

# Preface

This is the second edition of my "Handbook of Non-Toxic Intaglio" which was first published in 2003.

Since then a variety of new products and techniques have become available on the market. All techniques involved in the case of the application of acrylic resists, photopolymer film and etching have been thoroughly updated with respect to the products and techniques described.

The book can be read in its entirety to provide a survey of the subject, but it also serves as a reference book with easily to find solutions to specific problems. At the back of the book there is a user-friendly index and literature source.

## Content and Target Group

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The primary content of the book has been written with professional printmakers in mind. The main chapters deal with:

1. **Acrylic Resists**
2. **Etching**
3. **Photopolymer Film and Solar Plates**

As we are, however, working in fairly uncharted waters the target group will hopefully be much wider. Therefore, I have chosen to add four supplementary appendices:

### **Appendix I: The Transition to the Non-Toxic Studio**

This appendix addresses those who wish to change or expand already existing printmaking studios to apply the new techniques.

### **Appendix II: Digital Imaging**

Here I address printmakers and others who are inexperienced in digital imaging but who wish to prepare computer-generated stencils for photopolymer gravure and etchings.

### **Appendix III: Printing**

This appendix addresses photographers and others who wish to make their own prints who may have no prior experience.

### **Appendix IV: Working with Zinc Plates**

This new appendix describes all techniques using the acrylic etching grounds on zincplates and explains how to etch zinc safety.

### **What is New?**

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A variety of new products and techniques have become available on the market. These products and techniques, which we have continually been testing at The Grafisk Eksperimentarium in Copenhagen, fall into three categories: they are either improvements on their predecessors, or they offer the printmaker additional practical or artistic possibilities, or, finally, they are new products that merely provide alternatives to present problems.

The condition for being included in this book is, that they fully live up to professional standards, but they might be completely novel, cheaper or more easily accessible, depending on which part of the world you live in.

Furthermore, I have found that a number of printmakers have difficulty making non toxic etching grounds work on zinc plates. As my research in acrylic resists and photopolymer films has been based on the use of copper, I have chosen to devote a special appendix to the use of zinc plates for the benefit of those printmakers who prefer to work in zinc. The use of copper therefore should be seen as an absolute prerequisite in all the main chapters of the book, and the possibilities and limitations regarding working with zinc are described in Appendix 4.

The consequent changes of the main chapters of the Handbook are as follows:

### **Acrylic Resists**

The Swiss manufacturer Lascaux has developed a series of new etching grounds, some of which provide the printmaker with alternatives to American products and one of which offers new technical possibilities. The former have been added to the "Materials" sections, if they live up to the professional standards. Dealing with new techniques, the "Brush-On Hard Ground", and the "Slow Drying Soft Ground" have been given separate chapters devoted to descriptions of the practical uses of these products.

### **Photopolymer Film**

I have included a new way of laminating photopolymer film, the so called "wet lamination method." This means that we now have two options when laminating photopolymer film onto copper plates: using dry or wet Lamination. The chapter "Create Effect for Effect" has been replaced by a new and very useful "Spit Bite technique" based on the use of photopolymer film.

### **Appendix 3 - Intaglio Printing**

Rostow and Jung in the USA are the first manufacturers to develop a series of water-based etching inks which are completely non-toxic. The water-based inks are considerably easier to work with and to clean than the traditional oil-based etching inks. This appendix deals with both the traditional as well as the water-based inks since the handling of the inks are different.

### **Appendix 4 - Working with Zinc Plates**

This new appendix describes all working techniques involved in applying acrylic etching grounds on zinc plates and explains how to etch zinc safely.

### **General updates**

The present edition of "Handbook of Non-Toxic Intaglio" has been updated with respect to the products and techniques described. Any further product development in the

area, the test results will be described on my homepage [www.GrafiskEksperimentarium.dk](http://www.GrafiskEksperimentarium.dk) > Non-Toxic Updates.

### **Final Remarks**

Throughout my entire research in this field, it has been my clear objective to limit the materials to the lowest possible number having the highest possible efficiency. I have also striven to create practical and affordable solutions to the problem of finding the necessary equipment for the various processes - and needless to say, these solutions have had to meet the very strictest demands of the professional printmaker.

Another crucial objective for me has been to stay clear of affiliation with particular manufacturers or products. The Grafisk Eksperimentarium remains completely independent of financial or other kinds of stakes potentially held by industry. The products mentioned in this book have been chosen on the grounds of just two criteria: they must have the stamp of approval from the relevant authorities as regards health and environment, and they must meet the professional printmaker's demands with respect to producing works of art which is the all-important end-product. If or when new and better materials are developed, the necessary information will be made available on my website:

[www.GrafiskEksperimentarium.dk](http://www.GrafiskEksperimentarium.dk)

I would like to thank my two good friends the Belgium Printmakers, Marnix Everaert and Jos Pastijn, who are both teaching at the "Academie voor Beeldende Kunst" in Gent for critical reading of the manuscript and advice on the present edition of this book. The same applies to my good friend Juan Carlos Ramon Guadix, professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Granada, who is responsible for the translation and publication of the Spanish version of the book, "Manual de Grabado en Hueco No Tóxico" (published by the University of Granada in Spain last year).

Finally I want to thank Filip Le Roy from the “Academie voor Beeldende Kunsten” in Anderlecht who translated and published the Flemish/Dutch version of the book “Niet-Toxisch Etsen – Handboek” as well as the French edition “La Gravure Non Toxique - Manuel pratique” for generously providing me with the layout of this book as well as for fruitful cooperation regarding the presentation of the contents of this book. (The Flemish/Dutch and the French versions were published by Le Roy & Partners in Grimbergen, Belgium – leroypartners@telenet.be)

And least but not last I want to thank the Australien print-maker, Vicky Stirling, for her unique work reading the proofs of this book.

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