



Passage

collagraph
2009
varied edition of 12
Brian Holden

Collagraph printing

The study titled **Passage** began as a rough sketch on paper. Using carbon paper a tracing of the sketch was made onto the surface of a 1.6 mm (1/16 inch) thick piece of heavy paper fiber sheet known as tagboard (used in book binding).

I used the lines from the tracing as a guide for applying a host of low relief materials using liquid carpenter's glue. These materials included thin sheet polystyrene, organic plant fiber, medium grit sandpaper and acrylic gel medium.

Once the glue had dried I trimmed the plate to size (12.7 x 17.8 cm or 5 x 7 inches) using a utility blade. I then sealed the front, back and sides of the plate with a couple coats of water based varathane using a dense sponge foam roller.

By coating both the front and back the tension was equalized in the base board by the dried sealant which helped it to remain flat.

This coating also allowed the plate to become a surface to which oil based etching ink could be applied and wiped by hand using vinyl glove clad fingers and small bundles of cloth called tartalan down into recessed areas. The top surface was carefully polished using the flat of my palm and tissue and cotton pads. The plate was set onto the bed of my etching press. Damp cotton rag paper was placed on top of the plate and then a heavy felt wool blanket was set over top.

I adjusted the top roller to such a height that would push the dampened paper down into the recessed areas of the plate and transfer ink. The print was allowed to dry sandwiched between sheets of cotton rag blotting paper that were changed periodically and kept down flat using the weight of an MDF board set on top.