

Start at home

Movement monoprint



‘Modern art does not aim at realism... it is founded on design, harmony, and rhythm in forms’

Dorrit Black, September 1929

About the artist

The eldest of four children, Dorrit Black was born in Stonyfell, SA two days before Christmas in 1891. At thirteen she won a school prize for drawing, and by eighteen she was determined to be an artist. Following a tour of the galleries of Europe, Dorrit moved to Sydney. While painting by the harbour one day she saw a baby fall into the water. Abandoning her work, Dorrit scrambled to help, swimming fully-dressed out to the baby and saving its life. Dorrit became a daring and accomplished modern artist, living in London and Paris before returning to paint, print and teach in Adelaide.

About the work

Dorrit Black was already an established oil painter when she began creating colour linocut prints. The boldness of this medium allowed her to break further away from realism, exploring form, tone and colour with more freedom. *Music* is one of her best-known linocuts. The figures are simplified and anonymous, an overlapping group leading the viewer's eye up and around the frame. Their forms are flat, swooping shapes – arms and legs echoing the curved lines of the bright, abstract background. The dancers seem woven into the music, and the whole picture hums with energy and movement.

Presented by





Materials you need

- cotton buds
- a shallow baking tray
- several sheets of paper, a little smaller than the tray
- acrylic or poster paint in two colours
- two spoons
- a pencil
- a small paint roller or print brayer, or a soft rag
- something to play music on
- somebody to model for you!

Take it further

Are your background lines smooth and flowing, or jagged and sharp? Try it again with different music and compare.

Repeat the steps to overlay different dance poses. Take a turn as the dancer yourself!

Experiment with two or more paint colours on the tray at the same time.

Create your own movement monoprint

- 1 Select the lighter of your two paint colours. Spoon a blob of paint into the tray and spread it evenly across the surface with the brayer, paint roller or rag.
- 2 Put on some music. Using a cotton bud, draw lines and shapes in the paint, in time with the music.
- 3 Place a sheet of paper on top of the paint. Press and rub all over the paper with your fingers, or the back of a clean spoon.
- 4 Carefully lift your paper off the paint and leave it to dry. This is your background.
- 5 Wash the tray. When your background is touch-dry, fill the tray bottom again, with the darker paint colour.
- 6 Now politely ask your model to dance. When you see a really great dance move, shout 'freeze!'
- 7 Gently place your print face-down on the paint, so that the blank side is facing you. Do not press it down.
- 8 On the back of the paper, draw a picture of your model in their frozen dance pose, using a pencil. A simple line drawing will do – then they can unfreeze!
- 9 Carefully lift the paper off the paint again. You have created a two-layered monoprint!

Music by Dorrit Black is part of our online Collection
<https://bit.ly/3dImYH9>

We would love to see your work! Ask your parent or carer to post a photo on Instagram and tag the Art Gallery of South Australia. Or you can email your photo to us at public.programs@artgallery.sa.gov.au

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