



BETHANY R. GRAVERT AND KATIE V. BUNT  
By printing silver ink on a black background, Bethany and Katie have created the ghostly **negative image** of a single, light fish in dark water. The application of ink to the edges of the fins gives them a delicate **linear** quality that contrasts with the **solid shape** of the body.



KATIE V. BUNT  
By printing one light, **flat** shape over and over, Katie has created an entire school of fish. The **repeated, overlapping** images set up **foreground** and **middle-ground** areas which seem to move **horizontally** and **diagonally** across the page.



MICHELLE BOS AND LARRY E. GATZ  
Michelle and Larry chose a fish with a short, fat shape, **centered** it, and **repeated** it twice. The two **dark, positive shapes**—one red and one blue—stand out against the solid yellow background.



HALEY J. RYAN  
Haley has expressed movement by **repeating, overlapping, and cropping** her long, thin fish. By using light ink on the "top" and dark ink on the "bottom," Haley creates a three-dimensional, **modeled** fish. The bright-red background color adds to the active feeling.



HALEY J. RYAN  
Haley has used the same fish to make this print. By varying **size, background, color, and composition**, she has made the fish look very different. The large, light, multicolored shapes swimming into and out of the picture frame gives the viewer the sensation of swimming beside the two fish.

## SCHOLASTIC ART WORKSHOP

# Making a Japanese Gyotaku Print

Use an ancient Japanese technique to create a unique print of a fish.

**Y**ou've seen how Japanese printmakers *flattened, simplified, and stylized* the shapes they used in their block prints. Classical Japanese printmakers also created single prints, which were printed directly from the object itself. To create these Gyotaku (*gee-oh-TAH-koo*) prints, artists would apply inks to a distinctly shaped natural object—usually a fish—and transfer the image to paper. In this workshop, you'll use a real fish to make your own distinctive Gyotaku print.

### MATERIALS

- Variety of fresh, flat fish with good definition such as: porgy, angelfish, trout, black sea bass, pinfish, crappie, sun perch, bluegill, sunfish, carp, red and black drum, or life-like, rubber fish replicas
- Nonlatex (due to allergic reaction) disposable gloves
- Saran Wrap or large plastic fruit/vegetable bags
- Large zip-lock storage bags
- Large airtight plastic storage containers
- Reconstituted lemon juice
- Clean newspapers
- Paper toweling
- Container for water to rinse brushes
- Primary, secondary, white, black water soluble block printing ink or tempera or acrylic paint \*
- T pins or large straight pins
- Cotton balls
- Toothpicks
- Q-Tips
- Old bath towels
- Cardboard or foam board
- 9 by 12, 12 by 18, and 18 by 24 in. white, black, assorted color Subi block printing paper or rice paper
- 1 1/8 in. soft, flat brushes

\* For this assignment Dick Blick Water Soluble Block Printing Ink, Tempera and/or Blickrylic were used

### PREPARATION

Go to your local fish market. Select a thin, fresh, whole fish with definite shape, prominent scales, fins. Wrap fish in plastic; cover with ice. Keep fish **VERY COLD** (in home economics or cafeteria refrigerator). Print within 24 hours. (Thawed frozen fish print well.) Study fish



Wash fish with lemon juice, blot dry, and place on cardboard. Spread and pin fins, open mouth with cotton, and dry thoroughly before printing.

Prepared by Ned J. Nesti Jr., Morrison Junior High School, Morrison, IL. Assisted by Andrea D. Beveroth, School of Art, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL, Nicholas Bonneur and Charlie Dubnick



Brush ink from head to tail; then reverse direction. To print, put paper on fish. Damp paper will mold over surface, catch details.

anatomy; learn terms: *anterior dorsal fin, posterior dorsal fin, caudal fin (tail), anal fin, pelvic fin, pectoral fin.*

### STEP 1

Work with partner; prepare fish for printing. Handle carefully; don't squeeze. Wash with lemon juice (not water) to remove coating. **LIGHTLY** rub in direction of scales. Rinse with cold water. Blot, and put on cardboard. Spread fins with T-pins, open mouth, stuff with paper towels. Dry fish with hair dryer set on no heat (**NOT HOT!**). If fins stay in place after removing some pins, begin to ink. If fins move, let fish dry longer. If one side is damaged, print the other.

### STEP 2

Stack newspapers under fish. Ink fish, then slide top sheet out for clean printing surface. After considering size/shape of fish, composition (symmetrical/asymmetrical), and avail-

able ink colors, select paper size, color/s. Plan composition before inking/printing fish. Gently brush smooth, thin, even layer of ink on fish from head to tail; then reverse direction. Ink lips, fins, tail. Leave eye blank; can be painted a different color later. Print soon after inking fish or ink will dry.

### STEP 3

To print, position paper above fish for best composition. Carefully lower paper on fish. *Do not move paper after it has touched fish!* Rub fish gently, touching all parts to avoid blank spots. Hold fish's head so paper will not slip while printing. *To avoid double images, do not press same spot twice.* When done, carefully peel paper straight up. Fish can be inked in different color, but ink must dry before overprinting.



Clean fish carefully with cold water when changing colors. Fish can be used for three days as long as it is **immediately** stored in cold refrigerator.

Press paper evenly on fish to print. Pull paper away, straight up. Use one-inch-square soap eraser to design and print a Japanese *hanko* stamp to sign your print. Use any combination of initials. (See Web sites on hanko printing).