

GRAPHIC ART

First some technical information on graphic art.

Printed art or graphic art includes all works of art that were created by means of various techniques that allow the artist to multiply his work by means of a printing press. The term *graphic* refers to *grafein*, the Greek word for writing, because these works of art consist mainly of graphic lines, as in writing.

Graphic art can be woodcut, wood engraving, copper engraving, etching and lithography.

It is characteristic of Dalí's work that it often shows a combination of various techniques all in one.

Graphic techniques were originally developed in order to reproduce images efficiently. Famous paintings were often copied on a plate and printed, making them available to a large audience. But soon artists discovered that this graphic medium had its own qualities and value. Artists like Escher maximized the enhanced output of printing techniques, thus creating what some time ago became known as '*democratic art*'. Multiple prints, signed and numbered by the artist himself, reduced the total cost of the art production process considerably.

Every separate print is an original in as far as it is signed and numbered, the number referring to the individual print and the number of prints made from one plate or block (as in 5/25: the fifth print of a total of 25 prints from the artist's plate).

The artist produces the cliché (plate, copper sheet or block), whereas the printing process is often left to a professional printer.

There are various printing techniques: relief printing (as in woodcuts), intaglio (as in etchings and engravings) or planographic techniques (as in lithography).