

autotype

True-Grain



TRUE-GRAIN Textured Drafting Film

"Passages" by Ian Wilkinson, the work featured on the front cover, was originated from artwork drawn directly on True-Grain textured drafting film. True-Grain was launched in 1993 following collaboration between Autotype and Curwen Chilford Prints, Cambridge, who has for some time been experimenting with the reproduction of fine tonal information through the medium of screen printing.

The hand drawn artwork was exposed on to Autotype Alpha Star indirect photo-stencil film and printed by Curwen Chilford. From the same artwork Curwen Chilford also printed a litho version, holding the same tonal range, to confirm the benefits of True-Grain for both screen and litho reproduction.

"True-Grain presents opportunities of subtlety that were previously difficult, if not impossible to obtain. As the work progressed it became clear that we were looking into the future of screen printing. The language of printmaking now has a new vocabulary, one which parallels lithography but has a distinct feeling of its own. A complete reappraisal will be necessary. As I worked new possibilities presented themselves. The tonal variety and quality of some of the marks were a revelation. This is the most easy and seductive surface on which to work.

Roy Watson, Artist.



A section from the blue separation of the 'Passages' artwork showing the tonal values achievable using True-Grain.

"True-Grain guarantees that fine, medium or heavy tones reproduce with great clarity. The artist and the printer know that the image will be printed with no loss of definition.

This advance is not to be underestimated. Generations of screen printers have been schooled to make all artwork opaque - now levels of transparency are the key in stencil making.

In creative terms, this means that the process now has few, if any, limitations."

Kip Gresham, Curwen Chilford Prints.

Tonal Printmaking without Photography

True-Grain is a unique high quality textured polyester drafting film which holds tone. It is a technological breakthrough in the creation of hand-drawn prints, since its unique textured surface and very high level of transparency allows the reproduction of very subtle washes and marks without the intermediate stage of photography or laser scanning.

By drawing directly on True-Grain a wide range of drawing materials may be faithfully reproduced through photo-screen print, lithography and etching. Most drafting films are non-textured and semi-opaque and only capable of reproducing flat, solid marks drawn with opaque photographic drawing materials.

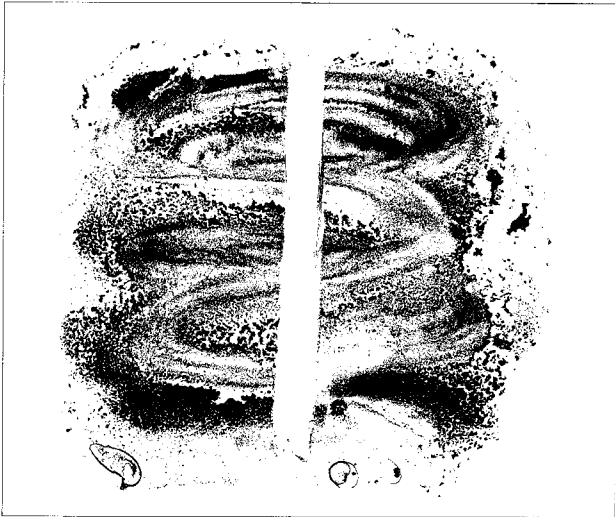
It is the unique textured surface of True-Grain that holds the tone. As the wash gradually dries, deep pits in the film catch the tiny particles of pigment suspended within the wash, producing the halftones for transfer to photo-sensitive screens and plates.

Similarly the surface grain exerts an influence on marks drawn with pencil, charcoals and crayon. The broad tonal range now possible with True-Grain delivers a fully resolved drawing using far fewer colours than was required previously.

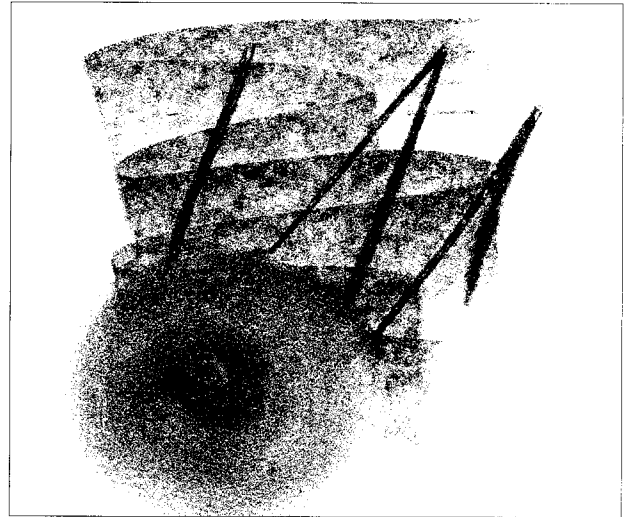
The High Level of Transparency

For the successful transfer of subtle tonal information to the stencil material, the drawing support must be as transparent as possible to create both a strong stencil and the minimum amount of resistance to ultra violet light on short exposures. Since True-Grain has a very high level of transparency, the minimum point of stencil hardening is reached with substantially shorter exposure times. These shorter exposure times also ensure the resolution of the maximum information from the artwork.

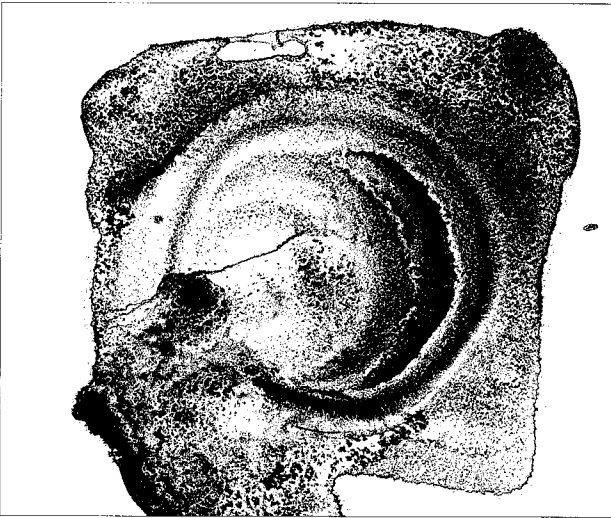
**These unique wash effects were screen printed
from artwork made on True-Grain**



Plumtree opaque in water and PVA.



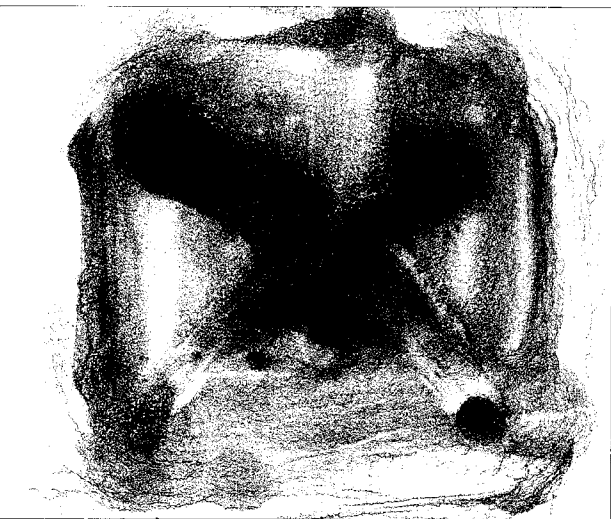
Compressed charcoal stick.



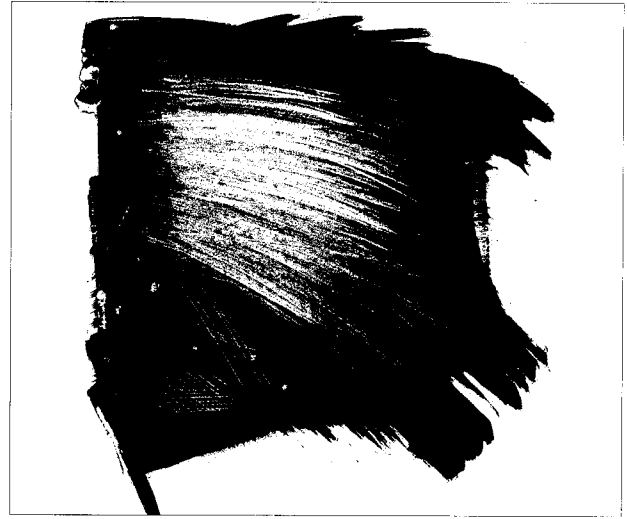
Lamp black and lamp black gouache.



Karisma graphite aquarelle pencil.



Colourjet black into oil bound retarder.



Lamp black gouache.

Try True-Grain for yourself

True-Grain THE textured film for quality work with all media

Pencils, Crayons and Pens

A selection of standard drawing materials which can be used on True-Grain:

- » Pencil (2B, 3B, 4B etc), 9B graphite sticks, graphite dust rubbed into the surface texture of the film.
- * Charcoal, compressed charcoal, Conte crayon
- » Black oil pastel, Korn'sorCharbonnellithocrayons, chinagraph pencil
- * Water soluble pencils and crayons:
 - Black Caran D'ache-colour pencil
 - Black Neo Color II water soluble crayon
 - Berol Karismacolor'Karisma Graphite Aquarelle'
- * Waterproof and water soluble marker pens

Interesting effects may be achieved by smudging and manipulating these drawing materials with water or solvent, such as screenwash, retarder and Actisol spray. The surface of the film may be easily worked, erasing and re-working areas as desired.

Creating Tonal Washes

There are a number of liquids which allow the pigment to separate from their base to create tonal washes. The surface of True-Grain will accept almost all solvent and water based liquids. For water based liquids add a few drops of PVA or Gum Arabic to improve adhesion to the surface of the film without resisting. The drawing materials for creating tonal washes tend to work much more effectively when brushed into a well wetted surface, which activates the separation of pigment from binder. The unique properties of True-Grain enable it to be stored in roll form, as its lay flat characteristics provide a level surface for controllable wash work. The film also has excellent dimensional stability, with no distortion, even with very hot air drying. If screen ink is diluted and floated into a pool of retarder in this way, the retarder washes about on the surface but the ink remains in place where it has been drawn. The retarder causes the pigment in the ink to separate from its binder, dispersing fine grains of pigment to create a rich open wash.

Techniques to create tonal washes on True-Grain:

- * Lamp black powder pigment mixed with water and a few drops of PVA, brushed onto the film wetted with water and PVA,
- * Lamp black gouache diluted with water and a little PVA.
 - » Plumtree black liquid opaque in water and PVA.
- * Ivory black powder pigment dusted or shaken into dilute PVA or Gum Arabic (pepper pot effect).
- * Graphite dust and dilute Gum Arabic.
 - » Chinese ink and water.
- * Chinese stick inks (Sumi) and water.
- * Waterproof Indian ink and water.
 - » Black screen printing ink diluted in any solvent eg screenwash and brushed onto surface pre-wetted with solvent.
- * Black screen printing ink diluted in oilbound retarder brushed onto surface pre-wetted with oilbound retarder.

Engraving and Dry Point Techniques

The surface of True-Grain is very tough, enabling scratching and sanding back techniques. Lines may be engraved into the surface and filled with pigment, as in the technique of Dry Point. If the lines are engraved and inked upon the textured side of the film, the surrounding areas will hold tone, if underwiped.

Conventional Opaque Drawing Materials for Film

Conventional photographic opaques, Rotring F Film ink, black acrylic paint and Fotostrip UV Block may be applied to the film in the usual way to create solid flat areas without tone.

