

Glossary of Print Edition Terms

A limited-edition print is almost always marked with an edition. An edition is the total number of copies of the print and can signify how rare the work is. Editions are numbered, for example, 1/50. A print with a shorter edition length is, understandably, rarer than a print with a longer or 'open' (unlimited) edition length.

However, at times the artist labels a print with a range of other symbols that denote prints outside of the numbered edition, such as AP, CP, TP, PP, HC and BAT. These markings denote the testing process that the artist and printer go through to get to a satisfactory final product. There are some collectors that aim for these pieces as they signify a part of process undertaken by the artist and printer in order to get to the final product.

See the Glossary below.



AP - Artists Proof

An artist will usually assign approximately 10% of a print run as Artist Proofs. Often these are for the artist's personal use, but in some circumstances will be released onto the open market. Having a print marked as an AP generally does not increase or decrease the value of the piece. Although there is a possibility that it can be argued to have more significance, as it is more closely related to the artist's personal collection.

BAT - Bon a tirer

This notation on a print indicates the standard to which all other prints will be held to. The expression is French for 'good to pull', and it is the print that meets all the standards dictated by the artist. It is often seen as a 'sign off' piece, that shows that the artist is happy with the print. There is usually only a single print denoted as the BAT.

CP - Colour Proof

A Colour Proof is used by the artist to test out different colours to see which best expresses the intention of the piece. These prints are usually done prior to signing off the BAT and are really a way to test out the colour characteristics of the medium.

HC - Hors d'Commerce Proof

This marking denotes a print that has been destined for promotional use. They may be signed by the artist and were originally intended to be used as samples for galleries and dealers. Again, there are collectors who prefer this marking, and endeavour to make these a part of their collection. There is no advantage to purchasing these prints, other than the 'journey' that the physical work has taken.

TP - Trial Proof

A trial proof may be signed by artist and is generally created so that the artist can examine and perfect small details in the print before any larger run commences.

PP - Printers Proof

This edition is usually held by the printer in their archives as a record of the print and is usually signed by the artist as a gesture of appreciation.