

# MoNA

Museum of Northwest Art

## Leaf Prints Inspired by Deborah Mersky

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY  
DESIGNED BY MONA  
EDUCATORS

### Description

Students will discuss Deborah Mersky's artwork with a focus on her nature-inspired prints and create a print by using leaves.

Students will learn simple techniques on how to effectively produce a print using print making materials.

### Resources

[Deborah Mersky, Still Life 2018 collection](#)

**Age:** Elementary

**Lesson Duration:** 1 hour

**Subjects:** Leaf printing, print making



*Example of completed leaf print  
Source: Museum of Northwest Art*

### Materials

- Ink brayers
- Water soluble printing ink
- Plexiglass or cookie sheets
- Printing paper
- Scrap paper
- Newspaper or covering for table
- Tweezers
- Damp paper towels or wipes
- Fresh leaves or rubber stamps

## Instructions

**1) Discuss:** Share images of Deborah Mersky's Still Life 2018 collection with the students (images are included at the resource section at the end of this lesson). Ask the students to observe her art pieces and discuss the following questions:

- What shapes or elements you recognize in the image?
- How do you think the artist created these art pieces?
- What are some creative ways you can use flowers or leaves to create a piece of art like this?

**2) Preparation:** Cover the table with newspapers or a protective layer such as plastic cloth or brown craft paper. Place printing paper on a separate table with wipes or damp paper towels nearby.

**3) Inking:** Roll a small amount of ink onto a smooth surface such as plexiglass or a cookie sheet. Spread the ink thinly and evenly by rolling the brayer back and forth. The ink should be tacky, not dry.

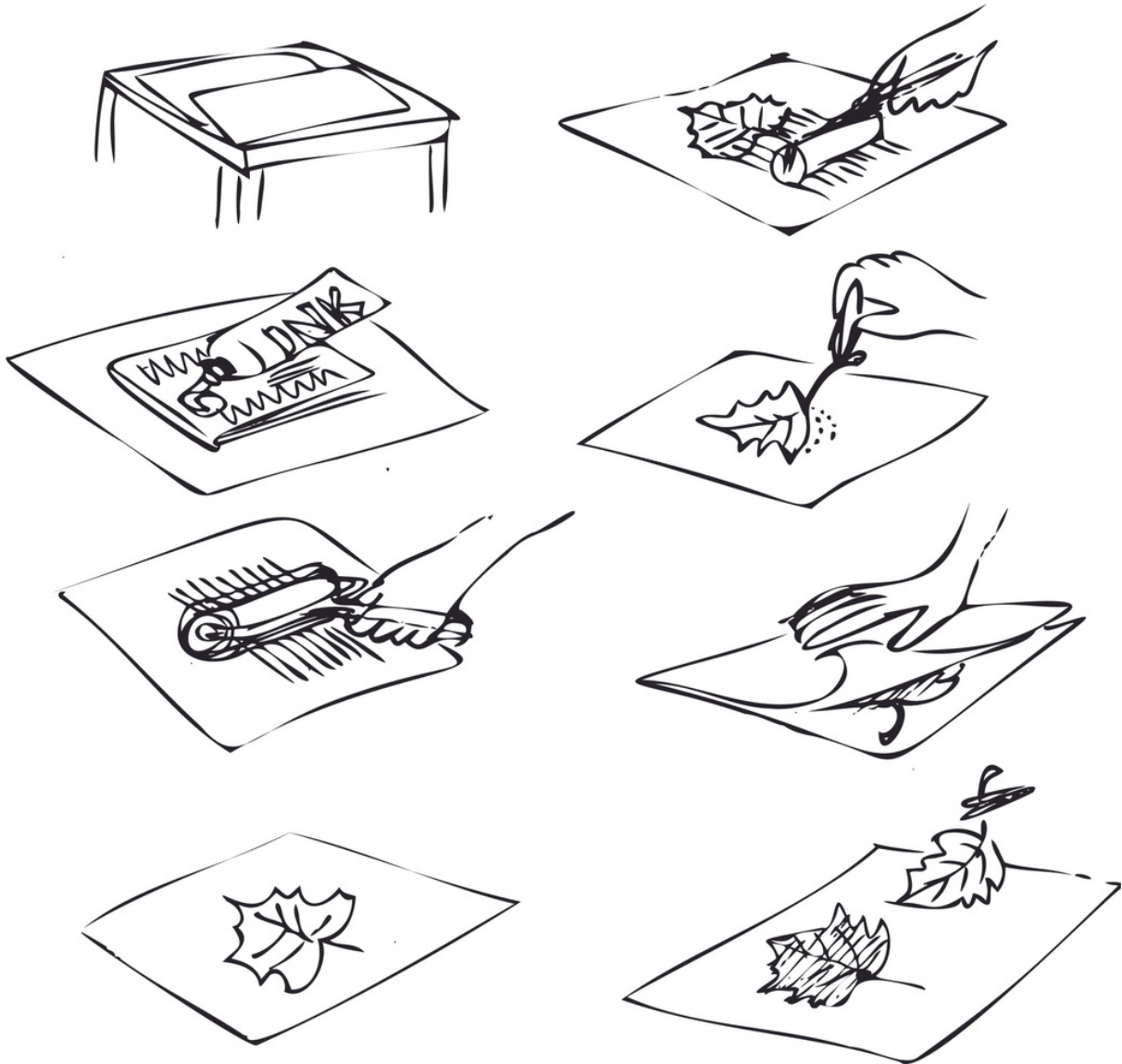
**4) Placement:** Place the leaf on a clean piece of scrap paper and roll the inked brayer over the leaf until it is evenly coated.

**5) Printing:** Lift the leaf with tweezers and place the ink-coated side down onto the printing paper. Put a clean piece of scrap paper over the leaf and rub carefully with your hand or roll a clean brayer gently over the paper. Make sure the leaf doesn't move to prevent smudging.

**6) Final Steps:** Remove the scrap paper and slowly lift the leaf. Your leaf print is complete!

**SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR SOME STEP-BY-STEP IMAGES!**

## Step-by-Step Images



## Learning and State Standards

Fulfills Washington State Arts Learning Standards:

- **VA:Cn10.1.I** (Document the process of developing ideas from early stages to fully elaborated ideas)
- **VA:Cr1.2.3** (Apply knowledge of available resources, tools, and technologies to investigate personal ideas through the artmaking process)
- **VA:Cr2.1.II** (Through experimentation, practice, and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form)

# Deborah Mersky

Deborah Mersky, born in 1955, has established herself in both the studio art and public art design fields. These two pursuits often intertwine and overlap. In the studio, she utilizes various mediums including drawing, painting, and a unique clay printing technique. This technique involves carving the surface of a clay slab and printing it with oil-based inks. Her artwork has been exhibited in galleries across the United States and can be found in collections such as Microsoft and the Fundación Altos de Chavon in the Dominican Republic.

In the public art arena, Deborah has created works for various facilities such as libraries, hospitals, parks, and light rail stations in states including Washington, Oregon, California, Minnesota, and Texas. Her artistic focus centers around the relationship between nature and human habitation on earth.

*Biography source: [deborahmersky.com](http://deborahmersky.com)*



*Still Life, Antler Vase, 2018*

Image Source: [deborahmersky.com](http://deborahmersky.com)



**“In both realms, the overlapping worlds of nature and human habitation on earth is what interests me, particularly the delicate, off kilter moment we currently reside in.”**

Image Source: *Art Tent*





*Still Life Neighbor's Well, 2018*  
Deborah Mersky  
Image Source: [deborahmersky.com](http://deborahmersky.com)