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“PRONTO”/POLYESTER PLATE LITHO

“Pronto” brand / Polyester Plate

Waterproof Sharpie pens (not extra fine point) and/or Bic Stic ballpoint pens

Photocopy or Laser print copy (halftone or line shot)

Hunt Speedball Screen Filler (optional)

(Other materials work - i.e. acrylic paints, this is the tried and true short list)

Optional: reticulated effects:

Make up a strong solution of dish-soap and pour it into a water sprayer/mister

Paint the plate surface with speedball screen filler or acrylic

Spray with the soap solution.

**Dry/heat set the plate

Be careful not to get fingerprints on the plate unless you want them to print

Printing

Print as you would a ball grain plate with this addition –

Sponging water - and add one ounce of gum arabic solution a gallon of water.

De-scumming – use a small amount of gum arabic or TAPEM (Tannic Acid Plate Etch) in the sponging water or directly on to the plate if necessary. There are many other “fountain solutions” (a term from commercial offset lithography) that work as well. *Toothpaste also works very well on tough spots that won’t stay clean.

Extra (optional) – heat setting: Run your plate through the laser printer or copier again This will make a longer lasting plate with less chance of image breaking down

Plates are inked on a surface away from the press – glass or the backs of aluminum printing plates work well. Then to print, put newsprint packing on press bed, then printing paper face up, then printing plate, face down. Cover with newsprint to protect the tympan on a litho press or blankets on an etching press.

Cleaning the Plate after Printing

Run the plate through the press a few times with newsprint to remove excess ink then wipe it with dish soap solution

Basic Digital Set up for Polyester Litho Plates:

How to setup for laser printer

Set **media size**:

Make sure **image size** is equal or smaller

Faster printing when: mode is bitmap, image size is not media size, and mode is gray scale,
Resolution is less than 150ppi

for basic graphics (line work, text):

120 ppi

print on paper to test

print on polyester plate

for a halftone: (dots)

Photoshop →

Image size ____

image resolution 300 ppi →

mode: grayscale → adjustments curves, levels etc → ok

mode: bitmap → (input 300) output 300 → dropdown halftone → ok

frequency 20 - 50ppi (try 40 first) for halftone look, angle (try 60 – 72),

shape ellipse → ok

(or diffusion dither)

print on paper to test

print on polyester plate

*Colgate with Tartar Control is best!

** There are a number of ways to dry/heat set image on the plate. You can try by using a hairdryer for about two minutes on each area. This is the least likely to succeed and therefore the least desirable. Making a hot plate oven out of two varying sized baking pans so that the plate doesn't touch the hot plate surface works well if set at 250F for about 15 minutes. In addition, a dry mount press with padding removed works very well!