

# CHINE-COLLEE GOES ON WITH ITS LIFE

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9. F. Krüger's lithograph Nicolaus I, Kbeingl. lithograph.institut, zu Berlin after conservation in Kanut, 2017.

In 2017 a lithograph in a really problematic condition was conserved in the SA EVM Conservation Center Kanut. F. Krüger's work - Nicolaus I, Köningl. lithograph.institut, zu Berlin had fragmented and its technique - Chine-collé - complicated conservation even more.

So-called China paper for intaglio printing and lithography has been used in Europe since the early 19th century. When it is backed with a thicker and more solid paper the technique is called Chine appliqué or Chine-collé.

Several storing and conservation problems may occur with prints made in the Chine-collé technique. In addition to the durability of the bond between the sheets, we have to take into consideration expanding and contracting of different paper, the adhesive used in the making process and the quality changes that vary due to different properties of fibers.

A year later a contemporary chine-collée by Walter Jule, an internationally acknowledged artist and professor of art at the University of Alberta, Canada was also treated in the Kanut. Walter Jule mainly works with photo etching and photo lithography, supplementing these with mixed techniques, happenstance plays a significant role in the process, making every print unique: "the technical process is a way for me to become more intimate with ideas about light, transience, cause and effect, what is predicted and what is recognized," he writes.

A lot of deliberation was needed of the conservator when estimating the present condition of the print and its original creation. As it was the work of a contemporary, active artist, the decision was made to drop all the deliberations and contact the artist.

The conservators today have perpetual questions about the most suitable solution for conservation and about the materials used. It was a privilege to communicate with the artist who readily described his techniques. Moreover, he understands his materials and prefers to use the best, considering the storage and preservation.

The drying process described by W. Jule resembles that of karibari. Thanks to that, as well as to the artist's choice of paper, the differences in tension of various sheets were minimal during the damaging and made the conservation process easier compared to the previous case with the 19th century lithograph.



19. Walter Jule's print in mixed technique Measurement of Void - A Device to Accelerate Wear. The work after conservation.



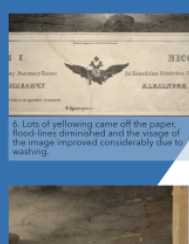
1. F. Krüger's lithograph Nicolaus I.



4. The sheets had retained some contact here and there, the tears had appeared just in the contact areas, where the changes in thin paper were faster and more extensive.



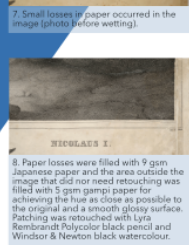
2. The textile backing was evidently not original as the tears (5cm up and 15cm down) in the paper that perforated two layers had been mended on the reverse side with robust rag paper patches. The backing textile was whole, referring to some later-day repairs.



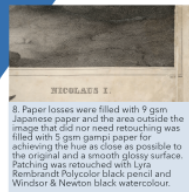
6. Lots of yellowing came off the paper, flood-lines diminished and the visage of the image improved considerably due to washing.



3. The glue that had been used at mending had turned brown and rebued the front through a tear.



7. Small losses of paper occurred in the image (photo before wetting).



8. Paper losses were filled with 9 gsm Japanese paper and the area outside the image that did not need retouching was filled with 5 gsm gampi paper for achieving the hue as close as possible to the original and a smooth glossy surface. Patching was retouched with Lyra Rembrandt Polychlor black pencil and Winsor & Newton black watercolour.



10. Walter Jule's print in mixed technique Measurement of Void - A Device to Accelerate Wear that had been damaged in a water-accident started before conservation.



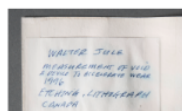
14. Due to water-damage the whole etching was puckering, especially above the flood-lines.



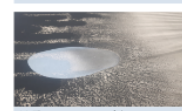
11. Closer observation showed that double-layered paper had been used - the not glued rag paper has the Chine-collé on gampi paper on top.



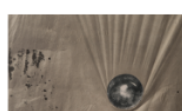
15. Having estimated the print's condition, the conservator decided to contact the artist, he replied and explained his techniques. The detailed photo about the damage sent to the artist before conservation.



12. The name label on the reverse side of the print had been written in blue ink that had dispersed due to moisture.



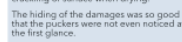
16. The conservation of the print was successful. The general cockling was straightened and glue-contact in between the sheets restored. The detailed photo about the damage sent to the artist after conservation.



13. This was an amazing case due to the fact that the damage seemed to have hidden itself within the image - the finer cockles were in the same region, where the artist had depicted puckered paper on his print. In his numerous works Walter Jule has depicted in amazing detail the most common physical phenomena - drying of damp paper on, under and between various objects and crackling of surface when drying.



17. The detailed photo about the damage before conservation sent to the artist.



The hiding of the damages was so good that the puckers were not even noticed at the first glance.



18. The detailed photo about the damage after conservation sent to the artist.