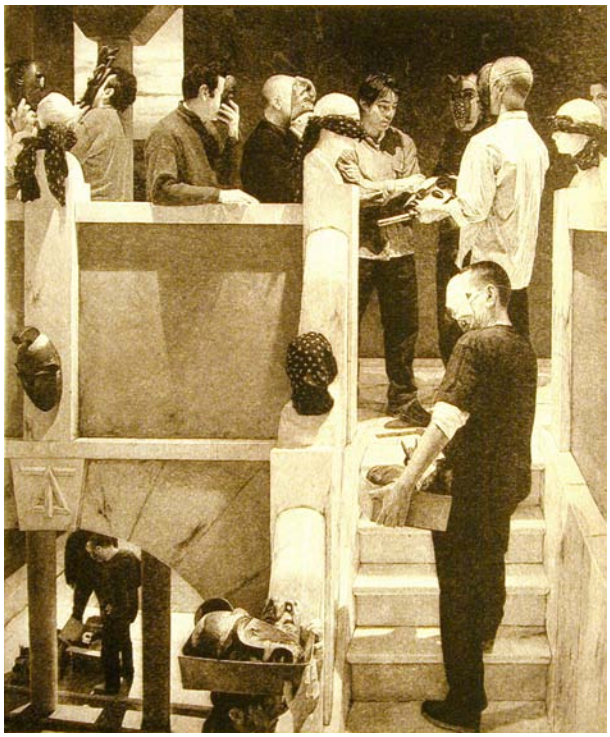
Edinburgh Printmakers

Photo-Etching & Photopolymer Printmaking

This course forms an introduction to the latest techniques in photo-etching and photopolymer printmaking. Photopolymer intaglio is an innovative new etching process, which allows the artist to produce photographic and digital images (as well as more traditional hand-drawn artwork) as original prints with the qualities of a hand-printed etching. The process is capable of producing high quality permanent artworks and is surprisingly fast and safe. We shall also explore photo-etching techniques, which is ideal for those who wish to combine this with acrylic-resist etching.

Course Tutor: Alfons Bytautus



Roberto Gonzalez Fernandez, AT series, AT3, Published by Edinburgh Printmakers, 1999

Participants on this class will receive comprehensive notes.

Course Structure

New processes in Photo-etching / Polymer Photogravure.

We begin by looking at how these techniques have developed and how they relate to traditional photo printmaking processes.

Creating etching/intaglio plates using the photo-polymer processes.

We discuss how to begin and how these techniques represent a new departure in the field of intaglio printmaking.

Artwork for etching - using hand-drawn, photographic and digital positives.

The most frequently asked question is " what kind of artwork do we need to make a photo-polymer print?" Here we look at the options available to us from simple and direct techniques of drawing to digital solutions.

Introduction to Polymer films & Solarplate.

We find out about the products available (Imag-on Ultra, Photec & Pure Etch films). We will compare and contrast the results achieved by using the polymer films compared with the commercial polymer printing plates (Solarplate).

'Non-etch' – safe methods for creating intaglio plates.

This is an introduction to the technique of producing photo-intaglio plates without etching or the need for dangerous and harmful chemicals. We will look at how plates are prepared and how the polymer films are applied. We will also examine the experimental and unusual ways in which this technique can be used.

Exposure & Development - how to determine the correct exposure /testing the polymer.

We begin by learning how to test the polymer and how to determine a successful exposure. We will also learn how to develop the plate successfully, finding out about the equipment and materials needed.

Photo-etching techniques - using the polymer as an acid-resist.

Alternatively we can use the polymer as an etching resist and here we will discover how photo-etching can be made to be fast, simple and fun.

Chemicals for etching: biting the plates.

Safer alternatives. Etching with copper sulphate / using zinc & aluminium. Etching copper with ferric chloride.

Printing Polymer 'Non- Etch' & Photo-Etch Plates.

An Introduction to printing methods using non-toxic water-based etching inks as well as conventional intaglio inks.

Forum for discussion and appraisal.

We will discuss the processes we have used in the course and assess the resultant prints. This will be the time for problem solving and finding out how to benefit and progress from our initial experiments. We aim to provide fully detailed notes on non-toxic versus traditional photo-intaglio methods explaining why ‘non-etch polymer printmaking is a safer option for artists & educators, as well as detailing all health & safety and environmental issues. We will list all the materials needed and how to source suppliers.