

## What is a Giclée Print ?

A Giclée print is the highest quality print available today. The word Giclée is a French word that indicates 'to squirt', from the word "gicleur" meaning "nozzle" or "jet". The process is digital printmaking originally made with an Iris printer that uses minute droplets of archival ink to create prints that cannot be duplicated by other printing techniques. Because there is no visible dot screen pattern the resulting image has all of the subtle tonalities of the original art. Each dot may have over 4 billion possible colors! This produces exceptional museum quality prints.

In the past, trying to have art reproduced usually resulted in a shortened lifespan and massive hair loss for the printer. Colors were almost impossible to reproduce because artists use such subtle glazes in their paintings. With this new technology the printer can achieve a true reproduction of the original in any size from 1" (for those with very small rooms) to 46", printed on the same archival watercolor paper used for original paintings. The new inks used in Giclée printing have the same longevity as the watercolor paints used in watercolor original paintings.

Among the many museums with Giclée prints in their collections are: The British Museum, The Metropolitan Museum New York, Los Angeles County Museum, Museum of Modern Art New York, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

The controversy over who first used the term Giclée and whether it is possible to trademark a word that has long ago been redefined in the common public usage, can best be found by going to any Web search engine. For the end user, however, the result is clearly that the hegemony of Iris for large format fine art color prints has been broken. Quality alternatives of wide format Giclée fine art prints, at reasonable prices, now exist. In the meantime, the world Giclée has passed into the generic language, like Kleenex and Xerox.

The Iris printer is still considered the absolute tops in prestige. Indeed the name "Iris" is synonymous with fine art Giclée prints throughout the United States. Iris cornered the market on prestige fine art Giclée wide format printers, but then ColorSpan introduced the Giclée Printmaker. Now the Roland Hi-Fi wide format printer is also producing Fine Art wide format prints used in the Giclée print market. Roland, ColorSpan large format printers and others now offer options to the high price of Iris from CreoScitex if you wish to print Giclée fine art color prints. When deciding which wide format printer to use, if not the Iris, one must also be concerned with the inks used to make sure they are of archival quality.