

NEW AND IMPORTANT TIPS FOR CENTURY PLATES

PLATE PREPARATION

- **WHEN GRAINING PLATES WITH CARBORUNDUM GRIT, USE PLENTY OF BON AMI AND A LITTLE BARKEEPERS FRIEND. When finished graining, thoroughly rinse the plate with water and cotton.** The purpose of Bon Ami is to bind the carborundum grit so that it rolls, not skids on the plate surface, resulting in a uniform rather than a scratchy grain.
- **ALWAYS FINISH WITH A GENEROUS APPLICATION OF BARKEEPERS FRIEND FOR A THOROUGH FINAL CLEANING.** This important step insures a water receptive surface on the plate that may be observed in the sheeting of rinse water rather than its beading up. Bar Keepers Friend is a highly effective degreaser for eliminating old images (including ghost images), and to remove any water repellent film.
- **Use a fine to medium sanding sponge (thick block type)** when cleaning the plate with Bar Keepers Friend or when graining with carborundum grit. Replace the block when it's worn out. Rinse the block off after each use.
- **When graining a new Century Plate for the first time, it is important to spend a little extra time to grain it extra thoroughly.** After graining, rinse well while wiping gently with cotton to remove all grit, then follow with an application of BKF to remove any oil residue from the manufacturing process. If available, clean with water under pressure and paper towels or rags. If no water pressure, rinse repeatedly and wipe repeatedly with towels.
- **When graining or removing images from a plate, do not use too much water.** It's better to have the Bar Keepers Friend be a thin paste rather than overly wet. Too much water results in too little graining and/or cleaning to remove old images.
- **After cleaning/removing images or graining, rinse the plate thoroughly and wipe diligently with cotton or absorbent towels, then repeat this step.** Plates that are not clean will likely cause tinting or scumming during printing. After wiping with wet paper towel look at it to see how much residue it removed, and continue rinsing and wiping until very little residue remains.
- **Squeegee the water off the plate using a VERY CLEAN squeegee, and replace your squeegee if it is worn out.** This is important because

a VERY CLEAN squeegee will remove almost all the water immediately. Squeegee both sides, then take the plate to a clean table and **use a hair dryer on high speed to dry** first the face then the back of the plate. To speed drying time, tip and hold the Century Plate on one corner when blow drying. Blotting the plate with newsprint or towels will likely leave tiny particles that will show up if brush-coating the plate with photo coating.

The plate is now ready for drawing or for coating with D & S Posi-Coat for photo exposure to positive images **as outlined in *Printmaking Revolution***.

IMAGING, PROCESSING, AND PRINTING TIPS FOR CENTURY PLATES

- **For beautiful reticulated washes, we recommend mixing toner powder with water and Photo-Flo.** Add more Photo-Flo than when using ball grained plates. We mix approximately 10 percent Photo-Flo to whatever amount of water we use. WHEN ADDING EXTRA WATER FOR A LIGHTER VALUE WASH, DON'T FORGET TO ALSO ADD PHOTO-FLO.
- **When using toner washes, be sure to heat the plate and bond the toner before applying litho crayon, oil-based Sharpie pens, etc.** Do not heat the plate above 220 degrees F. It is best to place the plate on a small wire stand and then cover the plate so it is heated by warm air rather than directly by the hot plate. We bent an old litho plate to make a very functional cover.
- **We recommend using NUMBER 4 AND LOWER litho crayons and pencils.** In fact number three is our first choice for all around drawing on Century Plates.
- **Don't forget to etch Century Plates with Tannic Plate Etch – as regular Gum Arabic is too mild.** We only add plain Gum Arabic on very light and delicate drawing areas, where we use a 60/40 mix of Tannic Plate Etch and Gum Arabic. For really heavy drawings or washes we add a few drops of citric acid crystals dissolved in warm water to the Tannic

Etch. Watch the YouTube videos on Century Plates techniques on the website: www.CSPogueGraphics.com.

- **After etching and buffing the plate and preparing to wash out the drawing materials with BioSolut, remind beginning students NO WATER at this stage.** Students on occasion may be wearing gloves that have water on them and then start to wash out the image on the etched plate. Of course, water will break down the Tannic Gum Etch film and the BioSolut then destroys the image.
- **Follow the instructions in *Printmaking Revolution* for printing and for coating and exposing the plate with D & S Posi-Coat.** As you print keep an eye on the image and use foam rubber as shown in the book.
- **Should the plate begin to fill in while inking, use FPC to restore the image/non image differentiation, as outlined in *Printmaking Revolution*.**