

Giclée Reproductions vs. Giclée Prints and Original or Unique Giclées

Please educate your buyer about what they are purchasing. **If your print is a copy of an existing work, even though it may be a different size than the original, it is a reproduction.** It may be labeled as a *fine art giclée reproduction* if it is printed on archival art paper using archival pigmented inks. If it is on non-archival paper, and printed with non-lightfast inks, it should be labeled a *giclée reproduction* or simply as a *reproduction*.

If you are working digitally, and have created a **new work** digitally, and are making multiple copies of this new work, each copy is a *giclée print*. **If you have created a new work, and make only one copy**, then it is labeled a *giclée original*, or a *unique giclée*.

Summary:

Giclée reproductions are copies of an existing work in any medium and may be on any type of paper, including non-archival paper, using non-lightfast, non-archival inks. Think “poster” and you have the idea.

Giclée prints (multiple copies) or a unique giclée/giclée original (one print) are new works that have been created digitally then printed using archival inks on archival paper.

Limited editions: Usually consisting of 100 copies or less, each print or reproduction in the edition is hand-signed and numbered. Each comes with a certificate of authenticity stating the number of prints in the edition, the paper (known as the *substrate*) used and the date the edition was released. This certificate also tells what number the print is in the edition, expressed as a fraction: the first print in an edition of 25 would be 1/25, the second print 2/25 and so on. The artist signs these certificates, guaranteeing the buyer that they are getting a particular print in the edition, and also guaranteeing that when the edition is complete, *no more prints of this image will be made*. If you, as the artist, decide you want another edition of this image, you must change something to make the second edition unique (different from the first). This difference could be the size of the print, a different substrate, a color shift, or adding hand-applied accents, etc. **It is incumbent on you, the artist, to control your print editions.** No matter how tempting it might be to print more copies of an edition that sells out, if you do this, you are deflating the value of the original edition, and negatively impacting your collectors’ trust in your integrity.



Open Editions: If you want to have the option of making an unlimited number of copies of an image, then open editions are the way to go. Prints in open editions are not numbered or hand signed, and do not come with a certificate of authenticity. The sample (above right) falls in this category. The artist’s signature is part of the printed image rather than being hand-signed, and appears (usually) in the lower right corner.



Signing limited edition prints

Limited edition prints may be hand-signed directly on the image, or below the print image if the paper margin size permits. Signing in the margin requires that the mat be cut large enough so that the margin is equal all around the image, and allows the signature, title and print number to show. (illustration, left).

The print number (expressed as a fraction) goes in the lower left corner, and the artist’s signature goes in the lower right corner. Optionally, the title of the piece may be centered in between the print number and artist signature, but many artists do not include the title on the front of the image.