MONO PRINT and MONO TYPE

MONO TYPE usually thought to be the most painterly method among the printmaking techniques, a monotype is essentially a printed painting. The characteristic of this method is that no two prints are alike; is actually a very simple medium that only requires applying pigments or ink to the smooth substrate plate. The plate for a monotype is a **blank smooth surface** that has no permanent **markings** or incisions. This image is created by applying or adding ink. It can be brushed, rolled, daubed or applied in any way that suits the artist. The artist may further manipulate the ink before a sheet of paper is applied on top of the image. This plate with the paper applied on top is then run through the press. What is created is a unique one-of-a-kind work on paper. Usually it is only the beginning for the artist from here the artist often applies additional hand work and drawing on the printed image. And many times adding additional print layers.

Some Steps to creating a Mono type.

Tech Page On Mono Type

**Monoprints**

The monoprint, unlike the monotype, is one of a series, so it is not completely unique. The monoprint begins with a marked or in some way established image substrate/plate. The image on this substrate the underlying image of all monoprints in the series. It is a constant that is common to each print in the series. The artist adds different pigments and designs on the consistent image of each print that is pulled. Monoprints are often thought of as variations on one theme. The theme, of course, is the sustained marked image that is on all prints. The variations are endless. Each print has something unique. The series of monoprints has a limited number of prints and each is numbered and establishes the monoprint edition They are numbered in various was to establish them as one of kind but to also establish the particular series. MP 1/3 MP2/3 MP 3/3

The appeal of the monoprint lies in the unique translucency that creates a quality of light very different from a painting on paper or a print, and the beauty of this media is also in its spontaneity and its combination of printmaking, painting and drawing mediums.  
If the goal is to produce a single painted image, why make a monotype instead of a painting?  
It would certainly seem pointless to make that image as a unique print. However, monoprints combine the spontaneity of printed inks and paper, creating a surface that is unlike any other art.

**Monoprints and monotypes**  
Although these two terms are used interchangeably, there is a big difference between one and the other.

**A monotype** is essentially ONE of a kind: mono is a Latin word, which means ONE and type means kind. Therefore, a monotype is one printed image, which does not have any form of matrix. Many artist begin a piece this way.

On the other hand, a **monoprint** has some form of basic matrix.  
The process of creating a **monoprint** or a **monotype** is the same, but when doing monotypes, the artist works on a clean and unmarked plate; with monoprints, however, there is always a pattern or part of an image which is constantly repeated in each print. Artists often use etched plates or some kind of pattern such as lace, leaves, fabric or even rubber gaskets, to add texture. In this case, having a repeated pattern, we have a monoprint.

Monoprints and monotypes are created by manually adding (additive method) or removing (subtractive method) ink from a plate which is then printed using a printing press. Many effects can be achieved in monotypes that are not possible with any other technique.   
  
In the **subtractive method** you cover a surface (metal or plastic plate) entirely with color (usually with etching or litho ink), then you remove the ink partially or wholly to expose areas of the picture being made. This process can be carried out using brushes, toothpicks, cotton swabs, foam rubber, fingers, rags, etc.

The **additive method**, you start with a clean plate and apply the ink or watercolor media in various ways, but as etching ink is a fairly unmanageable substance it is hard to achieve the intended effect. If the ink is applied too thick, it will spread from the pressure when printed, forming a blot. If too thin it won't show up at all.   
When the picture on the plate is finished, it is run through an etching press with dampened rag paper to form a unique one of a kind print. Almost all the ink transfers to the paper so it is not possible to make more than one print, hence the prefix mono. However, when a decent amount of ink remains on the plate, it is possible to strike another print without even adding any more ink: this is called a ghost image of the original print since it is much lighter than the first one, but has its unique character.   
Before cleaning the plate, it is also possible to add more ink or watercolor to the ghost image left on the plate. In this case, your second image, which is based mostly on the previous one, will be a monoprint and not a monotype, since its matrix will be the remaining color left by the previous print.  
Technically, you would be able to create a series of works which could be editioned - it would be a Varied Edition, so it would be numbered EV 1/10, EV 2/10 etc.

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| **A simple etching transformed into a monoprint**   Using an already etched plate, the artist first rolled a thick layer of ink over the entire surface of the print, then using brushes, cotton swabs, sponges and fabric, the artist worked over the image, wiping off or adding ink. | http://www.monoprints.com/images/etching_for_monoprints.jpg Basic etching, printed before additional ink was applied with brushes |  | [http://www.monoprints.com/images/rapsodia_monoprint.jpg](http://www.monoprints.com/corradi/index.html) Final print  Rapsodia, 2001  © Colleen Corradi |
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**There are three main methods for making a monotype:**

* The **additive** or light-field method, in which the image is painted by adding or building up pigment onto the plate
* The **subtractive** or dark-field method where the entire plate is covered with a thin layer of pigment, which the artist then works out his image by removing some of the pigment with brushes, rags, sticks, or other tools.
* The third method is a **combination** of the two.