

# THE UNIVERSE

## PART II

### *Appendix*

### *Etching Process*

**PART ONE (MAIN GALLERIES) & PART THREE (ESSAYS & Catalogue List) OF THE ONLINE EXHIBITION CAN SIMPLY BE ACCESSED FROM THE FOLLOWING MAIN LINK:**

*nicholas nicola etchings leichhardt 2016 website page:*

<http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/leichhardt-2016.php>

*Thank You.*

# APPENDIX

This appendix along with the rest of the information that follows is a smorgasbord of words and pictures that attempts to relate to some of the ideas and themes that underpin the images in the main galleries. However, during the compilation of this source information a somewhat random ‘scattershot’ effect has resulting in other notions also being presented. A meandering into subject matter other than the landscapes has led to looking at many other topics with the process becoming a catalyst to consider new possibilities. Thus there is some divergence away from the original aim of the appendix as a mere appendage to the exhibition leading towards this somewhat experimental visual digital exploration - as can be seen for instance in the rather disparate fragmented visual essays - which maybe of cursory interest (and a ‘beginning’ rather than an ‘end’ to ideas which can be viewed as ‘works in progress’; the collage effect of these visual essays maybe sublimely referencing Kurt Schwitter’s MERZ collages made up of many disparate , random ‘found’ components & which can be never ending in the potential of images etcetera - much like an artistic ‘Pandora’s Box’ which thankfully there is hope at the end – if ever reached); with a shift away from purely aesthetic themes to other contemporary considerations in various philosophical, societal and even political contexts that may lead to the creation of other prints in the future that are ‘non-landscape’ in nature. After all, there is a constant interest to maintain a link between art and life; art as an expression of life so as to enhance it, rather than to just decorate it. Nevertheless, the main body of the appendix still attempts to show source photos and express source ideas which one may wish to more presently focus on.

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**PARTS I & PARTS III can be accessed via the following main link:**

*nicholas nicola etchings leichhardt 2016 website page:* <http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/leichhardt-2016.php>

*Thank You.*

# Appendix

The following pages contain further notes, general info, essays, sketches, photographs and even other etchings which in general relate to the exhibition. The information is more or less ordered in relation to where the etching has appeared in this online exhibition. Further information and other etchings/images/photos/sketches/notes etc can also be gleaned from the website. At the end of the appendix after some essays is an introductory look at the etching process. Thank you.

## TEN ETCHINGS

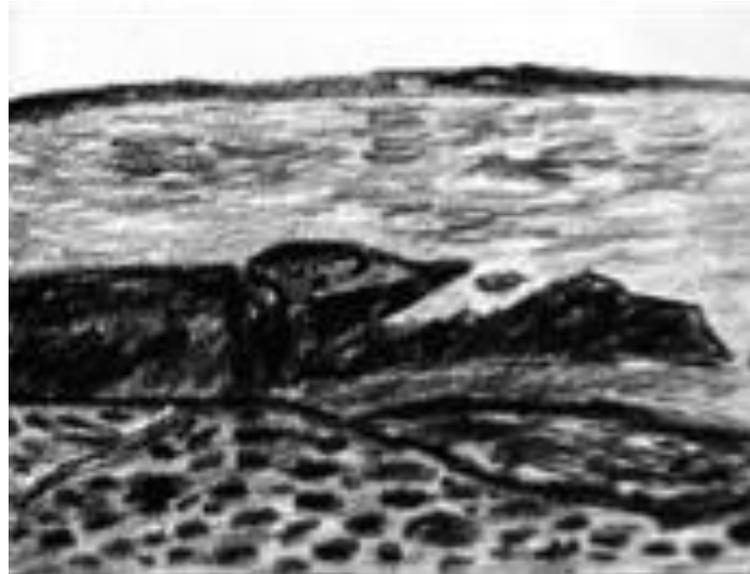
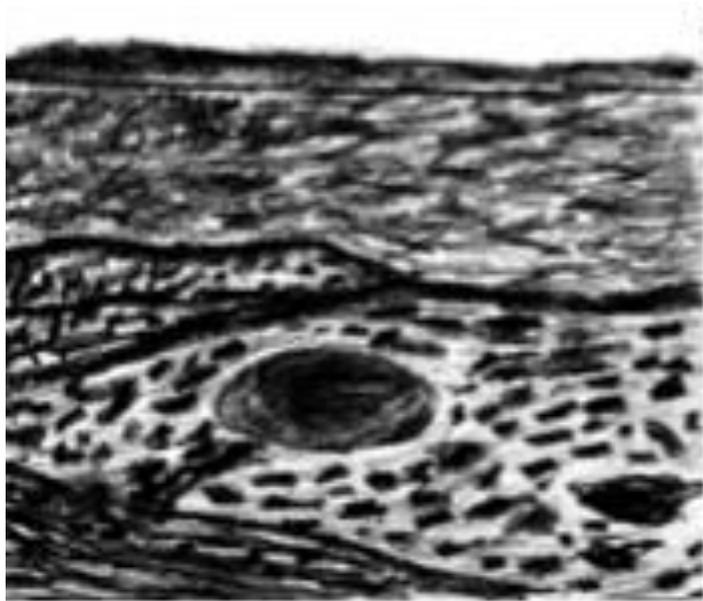
**Dance of the the Dead.** Wolli Creek. Sydney. *B&W. 6"X 4". drypoint. copper plate.* Signed by the artist Nicholas Nicola. Printed by the artist on Hahnemuhle off white 300 gsm using Heidelberg Warm Black.

Drawing used for this etching as mentioned.



**Well of Life.** Shelley Beach. Cronulla. Sydney. B&W. 6"X 4". drypoint. copper plate.  
Signed by the artist Nicholas Nicola. Printed by the artist on Hahnemuhle off white 300  
gsm using Heidelberg Warm Black.

Drawing used for this etching.



*Rocks. Shelley Beach.*

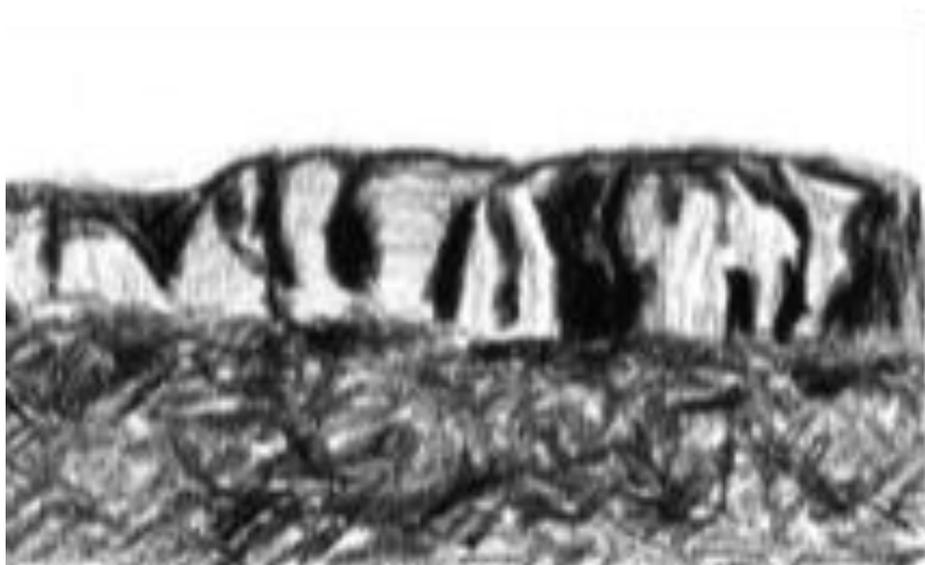
**Rockface.** Coledale. South Coast. NSW. *B&W. 6"X 4". drypoint. copper plate.* Signed by the artist Nicholas Nicola. Printed by the artist on Hahnemuhle off white 300 gsm using Heidelberg Warm Black.

*Drawing used for this etching as mentioned.*



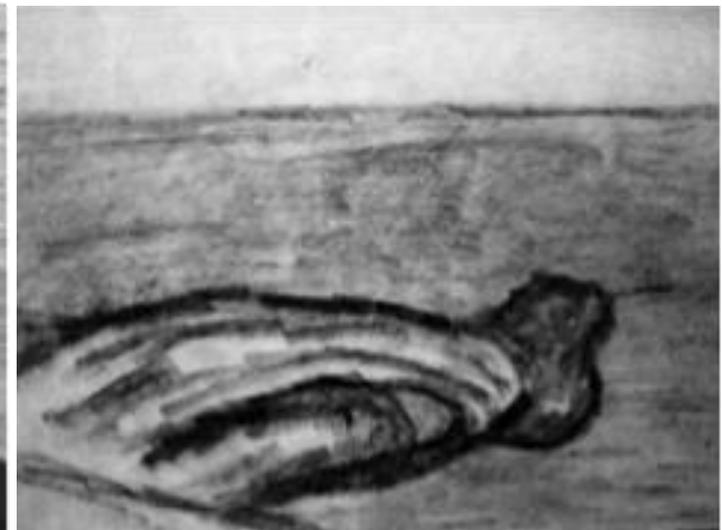
**Early Morning. Coledale.** South Coast. NSW. *B&W. 6"X4". drypoint. copper plate.*  
Signed by the artist Nicholas Nicola. Printed by the artist on Hahnemuhle off white 300  
gsm using Heidelberg Warm Black.

*Drawing used for this etching as mentioned.*



**Angel Rock.** Gordons Bay. Sydney. *B&W. 6"X 4". drypoint. copper plate.* Signed by the artist Nicholas Nicola. Printed by the artist on Hahnemuhle off white 300 gsm using Heidelberg Warm Black.

Gordons Bay with Angel Rock. Two photos and a sketch.



**Heart of the Universe.** Gordons Bay. Sydney. *B&W. 6"X 4". drypoint. copper plate.*  
Signed by the artist Nicholas Nicola. Printed by the artist on Hahnemuhle off white 300  
gsm using Heidelberg Warm Black.

*Drawing used for this etching as mentioned.*



**Archangel.** Wolli Creek. Sydney. *B&W. 6"X 4" sugarlift. aquatint. zinc plate.* Signed by the artist Nicholas Nicola. Printed by the artist on Hahnemuhle off white 300 gsm using Heidelberg Warm Black.

*Drawing used for this etching.*



**Mangrove Souls.** (Awaiting to go to Paradise). Cooks River. Goolay'yari. Sydney. *B&W.*  
*6"X4" sugarlift. aquatint. zinc plate.* Goolay'yari is the Aboriginal name of the river.  
Signed by the artist Nicholas Nicola. Printed by the artist on Hahnemuhle off white 300  
gsm using Heidelberg Warm Black.

*Mangrove. Cooks River. Cooks River (Goolay'yari) sketches.*



**The Last Judgement.** (Apocalypse). Wollie Creek. Sydney. *B&W. 6"X 4" sugarlift. aquatint. zinc plate.* Signed by the artist Nicholas Nicola. Printed by the artist on Hahnemuhle off white 300 gsm using Heidelberg Warm Black.

*Drawing initially used by the artist for this etching.*



**Fallen Angels.** Wolli Creek. Sydney. *B&W. 6"X4" sugarlift. aquatint. zinc plate.* Signed by the artist Nicholas Nicola. Printed by the artist on Hahnemuhle off white 300 gsm using Heidelberg Warm Black.

*Drawing used for this etching.*

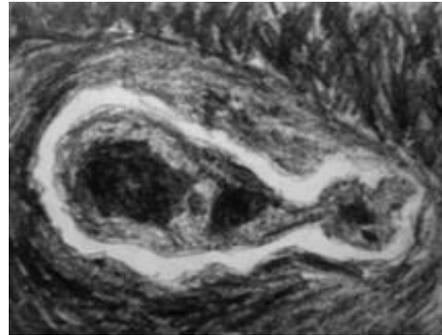


## COOKS RIVER/WOLLI CREEK

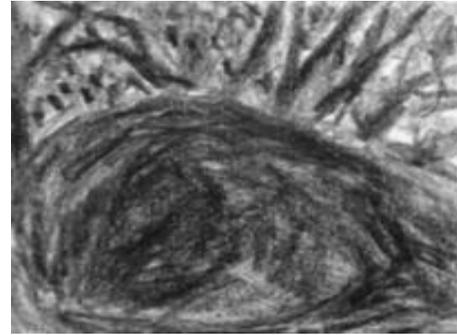
It should be noted there is a comprehensive overview of Cooks River in the essays section which follows the main appendix; articles which also relate to the CURRENTS etching series. Below are two drawings which have been used for Wollli Creek etchings as well as some other sketches which have been given a mythological accent. On the matter of the Cooks River photos it should be noted that a small Canon compact camera (Digital IXUS 60) that is now several years old was used to take these pictures; the quality is adequate if the images are kept small.



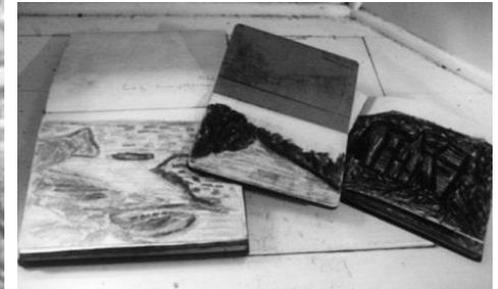
Cooks River.



Supernova.



Zeus's Cave ( The Eye of God).



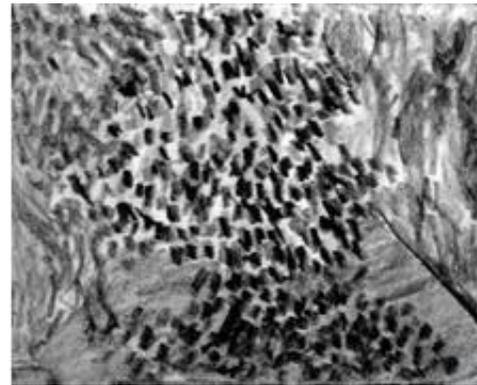
Sketch books.



Zeus throwing Prometheus down the fissure.



Rock of Sisyphus



Eurydice glimpses the surface from the Underworld



fallen angels. wollli creek.



Rockpool.  
Wolli  
Creek.

Tree Day. 2012. Wolli Creek.

*'...still the sky is blue...'*

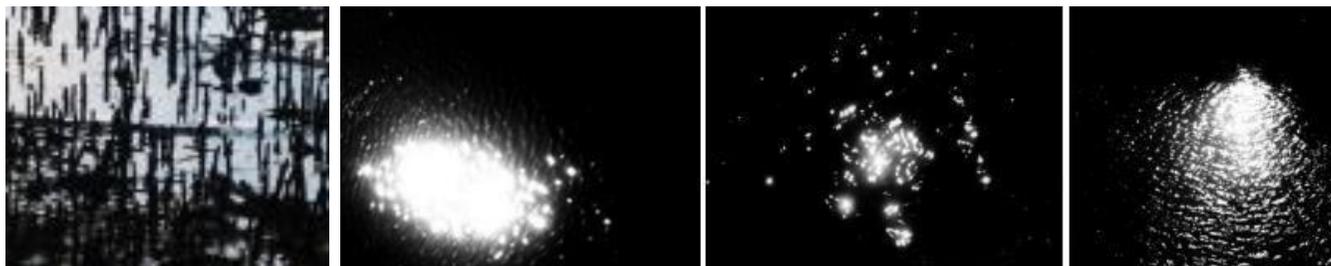
The explanation notes state that this two tone image is based on a remark in Marcel Proust's Remembrance of Things Past. The woods may be dark but one can look heavenwards for inspiration and hope. Here is an extract from Volume 2): Returning from a long walk, we saw Legrandin near the Pont-Vieux ( he was spending a few days more in Combray because of the holidays). He came up to us with outstretched hand: "Do you know, master booklover, he asked me, "this line of Paul Desjardins?

Now are the woods all black, but still the sky is blue.

Isn't that a fine rendering of a moment like this? Perhaps you have never read Paul Desjardins. Read him, my boy, read him: in these days he is converted, they tell me, into a preaching friar, but he used to have the most charming water-colour touch-

Now are the woods all black, but still the sky is blue.

May you always see a blue sky overhead, my young friend: and then, even when the time comes, as it has come for me now, when the woods are all black, when night is fast falling, you will be able to console yourself, as I do, by looking up at the sky." He took a cigarette from his pocket and stood for a long time with his eyes fixed on the horizon. "Goodbye, friends!" he suddenly exclaimed, and left us.

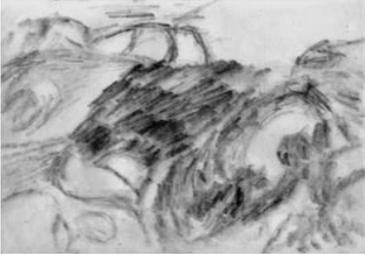


mangrove

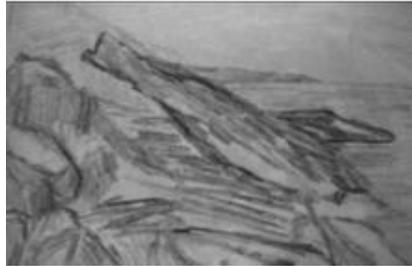
Cooks River as cosmos with sunlight reflected as stars of Heaven's Paradise. One may also wish to consider the idea that stars and galaxies are the fireworks of the universe.

# GORDONS BAY

Below are drawings of the rocks at Gordons Bay most of which were used for various etchings.



Nebula



Emergence of Life



Emergence of Life



Raveling of Life



Rings of Time



Cycle of Time

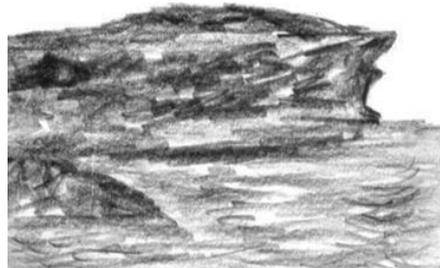


Emergence of Life

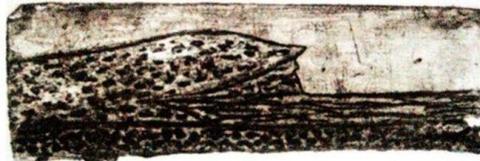


Asteroid

# SYDNEY



To the left is a tree referred to for *That tree, the Universe*. Underneath is a rock coming out of the water at Nielson Park for *The Birth of Zeus*.



Bronte etching. 2cm X 6cm. sepia. drypoint. copperplate.



Various source images used for etchings in this particular series. Top left/centre: Fallen angel sketches. Shelley Beach. Cronulla. Middle left: Bronte headland as used in background of *Ulysses and the Siren at Bronte*. Middle left: Tree. Blackwattle Bay. Glebe. Used for *The Universe our Canopy*. Middle left: Top Right: The original sculpture-by-the-sea on the way to Bondi. Bottom Right: Rock Hole. Middle Harbour.

# NATIONAL PARKS

Most of the national parks featured here either border Sydney or are in close vicinity of this large city. The obvious exception being the Pinnacles in Western Australia. One image from the Minamurra Rainforest at Jamberoo is here but other images of this national park are presented as part of the South Coast series.



Pinnacles



'Trojan Wall.'



'Misguided Angel'



'Burnt Angel'



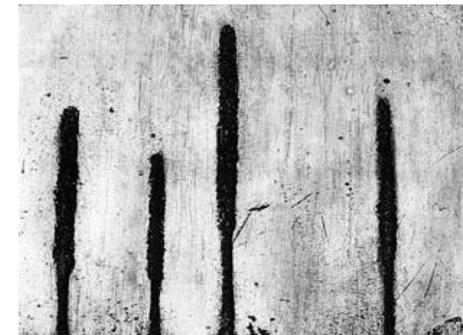
FROM COMPLEX TO SIMPLE: Tree womb etching 'studies' which finally led to a simpler tree womb ring etching with just an oval ring.



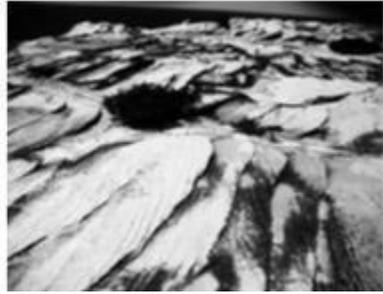
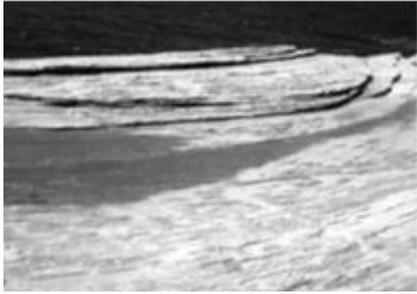
'Three Fates.'



'Tree Wombs'



Right: 'CHORDS OF THE UNIVERSE.' Royal National Park 7" X 5.5". B&W. aquatint. sugarlift. zinc plate..

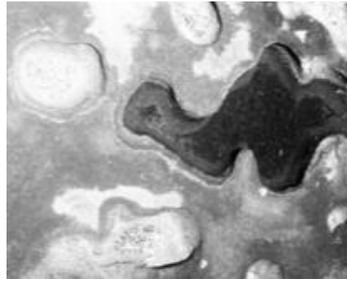


‘Currents of the Universe’

‘Flows of Time’.



‘Note of the Universe.’



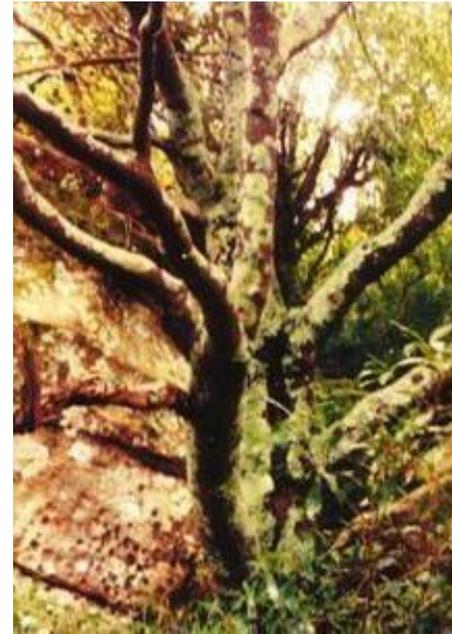
‘Black Galaxy.’



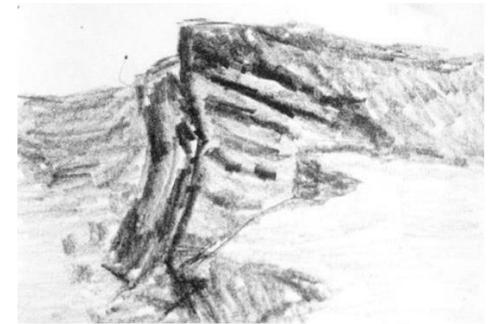
‘Evolution of the Universe.’



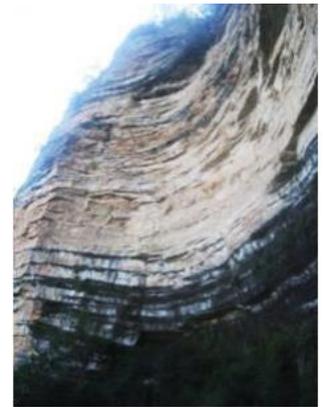
‘Hydra’



A Wolli Creek tree - with Hydra qualities.



Curramoors



Fallen Tree Galaxy

Symphony of the Universe

Wombarra windswept trees

Blue Mountains rock face

*The Three Fates. The Three Sisters.*

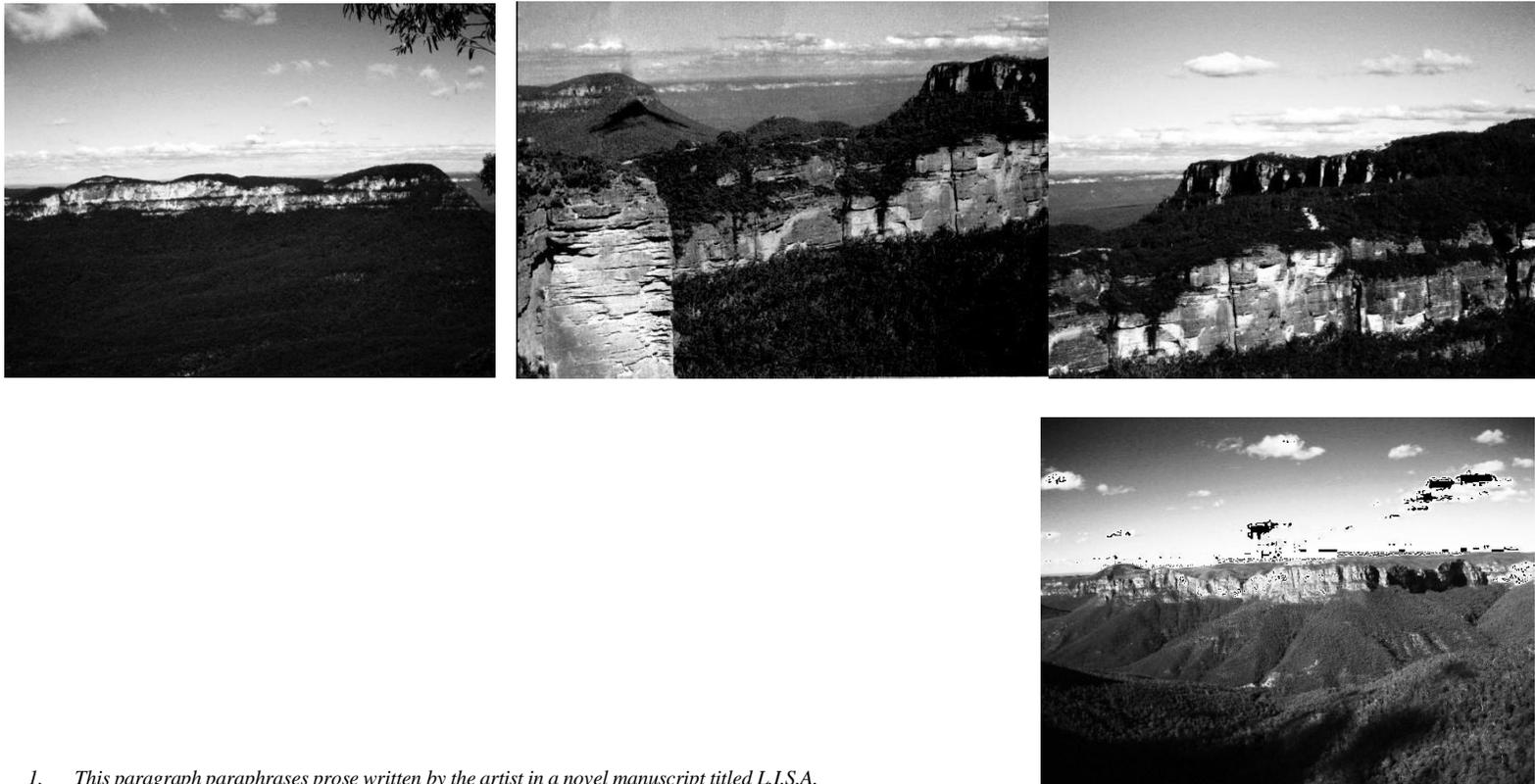


In regards to the Three Fates one may also wish to see the three similarly distinctive rock pillars known as the Three Sisters in the same way i.e. as another version of the ‘three fates.’

Yet one should also keep in mind how one can with the Three Sisters perceive a direct relationship between land and the cosmos. The Three Sisters are all that remains of the seven stone towers that once arose above the grand valley at Katoomba, the seven stone sisters were a geographical feature mirroring the Seven Sisters that still hover in the night sky, a link that can only be imagined by the human mind.

The Ancient Greeks and the Aboriginals share a similar theme when it comes to the legends associated with the Seven Sisters Dreaming. This star cluster is called by Europeans the Pleiades while in Aboriginal Australia they have been labelled the Meamai. To the Greeks they are the daughters of Atlas and nymphs to Artemis. They were also Nysiades or nursemaids and teachers to a young Dionysus. In Aboriginal culture many identities also exist around them such as being female attendants to an eagle who is now Sirius after being taken away by a crow who is now the star Canopus. Yet, curiously, what is common with both sets of sisters – Ancient and Aboriginal – is that they are often chased by a young man who lusts after them, but fortunately for these maidens, are turned into birds and fly to the constellations – as they do not desire him - he never catches up. He is represented by Orion - the hunter. Death chasing. Yet, not succeeding. This is the ‘final hope.’ One could speculate that the Ancient Greeks envisaged a deeper eternity that at the wheeling edge of the waters of Oceanus that swirl around this disc we know as Earth, there is amidst the threat of plunging into a nether world where sea and sky meet there are also beautiful islands where the gods dwell, of which the pure in spirit can join them. The universe is vast. Filled with many ‘islands’, which this Earth is yet one of them. Billions of years ago – according to what Australian astrophysicists have shown - light may have travelled at slightly different speeds. The inference is that light may refract through little extra dimensions affecting its speed. Theories

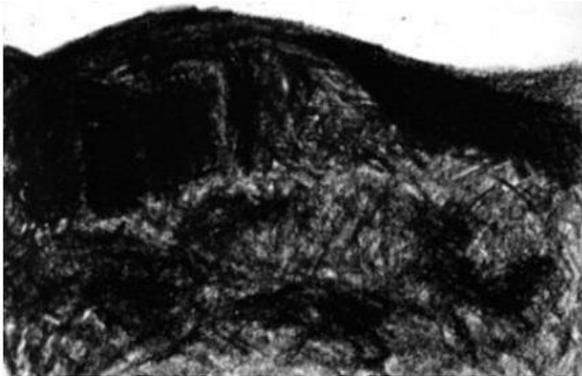
are developing that other dimensions with their yet unknown physical properties may exist which are like splinters brought into being the moment the universe was created. Apparently, the speed of light may keep changing as the universe changes in size, as it gets remarkably bigger as the volume of the universe grows; we live in a curved universe, where an unseen reality will always exist, like the unseen reality that lurks within our memory, which unconsciously affects our point-of-view; changing speeds of light, (along with changing refractions of forgetfulness and reminiscence) leads me to think that our perception of physical reality is no longer to be trusted and in the cosmic darkness are unknown dimensions that may never see the light of day. Yet, to continue the mythological allegory with the Three Sisters one could also compare them to the Three Fates and the string which is used by these mythical women to determine the length of a human life can be compared to the thread used by Theseus to preserve his life in the labyrinth; thread is a symbol of life, yet its length determines the span of life available and this length is determined by the fates, they have the final say, yet we are determined to live, to make deals, negotiate with fate, to be like Penelope who kept spinning thread to fend off fate.<sup>1</sup>



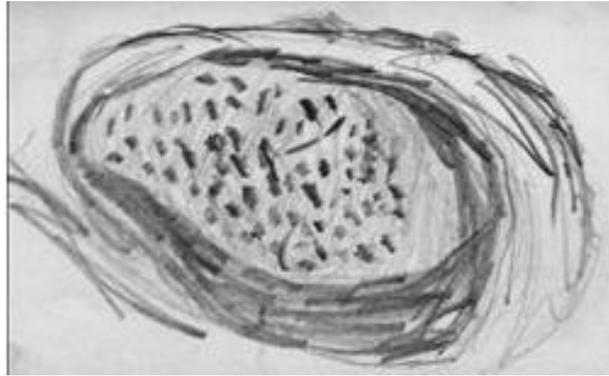
1. *This paragraph paraphrases prose written by the artist in a novel manuscript titled L.I.S.A.*

## NORTH COAST/SOUTH COAST NSW/VICTORIA

Below is mainly source material for many of the etchings in this series along with a few other images which are labelled in generally the same way as the source drawings and photos.



Misty Bluffa. Coledale.



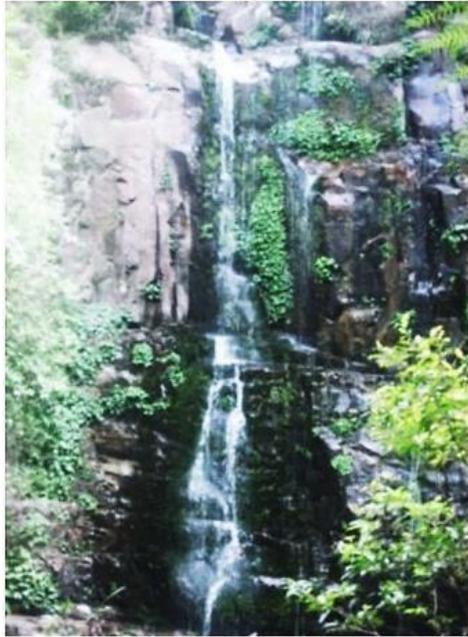
Conception of Life



Time Totem



Pillars of Time



Minnamorra Waterfall



Pillars of Time



Wisdom & Youth



Foundation of Time



Eternity



Fern Angel



Ferns

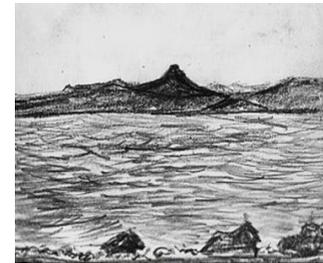
All these images are from the Minnamorra Rainforest which is situated near Jamberoo. Approximately two hours drive south of Sydney.



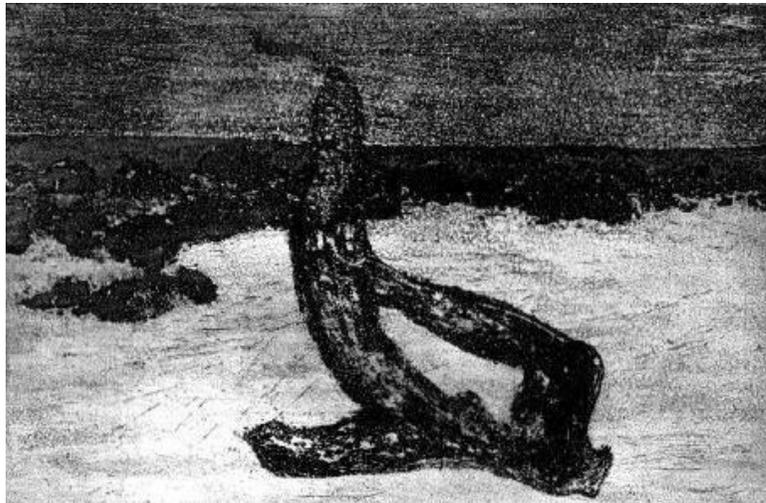
'Foundation of Time.'  
Minnammorra  
Rainforest. Jamberoo.  
B&W. 2" X 4".  
aquatint. sugarlift. zinc  
plate.



Eroding Rocks. Jervis Bay.



Sunset. Greenpatch. Jervis Bay. Extinct volcano. Jervis Bay. Eroding Rocks. Jervis Bay.



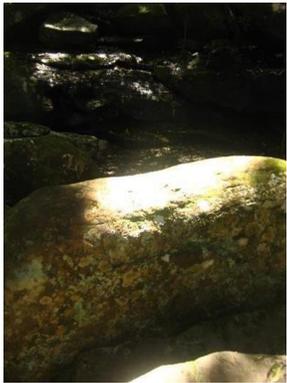
'Archangel.' Big Marley beach. Royal National Park. (Nature's sculpture-by-the-sea.).  
B&W. sugarlift. aquatint. zinc plate.



Apostles of the Universe



Forming Galaxies. Bulli Beach.



Sisyphus Rocks. Bobbin Head Point. National Park. (These photos should be with the national park series but they fitted in well here). Archangel.

## CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

These photos are all stills of the landscape filmed with a Super 8 camera while flying in a Cessna from Alice Springs to Amata. An Aboriginal community. The artist was visiting friends who worked as doctor and nurse at Amata in the mid-90s. The film can be accessed via the following website link: <http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/youtube.php> which leads to the Super 8 film link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdXnG3mDZMg>



Alpha/Omega



Embryo of the Universe



Pendulum of Time



Mother & Child

## CURRENTS/RESURRECTION

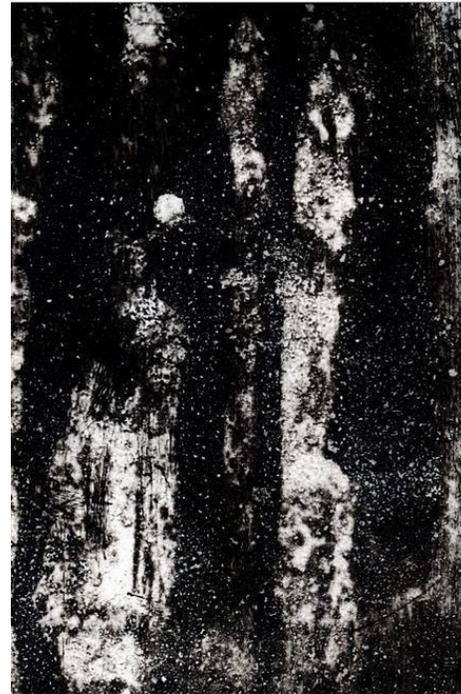


Resurrection tree. Royal National Park.



The image used at the start of the CURRENTS series is a still from a brief experimental film Ancient Spiritts showing the wind blowing over Cooks River. (See VIDEOS from the website).

*'Keyhole to the Universe.'* Garigal National Park. (Sydney).  
6" X 4". sepia. aquatint. sugarlift. zinc plate.



*'READYMADE UNIVERSE'*  
6" X 4" sepia. aquatint. copperplate.

The image is based on a natural erosion of the plate which included the deterioration of the blockout that had originally been placed on the plate in preparation of doing another image that never eventuated. Thus there was no use of sugarlift in the production of the image. Instead, by following Duchampian aesthetics, what one has here is a 'readymade universe'. The original title of the etching was 'Stellar Universe' yet was changed to better befit the 'chance' unpolished circumstances of its creation. Although a somewhat abstract experimental work on e may wish to envisage or note its rising stellar supernova pillars and a celestial object that maybe a moon or planet.

## Keyhole to the Universe.

In many recent etchings there has been an iconoclastic approach to the images whereby there has been a focus on one particular object. This approach is partly due to the indirect influence of Henry Moore whose sculptures often conveyed in a monumental way a certain idea and I have attempted to find the same 'monumental' approach although on a much more modest scale. There has also been a general tendency to 'strip back' an image by ridding it of any 'visual clutter' to arrive at a basic 'symbol' of what is to be expressed. Thus the object such as a tree or rock is surrounded by empty space. Yet space is needed in order to allow living growth to be made possible by having the necessary room to move into and thus in a metaphorical sense the fullness of an idea is allowed to be clearly expressed due to a visual clarity brought on by the emptiness that surrounds it – both eye and mind have been left with nothing else to focus on but by the subject of the image which is its essence. Emptiness matters. In Chinese painting emptiness can be perceived as an expression of the infinite which is a very concrete reality especially when it is to be considered that culture has to play a pivotal role in harmonizing humanity's relationship between itself and nature. An ultimate unity with the cosmos seems to me to be all encompassing Taoist aim which was a major influence on Chinese painting. To paraphrase the Tao notion of Yin and Yang emptiness and fullness are opposites that rely on each other to provide a complementary universal wholeness to life – and, as a consequence, also in art. A Chinese painting can 'breathe' and stay alive due to the empty space which essentially co-exists *equally* with the solid forms in the image. Breath is unseen but it is breath that provides life – with this way of thinking emptiness is thus vital in life. I am not at all knowledgeable of Chinese aesthetics but Empty and Full. The Language of Chinese Painting by Francois Cheng ( Shambala. Boston & London) provides an eloquent introduction to the relationship of Chinese art and Chinese philosophy such as the Tao. Instinctively, I have merely arrived at the same artistic conclusion to the value of so called 'empty space' in any pictorial configuration.

The floating 'keyhole' in this image intimates the calligraphic brush-stroking of Chinese art as well as to the organic biomorphic forms of the twentieth century artist Hans/Jean Arp (or even of Miro). The experimental image is based holes in a rock formation at Galigal National Park in northern Sydney. Although the keyhole is in two parts it is easy to imagine them joining up to form one whole space. It is a paradox in this image that what is actually space is conveyed in black while that which may be solid is white. Yet, if this is the 'keyhole' to the universe which allows entry to the cosmos where do we the viewer stand? Outside the universe? Outside space and time? In that case it perhaps makes sense that we are in a spiritual realm and it is valid that it is portrayed by the purity that is that is the colour white. White is the full colour spectrum combined in on itself by every colour and perhaps if outside the universe its edge would be therefore white as it would perhaps be possible to see the all of reality in every conceivable combination at the same time. Thus what is white blank which appears as 'nothing' is really *everything*. As if we are spirits in a boundless womb of eternity we will unlock the door leading to time and space to invert our position of the reverse perception we now have of reality while 'outside' the universe; what is black and what is white will perhaps be turned around. (It is somewhat ironic that recent astronomical discoveries confirm that the vast darkness of space is actually filled up with a dark matter that makes up to 95% of the known cosmos. What is 'nothing' in deep space is not that at all. If the universe were a mountain then the visible forms of the universe that do exist such as the stars and planets would simply form a thin blanket of snow covering the top of this peak). I have mixed feelings about this simple – yet profound – image. Yet have realised that the next logical step on this artistic course is to produce an image without any form - simply so called 'empty space'. ( I am also reminded by the simple Zen like compositions created by Georgia O'Keefe towards the end of her long life). No matter the hue, whether it be black or white or some other colour in between the artistic realm of nothingness as approached by Western modernism is best left to a Malevich or a Rothko to explore and define. I will draw back and in turn after the next 'mental gestation' period' go on to imaginatively explore other tributaries of that vast unlimited river delta we call 'reality' to discover or reflect 'truth'.

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## Jervis Bay

With the notion of 'celestial erosion' in mind one may wish to return to earth with the corresponding notion of terrestrial erosion. Below are two sketches and some other photos of the Jervis bay environ. The first sketch is of an extinct volcano on the other side of a stretch of water at a bay where a local Aboriginal community is situated. It along with the photo of the eroding rock pillars reveals to me the paradox of undetectable 'eternal time' intersecting with the visible physical world which perhaps leads to or influences mortal decay; one could surmise that what erodes disappears to the wind, air, earth and water – to the elements of the universe; the material 'more' that is forgone is a sort of a spiritual growth as this 'lost physical property resides anew in perhaps an unseen quantum realm. Thus one may wish to view eroding rocks as a measure of 'time eroding on the physical plane.





Fallen angel tryptich. Jervis Bay.



‘LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE.’

*B&W. aquatint. 8" X 8". zinc plate. (Dedicated to KV).*

This very early work is not of any particular land mass but the texture which was achieved by the process of aquatinting was inspired by coastal rocks. I like to walk amid the rocky outcrops that one often finds at many Australian beaches admiring the patterns and textures that have been sculpted into the surfaces of the rocks by water and wind.



Coastal rock fractal step crack; straight line crack on Jervis Bay rock shelf; straight line rock crack at Stotts Reserve. Nearby Wollie Creek.

# INDONESIA

Below are source photos for this series as well as some other images.



Creation of the World. Ubud.



Anu Krakatau is Angry.



Flores wharf.



Puppet Master.



Adam & Eve



# AUSTRALIANA

Source photos and some other images.



Kite flying. St.Peters



Icarus performer.



Colour Theory. Cooks River festival. April 2006.

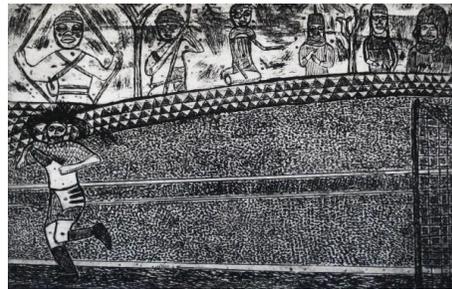


Indian magicians. Brunswick Heads.



Street theatre in Byron Bay & Marrickville Festival.

Sydney Sport Tryptich. 'Shiva the Crickete'r forms part of a 'sport tryptich.  
 The other two etchings are 'The Curse is Lifted.' . B&W. 9"X5" drypoint. copperplate  
 In commemoration of Australia's entry into the FIFA World Cup with penalty shoot-out win over Uruguay.  
 Telstra Stadium. Sydney. November 16. 2005. & 'Perry, Bek & Edmond between the posts'.  
 B&W. 9"X5" drypoint. copperplate



Marrickville awning sculpture which is on many awnings in the main shopping strip.



A Sunday afternoon with Perry Keyes, Edmond and Bek. Carlisle Hotel. Newtown. Gladstone Hotel. Dulwich Hill.

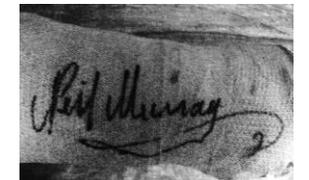


start: suburban musos



A green section of the Sea of Hands that originally covered Bondi Beach but has been installed over the years in places like Sydney University.

Black Deaths in Custody March. Redfern. circa late 1980s. The etching related to such photos was produced to take into account a social history that may become far less well known in the nation's long-term historical memory. Thus in social/cultural terms Aboriginal musicians & artists have helped to play a valuable role in highlighting the appalling treatment of 'black Australia' by 'white Australia' which unfortunately still insidiously continues.



Jimmy Little & Neil Murray. AN TAR concert. Prince Alfred Park. Broadway. Sydney. circa mid-2000s. Ruby Hunter & Archie Roach. Survival Concert. La Perouse. January 26. circa early 1990s. Stolen Children. Old weathered poster sighted in inner city Sydney. Mural of Aboriginal child. Cleveland St. Redfern/Chippendale. Sydney. Above: Neil Murray autograph turns an arm plaster cast into a significant found object.

Aboriginal art achieves worldwide fame and record high art market prices

ABORIGINAL RIGHT STUFF

Aboriginal Dreamtime huge canvas in corporate boardroom of Australian mining company

REGULAR SUSPEND TRUTH ZONE



Aboriginal community housing conditions achieve worldwide infamy and record high mortality rates

ABORIGINAL WRONG STUFF

Australian mining trucks in huge pits carving up the Aboriginal Dreamtime desert

NO SUSPEND TRUTH ZONE

Annual Black/Colours Diggers March after ceremonial wreath laying ceremony. Redfern Park. Anzac Day.2015



Girls with faces painted with Aboriginal flag colours. Survival Concert . La Perouse. circa early 1990s.

Black Anzac Day March. 2013. Redfern.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVE9iIn\\_dIM&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVE9iIn_dIM&feature=youtu.be)

Black Anzac Day wreath laying ceremony. Redfern Park. 2013

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHAGfQtTbCg&feature=youtu.be>

THE ABORIGINAL ARTIST ASKED WHY IS THERE NO DIALYSIS DREAMING?\*

THE BLACK ARTIST ASKED WHY ARE THERE NOT MORE INDIGENOUS IMAGES IN THE GALLERIES ABOUT THE POOR LIVING CONDITIONS OF HIS PEOPLE?

\*alternative title: no dialysis dreaming

fair go mate

the black musician said that in the so called land of the fair go it was about time he and his people got a fair go it was all they were asking for



Aboriginal figures on the doors of Mitchell State Library . Sydney. To acknowledge 40,000 years of Aboriginal presence. A well-intended act of recognition by William Ifoud, the Main Librarian (1912-1942). However, which one may view today with some sense of cultural and political irony considering how Aboriginal society was brutally destroyed by white occupation.

A helicopter TV shot of a government sponsored cruise ship to give safe passage for the hundreds of boat people on it being welcomed into Sydney Harbour with a ticker tape parade also to be held for them by the people of Sydney

IRREGULAR AUSTRALIAN ILLUSION

A helicopter TV shot of a government sponsored SAS commando team in speedboats boarding a ship filled with boat people to intimidate them to leave Australian waters because they are seen as a threat to the Australian way of life

REGULAR AUSTRALIAN REALITY

BAND AT THE BLOCK REDFERN. ANZAC DAY 2013. Sing Perfect.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ww0gj3xUqQI&feature=youtu.be>



Ressurrection Night. Earlwood Greek Orthodox. The lighting and raising of candles at midnight for the beginning of Ressurrection Sunday signifies the rising of Christ after his death by crucifixion. These days I am reminded of this occasion whenever I have a chance to attend a #LightUpTheDark event for refugees. The above photo is such a gathering whereby thousands of people turned up in Hyde Park in Sydney on a chilly Monday night in early September. 2015.

‘AGAPE.’ 10” X 8 “. sepia on cream paper. drypoint. zinc plate. An etching based on a Byzantine icon which is unusual as it shows Jesus as dead in the interim period between his execution and return to life. Such images are apparently rare.



‘Agape.’ 10”X8”. sepia on cream paper. zinc plate.



A young ‘Zeus’ with daughter and wife in ‘Speed’s Milk Bar circa mid-1960s. Earlwood. Sydney.



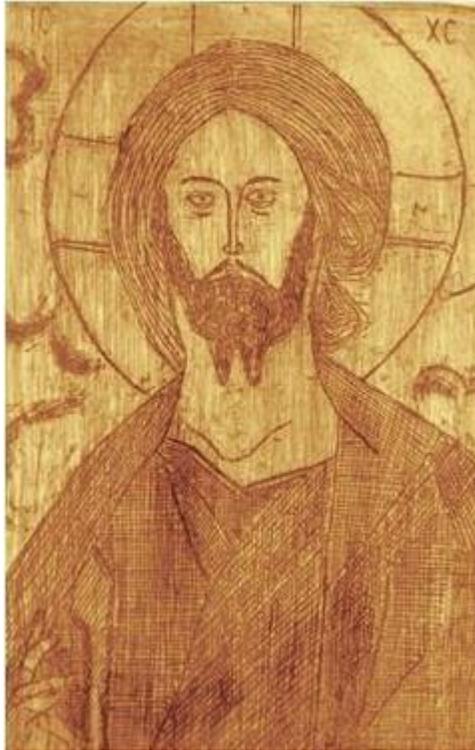
Valiant with proud driver.



EH Holden

## ICONOGRAPHIC/HUMAN FIGURES/CROSS-CULTURAL

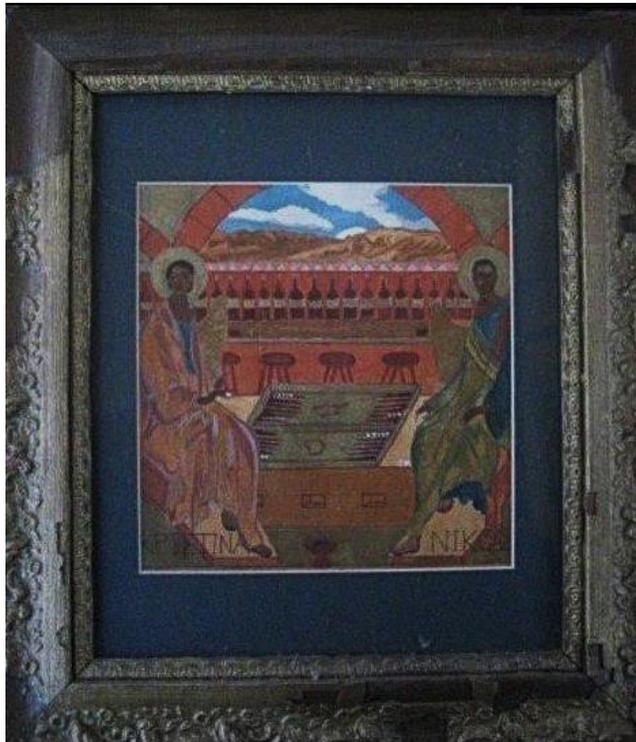
The Angel which is the etching that begins this series was produced at the same time as the following iconic work which is similar in style. *The Redemption*. 6" X 4". sepia. drypoint. copperplate. This etching of an iconoclast Christ as the redemptive Messiah is also based on an icon by the great Russian Byzantine icon painter Andrey Rublyov. *African Mask* 6" X 4". sepia. drypoint. copperplate was produced soon afterwards and is based on an African death mask. It is thought that African art influenced the development of Western modernism as exemplified by Cubism. However, recent reading seems to consider the idea that the multi-angled approach to painting by Picasso and Braque was perhaps verified as an appropriate approach to extinguishing perspectival painting by their viewing of African objects in Paris. It should be noted that African masks are still objects that are infused with life by the spirits and by that 'organic moving object' – the dancer. The third image is a display of a Russian shaman at the Ethnographic Museum in St.Petersburg. Russia.



SPRING. Royal Botanical Gardens. Sydney There's four statues to the four seasons.



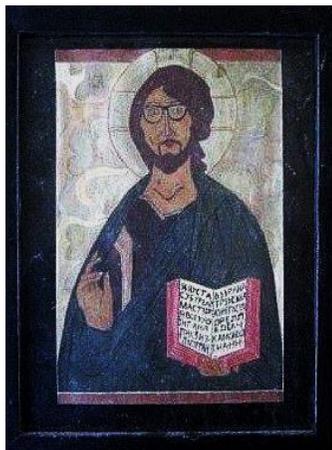
Venetian mask



THE MIRACLE OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE EXTRA WHITE BACKGAMMON PIECE.\*

*gouache on paper 19cm X 20 cm. Rozelle market frame 'restored' by the artist.*

This celebrated artwork fits better in the tradition of early Renaissance painting rather than in the Byzantine icon tradition. The mountain landscape & sky scene in the background creates a sense of spatial depth not usual in icons. However, the Byzantine tradition is more or less followed in the sense that this image captures the 'eternal moment' when both saints have realized that an extra white counter has materialized in the backgammon set. St. Kristina holds the piece in her hand. This 'holy piece' appeared at the end of playing the very last game. The game was played in an inner-city Darlinghurst café in Sydney. By the knees of St. Nichols are the dice with the numbers three and one. Three & One are both divine numbers often dealing in the Christian tradition with the Trinity of the Godhead & One with the concept of Unity with the Eternal. The apparition of the white counter brings up suggestions of unity between the opposite but connected realms of the Godhead & the Creation. This aspect promotes the idea of a Final Synthesis between the Physical & Spiritual to bring about a Total Unity in All Known & Unknown Reality. There is also a sense of the Eternal in the gold backgammon board. Thus the game represents human intelligence involving itself in the Finite & Infinite processes of dealing with Fate; & the interconnecting effect of divine action & human decision in affecting the courses of our own lives & to a resolution to the ultimate issue between life & death & to the realization that such a resolution brings us into contact with the Infinite Eternal which we as Finite Beings mostly desire. Our saints discourse with their Human Intelligence (which we must remember was created from the Divine) & with the Eternal & Fate every time they play backgammon. In the immediate background is the scene of a Grecian café bringing up connotations of a Mediterranean point of view towards life (this attitude is best summed up in the writings of Mediterraneans such as Nikos Kazantzakis & Marcus Aurelius). Whilst beyond the arch which serves almost as a window to the Eternal there is a mountain landscape which surrounds the Tibetan town of Xiahe in western China. In Xiahe our two protagonists experienced the Tibetan New Year (which was like walking into the colourful unconscious realms of a Wasil Kandinsky painting and into the divine glory of any William Blake work) in their travels and which was a reminder of the issues between Human & Divine Fate discussed here. Lastly, we note on the backgammon board the maps of Cyprus & Lithuania which is a point of reference to the human heritage of our two saints. Here in ends a summary of this image. (Please note that St. Ch/Kristina Day is December 5 & St. Nicholas Day is December 6).



MASTER.  
*Gouache on paper.*  
*A4 size.*

Portrait of Ica – a friend of the artist. Painted at the time of his surprise 40<sup>th</sup> at the Bat & Ball Hotel. Chippendale where many noted 'Newtown bands' performed.

*\*Based on a true event.*



Greek Easter red dye packet and red Greek Easter eggs. Red Square with St.Basil.

A large A3 size sketch used for the *Achilles* etching. Hermes sketch followed by etching titled: *'Hermes about to take flight.'* B & W. 2" X 1" sugarlift. zinc



The human figure. Reverse Garbage. Marrickville. Shop window helmets. Ancient & Space Age. Railway Square.

IMAGE 1\_medieval wheel of fortune behind theseus and the minotaur.jpg

IMAGE 2\_IKEA shopping path.jpg

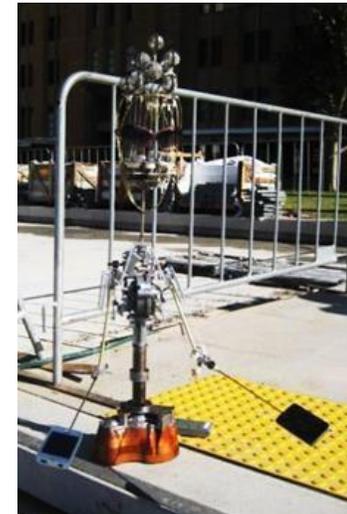
start

human fate.rtf.

Human fate with the wheel of fate of the cathedral behind Theseus and the Minotaur and the shopping centre pathway as a modern day labyrinth.



'St. David' with halo & a messianic hand gesture.



Moving human figure. The sculpture is powered by solar panels as hands.

## POLYXENA.

Along with notable males such as Achilles and Hector there are also some extraordinary female characters in the Trojan War which would make the likes of an Antigone feel very proud. The Amazons are well known but another woman who comes readily to mind is Polyxena. Polyxena was Hector's sister who was sacrificed by the Greeks after the Fall of Troy to appease the ghost of Achilles who ruthlessly desired this fiesty Trojan princess to join him in the Underworld. (Another female sacrifice was Iphigenia who was pragmatically sacrificed by her father Agamemnon – the military commander of the Greek army that would attack Troy. - to appease the goddess Artemis so the winds would return to take the Greek fleet to Troy. Iphigenia tragically awaited her death; having been lured to it by her father's promise that she would be married to Achilles). Regarding Polyxena consider the following 'dream passage' [from LISA a novel manuscript work-in-progress]:

*'Who can appease the appetites of empires?' inquires Agamemnon. 'All is hollow...Achilles is pitiless. His deathly spirit debases all love. As I waited by an ill-fated Thracian shore for the winds to taper off so my fleet could safely go home (an ironic, bitter twist to the closure of my time in Troy), Achilles ghost arose from the cracked desolate ground to accuse me with his sword that all Achaeans were now abandoning him; so much for the 'bygones-be-bygones' to me to resolve our differences after the wasteful end of Patrocolus; 'never mind' Achilles previous abandonment of us at our moment of most dire need; yet this shade demanded that if Priam had his son, he would have his daughter; this was the measure of his 'love': that an innocent maiden die for his lust. I acceded to his wish, for I was still too grateful for having Priam's other daughter— 'dear Cassandra'—ah, the years weary me, the years condemn me...so 'it' was done...Odysseus convinced the Achaeans who questioned this barbarity, who wanted to veto this 'sacrifice' by saying the victors had to show their 'gratitude' to 'honourable Achilles'. In life Achilles was willing to have peace with Troy so as to marry her; yet in death he would have her still. How did Polyxena take it? Hector's sister shamed us with her courage, it was almost unearthly, she did not allow our force to turn her into another mere object of our wrath; we the 'victors' were shown to be morally bankrupt, all we did with the city we revered was to destroy it and slaughter its citizens for no reason, we came for riches but left with dust, better if we had gone to the Carpathians, where it is said Jason had ventured, and all fossicked for gold with Georgian peasants, capturing gold in fleeces left in mountain streams. Bah! We sliced the windpipes of virgins and let Helen live! Trojanwhore!'*

*Thus Spoke Zarathrusa is playing over the loudspeakers as the main screen shows a re-enactment of Polyxena's end with Lisa again playing the sacrificial role. This lone woman stands by Achilles burial mound and around her is the whole Greek host; at the fore are the likes of Odysseus, Agamemnon, Menalaus, and Theseus's two sons. At the altar is Achilles son Neoptolemus who will act as priest and cut the victim's throat.*

*'Look at how serene she remains compared to the madness that will overtake Ajax who will slaughter sheep and goats after being deceived by Athena that they are his fellow Greeks who had rejected him; his military pride will lead him to thrust his blade into his tight gut, it is the only response he knows, and the gods know it, his entrails will be found hanging out, mixed with the guts of his butchered 'victims'. Ajax will prove to be unworthy of Achilles arms, while wise Odysseus is a better choice this woman, with her stoicism, certainly deserves them.'*

*Above the sacrificial victim glows the planet Jupiter and angled below on either side in equidistance from this celestial apex are two points of gravitational pull that hold in Jupiter's orbit masses of asteroids known as 'the Trojans'. Thus Achilles and Patrocolus follow the path of Jupiter while lesser 'warriors' hurtle into this giant.*

*'The shield of Zeus protects us from Apollo's arrows.' thinks Agamemnon. Nevertheless, every Pharaoh present sees in this 'eternal triangle' reference to the first pyramid that emerged when the watery chaos subsided; like themselves—who travelled to the two starry Invincibles after burial in their pyramid receptacles—this woman will also head to an immortal tomb.*

*A black slab on Artemis.*

*A black rock in the Central Australian desert.*

*A space antennae titled L.I.S.A.\* passes by the shield of Zeus, heading to deep space to measure the gravitational pull of black holes; in a search to understand the fundamentals of the universe; to help resolve the mystery of dark matter, a black cosmic energy which helps the universe to grow; whose gravitational pull may help the stars to move.*

*'Heaven is strange. To attempt to measure the gods who cause us chaos. To learn how fate controls us...to control fate...' The Mycenaean frowns. 'Yet Zeus had us go to war so Achilles death could be made possible. No half-cast god would threaten to overthrow the Lord of Mt. Olympus. We are all a stain in Zeus's mind and Apollo and Poseidon would wash away the Achaean wall to cleanse the earth of our violent presence.*

*Naked.*

*Human.*

Pyramids.

*'The slaughter of the Trojan prisoners at the funerary pyre of Patrocolus.'* surmises Agamemnon. *'Achilles, you have spurred on our divine retribution with such evil acts. A ransom had to be given to you in return for Hector's mutilated corpse. Plato is right: it was wrong of you to follow with such mercenary zeal the advice of your tutor Phoenix who told you not to fight unless you were rewarded by me in kind with gifts. To think I gave you back Briseis! We give you Polyxena!'*

*'Zeus's shield' is still in full view, outshining all the stars including Sirius.*

*'Our destinies can so uneasily turn on a god's whim.'* Agamemnon is unnerved. *'This shield can so easily descend! How I am still thankful to Hera who distracted a lustful Zeus, led him to Mt. Ida, to give my war weary troops some breathing space as we rallied against Hector. 'Our supreme god'—to be our enemy—for fickle agreeing with Achilles that us Greeks deserved to bitterly learn how 'grateful' we should be to 'our hero'.*

*As dusk prevails Aphrodite's planet twinkles in the clear orange-purple sky.*

*'The Cyprus goddess, when that bitch forgets all her envies she can magnificently comfort us. All fear—and loneliness—leaves. This woman will not squeal like a hog, like my daughter.'*

Love.

*'Helios slowly goes down towards Thessaly; from there Asclepius -Apollo's son—the god of healing—with snake ravelled around his rod—will reveal his compassion on this hostage.'*

*A sigh. 'We are certainly punished for our disrespect to the gods, yet we die anyway, it is better to live staring at death daily in the face, to not hide from death like Calypso tried to do with Odysseus; for a heroic life is to know one is mortal, and to then live life to the full in devotion to what is just, this will make you fully human, and then—at 'the end'—to die unafraid, this may at least gain you some divine respect. Certainly Polyxena will die as a free woman, as no one's slave-' (Haitian drum beating. A wild Sargossa Sea. Yes, there is a sad destiny for this beauty. Agwe, voodoo's Lord of the Sea and Lasiren his Mermaid Queen weep as Lisa's soul readies to board a sailing boat to take her 'home'; Apo Lisa the sun-god).*

*A light drizzle falls from a passing cloud. Lisa prepares for her destiny by unzipping her white jumpsuit to reveal the upper half of her body. It is fully shaped, that is to say there is no sign of her disease, a full bosom, a full face filled with the vigour of life, a perfect being of beauty that makes the Greeks*

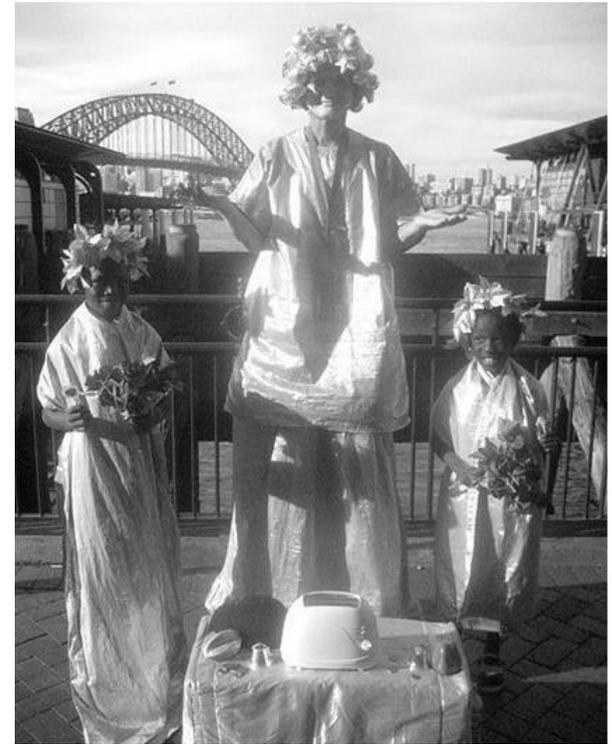
*shudder, a flower that must be scythed down, her shining long hair drapes this shapely body as the winds die, Lisa's torrid eyes look ahead at her murderers. "I stand before you Greeks, upright and unafraid, I pity your inhumanity, your moral degradation, your blind willingness to do the will of your 'great hero'—you are all like sheep who have lost their right way, who look to follow a ghost to soothe the quickening tremor of your quivering hearts, are you savages who believe by human sacrifice the power of nature will not also take you? Do you think with my death the winds will gracefully take you all to the homes you have yearned for these long ten years? Odysseus, do not avert your eyes from mine by casting them to the stony ground, do you think you will soon be with your wife? Do you Agamemnon think you will be glided off to find joy in your 'dear Clytemnestra's' arms? The gods will surely give you the fates you all deserve! As you will not defy your 'god' I will defy you. I dismiss your banal cruelty, this foul evil that you will perpetrate on my sinless body. Your power has no hold over my royal heart. You have not stripped me bare; yes, you will kill thy flesh, but not thy spirit—let my embittered, black-cloaked mother know I met my death freely, I do not resist, I will face 'the other shore' as bravely as my brother unfairly faced your 'master' ...oh Greeks! Stay as slaves to Achilles, if you wish—but Achilles will not rule me! I go to the son of Peleus's place to replace his 'starry heart'—not like ill-fated Patrocolus who resides beneath Achilles. I won't endure his rape of my spirit, for love—my love of life—will conquer his malice, usurp his tyranny! Neoptolemus, do not order your thugs to grab me! No unclean Achaean hand will touch me! Here is my breast, here is my neck, both I freely offer to your gleaming blade, my pure blood to flow on your impure altar, this you Greeks—who torched fair Troy, who butchered Priam, who enslave the Trojan race—is your ultimate atrocity."*

*'These harsh words are like sharpened sticks beating on our hard chests but we applaud her nevertheless. Her bravery deserves full honour. Thus we cheer as if praising one who has led us to some mighty victory; where there was no human cost to ourselves. Yes, we pity Polyxena for some warmth has come from her to our cold hearts.'*

*Lisa drops to her knees, yet lifts her head to look coldly into the tearful eyes of her executioner. "Weak man, do you not have the courage to look into this face of death, which brims with life?" The question is whispered with a quick sucking breath.*

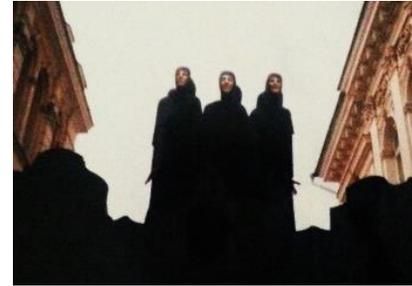
*Agamemnon sights in his mind Lisa wearing Achilles armour—a hurtling blade. 'A candescent life snuffed out, look at the blood spurting from that gaping throat wound, a rich red stream is flowing quickly over this earth, she will be planted like a seed in a hollow by Achilles raised tomb—our bitter 'high moral ground'. We who overlord Polyxena see that this 'free spirit' has the noble character that we delude ourselves to possess. At least we will grievously leave, in this shallow grave, alms beside her supple body, lovingly oiled, then stained by our violence, for her defiance, her love will bless the ground with new growth, while all we finally offer this earth with our might—is ash.'*

\*Laser Interferometer Space Antenna see <http://lisa.nasa.gov/>



A busker as a mythological figure at Circular Quay. A holy toaster on altar with 'friends.'

LITHUANIA. Top left: this is the flute player outside the Devil's Museum. Kaunas. Middle: typical Witch's Hill wood carving sculpture. Nida. Right: WWII german helmets found over time in the forests around Nida by a local artist. The fighting was heavy in this region. Bottom: Nida burial totems.

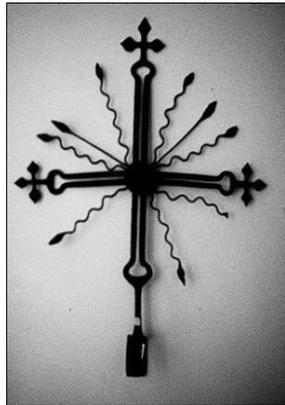


Aboriginal art by Lithuanian students. A kangaroo blending with features of a Lithuanian fish. Three figures based on three women above a Vilnius drama theatre.



Left: Sleeping Beauty. Vilnius. Bottom: Lithuanian Angel in the river. Uzupis Vilnius. One may think of Orpheus who as legend goes when he was beheaded by the maeneds his head floated down a river on his lyre with him still singing beautifully.



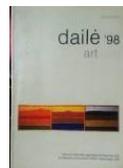


Hill of Crosses. Cultural resistance: during the Cold War's Russian occupation the Russians would dismantle the crosses & Lithuanians would defiantly put them back up.

Top left: A Vilnius church typically with sunrays (as in the Lithuanian countryside. Middle right: I am an artist I love myself. Museum of can be seen in the neighbouring picture) on the top spire. Top right: Druskininkai winter trees sketch. Middle left: Uzupis postcard with angel on top of a column set up in the main thoroughfare. Middle Centre: A wooden church Contemporary Art café. Vilnius.



Botom: Sculpture garden. Kaunas. Bottom Centre: The Look. Darius Gircys 1995. Steel, double glass, circulating water of the river. Bottom middle: daile 99, daile 98. Book covers of the Art Review of the Lithuanian Artists' Association. Bust of M.K. Ciurlionis. Druskininkai. Lithuania's greatest artist known by Chagall, Kandinsky but is still little known in the West. A lingering cultural victim of the Iron Curtain.



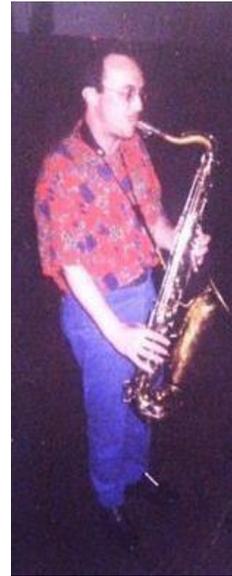
While in Australia Lithuanian culture also extends folk singers & to the annual Baltic Film Festival.



neo-platonic form: in Plato's 'perfect society' children were to be deliberately separated from their mothers so as to be brought up by the state to become 'perfect beings.'

## Australian Mateship I

**WHITE FELLAS**  
**HUNTED FOR**  
**BLACKS IN PACKS**



Berlin Orpheus.



**Orpheus**

*B&W. 7cmX7cm. aquatint. zinc plate.*

Orpheus. B&W. 7cm X 7cm. sugarlift.aquatint. zinc plate.

This Orpheus is based on an incredible bazoukia player at a Greek restaurant in Leichhardt.

ITHICA by C.P.Cavafy as read by Sean Connery.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1n3n2Ox4Yfk&feature=youtu.be>

Ancient Greek Hoplites parading at the Nicholson Museum Lego Acropolis Open Day to Zorba the Greek  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pC5wPxLF54&feature=youtu.be>

Top left: Neo-Platonic Form digital print. This was the original image created before attempting an etching with a direct appropriation of the original image of the Aboriginal boy found in *Colliding Worlds: First Contact in the Western Desert. 1932-1984. P Batty, R.G.Kimber, J Long, J Kean. Museum Victoria, 1 Jan 2006.* Below is a digital print which is one of 11 prints which form a series titled Australian Mateship. It is based on 19th century massacres of Aboriginal people – most notably the Myall Creek massacre. The full range of prints can be found on the website on a page that can be accessed by clicking on the Contemporary title in the sidebar. Other digital prints dealing with the Iraq war, torture, secret rendition etc can also be found on this webpage. Below is the link which one may have to copy & paste into SEARCH:

<http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/contemporary.php>



Along with the Melbourne Cup which is the 'race that stops a nation' there are other lesser known 'sporting cultural events' such as the Australia Day Dog Race which may no longer happen now but when these photos were taken in the early 90s it was a race that was quite a big event. Below are shopfront stiletto shoes to reference an annual stiletto race in Sydney. Beside the stiletto shoes are the golden sporting shoes attributed to Steven Mortimer. A NRL player for Canterbury Bankstown.



Angel Seat. Brunswick St. Fitzroy. Melbourne. Followed by New Years Eve fireworks. 2011. Sydney. Always the ultimate cultural event – sporting or otherwise – in this harbour city.



A cross-cultural example of a different sort: a found sushi usb from a Broadway computer shop



Sugar skulls photographed at a Mexican Day of the Dead fiesta at the Latino Hut at the Addison Road Centre. Marrickville. Street sculpture. Redfern. Addison Rd Centre sign. The Real Thing.





*phnom penh, december, 1990*

From the sixth floor of the Hotel Sokhali we had a grand view of Phnom Penh. We could see the hills beyond the outside of the city. We looked down onto a shanty house on the roof of the building opposite us. A lone girl, perhaps only four years old, was brushing her teeth. I shut the windows. This cuts out the noise. I walked out onto our small balcony. I was immediately reminded that the Sokhali was on a T-intersection. I looked over at the local cinema which was on the other side of the main road facing the front of the hotel. Large billboards of beautiful Indian women and macho guys adorned the front of the building. Cinema crowds continually swirled in and out of the large entrance from which came sounds that ranged from mystical rhythms to cowboy music. On either side of the cinema were flats and units filled with families. Underneath the units were shops which household goods, cigarettes, jewellery, food, bottled water, Russian vodka and where black-market money was also displayed behind counter windows. There were barbers, hairdressers, bakeries, stalls, cafes with televisions, restaurants and photography places with the latest Fuji technology. The one constant sound throughout the length and breadth of Phnom Penh was the blare of horns. These came from the many motor scooters and few cars which raced up an down the main road outside the Sokhali. Mingled in between these vehicles were hundreds of bicycles and cyclos, carrying goods as well as passengers, which were invariably always ringing their bells. N.G.O four wheel drives would wound their way through this traffic. I saw a tourist bus which was to me like a bubble protecting its occupants from the filth and noise of the city. Near dusk the dirt of the city would swirl up and cover everybody as the traffic became heavier and thousands of people left their daily chores to go home. Along the pavements would be children playing games which included French skipping, plastic sword fights, hoola hoops, cards and throwing whirling things into the air. Some children along with a few women would beg. One -legged soldiers could also be seen limping along the walkways or trying to rush across the roads. The cyclos, when stationary, would gather outside the Sokhali and other hotels. Many people would always be walking about and at the intersections were guard posts manned by traffic police. A lone green figure on top of a stand would direct the traffic to stop and go from the centre of these crossroads. The bicycles and cyclos would strain in neat lines waiting for the hand signal which would allow them to move on. Women wearing Peruvian style hats would cling to their husbands on the back of motor scooters. I saw a truck filled with large blocks of ice. One cyclo had his seat stacked with line after line of Coke bottles in crates. The driver could just peer over them to see where he was going. I saw before me people who were simply getting on with their lives...the warm air of the hot day shrouded each person as the elongated shadows of the sinking sun connected together to bring in the night. There were no street lights. Light would come from the shops. Light would come from the heads of passing vehicles. The noise permeated on, indifferent to whether the world was light or dark. People's conversations cluttered the night sounds..

CAMBODIA.  
Top left: 'Luna Park.' Bayon.  
Top: Sweeper.  
Ankor Wat.  
Bottom: Phnom Penh street.

POSTMODERN POSTSCRIPT: Ankor Wat as a backdrop to looking at a general theme of first world travelling in the third world with another reference to Luna Park in a different, yet postmodern, way.



Ankor Wat.SiemReap.'Cambodge.1989.'



GROUP PHOTO OF FIRST WORLD TOURISTS ON 7 DAY PACKAGE TOUR OF INDOCHINA. (ANKOR WAT).

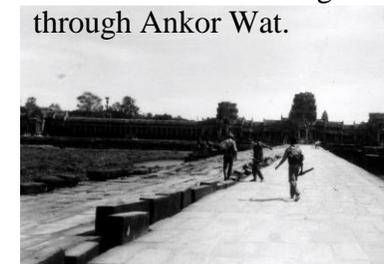
Appropriated space travellers: a digital image created by scanning a collage which has the astronauts at Ankor Wat.

I HEARD ON THE RADIO THAT IT WAS OBSCENE THAT A BILLIONAIRE WOULD SPEND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO GO ON A ROCKET & BE A SPACE TOURIST FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS BUT I ASKED MYSELF WHAT'S THE REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIM & US WHO ARE FROM THE SAME FIRST WORLD & TRAVEL TO THE THIRD WORLD WHERE MANY HARD WORKING PEOPLE EARN ONLY ONE U.S. DOLLAR A DAY WHILE WE MAY SPEND THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS TO HOLIDAY IN LUXURY? THUS WE TOO ARE SPACE TOURISTS & THE THIRD WORLD IS OUR LUNA PARK SO ONE MAY GET FITTED UP IN A SPACE SUIT TO BE PROTECTED FROM DISEASE & DUST & GO FOR A STELLAR JOYRIDE ON A TUT-TUT JUST FOR FUN.



Bayon.  
Siem  
Reap.

Below soldiers walking through Ankor Wat.



## TIBETAN NEW YEAR



MEDIUM article on Manjustri. Bodhivista of Transcendental Wisdom.

<https://medium.com/@nicolasnicola22/manjustri-bodhivista-of-transcendental-wisdom-c2e5b066eac1#.7h0eucf40>



OUTER TIBET.  
(GHANSU province).  
March 1997. Tibetan  
New Year.

Top left: Tibetan  
prayer wheels.  
Xining.

Top right: Sunning the  
Buddha thanka.Xiahe.  
Bottom left: Prayer  
wheels with pilgrims.  
Xiahe.

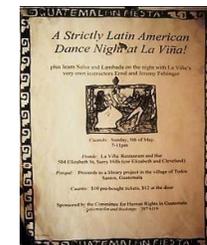
Bottom right:  
bemused girl  
watching crowd  
controller with stick  
and wearing horse  
head.

## CENTRAL AMERICA

Below are some photos of Central American 'political culture' which mainly reference the historical period when there were many civil wars in Central America in the 70s and 80s in which the United States supported dictatorships who used their national armies, police and U.S. trained death squads to terrorize their populations; while in Nicaragua the revolutionary government of the Sandinistas had to face a U.S sponsored terrorist counter-revolutionary guerilla army known as the contras and who would target any progressive civilian infrastructure such as rural co-ops, hospitals, schools etc etc killing many innocents.



Extreme left: Sandino mural. Lake Managua. Nicaragua. 1986. This is a mural of Nicaraguan national hero Augusto Sandino who fought the invading U.S. marines in the thirties. The photo was taken on the way to a visit to the Solentiname painting community. The other photo is of a Anti-U.S. Imperialism mural. Esteli. Nicaragua. 1986.





Nicaraguan woman painted by Karen Spencer. Bluefields.



Tikal. Guatemalan Postcard.

I purchased this postcard on my second trip to Guatemala in 1992. I visited Tikal in 1985 and being in Guatemala in the mid-eighties was a strange affair as it was a period of severe oppression for the Mayans. Yet wherever you went as a tourist there was a sordid 'magic realism' to the way such injustice was cunningly kept out of view. There was a civil war with leftist rebels but it always seemed to be happening 'somewhere else'; if you were not aware of how vicious things really were, the occasional sightings of army trucks dropping off soldiers – the 'upholders of national security' – going into the jungle from the road to out-of-the-way indigenous villages would have been noted as a mere routine 'army exercise' – with no malicious intent. While in reality thousands were being slaughtered by the military. Around Tikal many Guatemalan soldiers would be marauding in the surrounding jungle just out of sight of the temple and the tourist area being a subtle reminder of the conflict.

Top left: 'The Birthday Martyr.' Managua. This photograph shows a sign of a young man who was killed during the time of the fighting in Managua during the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship in 1979. I noticed that he died very close to his birthday. Many streets have many memorials at the spots where people died at the hands of the former dictato's military. Middle: A poster for Rigoberta Menchu coming to Australia in 1989 before she won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992. Top right: Solidarity fundraiser poster for a benefit to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Sandinista Revolution at Balmain Town Hall, Sydney, July, 1989. Bottom right: 'MACANDEL.' 8" X 4". B&W. drypoint. zinc plate. Haiti. Macandel was a one armed Haitian rebel who was burnt at the stake by the French in 1758. In Alejo Carpenter's novel The Kingdom of this World it is written that Macandel transformed into a butterfly.



Art resources are difficult to acquire and the artist took brushes to Bluefields on behalf of two Australian women who were twins who helped to develop community art in Bluefields.



Rigoberta Menchu with Victor Hugo President of the Guatemalan Human Rights Committee. Marrickville Town Hall. Sept 5, 1993.

# MEXICO

The flames shimmered in the reflection of the dull duco  
The flames spewed from his parched mouth  
The head was hidden by a column of fire  
Only in the tight muscles of the hand which held the canister did there remain a visible sign to his desperation  
The blackness spewed down a star while the morning light sucked up the dew  
Their bowed faces were hidden by their broad brims while they swept before the iron mouth  
He was from Guadalajara and held up his hand to refuse the offer of reimbursement  
In another time another man from the same city boarded a bus in Dallas and looked for my support in Brownsville  
I walked through the ruins and rummaged through other memories  
In the afternoon heat she silently waited in the long queue holding her black umbrella as a shield  
She watched the towering machine which pulled down the dough to manufacture the tortillas she would purchase  
He diligently cleaned the machine saw he used to cut the meat he had left outside on hooks for the flies to vomit on  
The boy took the ten cent coin and eyed the lyre bird while speaking in slow Spanish, listening patiently to the slow voice  
His elderly mother and his elderly father and himself farewelled me when the dusk train arrived  
There was no light and an old woman's voice could be heard in the dark carriageway  
There were the silhouettes of bodies who paced the night aisle selling their wares and in unison were calling as if in an Ancient Greek Chorus  
There was a station where in another time two of us had waited till midnight huddled with the poor as if all together we were refugees escaping from some war  
Men are sleeping and other men sing while the man opposite holds his machete and in the morning there are the village huts where people are scantily dressed and the children look unhealthy  
The women and their employer speak inside the market and from their stall offer a cool liquid and there is tranquillity and there is a Spanish wall near the sea and there is a tranquil breeze  
The train arrives at midnight where the sweeping roof of the station is a reminder to Paris Norde  
There are two old female indigenous who no one will help carry their heavy pots from the platform to the station and so the three of us sleep together  
Where there had been another time when two of us had slept the first night in the zocola  
There are the sleeping shivering homeless men at this tourist destination  
Yes  
Lets sit in the zocola  
Where its fun sitting in these chairs where we can face each other where we can talk to each other where everyone is trying to sell us hammocks, gold chains, panama hats  
Those sunglasses  
Suit you

Very trendy  
Very fifties  
I like the pointy bits  
At  
The end  
S  
You look so hip  
With your short  
blonde hair  
And your shorts  
What sort of country is this where people must cover their faces in demonstrations?  
We walk the length of the beach passing an Australian woman wearing a Burning Bridges t-shirt  
You have read in Le Monde of Aboriginal deaths in custody?  
So you think it is a disgrace?  
Of course!  
It's a shame  
It is raining  
Lightly  
We notice in the restaurant garden of a fishing village that there is above the tables plastic bags of water tied to the posts that hold up the lightweight roof.  
The women say they keep the flies away. I say in Australia people place plastic bottles filled with water on their front lawns to keep the dogs off them.  
We walk past  
The busy noisy wooden drinking bars  
A bus comes every half hour?  
You think the video on this bus is racist?  
They use chicano actors who live in L.A?  
You think it makes all Colombians  
Look like peddlers?  
Yes, you wonder  
Why there is a market  
For  
Films  
Like  
These  
In

Latin  
American  
Countries  
Lets  
Go  
See  
Pretty flowers and trees  
For the people of South and Central America  
Mexico  
Guatemala  
Belize  
El Salvador  
Honduras  
Nicaragua  
Costa Rica  
Panama  
Colombia  
Venezuela  
Guyana  
Surinam  
French Guiana  
Brazil  
Ecuador  
Peru  
Bolivia  
Paraguay  
Uruguay  
Chile  
Argentina  
Do you know  
Of  
Any  
Cheap places  
To eat?



*Refreshments. Oxaca. Mexico. 1986.*

# A TRIP TO THE MOON

*Guatemala 1986*

We arrived on the old bus at an out of the way village as we travelled through the interior of this beleaguered country

I remember the dust

The heat

The silent very poor *indigenous* – in their old worn out clothes – who walked passively past us

Who would not speak – to us

With heads bowed

(We would learn later there had been a massacre a year ago)

Staccato bangs

outside

heard from the interior of our hotel room

Firecrackers

at the village festival

are men with cowboy hats wearing plastic face masks of white bearded *conquistadors*

At night

A clear sky

A full moon

Hovering over the carnival

A burly Mayan woman smiles at us

Invites us to board her enormous ferris wheel

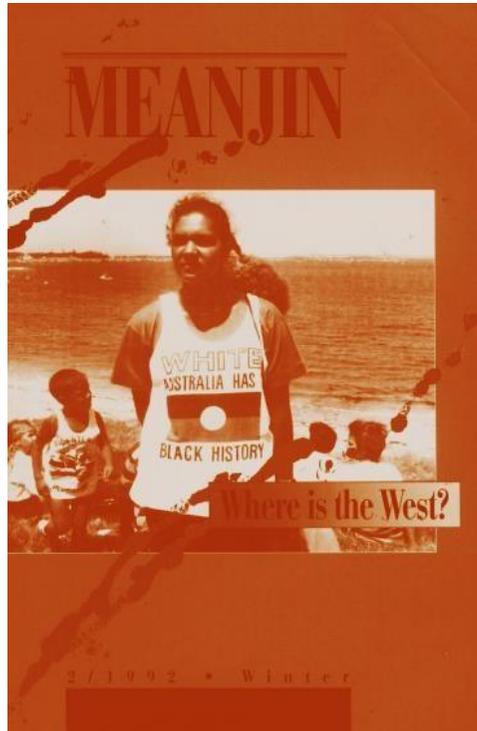
To travel to *la luna*

Which we cheerfully do



Blood Moon. Sydney December 2011..

## where is the west?



where is the west? My host stood in the space in between the dark wood and glass partition that opened up from the middle and which when closed split the long living room of the art deco flat I was staying in in two her long frizzy brown hair was highlighted around the edges by the strong sunlight coming through an open window behind her thus ringing her head with a thin glowing golden halo but paradoxically her face was cast in shadow as the rest of the room was in shade for the high afternoon sun was steeply angling its light down to only form a light patch in a small area of this grand interior my host was holding the copy of Meanjin that I had brought with me from Australia and which I had read in countries such as El Salvador Nicaragua Guatemala Mexico Cuba and Ecuador the issue was called Where is the West? and mainly had articles about Aboriginal issues and on the orange front cover was a black and white photo of a young Aboriginal woman on a beach with some young indigenous children behind her and wearing a white singlet with the Aboriginal flag and a slogan that read WHITE AUSTRALIA HAS A BLACK HISTORY I had given the Meanjin as a memento that was from Australia as a thank you for my stay at this lovely flat the woman was appreciative and naturally enough due to the political nature of this literary magazine the previously light hearted conversation led to a discussion about the politics of Colombia and to what people had to deal with in their daily lives as a consequence of the ongoing civil war the woman suddenly looked at me seriously almost a little pensively and the shadow over her face was appropriate for this quick change in mood and while casually pointing a raised finger towards the window she remarked in a melancholy way that not far from where we now were on another Bogota street there had been a car bombing only in the last week

# Mass

When you think of 'mass' what do you think?

Church mass

critical mass

mass graves

the human mass

the dark mass within the universe or of the dark mass in our minds

or

perhaps there's

the masses of

masses of particles

of physical existence

which makes our huge populations able to wonder about God while looking at the stars and also wonder about God after looking

at

a

massacre

consider the

increase

in

mass

of

a

falling

object

when

that

falling object

is

a

human

being

who

has

become

a

victim

of

a

falling morality

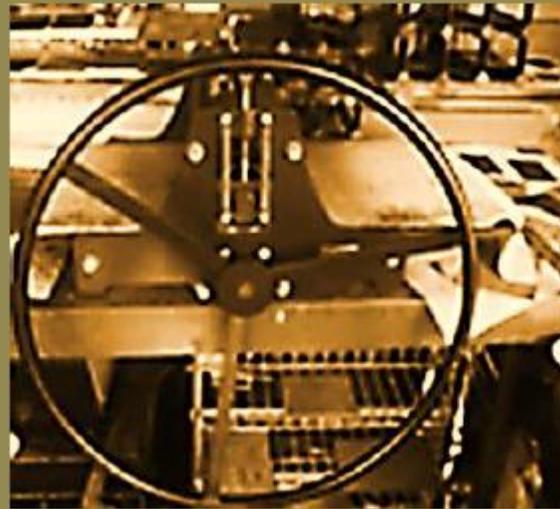


*Indonesian performance artist inviting the audience to throw little flour bombs at him once he sits down under writing on wall which references the anti-communist massacres of the mid-1960s.*

## Labyrinth

I was at the Greek bookshop with the Free Cyprus t-shirts  
near the Tufnell Park  
tube stop  
that  
I found  
that  
book  
about  
labyrinths  
from  
ancient times  
to the medieval ages  
they  
understood  
better  
than  
us  
that  
life  
is  
like  
walking  
through

a  
maze  
that  
can  
be  
filled  
with  
Minotaurs  
and  
other  
monsters  
to ensnare  
kill  
and  
destroy  
us  
from inside  
thank goodness  
for  
the  
Celestial Rose and threads of love  
That can rescue and guide us out



***PART THREE (ESSAYS) or PART ONE (MAIN GALLERIES) can be accessed via the following link:***

*nicholas nicola etchings leichhardt 2016 website page:*

<http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/leichhardt-2016.php>

*Thank You.*

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## *the etching process*

*Etching is a process whereby ink is captured in grooves on a metal plate and then pressed onto wet paper to leave an image.*

What follows is a very basic step-by-step look at the etching process. Please refer to specific printmaking books or websites for more comprehensive information on traditional etching & solar plate etching. It is hoped this simple presentation helps to both explain and demystify the etching process.

**STEP 1:** Apart from directly scratching directly onto an etching plate one may wish to cover the etching plate with a brown wax known as a hard ground. It is applied onto its surface either by using a liquid form or by melting it onto the plate after placing it onto a hot plate. When it is dry a needle is used to scratch out an image.



From left to right: (a) hard ground as a ball with a flat base that can be melted onto an etching plate when the plate is warmed on a hot plate. (b) hard ground that can be applied onto an etching plate in liquid form. (c) scratching through the dried hard ground to reveal the metal that will be exposed to a copper sulphate/salt/water solution or ferric chloride or nitric acid/water that will bite into the plate to produce grooves that can capture etching ink. Note also the use of tracing paper to outline image on top of hard ground. (d) drypoint marks that can be produced by simply scratching onto the etching plate without any wax to produce grooves. (e) a hotplate that can be used to warm an etching plate which can also be used to simply warm the plate to make it easier to spread the ink over the plate. This is a simple cooking hotplate that can be purchased very cheaply at a local market store or hardware. Professional etching hot plates designed specifically for printmaking can be purchased but are extremely expensive. It should be mentioned that etching plates are usually made of zinc or copper and there are different approaches to utilizing the plates for etching.

**STEP 2:** The idea is to expose the metal that can be viewed from under the wax so when the plate is placed in an acid bath it can eat into the metal to form grooves.



Here is a plate in a *nitric acid* bath. Nitric acid has been a traditional liquid used to etch a plate but these days there has been a move away from this very dangerous substance. However, nitric acid is very effective in biting a plate. It is mixed with water to control its very strong corrosive capability. With zinc a typical ratio maybe something like 10:1 (10 parts water 1 part nitric acid). The acid can be made stronger or weaker by changing the ratio. I no longer use nitric acid but I tended to use stronger ratios of up to 6:1 or as weak as 12:1 if I wanted further control. However, with copper the ratio is typically 3.5:1. Water temperature can also have an effect on the strength of the bath. Warmer water leads to a stronger effect. I often leave the plate in the bath for anything up to an hour or much longer. The longer the plate is in the bath the deeper the bite and thus more ink is captured leaving to a darker print. Through experience and testing one comes to a satisfactory result. Other printmakers would use different ratios and times. I am simply outlining what has worked for me. I notice in etching books the bath times are much shorter than what I employ. However, I may leave a plate in for 5 minutes if I want to simply achieve a slight background effect. As a general warning **WHILE LEARNING ONLY USE NITRIC ACID UNDER STRICT PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION**. It is a very dangerous product! **ALSO: ALWAYS POUR THE NITRIC ACID INTO THE WATER!** Otherwise from what I have read the reverse (water into acid) an explosion can ensue.

*In the image one can see a nitric acid bottle behind the plastic tray normally used for photographic developing. Nitric acid has to be specially ordered and is actually now very difficult, if neigh impossible, for the 'person-on-the-street' to purchase in Sydney. Melbourne Etching Supplies stocks nitric acid which can only be acquired for the specific purpose of printmaking.*

In the acid bath as seen in the image a feather is used to brush off bubbles that are produced while the plate is being bitten. The bubbles can impede the effect of the acid. (I have the habit of picking up feathers off the footpath when I sight them). The tray is what was once used for photographic developing and made of plastic so it doesn't corrode. If concerned, one may wish to also cover the back of the etching plate with hard ground or other similar substance so the acid does not corrode it. As the acid produces toxic fumes it is a good idea to have a well-ventilated studio or to place the acid bath outside. (A sunny day will even help warm the bath which will speed the biting process). It is also advisable to wear gloves as well as wearing a face mask. The acid bath may work up to two or three times before its strength is exhausted. It is advisable to then dilute the acid bath with much more water to further weaken and to extinguish any remaining potency. Even in a diluted state never pour an acid bath down one's sink.

## ALTERNATIVE ACID BATHS WHICH ARE NO LONGER SO ALTERNATIVE

Instead of using nitric acid it is preferable to try ferric chloride which works for copper plates or a copper sulphate/salt solution with water which works for zinc plates.\*

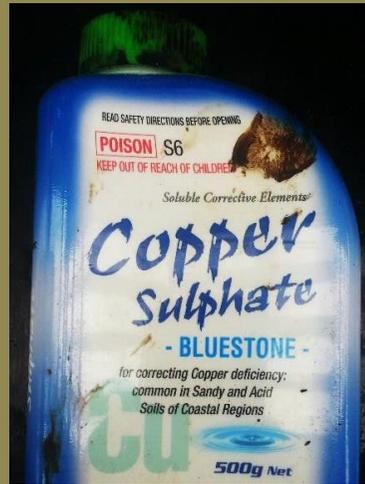


**FERRIC CHLORIDE** is a dark brown liquid which is a corrosive salt and I now use it for my copper plates. I pour it straight out from the container and do not further dilute it. However, what I do is usually place the plastic tray with the ferric chloride biting the plate in a larger tray that is filled with boiling hot water. For me, at least, it seems to incredibly increase the effectiveness of the bite. As for bite times, it is best to experiment but sometimes I try for an initial tentative bite of around 20 minutes before extending the time out for my usual one hour - or for even much longer. (I do prefer long bites). However, much like the approach to printing photos before the digital age one may wish to do a test strip taking into account both air and water temperatures. Also one should also note that when ferric chloride loses its effectiveness it loses its muddy dark brown look. I tend to use a fresh batch of ferric chloride every time I etch a new plate; never more than twice anyway. As it is not used diluted it can be a more expensive manner in which to bite the plate but definitely advice using it over nitric acid. After the ferric chloride has been exhausted it is best to dilute it with water to get rid of any lingering potency and to not pour it down the sink. As this is only a general explanation it is best to refer to a more specific website for more technical information. In Sydney I acquire ferric chloride from Parkers Art Supplies in Cambridge St at The Rocks. Otherwise try Melbourne Etching Supplies. It is also a good idea to buy the 4 litres bulk bottle as that works out cheaper.

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\*I restrict the information to zinc and copper plates which is commonly used for etching as they are most accessible. Plates made from say aluminum or steel can also be used for etching. With that said aluminum is somewhat similar to zinc and much cheaper. Plastic can also be used for drypoints. Most art shops which stock printmaking materials usually have a ready supply of zinc or copper etching plates. Some art shops also supply aluminum plates but sheets of it can also be bought at a large hardware shop and cut to size. If using plastic for drypoints make sure it is of a suitable thickness. Plastic drypoints are excellent for safely introducing children or teenager students to the wonders of etching. Although it may not be possible to do any large editioning with plastic as it wears out quickly. I should add it may be possible to use ferric chloride with zinc plates but I have never tried to do so and thus can offer no advice on its effectiveness with this metal. Also solar plate etching is not covered either although I have made some initial attempts at this modern technique.

## COPPER SULPHATE



Left to Right: (a) copper sulphate and salt mixed in water leaves a green hue and looks rather cloudy. It seems when the mixture goes clear it can be presumed that the solution is exhausted. (b) table salt (sodium chloride) and copper sulphate are mixed together in equal parts in water to produce the etching solution that effectively bites a zinc plate. (c) the sort of bottle/package of copper sulphate which you could look for at a large hardware – try the gardening section. Copper sulphate is also known as bluestone.

*Copper sulphate* with sodium chloride (table salt) can be mixed with water to bite zinc plates. A typical mix is 50 grams of copper sulphate and 50 grams of salt mixed with about one litre of water. (Increase the amounts equally if you wish to make a stronger solution ). A good bite can be achieved after ten or perhaps twenty minutes although I like to leave a plate in a prepared bath for much longer. Using warm water can accelerate the process. In fact, I will place the copper sulphate and salt into very hot water. Copper sulphate can be purchased at a gardening shop, nursery or hardware. It also comes under the name of 'bluestone.' Compared to ferric chloride it is a relatively inexpensive way to bite a plate so it's suggested to experiment or do a test strip on a zinc piece to find out how long it will take you to obtain a deep line or dark tone.



Talking of zinc and copper plates here are two involving only groove line work .

**STEP 3:** When the plate has been bitten leaving the grooves the wax is taken off with mineral turpentine – or if preferred, with baby oil which is just as effective and far less harmful. Ink is then applied over the whole of the plate usually with a flat piece of rubber. Then the ink is scrubbed off first using tarlatan and then with newspaper; while the surface of the plate is cleaned of any excess ink there is still ink remaining in the plate's grooves. The plate is now ready for printing.



In the first image are a variety of etching needles, charbonnel ink, a tube of a cream coloured easy wipe gel which is mixed into the ink on the plate to make it much easier to wipe off (you can also heat the etching plate on a hot plate so the ink wipes easier onto the plate when both applying it and taking it off), a file, spatula, an ink dabber, a wiper to spread the ink and press it into the grooves and indentations of the plate, gauze known as tarlatan which is blackened with ink, nitric acid bottle, brown powder rosin that is sprinkled onto the plate using a sieve covered in stocking as can be seen in the second image (you place some powder in the sieve with a teaspoon and then slightly shake and tap the sieve with your finger as the powder spreads over the plate. When finished the powdered plate is placed on a hot plate until it melts. This is known as aquatinting the plate. In the second photo is also a magnifier that can be used to see if the grooves have been bitten to a sufficient depth; as well as a small sugarlift bottle. The plastic pourer contains the acid that has been mixed with water which is then placed into the acid bath tray. The tool with the flat curved top is a burnisher which is used to rub down the plate to make grooves and other plate areas lighter. (A groove or area can be made darker by further acid biting). The third image is of a small portable etching press which can be a feasible introduction to this printmaking process before acquiring a far more expensive large etching press.



*A burnisher with its flat head is used to rub on the plate to make a dark area lighter as you rub down the depth of the area you have been working on so it captures less ink or no ink at all to be white ( but will still remain textured)..*

Here are various tools that are used to etch. Along with a range of different needles of different sizes & strengths; there are also scrapers (which like the one on the far left can be used to smooth down a particular unwanted line so it may disappear or even scrape a whole area to lose a tone) & different burnishers as well as a plate cutter next to the two hard ground wax balls. Far right is a roulette that is used to create an aquatint texture.



A piece of gauze tarlatan used for initial wiping of ink off a plate.



A large piece of tarlatan which smaller pieces are cut when needed to be used.

**STEP 4:** (1) The plate is placed onto the press with an ordinary paper sheet underneath which can have lines on it so as to help line up the plate with the etching paper on which the image will be printed. This sort of correct positioning is called registering. Registration also helps to obtain an even margin around the image.

(2) The plate is covered with a piece of moist etching paper that has been dipped in a water bath then covered with a towel underneath and above to soak out the residue water. The moisture that remains in the paper helps with the transfer of ink.

(3) The plate with paper on top is pressed through the press which consists of two rollers that place enormous pressure onto the plate so the ink squeezes out onto the paper. There are white felt blankets between the press and plate that help with the rolling and also protect the plate from bending from the enormous pressure. Also all four edges have been evenly filed back to create 45° angled edges; the slopes help the plate to roll through the press. (This filing is called beveling the edges).

(4) The paper is taken off the plate to reveal an image. The plate can be re-inked to repeat the printing process but at the end of the session the plate is thoroughly cleaned.

(5) Making several copies of the same image is nominally referred to as 'editioning.'



The plate is placed down on paper which can be pencil marked to allow for proper positioning. The moist etching paper is placed on top of the plate then the blankets are placed down on top of everything before being taken through the etching press rollers.

## *Various etching techniques.*

**Drypoint** - the needle can be used to directly scratch onto an unwaxed plate to make a grooved drawing. Drypoint can also be used on plastic plates.

**Aquatint** is when a fine powder rosin powder is melted over the plate while at the same time there is a tiny space in between every powder grain which then allows for an area of dark to black tone to be produced. The plate is placed into an 'acid bath' which bites into each tiny space of exposed metal which will capture ink leading to tones. The length of time in the bath can determine the tonal range. A short time will produce greys while a long bite will lead to very dark tones. (One can also burnish back the aquatint to make it lighter after a deep tone has been originally acquired).

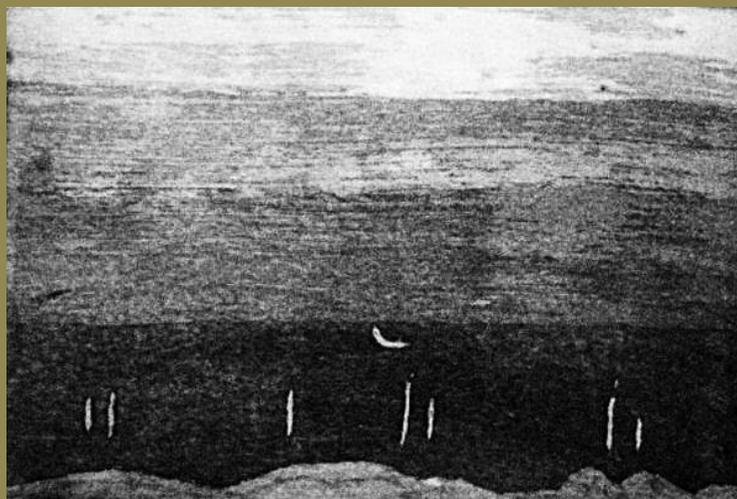
**Sugarlift** is a syrupy liquid substance with the fluidity of ink which has sugar in it. The sugarlift is usually brushed onto the plate and then it is covered by a thin layer of hard ground. It is then dipped into warm water. The sugar particles expand & lift off the plate taking with it the hard ground on top of it so the positive space that is formed can be exposed to the acid.

**Combining** - it is possible to combine drypoint, aquatint and sugarlift on the same plate and it is up to the imagination of the printmaker to use any other procedure (such as placing material onto a softground – another type of ground wax - to leave an impression) to leave marks suitable for his/her artistic purposes. There are always new ways to consider in achieving a print.

## *Aquatinting Demonstration*



From left to right: (a) rosin in a container and tea strainer with stocking covering it through which the rosin will fall once it is placed in the strainer with a spoon. (b) First covering areas that will not be aquatinted with hard ground or stopout which is a similar substance. (c) Sprinkling rosin over plate. (d) the rosin melts on the hotplate going a dark brown then clears to a transparent hue. This is when the plate is taken off the hotplate. (e) after the plate has been in an acid bath the melted rosin is cleaned off with methylated spirits so it becomes possible to print.. One can see the grainy texture left by the aquatint on the plate which is pitted with many tiny holes to capture the ink. Also one can see the clear areas of plate that were not exposed to the rosin. (f) the resulting printed aquatinted area. One may note that the ring was aquatinted earlier but left in the acid bath for a shorter time to leave it grey.



*Lights over Mt. Sinai. 6" X 4". aquatint. zinc plate.*

I present this etching which was one of my earliest attempts at aquatinting. (*White Ox* was actually my first and perhaps still one of my best along with *Looking into the Future* which is another early work). One can see that I was treating it as a test strip as one can see the gradations in near white to greys to black in the sky. Obviously I was interested to see the effects that would result in putting the aquatint into the acid bath at different times. When a new area was exposed for longer I would cover it up with a hard ground tar blackout before continuing with the next bite.

I should mention as I am interested in the magic realism that one can see or experience in everyday life this somewhat primitive etching is based on a 'strange real' event. Late at night seven columns of pulsating green light appeared above the mountain horizon as seen from the top of Mt. Sinai where I had slept overnight in late November, 1985. I was actually listening to Vivaldi's Four Seasons for the first time which a fellow backpacker had on her portable cassette player. (Two glasses were used as speakers with her ear pieces inside them).

I based this etching on a sketch that I did in my travel diary as no one had a SLR camera with a B option which allows for long term exposures. Of course I am talking of the pre-digital age when one also relied on Poste Restante for mail before the advent of email. As for these lights they remain a compelling mystery to me to this day.



View from Mt. Sinai. Original diary sketch.



*Aquatinting in Black Poles.*



First State



Second State (Final)

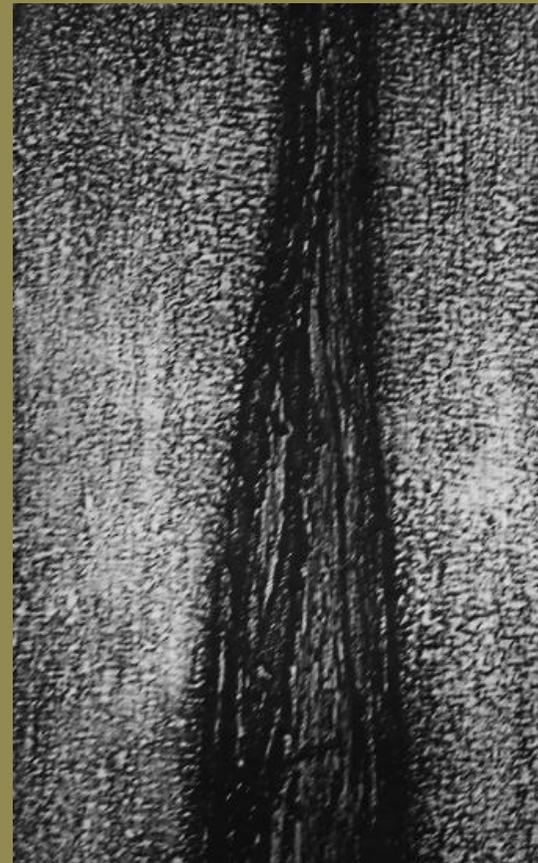
The use of aquatint in *Black Poles*. In the first state of this etching one sees the underlying structure built up with previous sugarlifts and aquatints and with some burnishing. A total overlay of aquatint was placed over this 'mesh pattern' making the whole plate become black (not shown). The plate was then burnished back to reveal the white areas in the second state which are contrasted in the deeper black areas.

## FINAL STATES

In both these etchings a dark aquatint was applied to the background of those zinc plates and then burnished back to create a more textured effect. (The first states can be viewed in the main catalogue which it has been decided to leave them rather than replace with these two images which have been used as examples).



**Neo-Platonic Form.**  
*B&W 6" X 3.5" aquatint.  
drypoint. zinc plate.*

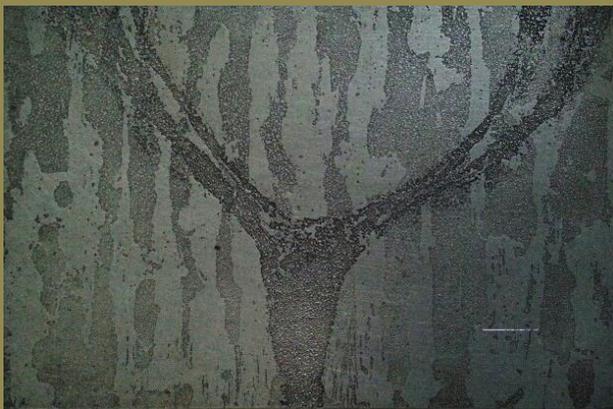


**Pillar of Time.** Minamurra  
Rainforest. Jamberoo 6" X 4".  
*B&W. aquatint. sugarlift,  
copperplate.*

## *Sugarlift Demonstration*



From left to right: (a) a clear version of sugarlift being brushed onto the etching plate with sugarlift bottles also in frame (b) a brown version of sugarlift also placed on this demonstration of sugarlift. It should be noted one may come across a black coloured version as well. (c) when the sugarlift has been allowed to dry one then covers the whole plate with a hard ground and this is allowed to dry. A dryer may be used to accelerate the process. However, it may be recommended to allow to dry but not set. (d) when the hardground has dried – which should also not be too thick – one pours hot water over the plate or place in a warm/hot water bath. (e) a detailed image showing how the sugar in the sugarlift has expanded and broken through the hard ground lifting it away from the plate. The zinc metal is exposed and an aquatint can be placed on it to produce an image.



On this image one can see how sugarlift has been used producing the background stripes first which have then been aquatinted and the plate then left in an acid bath for about twenty or so minutes. The 'archangel' was then brushstroked on using sugarlift again and then aquatinted and placed in the acid bath for much longer - perhaps up to an hour – to be much darker.



Archangel. Wollie Creek.  
6" x 4". sugarlift. aquatint. zinc plate.

## **FURTHER REMARKS ON THE ETCHING PROCESS - “...I do not etch the plate I erode it...”**

As stated with zinc which is a soft metal I can use – in the old traditional way - anything from say 1 part nitric acid to 8,10 or 12 parts water to create an impression on the plate. The less acid I use, softer lines often result - while taking longer to bite; while a strong acid rapidly eats into the metal which can lead to a somewhat harsher, hard-edged result. With copper sulphate I continue to use zinc as I find it to be a more manageable metal to work with than copper although it is said that copper can produce a more elegant result e.g. it is said finer lines can be achieved. At times I have placed a copper etching in a nitric acid bath and then after working on it for some more have re-submerged it in a ferric chloride bath to obtain differing yet complementary subtle results in various areas of the print; a case in point is *Early Morning. Coledale*).

### **the ‘plasticity’ of metal**

Overall, it is interesting how what appears solid re: metal becomes an ‘organic substance’ in the hands of a printmaker. If I am not happy with the result I can place the metal back in the bath to make particular areas darker or I can use a burnishing tool to rub back areas of the plate to make that region lighter; then at a later stage I may choose to darken that area again or build up an area subtly with many bites. It is almost like painting. As it is I often I spend ‘forever’ on a plate – biting & burnishing it - until I obtain the desired result. I can show you a plate which I have spent many days – or much, much longer - working on to get what I wanted or another plate that has simply taken me a couple of hours to arrive at a satisfactory end. Often the subject matter can play a role in what needs to be done – or perhaps I may simply be after a certain ‘mood’. One should not forget that art is often a reflection of human emotion, it is emotion (and usually an ‘edgy’ one at that) that often motivates one to spend a long period of time on one’s own and for one’s own sense of personal resolution to produce a work of art. I should also add that when I touch plate with needle I feel that I am inscribing into eternity. You can burnish, bite into some areas or wax over other parts to leave ‘as is’ until the final state is reached.

### **the eternal form**

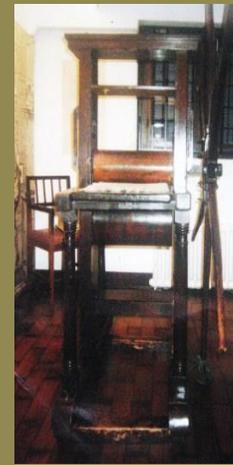
At the risk of sounding Neo-Platonic: no matter what technique is used the plate often ‘guides’ or ‘tells you’ when the Final Form has been arrived at and may often suggest to you what technique should be used to reach - or even divert away from - what you have originally envisaged in your mind.



(1) inking up and then (2) wiping the plate (3) turning the wheel of the press (4) print produced. In these pictures is an accomplished painter friend who was interested to learn how to etch. She was able to get the basic idea by doing a plastic plate drypoint).



The artist's etching press with the blankets which are placed over the etching plate and paper that are on the steel bed and then squeezed through the heavy rollers. A Melbourne Etching Supplies press.



Rembrandt's etching press at his Amsterdam house. He was a true master of the art form.

*Some miscellaneous info & the notion of doing Print Editions including Artist Proof (A/P) & finally some Artist Information as well as some website and video links.*



*Two sugarlift bottles to the left followed by two bottles of stopout/blockout on either side of a pile of etching ink cans. One can see a can of Charbonnel sepia ink. Charbonnel is based in France and this ink is of the highest quality. A dabber on top of another ink can followed by a couple of more bottles of sugarlift. I find this particular sugarlift dries out very quickly and so prefer the clear variety. Although sugarlift can be ordered from Melbourne Etching Supplies if one lives in Sydney it is possible to obtain from Parkers at the Rocks which stocks the clear variety. Also one may try to make a home-made sugar lift involving simply mixing large amounts of sugar with water until a syrupy consistency is gained. It is a good idea to keep one's plate clean. I believe using something like Ajax is suggested but I tend just to use a spray-on cleaning fluid.*



*A German ABIG press from Parkers which is very manageable. Presses come in different sizes and one's main concern is the pressure as that can lead to different results. A lithograph of the artist at work by 'artist unknown' but he did attend Willoughby Art Centre printmaking evening classes under the direction of Pia Larson. A retro kidney worktable the artist uses which was obtained off a generous American woman who knew the great beat poet Alan Ginsberg.*



***EASY WIPE COMPOUND** is the yellow cream one can see coming out of the tube which is blackened by etching ink.. Thus I include the packet in which it was contained at time of purchase. It is possible to purchase from **PARKERS** or **MELBOURNE ETCHING SUPPLIES**. The easy wipe compound is mixed in with the etching ink that one uses so as to make it more manageable to wipe off all the excess ink when preparing to print. Printmakers also like to warm the etching plate to also make it easier to wipe yet I like using this easy wipe compound. However, be careful how much easy wipe you use as too much can thin out the colour you are using. Also when purchasing etching ink it should be possible to find out if the particular ink you are buying is easy to wipe or is much harder. (e.g. Charbonnel provide a listing for all their blacks and there are many blacks to choose from and this goes with many etching ink companies including Graphic Chemical & Ink Co who supply this easy wipe compound which I have found for myself to be an essential product ). It should also be mentioned that etching inks can also be bought in tubes.*

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*websites for printmaking* – there are many websites and involves typing in ‘etching’ printmaking’ etc into one’s search engine as well as with youtube; however, the following Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) URL has a good basic animation display of the etching process: <http://www.moma.org/interactives/projects/2001/whatisaprint/print.html>

The following printmaking website of Crown Point Press based in San Francisco may also be useful: <http://www.crownpoint.com/printmaking>

*websites for printmaking supplies in Australia* can include the following two:

Sydney – **PARKERS** - <http://parkersartsupplies.com/stores/> The Rocks shop at 3 Cambridge St is perhaps the best place to see about etching supplies including the acquisition of an etching press.

Melbourne – **MELBOURNE ETCHING SUPPLIES** - <http://www.mes.net.au/> Perhaps the most comprehensive place for printmaking supplies in Australia.

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*Remember, these few websites are just suggestions/starting points as there are many other options to consider.*

## *Editions & Artist Proof*

### *editions*

One of the main aspects to realize about etching is the ability to repetitively produce the same image many times.

This repeating of the same print is commonly referred to as doing an *edition*. So if a printmaker produces – say twenty etchings from the same print – we call this an edition of twenty. Underneath the print is recorded which etching was done first and so forth e.g. 1/20 (first print out of an edition of twenty); 2/20 the second print out of an edition of twenty and so forth until 20/20 meaning it is the 20<sup>th</sup> and last print in this edition. There is no limit on how many prints can be in an edition which can well be over one hundred, two hundred or much more as long as there is no discernable degrading in the quality of the print. However, the first print has considerably more value than any latter print for - as along with uniquely being the first print - it's considered that the plate was in optimum condition when it was produced (even though it would be hard to perceive any real difference in quality from most of the prints produced in the same edition. Although there is always something special about the 'first born.'

Yet as a slight fading occurs and the line work is no longer quite strong the printmaker realizes that the plate is wearing out and so should stop the edition.

It can also be assumed that if the edition is a short run each print can have more value than a print that belongs to an edition of a hundred or more. Yet, to reiterate the art market will generally place a higher value on the first registered print and least value on the last. Also it can be stated that the edition is limited i.e. a 'limited edition' to maintain the value of the prints which is to say that once a particular edition has been completed there will not be any more prints done even though the plate may still be in good condition. (In any case most etchings can often be printed before any real difference in the uniform quality of them can be detected by the naked eye).

There is no practical reason why a second (or other editions) maybe done but it seems to not be encouraged by the art market. From my reading it seems that limited print editions started to become a common procedure to create 'artificial rarity' only in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Previously, a print was available to be reproduced until the print wore out. To guarantee the value of the prints of any limited edition the etching plate can be deliberately scratched or 'scored' with a line going through the plate so it becomes impossible to do any more prints. This is called the *cancellation* of the print. Personally, I view the etching plate itself as a work of art with the

prints as graphic ‘reflections’ of it so if there is to be any exclusivity it would be preferable to simply store the plate in a secure place rather than permanently scar it. I do not score my plates.

Consider the following paragraph:

*Limited Edition. The practice of limiting the number of impressions of a print in order to create an artificial rarity for the benefit of the collector. Often the impressions are signed and numbered by the artist; a number such as 6/20 indicates that the impression was the sixth in an edition of twenty impressions. In the early days of printmaking editions were not limited: so long as demand continued the plate was used until it wore out. The limited edition is a relatively recent development, dating only from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. When the edition is complete the plate or block is often destroyed or defaced. The scratching of lines across a plate to indicate the end of its use is known as cancelling.\**

\*Page 6. Paul Goldman. *Looking at Prints. A GUIDE TO TECHNICAL TERM.* 1981. The Trustees of the British Museum.

### ***Artist Proof (A/P)***

A/P refers to the practice that before a printmaker actually does an edition he or she may do a few prints to see what it is like and perhaps make a few ongoing changes. When an individual print is made and is kept by the printmaker he or she will usually scribe A/P under the etching to say it is a ‘one-off’ rather than be part of an edition. An official edition deliberately restricts the number of available prints. The number of artist proof prints is the prerogative of the artist. Yet usually there is much less number of artist proof prints than there is in any final edition.

### ***States***

Each time the plate is changed by way of adding or deleting features to its image it is called a new state. A plate may go through many a few states before the printmaker is satisfied the plate is ready for an edition in its final state.

Although some printmakers may also make an edition of each state before working further on the plate. (In fact, a plate may never ‘arrive’ at a final state).

## *Artist Information*

Nicholas Nicola

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Biographical Details. b. Feb. 1959. Melbourne. Australia. The son of parents who had their own milk bar and are of Greek Cypriot heritage. Resides in Sydney. Studied at UNSW from 1977 to 1979. Bachelor of Arts. (Majors in Psychology, Sociology). As a non-degree student studied at Sydney University from 1978 to 1980 to obtain a Fine Arts Major which included studying a variety of subjects such as the Renaissance and Baroque periods, Film Studies, 19th and 20th century Modernism as well as Neo-Classicism. In 1981 completed a Diploma of Education (Dip. Ed) at Sydney Teachers College where introduced to etching by the pre-eminent Australian printmaker Pamela Griffith. Qualified to teach Visual Arts and also teaches E.S.L (English as a Second Language) to migrant/refugee students.

### Artist Statement.

As a 'late bloomer' Nicholas Nicola's etchings in the last few years mainly display an ongoing interest in the Australian bush. Acknowledging that he is portraying a landscape that was previously occupied by the 'first Australians' Nicholas is aware that - compared to the mature understanding of the land by Aboriginal artists - he is still very much in the process of appreciating this ancient continent. Nicholas perceives a cosmological link between the land and the heavens and incorporates an archetypal view of the sky as 'father' with the Aboriginal view of the land as 'mother.' The union of 'mother' land and 'father' sky - which can also be read as the union between 'spirit' and 'physical' - leads to the union of life between what is mortal with what is eternal; all things on earth die but life also continually regenerates. Nicholas mostly works in the 6 inch X 4 inch format often combining the etching techniques of drypoint, sugarlift and aquatint.

Subjects & Themes: Along with the Australian landscape other areas of interest for subject matter have included travel, cross-cultural, suburbia, mythological themes.

Collections Various private collections in Australia as well as Lithuania, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, France, Russia, England, Thailand.

### Solo Exhibitions.

1998-1999. December- January. 'The Teachers House.' Vilnius. Lithuania.  
2005. November-December. 'The Apostrophe's Café.' Surry Hills. Sydney.  
2010. April. 'Powerhouse.' Private residence of Ms K. Power. Clovelly. Sydney.  
2016. February. Leichhardt Library. Sydney.

### Group Exhibitions

1990. Annual Printmaking Show. Willoughby Art Centre. Sydney.  
2005. November-December. EDU-K8R. Fairfield Regional Art Gallery.



Nicholas Nicola. Bungendore exhibition. June 2011. Photo: Amparo Llanos

2007. Annual Amnesty International Fundraiser. Tap Gallery. Darlinghurst. Sydney.  
2008. July. 'Fondue Designs.' Private residence of Ms M. Moutzouris. Camperdown. Sydney.  
2008. Julian Ashton School Annual Show. Sydney.  
2011. The PRINTMAKERS. Pamela Griffith. Nicholas Nicola. Theo Tremblay. Glen Mackie. Robyn Collier. Tess Barker. June - August. Bungendore Wood Works Gallery. Bungendore. NSW.  
2012. November. Artists for Human Rights and Action Exhibition. Blak Dot Gallery. Melbourne.  
2012. December. Building Bridges Exhibition. Artists for refugees. UTS. Sydney.  
2016 February. The Universe. Leichhardt Library. Sydney.

Website : Nicholas Nicola's art can be viewed on his personal website: <http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/> (or websearch: 'nicholas nicola etchings').

Youtube: for a general 'visual overview' of some of Nicholas Nicola's Australian landscape etchings go to:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z\\_V9gO6oTj0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_V9gO6oTj0) Also consider the two video webpages on his website: the first is via the ARTIST INFORMATION sidebar link:

<http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/youtube.php> & also <http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/videos.php>



A webpage dedicated to the Apostrophes' Café exhibition:

<http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/apostrophes-cafe.php>

A webpage dedicated to the Black Fez Poetry Nights of which the artist was conscious of on the opening night of the Apostrophes' Café exhibition:

<http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/black-fez.php>

In the first archival photo are etchings on display on the bookshelves of the Apostrophes' Café. Surry Hills. There was also artwork on the walls admired by a festive audience. It was bemusingly noted how the images in their hand varnished frames were ordered in different t-shirt sizes. The largest prints being marked as XL then to L and down to M & S. The 'readymade' frames were and varnished by the artist. The next photo is of vibrant Napoli folk music played at the 'Power house' which many people enjoyed dancing too. A brief video of this music can be seen via the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oja29HYEJTI>



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Also consider the following **Central Australian AMATA video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdXnG3mDZMg> and some background info on: <http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/youtube.php>

## AN ARTIST STATEMENT/S

Below are displayed remarks made for the Bugendore exhibition which in many ways are still applicable.



### NICHOLAS NICOLA

Many of Nic's prints derive from an intense interest in the Australian bush. He is still very much in the process of comprehending the natural elements of this ancient continent. Acknowledging that he is depicting the topography previously occupied by the 'first Australians', he also admits to only having a dimly perceived appreciation of the Aboriginal artists' far more mature and astute understanding of the landscape. Nic also sees a cosmological link between land and sky and space adding the concept of 'father' to his acceptance of the Indigenous view of the land as 'mother'. Working almost exclusively in the 6 x 4 inch format and often combining drypoint, sugarlift and aquatint on the same etched plate, Nic believes it is up to the imagination of the printmaker to use any method of leaving marks suitable for the artist's purposes of image-making.

## SILKSCREEN PRINTING ANOTHER OLD PRINT TECHNOLOGY



Before etching screen-printing was a strong interest & I recently found some old screens of which this was one using a gum to 'paint' a stencil onto the screen. The writing below this tree is as follows: *One fine Sunday Morning I walked into Ariel bookshop and found myself – of all things – talking about silkscreening for refugees. I then decided as an example of this technique, to print up this tournefortia tree from the front cover of a poetry book by Charles Bukowski....* \* [I now dimly remember teaching people seeking asylum how to screenprint t-shirts. A part-time venture for a few weeks at the Jesuit run Asylum Seekers Centre in Surry Hills coaxed by an old friend].

***Please continue to PART THREE (ESSAYS) or return to PART ONE (MAIN GALLERIES) via the following link:***

*nicholas nicola etchings leichhardt 2016 website page:*

<http://nicholasnicolaetchings.synthasite.com/leichhardt-2016.php>

***Thank You.***

Screenprint entitled:  
*Chinese Landscape*

