

## **Firestation Print Studio —Brief History and Current Operations**

### ***Then...***

The Firestation (Malvern Community Print Access Workshop began in August 1991 renting the downstairs of the building and the rear room (formerly the billiard room) The aims and objectives of the organisation was to provide an alternative printmaking access workshop that provided opportunities for both professional artists and for community groups including schools. Prior to amalgamation the Firestation was the only visual arts organisation providing the local community with a visual art and exhibition program in the City of Malvern. In 1995 the name of the organisation changed to the Firestation Print Workshop Inc and we took over the management of the upstairs studios previously managed by the Council.

For seven years the Firestation has continued to survive through Stonnington Councils support and largely the work of several dedicated individuals and resident Studio Artists. The Firestation was available for open access three days a week, the studio artists opened and supervised the studio on a rostered basis, ran the gallery and maintained the workshop and equipment. But for several years we have been unable to provide the service we initially did due to a lack of resources and an ever changing studio occupancy so hence we have embarked upon a new operational structure that will provide a greater service and stability to the community and Professional artists alike.

### ***Now...***

The Firestation Print Studio is now managed part-time by an on-site worker three days a week, creating a lot more stability. This is largely possible through the support and benevolence of the Stonnington City Council. There is a Firestation Committee consisting of the Resident Studio Artists, Honorary Members and Firestation Members who play an important role in the development of new ideas and the general progress of the Firestation. Many of the Resident Artists are Printmakers and regularly use the Workshop themselves so it is in their vested interest that the facilities are respected; Equipment used responsibly and cleaned thoroughly after use and Rules and Regulations adhered to. There is one Artists Studio downstairs and another five studios up-stairs, so sooner or later you will end up meeting the Resident Artists who come in to work in their own studios. The Resident Artists will also be required to book and adhere to health and safety regulations if they wish to use the Print Workshop.

Under the new Structure Rules and Regulations and Health and Safety Practices are of the utmost importance for if they are not practiced then the Firestation will not be able to operate and offer 24-hour access. It is very important for all members to familiarise themselves with Health and Safety Practices and Rules and Regulations of the Firestation Print Studio and practice them at all times. Those who do not practice these regulations may be asked to leave - this applies to all who use the Print Workshop.

As we are still a largely voluntarily run not-for-profit organisation we haven't the funds to continually replace stolen/damaged stock and it is up to not only the Studio Artists but all who use the facilities to be responsible and take care when using the Workshop. Damaged equipment affects all who use the Studio, please treat materials as if they were your own-as you —the member- will be instrumental in making this practice work. After all, this will be your studio too!

## **STRUCTURE FOR THE FIRESTATION PRINT STUDIO.**

### **Membership Structure**

12 Month Membership-\$40 or

24 hour Professional Artist Membership-Block of 10 Printing Sessions (to be used within 3 months)

\$550 (6 months) (Plus \$40 12 month membership)

\$1000 (1 year) (Plus \$40 12 month membership)

### **FIRESTATION MEMBERSHIP (12 MONTHS)**

**Cost: \$40**

**Duration: 12 months from the date applicant joined**

#### **Benefits:**

- Ø You will be supporting a non profit arts organisation and local artists/Printmakers in your community!!
- Ø Invitations to any Workshops/Seminars/Open days at the Studio
- Ø Invites to all Studio Artist and Workshop Members Exhibitions.
- Ø 10% discount on classes, workshops and life drawing.
- Ø Network of other artists/ Firestation Print Studio social Events
- Ø Seniors Art 10% discount card-entitling the bearer to %10 off art materials at Seniors Art Supplies, Malvern for the duration of the Membership.

### **PROFESSIONAL WORKSHOP STUDIO MEMBER**

*(24 hour Print access —for Professional Artists Only)*

#### **Criteria required to become a 24 hour access Firestation Workshop Studio Member**

##### **1/ You must be a Professional Artist**

Under Nava's definition a professional artist will have some of the following professional characteristics:

- Ø Have regular public exhibitions of art work/or have work publicly written about or discussed.
- Ø Have Professional qualifications in visual arts, have won prizes or been awarded a grant, has work in public collections, is commissioned or employed on the basis of his/her art skills and /or earns income from the sales of artwork, is recognised by arts peers as a professional artist, is a member of a professional association on the basis of his/her status as a professional artist.

These artists must firstly meet the requirements set down by the Firestation Print Studio to establish competency and understanding of Printmaking and its application in the Firestation, as well as their understanding and agreement to practice and abide by our health and safety regulations.

**2/ To become a Workshop member you must first be a member of the Firestation Print Studio.**

**3/ The applicant must then undertake to:**

- Ø Read the booklet provided entitled ' *Introduction to the Firestation Print Studio for Workshop Studio Members*' and become familiar with all operational procedures
- Ø and Health and Safety Practices and Regulations.
- Ø Complete a Practical Session in the Workshop. This allows the workshop to ensure that the applicant is competent in the art of Printmaking and its techniques; is familiar with the equipment and the correct usage; Both understands, and practices the health and safety regulations and rules as set down by the Firestation Print Studio and agrees to adhere by them.
- Ø Complete a physical tour of the Workshop and Acid Room.
- Ø Complete a Firestation Information multiple test whose content will be based on the above.

The successful applicant, if the above criteria is met, will then sign a contract in relation to having performed the above and hereby agrees to abide by the Firestation Print Studios Rules and Regulations and understanding that a breach of these rules and regulations can result in having their membership terminated

**12 month membership-\$1000** (*up to 100 sessions in 356 days*)  
**6 month membership- \$550** (*up to 55 sessions in 168 days*)

#### **BENEFITS:**

##### **Yearly Professional Artists Membership (\$1000):**

- Ø Reader ' *Introduction to the Firestation Print Studio for Workshop Studio Members*'
- Ø All of the benefits that the Firestation Membership offers.
- Ø An Information Session
- Ø Use of a plan drawer and locker storage inclusive in membership.
- Ø The printmakers work to be shown once a year in the Firestations gallery\*.
- Ø The opportunity for the printmakers work to be displayed on the Firestations Web-site.
- Ø Access to Printmakers/Arts news and publications. Information on local stockists of printmaking materials/services
- Ø 24 Hour access to site and facilities.
- Ø 10% discount on art materials, courtesy of Seniors Arts Supplies, Malvern for the duration of the Membership.
- Ø 10% discount on printmaking materials, courtesy of Melbourne Etching Supplies, Fitzroy, for the duration of the Membership.

*\*One print from each edition to be kept for Firestation Print Studios archive\**

##### **Six Month Professional Artists Membership (\$550):**

Reader ' *Introduction to the Firestation Print Studio for Workshop Studio Members*'

- Ø All of the benefits that the Standard Firestation Membership offers.
- Ø An Information Session.
- Ø Use of a plan drawer inclusive in Membership. The option of locker storage for those wishing to leave materials on-site.
- Ø 24 Hour access to site and facilities.
- Ø Access to Printmakers/Arts news and publications. Information on local stockists of printmaking materials/services.

- Ø: 10% discount on art materials, courtesy of Seniors Art Supplies, Malvern, for the duration of the membership.
- Ø: 10% discount on art materials, courtesy of Melbourne Etching Supplies, Fitzroy, for the duration of the Membership.

**10 Session Pass- Professional Artists Membership (\$180):**

*\*Sessions to be used within a three month period\**

- Ø: Reader ' **Introduction to the Firestation Print Studio for Workshop Studio**
- Ø: **Members'**
- Ø: All of the benefits that the Firestation \$40 Membership offers.
- Ø: An Information Session.
- Ø: 24 hour access to site and facilities.
- Ø: Access to Printmakers/Arts news and publications. Information on local stockists of printmaking materials/services.
- Ø: 10% discount on art materials, courtesy of Seniors Art Supplies, Malvern, for the duration of the membership.

*Unfortunately we cannot guarantee the availability of drawer and locker usage due to limited space/drawers/lockers available on-site; understandably these facilities service the 12 and 6 month members first. However, if we can accommodate, we will certainly try.*

**FACILITIES INCLUDE:**

**Workshop**

- Ø: 1 Small Etching Press(Bed size 59x198 cm)
- Ø: 1 Mid size Etching Press(Bed size 84x158cm)
- Ø: 1 Large Etching Press( Bed size 109x220 cm)
- Ø: 1 Book Binding Press (Bed size 25x37cm)
- Ø: Acid-room (Ferric Chloride)
- Ø: Water bath(125x152x15cmdeep)
- Ø: Hotplate
- Ø: Drying boards
- Ø: Plan Drawer and locker access
- Ø: Print Drying Rack(1.22cmx83cm deep)
- Ø: Drop down table(outside)for Spray Aquatint and solvent use

**Kitchen**

- Ø: Microwave
- Ø: Fridge

**Acid Room**

- Ø: 2 Etching Baths (Ferric Chloride)
- Ø: Water bath (125x152x15cmdeep)

*(Aquatint Facilities are currently limited as use of traditional aquatint methods and the use of aerosols are not permitted to be used inside the workshop. There is however a 'drop-down' table being installed to facilitate the painting of grounds on plates and for spray aquatint)*

**Gallery**

The Firestation Print Studio Gallery has formally been available to artists in the community who work in a variety of mediums.

In 2005 The Firestation Print Studio will be focusing on representing works on paper and art created with an emphasis on traditional and contemporary printmaking methodology.

The Gallery is committed to raising the profile and the awareness of Printmaking by exhibiting works from established and emerging artists, and supporting these artists by taking no commission on works sold.

### **Gallery Details(2005)**

- Ø 6.7 metres x 3.5metres (Height 330-facing wall end. 350 at entrance end)
- Ø White Walls
- Ø Track lighting
- Ø Weekday sitting of exhibition
- Ø Curatorial advice
- Ø Mail out/advertising for exhibition
- Ø Administration of art sold (Weekdays only)

### **WHAT IF I STILL WISH TO USE THE FACILITIES BUT DON'T WANT TO BECOME A STUDIO WORK-SHOP MEMBER?**

The Firestation Print Studio offers Life Drawing, Workshops/Courses and 1:1 tuition in Printmaking and Supervised Access (All members receive %10 discount). These activities will continue to facilitate existing and community members who don't wish to obtain 24 Print Access and become a Workshop Studio Member.

'Supervised Access' sessions run every Thursday between the hours of 11-5pm, catering to those who are not 24 hour Workshop Members **but have Printmaking experience**. This allows those who have some experience the opportunity to be able to print up their work in a supervised environment with a technician on hand. If you require more information about Life-drawing, the Firestation Gallery, Print-making classes or the Supervised Printing Sessions please call the Firestation on (03)95091782 and speak to the on-site worker on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays between the hours of 11am-5pm. Alternatively call and leave a message regarding the nature of your inquiry and the worker will call back when next on.

### **HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER?**

The Firestation Print Studio, has an *On-Site* worker for three days a week. All wishing to speak to someone in person can call on (03) 95091782 between the hours of 11am —5pm or alternately leave their number and the nature of their enquiry and the relevant person will return their call as soon as possible. Information about the Firestation Print Studio services, activities, classes and gallery news can also be accessed on-line on our website [www.firestationprintstudio.com.au](http://www.firestationprintstudio.com.au)

### **HOW DO I BECOME A 24 ACCESS WORKSHOP MEMBER?**

If you wish to become a 24 hour access Workshop Member, you must be a professional artist with a sound knowledge of Printmaking. Preferable are those who are practising Printmakers with a B.A. in Printmaking and/or have had many years experience Printing. ( Please refer to the Firestation Manual for N.A.V.A.S definition of a 'Professional Artist')

Those who have not printed for a period of time will be expected to, upon the advice of the Workshop Co-ordinator, undertake classes, 1:1 tuition, or attend Thursdays Supervised Access Sessions. The applicant may have to do a combination of two or more of the forementioned activities, dependent on the applicants skill and experience.

Those interested in becoming a Workshop Member must:

**1/** Firstly ensure they have the relative experience to enable them to undertake a Professional Workshop Membership. Then, speak and arrange a meeting with Megan, the Workshop Co-ordinator. Available Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays 11-5pm.

**2/** After meeting and viewing the facilities you decide to apply for membership you will set a date to do the test. The applicant is expected to read the **'Workshop Manual-Firestation Print Studio'**. This manual contains O/HS information, Firestation rules and regulations and general information enabling the applicant to complete the Practical and Written tests.

**3/** The Practical and O/HS testing takes about an hour/hour and half. Unfortunately Testing can only be offered on Wednesdays, Thursdays or Fridays. After a successful completion of the Practical Test (involves setting up, printing, cleaning, use of Acid room etc) and the Firestation O/HS written test you are able to take up a Workshop Membership immediately and commence printing!

*\* After completing the practical/written criteria in order to become a Workshop Member, you **must join and begin printing within a month** of the test otherwise it will be deemed invalid and you will have to do the testing again . \**

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS OF FIRESTATION PRINT STUDIO**

All members must abide by the following rules and regulations-failure to do so may lead to the termination of your Membership.

### **Acid room**

Members must use acid-proof gloves and Safety Glasses provided and an apron (or bring their own) whilst using the Acid baths. Gloves are hanging on the R.H.S wall near the acid bath, in the Acid Room. **DO HANG THEM BACK ON THEIR PEGS.** Please take care not to leave gloves lying where they could come into contact with acid. Safety goggles and a fume mask are kept in the Acid room under the Waterbath. Both are in sealed containers and must be put back after use. Antiseptic wipes are found in the First Aid Box located in the bathroom, for those who need a fume mask and didn't bring their own you can use the wipes to disinfect the mouth/nose piece.

Eyebath- Small sink situated on the right-hand side of the room. For **Emergency Use Only**. This is to be only used if Acid is accidentally splashed into the face/eye region **NOT** to wash hands or anything else.

All Members and Artists are **NOT TO HANDLE/MIX** Acid under any circumstances. This is the responsibility of the Workshop Co-ordinator. If there is any concern then record this/or any other comments in the Communication Book. (This is located just outside the Acidroom door inside the Workshop. The Workshop Technician will respond either via the book/in person. There is a 'Acid Room Book' that resides next to the glove rack in the acid room which informs the printer of how the acid is behaving, when last changed etc. Please feel free to add your comments to aid other etchers.

There are two baths in the Acid-Room, both are Ferric Chloride (actually it is an Edinburgh Etch) The sink, on the right hand side, where the acid baths sit is **THE ONLY SINK** that acid is rinsed off in. **THERE IS NO ACID USE/ACID RINSING DONE IN THE LEFT HAND SIDE SINK.**

Members are only to use Copper Plates in the baths-**no other type of metal** ie; zinc, steel or aluminium is to be used-it could lead to a dangerous chemical reaction.

### **Taking the plate out of the Acid Bath**

When lifting Plate out of the Acid please hold the plate over the bath for at least 30 seconds to drain excess acid back into the bath.

Then place the plates on the bottom of the sink behind the baths leaning them on the back wall of the sink. Try not to place the plates directly behind the baths as the spray from the hose tends to end up in the acid-or simply place the lid back temporarily on the smaller acid bath.

Turn the hose on-you don't need much pressure- and thoroughly rinse the plate of all acid-back and front.

Leave plates **to dry** against back wall of sink with the aid of the Extractor fan (Which comes on immediately when you switch the Acid-room light on)

With the **plates dry** there is no drips/spillage's on the floor when you move the plates from the Acid-room to the Workshop. Otherwise there is a mop in the Acid-room members can use to clean the floor with-it lives in there.

**When you have finished etching you must:**

**Check that all plates have been removed from both of the Acid Baths. Replace the lids to reduce evaporation. Ensure the bath edge and the floor are free from acid spills.**

**CLEAN UP ANY ACID SPILLS IN THE SINK/FLOOR AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED ETCHING-ENSURING SINK SIDES THAT HAVE ACID SPLASHES ON THEM ARE WIPED CLEAN. LEAVING SPILLS UNWIPED IS NOT ONLY UNSIGHTLY BUT ACID CAN BE TRANSFERRED UNKNOWINGLY ONTO EXPOSED SKIN/CLOTHES. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT OTHERS WILL BE ACCESSING THE BATHS AS WELL — GRANTED IT IS THE WORST ACID TO KEEP CLEAN!- BUT IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP IT AS CLEAN AS POSSIBLE -IF ITS REALLY DIRTY WHEN YOU ARRIVE, MARK IT DOWN IN THE COMMENTS BOOK AND IT WILL BE FOLLOWED UP.**

**No Acid is to be rinsed off in the Left-hand side sink. This is for cleaning off ink /rollers /hands only.**

### **,Aquatint**

There are currently no facilities for Traditional Aquatint Methods. We are in the process of installing a 'drop-down' table just outside the rear entrance so it will facilitate spray aquatinting and application of shellac/bitumen. **NO SOLVENTS/SPRAYS TO BE USED IN THE WORKSHOP; THEY MUST BE USED OUTSIDE.**

### **Aerosols**

Members can use aerosols as an alternative to traditional aquatint methods however in accordance to Health and Safety Regulations no spray of any description can be used inside the studio (This includes fixatives, Spray Adhesives) They must be used outside. Members are expected to supply their own masks.

### **Blankets**

It is advised that members purchase their own blankets to use. Use of Workshop Blankets by classes and past 24 hour access members have resulted in the continual misuse of blankets thus leaving them marked and dirty. Each press has its own set of Blankets. When you book a press, use the blankets for that press and always return the blankets to their correct space.

Do not roll the blankets too tightly when putting away.

Always use gloves/paper-fingers/clean fingers when handling the blankets.

Marked blankets will have to dry-cleaned by offender or blankets replaced altogether if the Workshop Co-ordinator believes it is warranted.

***Currently blankets are being continually misused and proving to expensive to replace and impossible to police so 24 hour access users are more than welcome to use the Workshop blankets but unfortunately many are marked or have small cuts in them and again we suggest you bring your own.***

**\*No Workshop blankets to be used for any form of relief printing\***

### **Bins:**

There is an old bin inside the workshop which HAS TO BE EMPTIED AT THE END OF EACH SESSION. There are bins also located outside the rear studio door. Do Not throw paper/general rubbish in the bin marked recycling(with a blue lid). Please also do not throw your turps soaked rags in the outside bins either. Please take home to dispose of.

### **Bookings**

All bookings must be made personally when you are in the studio or you can telephone on 95091782 between the hours of 11am-5pm Wednesday-Fridays **only** when the on-site-worker is in to book for you. The Bookings Book is located on the table to your left when you enter the Studio through the rear entrance. Please **note members are responsible for booking sessions** themselves, the On-Site Worker will not be responsible for *returning* calls regarding sessional bookings; if however you call on during opening hours and speak to us personally we will only be too happy to be able to book you in.

#### **Cleaning-up:**

**All members are responsible for cleaning up after a Printing Session. Cleaning materials are stored in the Workshop under the hotplate.**

#### **What we provide;**

**Vegetable Oil:** This is used to clean up all ink; off plates, glass slabs, rollers, spatulas-all equipment.

**Windex:** This must be used on the glass slabs to remove all traces of Vegetable Oil and any missed ink. The surface must be totally clean ready for the next member to work.

**Spray'N'Wipe:** This is used to clean up any marks left alongside the white edges of the glass slabs after inking. It is also used for the white bench-tops.

**Handcleaner:** Located in the Acid Room. Use the L.H.S sink to wash hands in. Please don't clean your hands of ink in the bath-room-use the Acid-room sink for inky hands.

***\*There is no solvents to be used inside the Workshop under any circumstances\****

#### **Presses:**

After Printing check the presses to ensure there is no ink, adhesive from tape or any other substance on the press bed. Check the roller for the same. Clean both bed and roller ( and if need be, the wheel) with a clean rag with a little oil.

**Glass Slabs:** Clean off ink with **oil** and degrease the slabs with **Windex** provided. There should be no greasy marks/residue on the glass surface. There is to be **NO CUTTING** on the glass tops. **ALWAYS** use Cutting-Mat.

**White Bench-tops/ Tables:** Paper is to be placed down on these surfaces at all times when working. This is to ensure they remain clean at all times. There is absolutely **NO CUTTING on these surfaces ALWAYS use the cutting mat.**

**Floor:** The floor must be swept of copper filings and any other materials you have used during your session. Ink spills should be cleaned up immediately.

**Bins:** Must be emptied at the end of the session. In accordance with Health and Safety Regulations **NO TURPS USED RAGS** are to be thrown in F.P.S Bins ( Inside or Out) they must be disposed of by member.

#### **Check-list ( What to do after finishing a Session)**

##### **Workshop:**

Is the hotplate turned off?

Has the Heater been turned off ?

Any other appliance that needs to be turned off? Hair-drier? Radio?

Has all the cleaning been completed? ( Glass-Slabs, White Bench-tops,Floors,Presses,Bins)

Has the Pressure been released on the Presses and the blankets put away?

Have you signed in?  
Is the Workshop Entrance door locked?  
Are all the lights off? (Including outside Front/Gallery light)  
Have you returned the Entrance key to the Security Box outside?  
Make sure you shut the Exit Door firmly behind you-it is sometimes reluctant to close.

**Acid-Room:**

Is there any plates in the Acid Baths?  
Is the Acid-room baths clean? Both the R.H.S Sink containing both baths AND the sink for cleaning hands/equipment?  
Has the water been drained from the Water-Bath?

**Damaged equipment:**

Upon commencing a session you discover something is damaged please record it in the Communication Book/Sign-In Book. This is very important if we are to maintain Health and Safety Regulations and monitor equipment usage.

**Drawers:**

One year Workshop Members are given a plan drawer and a locker. Six month members are given a drawer, in which to keep their work during the duration of their Membership. Works will be kept up to one month after Membership Expiry. After this date, if the work is not collected, the Firestation Print Studio can not be expected to store work and will not be held responsible for the safety of the work.

**Drying Boards:**

There are Drying Boards available to Members. Please ensure you place a slip of paper (this paper must be dated) in between the boards that house your work to let others know what boards are being used. Works may remain between the boards for up to one week, then it is the responsibility of the Artist to remove them to their drawers. Again NO RESPONSIBILITY for the works is taken by the Firestation after the weeks duration-it is up to the member.

**Electrical Equipment:**

Approval from the Workshop-Co-ordinator is required before bringing along electrical equipment/machinery to the Workshop.

**Exhibitions:**

Firestation Exhibitions are held generally every three weeks on a Wednesday night. Usually between the hours of 6pm-8pm. On this date, in the evening, there is no Workshop printing allowed. Please check bookings sheet/Exhibition Invitations (Usually all members would be sent these) during these times when you wish to print.

**Fire Safety:**

In your '*Introduction to the Firestation Print Studio-for Workshop Studio Members*', you will have covered where the location of the Fire-extinguishers are and Blankets are.

The Floor-plan of the Studio is displayed below the 'EXIT' sign above the door that members exit by.

There is **NO SMOKING** inside the Studio, this also includes the use of tapers (exception being in a supervised class situation)

**No Solvents** of any description to be used inside.

No Rags that contain oil or Solvents be placed in Firestations Bins (Inside or Out)

Do not leave paper unattended on Hot-plate nor use on a high setting.

**First Aid Kit:**

There is a First Aid kit in the Bathroom, located next to the kitchen.

**Guests:**

It is expected that members DO NOT allow any one but themselves On-Site whilst they are using the Studio. The Workshop is for Members Only. The Firestation can only operate offering 24-hour access if the person accessing the facilities is a Studio Artist or

**i/** A Workshop Studio Member of the F.P.S. and **ii/** Is a Professional Artist. All Guests/Visitors are not covered in regards to insurance to use the Firestations facilities or if an accident occurred whilst they are on-Site. This Rule exists to protect members of the public and to ensure the Firestation adheres to the Requirements of our Insurance Policy. Members found ignoring this Rule could forfeit their Membership.

**Hot-plate:**

- Ø No paper is to be left unattended on the Hot-plate.
- Ø The Hot-plate is **NOT** to be used on the highest setting. Inbetween 'Off' and 1 is usually the most generally used setting.
- Ø Please inform other members, if present, that the Hot-plate is on.
- Ø The Hot-plate **MUST** be cleaned after use. Use Oil provided. Ensure there is not residue ink, shellac etc. Use newsprint under your plate whilst using the Hotplate.
- Ø There is a timer on the hotplate to ensure it switches off automatically after a time.

**Heater:**

For the heater to work the 'Timer' must be set on '0'. Otherwise it will not work. Make sure you turn it off at the end of your session. Use courtesy when printing with others in regards to the use of the heater.

**Kitchen:**

The kitchen is available for Members and Studio Artists to use. There is a microwave, kettle and fridge. Members and Studio Artists alike are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and disposing of items that they have stored in the fridge. Please bring your own milk and coffee. All dishes used are expected to be washed and put away.

**Materials:**

As a Professional Artist it is expected you have all the materials you require to print yourself ie; inks, tools, rollers, paper, blankets, solvents etc. Please check what the Firestation provides (under facilities) to be clear and to avoid disappointment when you turn up to print. However when the On-site workers are on if we can accommodate you on the odd occasion you have forgotten something we will certainly try!

Seniors Art Supplies are the nearest Art supply store, located in Malvern on Malvern Rd.

They now stock a limited range of print making materials, and as a Workshop Member you are entitled to a 10% discount.

**Material Safety Data Sheets:**

Information on all cleaning products and materials used in the Workshop are found in the form of MSDS's. A sheet from manufacturers outlining what is in their products and documenting any safety concerns regarding that product. The sheets are kept in a red folder near the booking sheets near the rear glass door of the Workshop.

**Monthly Member Meetings:**

These are currently held on the First Tuesday of every month. Notice of these meetings are displayed in kitchen on a small whiteboard. All Members and Workshop Members are welcome to come along. For Studio Artists they must not miss any more than three meetings consecutively. They are an opportunity for Members to meet other members and Studio Artists. It can also be an opportunity for you to make any comments/share ideas etc. Agenda items for meetings can be forwarded by Communication Book, marked to the attention of Bronwyn; Firestation Secretary.

**Presses:**

With each Press there is a designated area in which one can work (Inking-up area, Paper-drying etc) Of course if you are working alone and no-one else is booked in you can use the entire space! However if someone turns up to Print you will have to make room for them. Please be respectful of space considerations. See 'Cleaning' in regards to what is expected when you use the Presses. **No Blankets to be used when Relief Printing.**

**Paper:**

Members are expected to bring their own Etching and Butchers/Blotting Paper. The nearest Art Shop is Seniors Art Supplies. (About 5 kilometres away) It is located at 1357 Malvern Rd, Malvern.

**Parking:**

Parking is available for Members at the gravelled rear section of the Firestation Print Studio. Be patient when its busy and everybody has to move vehicles to let someone out!

**QUIET!**

As this area is a Residential Area Members are asked to be mindful and exercise courtesy when they are printing in the latter hours of the evening.

**Rollers:**

There are two Rollers hanging kept in the locker next to the grey materials cupboard in the kitchen area.. **NO SOLVENTS** are to be used when cleaning them. Use oil, or water (If using Water-based Inks) They are to be cleaned thoroughly —there should be no residue Ink

They should be returned **CLEANED THOROUGHLY WITH OIL** and dusted with Talcum paper upon their return to their place in the locker.

There is a large 'Roll-up' Roller. This is only available on a booking basis through the Workshop Co-ordinator directly.

There is a 'hardground roller' and 'softground roller' located for use on the tools board.

**Rags:**

Members are responsible for bringing in their own Rags for use during a Session. All Rags must be disposed of by the member. No used rags to be thrown in F.P.S. Bins Inside or out. This is a Health and Safety Regulation that must be practised. Rags left in crate under Hot-Plate area are the workshops for use with Windex only. Soon there will be present a 'Rags Disposal Bin', especially for the disposal of turps soaked rags.

**RAG DONATIONS GLADLY ACCEPTED!**

**Solvents:**

Under no circumstances can any Solvent be used inside. The Studio isn't equipped with adequate ventilation. This includes substances like Mineral

Turpentine, Methelated Spirits, Acetone, Shellac, Bitumen etc. They are to be used outside. It is the responsibility of the artist to ensure they use a mask and clean up after themselves. Please **do not use** the long bench seat or the tiled back step at the rear of the Firestation to clean plates on. Use tops of bins outside to right of rear glass door, or protect tiles with newspaper FIRST.

**Security:**

Once Members have been given the Access Code it is to be kept confidential. From time to time the Code may be altered due to Security concerns, if this occurs Members will be notified.

DO lock the Studio Entrance door once you have entered and keep it locked whilst you are working. Do not leave premises unlocked if you leave to go down the street-even if it is for a short time.

Ensure that once you are ready to leave that you read the 'Check-list' and double-check that the doors are locked/shut firmly behind you when you exit.

**Smoking:**

There is no Smoking inside.(Refer to Fire-Safety )

**Signing in:**

All members must 'Sign-in' when they arrive for a Session. This book is located on the wall in the plastic holders between the Acid room door and the table as you enter the rear of the Workshop.

**Storage:** Drawers are available gratis to One Year, Six Month and Three Month Members. Lockers are gratis for One Year Members and are available for Six month Members if required for \$10 per month. If there are available lockers, after servicing the One Year and Six Month Members, they can be offered to Three Month members, then 10 Session users, for twenty dollars a month and drawers for fifteen dollars a month.

**Tools:**

Most Members are expected to have their own tools. However there is a small selection of tools on the Shadow Board.

**Telephone:**

Please note that there is no telephone available to members unless the On-site worker is present.

**Transit Drawer:**

Unknown/Uncollected works usually when they have remained too long in the Drying Rack or the Drying Boards. So a good place to start looking for missing work. Work can only be stored in here a maximum of one month unless prior arrangements are made with the Workshop Co-ordinator. No responsibility is taken for the works after this time.

**Upstairs studios:**

No Workshop Member is allowed entry to the Upstairs Studios. This is not only a privacy issue but an area not covered by our Insurance Policy for members of the General Public.

**Waterbath:**

Must be emptied at the end of your session-unless some-one you are working with still requires its use. No chemicals or anything but water must be used in this bath. If it dirty or greasy after you have used it, it will be expected you will clean it out ready for the next printer.

## **Firestation Print Studio Health and Safety Manual**

Health and safety are vital issues, and no one accessing the Firestation has a right to endanger either themselves or anyone else through uninformed or negligent use of implements, materials, or machinery. This manual has been compiled to provide basic information on safe practices and procedures in Printmaking. It is intended to protect you and those around you. Each workshop member will receive a copy. It is a basic requirement that you read and understand this manual before beginning to work at the Firestation Print Studio (FSPS). Read it now. If you have any questions about the contents, please contact the Workshop Coordinator. Anyone who implements, materials, or machinery in a hazardous or potentially hazardous manner may be immediately barred from further access to the Firestation and may be subject to additional disciplinary action.

### Occupational Health and Safety Policy

#### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Firestation Print Studio to take all reasonable steps to:

1. protect the safety of all members, staff and visitors against work accidents and occupational hazards;
2. comply with all relevant statutes, regulations and standards of government agencies and other regulatory authorities representing Occupational Health and Safety;
3. give priority to safe working conditions and non-toxic practices in the planning, budgeting, direction and implementation of Firestation activities;
4. formulate and carry out continuing effective safety procedures appropriate to the Firestations operations; and failure to observe the Firestations Occupational Health and Safety policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Safety is the responsibility of everyone. Specific responsibilities are as follows:

#### **Members shall**

1. comply with the Firestation's Safety Policy and Procedures, and rules and regulations associated with all of their Firestation- related activities;
2. seek guidance from their instructors or workshop coordinator concerning safety-related knowledge and skills required to ensure safe performance in their activities;
3. immediately report to their instructor, supervisor or workshop coordinator any accident, near miss, hazardous practice or condition with respect to their activities.

#### **Visitors shall**

1. comply with the FSPS Safety Policy and Procedures and all other regulations.

### Safety in the Arts

In order to take preventative measures it is important to note the following:

#### **How Chemicals Enter the Body**

Inhalation: This is the major route of entry for airborne chemicals. The chemicals can have a direct effect on the nose, upper respiratory tract and the lungs or they can enter the blood stream and thus affect the blood, bone, heart, brain, liver, kidneys or bladder.

Ingestion: This is not normally a direct route of entry from exposure except by wilful or accidental ingestion. Materials can also enter the stomach through indirect means. For example, the lung has a cleaning mechanism, which pushes material out of the lung where it can be swallowed. This can result in an exposure to most of the internal organs or even in a local action on the stomach wall.

Skin Contact: Some materials are absorbed through the skin and therefore when they enter the bloodstream they can be transported throughout the body and accumulate in, or affect, the most sensitive areas of the body. Skin contact can also result in allergic reaction, the removal of the protective skin oil, or dermatitis. In some cases, the chemical contact may result in a cancerous lesion. Note: More detailed information on the hazards of a chemical can be found in the material safety data sheets of the product.

### **Arts and Reproduction**

Many chemicals used in art can also affect the reproductive system. Some chemicals have specific effects on the male reproductive system, eg. cadmium, manganese, and lead. Others have specific effects on the female reproductive system, e.g., toluene and xylene, which cause menstrual irregularities. All of these chemicals are common in art materials.

### **High Risk Groups**

Pregnant and Breast-feeding Women: Chemicals and other factors which are thought to cross the placental barrier and possibly cause damage and birth defects, include lead, cadmium, mercury, copper, carbon monoxide, dyes, noise, vibration, and many organic solvents. The amount of material necessary to damage the fetus or embryo is much smaller than the amount, which can injure the adult. The most sensitive time for chemical interference with normal development is from the 18th to the 60th day after conception. Other hazards include materials that can affect the respiratory and circulatory systems. Examples include solvents, dyes, metals, toxic dusts and gases, as well as strenuous activity and other stresses. Many chemicals, especially heavy metals and solvents, can be found in a woman's milk several hours after exposure and can affect the infant. AVOID USE OF SOLVENTS AND AEROSOLS.

Children: Children are more susceptible to the effects of hazardous chemicals than adults are and they should be closely supervised in the studio environment.

Smokers and Heavy Drinkers: These individuals are at a higher risk of damage to their lungs and liver respectively. Nicotine and/or alcohol mixed with toxic chemicals in art materials can cause synergistic and multiplicative reactions.

Individuals on Medications: Medications also create a greater risk. Consult your physician to ensure that any medication will not interact with substances in art materials to cause illness.

Note: Also within the high-risk group are the physically disabled, the elderly, and those with allergies or illnesses.

## **Safety in the Arts: Basic Preventative Measures:**

1. DO NOT eat, drink, or smoke in the studio.
2. SUBSTITUTE less hazardous materials or techniques when possible. There are many instances where highly toxic chemicals can be replaced by less toxic materials.
3. KNOW the materials and their hazards. If labels do not provide adequate information regarding contents, hazards, and precautions, obtain a MSDS to research the product your health is worth the effort.
4. STORE materials safely. Use clearly labelled unbreakable containers, and always cover them when not in use to deter their evaporation into the environment. Do not store materials in food containers to avoid accidental ingestion.
5. ENSURE proper ventilation.
6. WEAR appropriate personal protective equipment such as respirators, face shields, ear muffs, proper footwear and gloves.
7. ASK if you are unsure about the operation of any equipment. Misuse of tools leads to accidents. No equipment is to be altered or modified unless on manufacturers recommendation.

### Solvents

Solvents and paint thinners are moderately toxic by skin contact and inhalation and highly toxic by ingestion. This applies to odourless solvents as well. When using solvents and thinners have good general or local ventilation. The use of solvents is not permitted in the workshop.

### Ventilation

- Ø To ensure proper ventilation, toxic substances must be placed BETWEEN an individual
- Ø and an exhaust fan. Where open windows (incoming air) and exhaust fans (outgoing air)
- Ø coexist, the same positioning applies. In this case, however, the window must be kept
- Ø behind the individual. This is to ensure that the toxic substance is drawn AWAY, and
- Ø not PAST them.

### **Spray Painting**

- Ø This type of spraying is to be done outdoors and not in the workshop. A respirator and
- Ø suitable personal protection (clothing and gloves) should be worn and drop sheets used.

### Studio Clothing

Because ink and solvents do contain toxins it is important that they be kept away from the skin and therefore from entering the bloodstream. The best way to minimise risks is to reserve a set of clothing solely for studio use, or to wear coveralls or a smock over street clothes. Also less paint is inhaled if it does not dry and evaporate on clothing.

### Storage of Materials

Food items (lunches) should not be stored in lockers that contain paints and/or solvents because of a high risk of contamination.

### **Equipment and Facilities**

Equipment and workshop facilities are for the use of registered members only. Facilities and tools are not to be moved or modified to suit individuals unless authorised by the workshop coordinator. Unsafe use or misuse of equipment in the workshop will result in the withdrawal of privileges. Members whose actions are considered detrimental to themselves or fellow members may be asked by the Firestation committee to leave the workshop or stop using the equipment. Any equipment requiring repairs should be brought to the attention of the workshop coordinator.

## **PRINTMAKING**

### **General Hazards**

Although the techniques of intaglio, and relief printmaking vary considerably, they all involve inking the plates, setting up and operating the printing press, and cleaning up. The main hazards occur during the inking and cleaning steps. In handling prepared inks, there are no hazards due to inhalation of the pigment unless ink is allowed to dry on surfaces where it can eventually form a powder. The major hazards with inks are due to skin contact and accidental ingestion. This can be a problem particularly with hand-wiping techniques. Using bare hands increases the possibility of getting the ink in cuts and sores and of transferring ink from hands to mouth.

### **Clean-up**

Many solvents are highly toxic by inhalation and moderately toxic by repeated skin contact, causing dermatitis. Do not wash your hands with solvents; appropriate gloves should be worn to avoid skin contact and must be used outside when cleaning plates. Members are responsible for disposing of solvent-soaked rags themselves, do not place them in the outside rubbish bin, as they can spontaneously combust. Vegetable oil is provided by the workshop and should be used with an ink scraper to clean the inking slabs.

### **Ventilation**

The main ventilation system in the workshop is located in the acid room and is automatically turned on with the light. The vent directs contaminants away from the work area by drawing out the contaminated air and expelling it. Always have good ventilation when working with vapour emitting chemicals.

### **Intaglio**

Intaglio printmaking processes include etching, engraving, drypoint, and collagraphs.

### **Drypoint**

The main hazard of drypoint and engraving is the chance of cutting yourself through improper use of the tools. Hold the tools properly and always cut in a direction away from you with both hands behind the blade. Always keep the tools sharp.

## Etching Grounds

Some of the ingredients which make up both hard ground and soft ground are flammable and can cause skin and eye irritation; avoid prolonged contact. Xylene is often used in making up hard ground, but as it is non-essential to the mix and highly toxic, it should be deleted if you are making your own hard ground or alternative supplies are available.

## Stop outs

Alcohol: slightly toxic.

Rosin: slightly toxic by inhalation.

Asphaltum: toxic by skin contact, possibly causing skin cancer and skin irritation.

Wash carefully after use. Use in well-ventilated area.

Aquatint: Rosin can cause respiratory problems during this process because of the fine dust produced when it is shaken onto the plate. Wear respirator.

Copper plates can also be etched with Dutch mordant or iron perchloride.

## Hazards:

1. Concentrated acids are highly corrosive to the skin and eyes
2. During the preparation of Dutch mordant, highly toxic chlorine gas is released. Chlorine gas is highly irritating to the eyes and mucous membranes of the respiratory system. Potassium chlorate can be explosive in contact with organic materials such as rosin.
3. Iron perchloride (ferric chloride) is moderately irritating to the skin. It is also moderately toxic by ingestion and inhalation.

## Precautions:

1. It is wise to wear gloves and goggles when handling and mixing concentrated acids and when handling plates in acid baths.
2. The acid baths and preparation of acid solutions should be done in a well-ventilated area.
3. If the acid bath gets too hot, carefully remove the plate from the bath and cool it with cold water. Wear gloves.
4. Acid mixture - always add acid to the water. Usual mixtures are:  
Normal bite - 1 parts H<sub>2</sub>O to 1 part acid; Strong bite — 1/2 part H<sub>2</sub>O to 1 part acid.

## Photoetching

In the past the most widely used photoresist contains the solvent ethylene glycol monomethyl ether acetate (methyl cellosolve acetate). The developer and dyes contain the solvent xylene (xylol). Due to non-toxic research solar plate and image-on are much safer photographic alternatives. Exposure of plates is commonly done with ultraviolet sources such as mercury lamps, metal halide lamps or sunlight.

## Hazards:

1. Methyl cellosolve acetate is a highly toxic solvent, causing blood and kidney damage and nervous system damage. It is hazardous both by skin absorption and inhalation.
2. Xylene is highly toxic by inhalation, and moderately toxic by skin contact and absorption.

### Precautions:

1. Wear butyl rubber gloves and goggles when handling the photoresist and photodeveloper. Do not wear contact lenses.
2. Use photoetching materials in a fume hood or have very good dilution ventilation. In some cases you might require an organic vapour respirator if a fume hood is not available.

## **Relief Printmaking**

### Woodcuts and linocuts

Wood and linocuts are made by gouging out areas of a smooth surface with cutting tools. Standard inks (both oil- and water-based) can be used to print the plates. Soft woods such as pine make ideal woodcut blocks. Battleship linoleum or silkcut is available in stores. Heating the linoleum with the electric hotplate in the workshop makes cutting easier.

### **Hazards**

1. Cutting tools are very sharp and should be used correctly to avoid cuts.
2. Solvents, eg. Mineral turpentine methylated spirits and kerosene.
3. Airborne dust from woodcuts.

### **Precautions**

1. Always cut in a direction away from you, with your free hand on the side or behind the hand with the tool.
2. Solvents, which are used during cleanup, are skin irritants. Wear gloves and use outside.
3. Sawdust residue from carving should be cleaned up after working and a dust mask worn.

## **Printing Equipment**

### **The Press**

The FSPS has four intaglio (enjay, artequip, starwheel and large etching) and one book binding press.

### Hazards

1. A press has the capacity to squash fingers caught between the roller and bed of the press. Artists need to be conscious of Manual Handling issues when moving large or heavy plates.

### Precautions

1. Always tie hair, lose items back and keep hands away from rollers when printing. Never twist when lifting or holding heavy objects.

## Summary

To handle Art materials safely, there are certain basic ideas, which are important for you to know.

1. Art materials are chemicals. The fact that you are working with potentially hazardous chemicals should be a major factor in determining your work habits.
2. You should inquire about the hazards of art materials and how to work safely with them when you first learn about a particular art technique. In this way, working safely with these materials becomes an integral part of your work routine. But safe-working habits can be developed at any time.
3. You should always consider ways in which you may be exposed to hazardous art materials. One of the aims of safe working practices is to prevent absorption of hazardous materials into the body, whether by skin contact, inhalation, or ingestion. You should examine each material you use and how you use it to determine if your work habits might contaminate your body. Check manufacturer warnings, instructions and material safety data sheets. Many precautions then become common sense.
4. Safety takes longer. Precautions such as putting on gloves before cleaning up ink, cleaning up spills immediately, not eating in the studio and washing your hands carefully before eating or smoking. It is often tempting to skip a precaution to save time. Don't. This is how many accidents and overexposure to chemical occur. Making these precautions a normal part of your work routine is the only way to be safe. An extra 20 minutes a day now may save you years later.

## For More Information

- 1 National Association for the Visual Arts Ltd., 1<sup>st</sup> floor the Gunnery, 43-51 Cowper Wharf Road, Woolloomooloo NSW 2011, (02) 9368190
- 2 *Artist Beware*, Michael McCann, PH.D., Watson-Guption Publications/New York.
- 3 *Printmaking, Hazards and Precautions*, Victorian College of the Arts
- 4 Worksafe Australia, the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission.
- 5 Worksafe Australia Publications are available from the Commonwealth Government Bookshop in Melbourne, for information call 008 020049
- 6 *Control of Workplace Hazardous Substances*, National Model Regulations and National Code of Practice.
- 7 *Storage of Chemicals*, Worksafe Australia Guidance Note.
- 8 *Labelling of Workplace Substances*, Worksafe Australia.