



Creator and Character: Artists Interpret James Joyce

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Exhibition Glossary

Compiled from various sources

About James Joyce

Leopold Bloom – the protagonist of *Ulysses*. Joyce apparently used different real-life models as inspiration for Bloom.

Bloomsday – a commemoration and celebration of the life of Joyce during which the events of his novel *Ulysses* (which is set on June 16, 1904) are relived. It is observed annually on June 16 in Dublin and elsewhere. Joyce chose that date as it was the date of his first outing with his wife-to-be, **Nora Barnacle**. The name Bloomsday derives from **Leopold Bloom**, the protagonist of *Ulysses*.

Horne – In James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Horne's name is mentioned no less than ten times in "Oxen of the Sun," chapter 14. It is suggested that Horne represents **Helios**, the Greek sun god, as well as oxen (Horne=horn).

Eugene Jolas – Along with his wife **Maria McDonald** and **Elliot Paul**, Jolas founded the influential Parisian literary magazine, *transition*, in 1927. He met James Joyce during the author's time in Paris. Jolas played a major part in encouraging and defending Joyce's '*Work in Progress*' (which would later become *Finnegans Wake*), a work which Jolas viewed as the perfect illustration to his manifesto, published in 1927.

Finn McCool – Fionn mac Cumhail was known as "Finn McCool" in Irish popular folklore. McCool was a mythical hunter-warrior of Irish mythology, occurring also in the mythologies of Scotland and the Isle of Man. The stories of Fionn (Finn) and his followers the **Fianna**, form the Fenian Cycle. Finn McCool features heavily in modern Irish literature. Most notably, he makes several appearances in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, and some have posited that the title, taken from the street ballad *Finnegan's Wake*, may also be a blend of "Finn again is awake," referring to his eventual awakening to defend Ireland.

Ulysses – 1922 novel by James Joyce set in early twentieth-century Dublin. The action of the novel takes place on a single day, June 16, 1904. *Ulysses* sets the characters and incidents of the *Odyssey*, by ancient Greek poet **Homer**, in modern Dublin. The book consists of 18 chapters, each covering roughly one hour of the day, beginning around 8:00 am and ending sometime after 2:00 am the following morning. Each chapter employs its own literary style and parodies a specific episode in Homer's *Odyssey*. Furthermore, each chapter is associated with a specific color, art or science, and bodily organ.

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Print Terminology

A la poupée – the term derives from the French word for doll (poupée) and refers to the application of colored inks to specific passages of a plate by means of cotton daubs called **dollies**. This is a method for coloring an image without resorting to the more time-consuming method of registering a number of plates, each carrying separate color.

Aquatint – a method for **etching tonality** developed in the eighteenth century in which a fine rosin powder is deposited on the plate and melted. Passages not to be etched are then “stopped out” by painting them with a varnish that does not allow the acid bath to penetrate the metal plate. The fine melted rosin also disallows the acid to bite, but the exposed microscopic bits of metal between the dots of melted rosin are eaten by the acid. The result is a skein of etched dots of varying sizes, which hold ink to varying degrees. The longer the etch, the deeper the dot, the darker the tone.

Burin – a chisel of tempered steel with a sharp lozenge-shaped point, used for engraving furrows in metal, wood, or marble

Drypoint – a classic printmaking method similar to **line engraving**. A sharp-pointed metal tool (sometimes with a diamond tip) is employed to literally scratch an image into a plate. The plate can be immediately printed (no acid being necessary). The minute and rough metal spurs thrown up on either side of the scratched line hold ink in a feathery manner that provides richness to early impressions.

Engraving – the engraved plate is one that has not been etched in acid. Rather, the lines that will hold ink are “carved” into the plate by a hand-held tool called an engraver. Engraving tools come in many sizes and shapes. A preliminary drawing is usually executed on the plate to be engraved, and then subsequently “cut” into the plate with the tool. Engraving is the oldest form of **intaglio** printmaking (i.e. any kind of printing from lines or marks made by cutting into ‘something,’ such as copper or wood.)

Etching – the generic term “etching” refers to any of the procedures that employ acids to eat into a metal plate for the purpose of creating a printable matrix (e.g. hardground etching, softground etching, sandpaper etching, aquatint).

Hardground etching – to be etched in acid, a metal plate must first have a **ground** applied. The purpose of the ground is to protect the plate from the action of the acid. **Hardground** is usually composed of asphaltum, beeswax, and resin. The mixture is then applied hot to the plate and rolled evenly over the surface. While it is hot, it is viscous and can be rolled on to the plate by means of a rubber brayer. When the hardground cools, it becomes hard and immovable. Only those lines or dots that are drawn through the hardground by the sharp point of an etching needle are exposed to the action of the acid and etched into the plate. Once the plate has been etched, the ground is removed with mineral spirits and can be inked.

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Letterpress – Letterpress is the oldest form of printing. In this method, a surface with raised letters is inked and pressed to the surface of the printing substrate to reproduce an image in reverse. Typically, metal type has been used, but other possibilities include carved wood or stone blocks. After the **Gutenberg press** introduced movable type to the process in the fifteenth century, letterpress was the predominant printing method for 500 years. The creation of huge rotary presses made industrial printing and newspaper production practical. In the 1950s, **xerography** and **offset** printing began to supplant letterpress. By the end of the twentieth century, **digital** printing and related technologies had become the industry standard for many uses. Nevertheless, letterpress is still used for some specialized commercial applications. The old method is also enjoying a resurgence among modern-day enthusiasts who prize the hand-made qualities and historical nature of letterpress print.

Lithograph (lithography) – a method of **planographic** (flat surface) printing in which an image is created on a stone or thin metal plate surface with incising. Lithography is based on the incompatibility of grease and water. Traditionally, greasy ink was employed to draw an image on a special limestone that was then treated with nitric acid and **gum Arabic**. The solution of acid and gum Arabic made the stone capable of retaining a thin layer of water. The stone could then be wetted with water and rolled with a greasy ink, which would only adhere to the greasy drawing. The inked, greased image could then be printed.

Retroussage – a method of enriching the impression possible from an inked plate by means of lightly brushing (often with a circular motion) the surface with a **tartalan** (sized cheese cloth). Retroussaging a plate lifts the ink from the **etched** or **drypointed** line, giving a softer (seemingly fuller) appearance.

Roulette – a **burin-like** device, but with a rolling serrated blade on a little axle that engraves a small repeated pattern.

Spit-bite – a somewhat common, though no longer accurate, term used to describe a method of painting with acid directly onto a copper plate grounded with **aquatint**. The term was derived from the early use of saliva to break the surface tension of the brushed field, allowing a more even dispersal of the fluid over the passage being painted. The modern substitute for saliva is **gum Arabic**, which is very effective in breaking the surface tension that causes the acid to pool into droplets as it is applied over the aquatint (melted rosin powder).