

Giclée Printing: Making your Art a Lasting Legacy...What you Can Expect

If you are new to the print process, Grayson Design is here to help. We want you to know up front what is reasonable to expect from us and our process. Our goal is to “consistently produce prints that are as good or better than the original, although they might not be exactly the same as the original.” In other words, the print is a separate product based on the original. We come very close to capturing the original image and printing it. That is always our objective, but that objective is not always attainable. You may not know that some colors are not reproduced accurately by scanning and/or converting to printing inks. Colors can change hue, lose or gain saturation or lighten or darken in appearance. Grayson Design has the latest and greatest equipment to capture the image and print it. The fact still remains; many adjustments and color corrections must be done manually by a trained, color expert who does nothing but work with color. It is a balancing act!

We might have to take purple from the sky and try to correct it while trying not to change the rest of the image. We have a lot of experience doing this as well as anyone else in the business. But, it is not an exact science. It's a craft. Add this to the fact that none of us see color exactly the same.

Producing a Great Print

A great print begins with a good image. Proper high resolution scanning assures that we are starting with a good image. We get the best results if we scan the piece ourselves. If the artist no longer has the original but has a 4x5 inch transparency, we can work with that. The quality of the product from a transparency can only be as good as the quality of the transparency. Nine out of ten problems that customers have are directly attributed to the digital or photographic image they give the printer.

This is what you can expect in a proof and in your final print.

- The color and contrast should be very similar to that of the original. Soft is soft, vibrant is vibrant, hard is hard and dark is dark; all should be very similar to that of the original.
- The print should be well balanced. You should be able to see definition in the shadow areas. There should be good color in the highlight areas and good detail definition in the mid tones. These are achievable when we scan or if the data is present in the transparency or digital file that the artist provides. If the data is not there, this is not achievable.
- The print should depict the same time of day as the original, if that is important to the artist. If the original is a picture of a deer standing in a field at dawn, the print should look like a deer standing in a field at dawn, not at high noon.
- The artist can expect the print maker to use the proper size file for the size print that is to be produced. The quality of an image printed full size at 300 dpi is twice as good as an image printed at 150 dpi. The artist should know the file size required to print a quality print and expect the print maker to use that size of file.
- The proof/print should be clean. Clean edges without any pixels escaping. The image should be free of left over dust, lint or scratches that are not a part of the original.
- The color should be very close to that of the original artwork.

It will be a more pleasant experience for you, the artist and for your print maker if you go into the print making experience knowing and accepting that there is only one original and no one can reproduce it exactly. No one captures and prints an exact likeness of the original. Close, but not exact. We have to capture the image digitally with light reflected off of the original. Some colors reflect light in unusual ways. For example, some blues, such as cobalt blue, turns purple because it has a high reflectance in the far red and inferred end of the spectrum. Some greens show up gray. We are always working to minimize the variables; but there are always variables that require human judgment. Our business is a craft and we are continuously developing our craft.

A very successful wildlife artist said, “A print is it's own product. It stands alone and has about as much relevance to the original as a movie has to the book that it was based on. Prints should never to be shown next to original. Because no matter how good the print is, all potential buyers will look at the differences, and there will always be differences”. The print process is the artist's opportunity to develop a new product. We will come very close to duplicating the original. In the end, the print product will be as good as or better than the original, though it can never be exactly the same. Your satisfaction is always guaranteed.