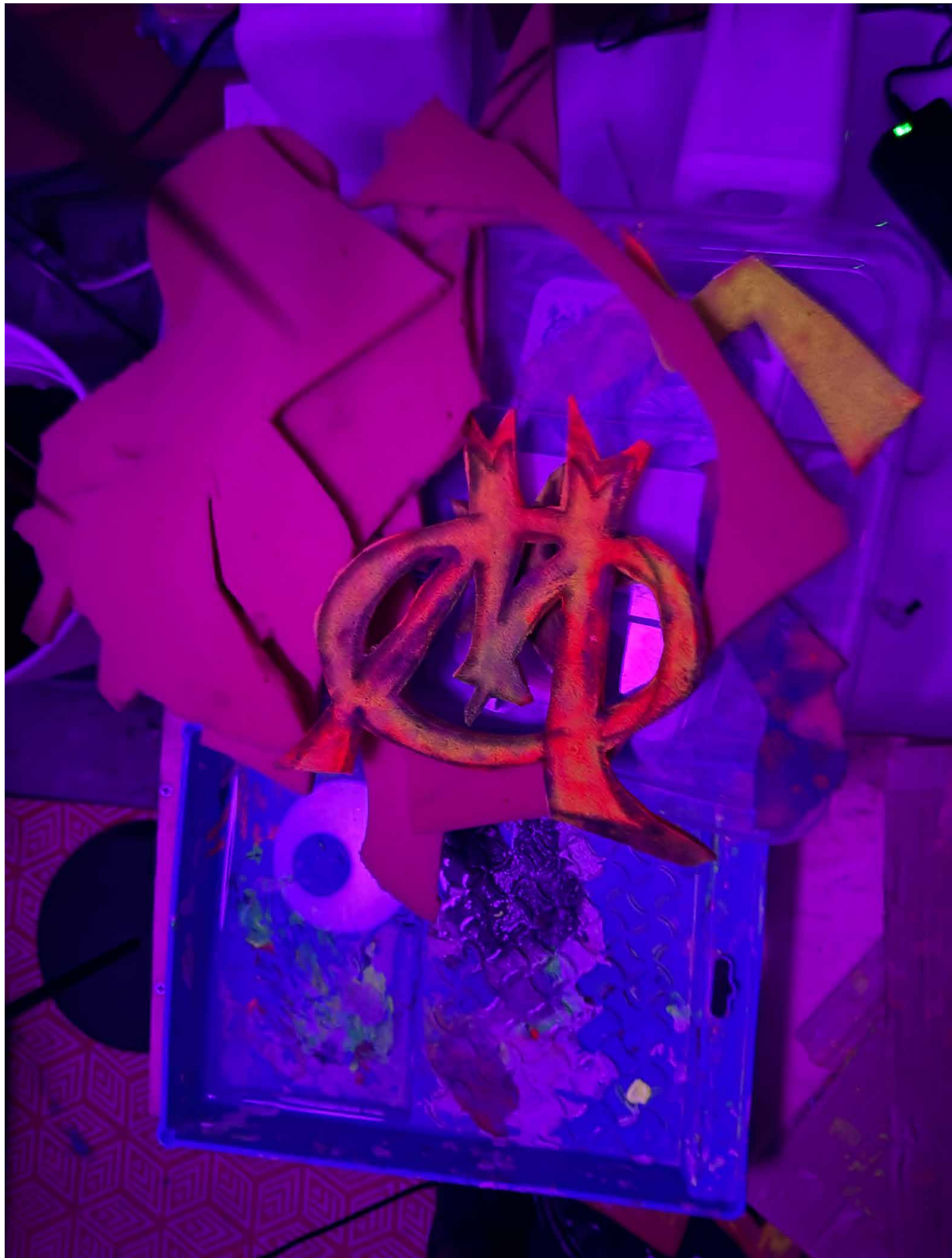
Teacher Feedback:

What worked well?

What surprised your students?

Would you repeat or adapt this project?

What would you improve next time?



Contact + Questions

Stay Connected with MAW !

We'd love to hear how you're using this guide in your classroom, workshop or team.

Send your projects, photos, ideas or questions to:

Instagram / Facebook — @makeartwerk

For workshop support, mural planning, or to explore custom facilitation :

Please email — makeartwerk@gmail.com

Or visit — www.makeartwerk.com — for more information