

7 ■ COLLAGE PRINTS: MIX AND MATCH

Collage is a fun, extremely creative and expressive process for artists at all levels. Simple collage techniques can be applied by hand and when used in small areas can transform an image. More sophisticated techniques require a press.

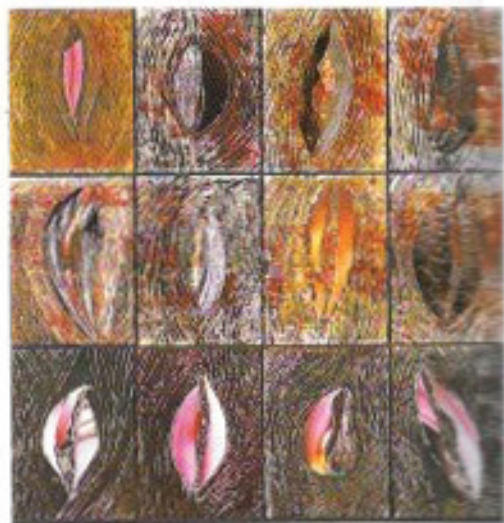
The introduction of collage by the Cubists in the early 20th century opened up a vast potential for inventive solutions. The inclusion of materials other than paper was made possible; such alternative materials could include virtually anything.

A press is not always required when making collage monoprints. Anne Marie Foster, who works in a small studio with limited facilities, produces prints by hand burnishing and favours the ecological use of materials. She recycles whatever is available in her workplace.

Collage is a principal element in the work of Tara Sabharwal owing to its flexibility and the opportunities it presents for layering. This offers endless,



▲ Dune Miller; *Yellow Falls*, 62 x 47 cm (25 x 19 in.). This print utilises collage combined with a monotype.



▲ Anne Marie Foster; *Skin - Composite 1*, 1991, 75 x 70 cm (30 x 28 in.). The artist used mixed media with added colour and texture, both sourced from glossy magazines. She printed 12 individual monotypes with collage, which she presented in a grid format mounted on rough, heavyweight, handmade paper to form the composite work.

ongoing possibilities as it is not solely dependent on printmaking processes and encourages freedom of expression.

Bottles in a Row and *Dreamworld* were made by the following method:

- The printing paper was selected and soaked. The timing of this depends on the paper brand and the amount of sizing. (Size is the glutinous material made of flour, varnish, glue or resin that is used to fill the pores of paper. Paper with little or no sizing, such as German Etch or Manyani, does not require soaking for more than 5 minutes, in fact a light spraying of water is often sufficient, unlike a more heavily sized paper, such as Somerset, Arches or BFK which require at least 30 minutes soaking.)
- The pressure of the press was adjusted to accommodate the block (see Chapter 2).
- The selected ink was rolled onto the surface of the Perspex™/Plexigraph™ block, which had been loosened with thick linseed oil. This mixture was drawn into with cotton buds. The unwanted ink was removed with paper towels, fingers, etc.
- Turpentine, spirits and lighter fuel were also applied by sprinkling and spraying to loosen areas of ink and create textures.
- Fragments of coloured Japanese, Indian and Thai papers were placed under the prepared block to arrange a suitable composition.
- The pieces were then brushed with a thin coat of methyl cellulose (wall-paper paste) mixed with water and covered by the pre-dampened printing paper (blotted). This latter paper was placed directly over the inked block.
- This was backed with clean newsprint and blankets and then run through the press.
- The printing paper was lifted carefully from the block to ensure all fragments were stuck to the printed image.



▲ Iara Sabharwal, *Bottles in a Row* and
▼ *Dreamworld* 2002, 45 x 65 cm (18 x 26 in).



Tara Sabharwal sometimes includes stencils in her work by cutting forms from acrylic or Mylar sheets, which are inked and added to the prepared block, creating positive shapes (areas that will print) and/or negative features (areas that will resist ink and not print). Sometimes this may include the addition of watercolours and gouache, applied by hand to enhance the final image. Tara has proved that this technique produces colourful prints that are both dynamic and playful.

The versatility of collage is useful in the creation of monoprints. It can be incorporated in the printing process to create one print, or it can be used as an ongoing process that can individually adapt what would otherwise become a limited edition print.

Pre-printed material is commonly used by artists as an opportunity to investigate texture and imagery. This material can include the recycling of all old printed matter, such as magazines, newspapers, promotional literature, old letters, etc.

▼ Dee Whittington, *High Renaissance High Revs*, prints II and IV, 2003. 75 x 55 cm (30 x 22 in.). In these two monoprints, the image has been manipulated by the use of collage to fully investigate a basic theme. The medium used was photographic screenprinting and the composition was originally created from the use of digital imagery. Collage was applied during and after the printing process.

