

# **Printmaking As a Tool for Social and Political Change in America From WPA to Shepard Fairy**

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## **Abstract**

This research seeks to explore the effectiveness of utilizing the art of printmaking as an effective tool for social and political change in societies, focusing on two case studies in the United States of America. The research also examines the different ways in which the art of printmaking can contribute to the development of public awareness of social and political issues, as well as the potential positive effects of utilizing printmaking to communicate with the public regarding social and political issues affecting the community.

The research also explores the concept that the art of printmaking is one of the most democratic disciplines of art. For investigating the concept of printmaking as a (democratic) art. The research reviews the different approaches to make the art of printmaking more accessible to the public, by pushing the emergence of the art of printmaking in the public arena, outside the art galleries and taking advantage of the expertise of print artists to develop awareness posters. This research focuses on two study cases, namely the American Federal Art Project and the works of the American artist (Shepherd Ferry). The state of the American federal art project during the Great Depression in the thirties and forties of the twentieth century in the United States of America is one of the most successful examples of using art to serve society and advance the awareness of the public on economic, environmental, and health issues.

The works of contemporary American artist (Shepherd Ferry) also represent a unique model of utilizing art as an important tool in building public awareness and dealing with difficult political and social issues. Ferry's prints in particular, have met a great success among American society. Below, the research will explore these two study cases, and it will explain some of the most important examples of printmaking artwork for each.

## **Keywords:**

Printmaking, WPA, Matrix, Multiples, Substrate.