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# Creating various shades of a colour using the aquatint technique.

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**Estimated time:** 3 hours

**Level:** intermediary

**Artist:** Charlotte Reine

[www.charlottereine.fr](http://www.charlottereine.fr) [6]

Aquatint is a technique that makes it possible to create patches of colour on the copper plate thanks to graining created by powdered resin. Once it has melted, the area covered with resin will retain the ink and make it possible to create various shades of colour according to the length of time the acid bites the plate.

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<https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/default/files/Ed-Art-Pas-a-pas-Aquatinte-illustration.jpg>



## Matériel

>**Paper** : Canson<sup>®</sup> Edition

**For engraving:** ferric chloride, a 10 cm x 15 cm copper plate, spirit varnish, rosin, several tubes of intaglio ink, 1 metre of tarlatan, methyated spirit, white spirit.

**Accessories:** a plastic tray ? approx. 15 or 20 cm, a spirit lamp, an intaglio printing machine, a dusting box.

La profondeur de champ (PDC)

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## 1. Preparing the plate

Clean your copper plate with blanc de Meudon mixed with methylated spirit.  
Using a brush dipped in liquid spirit varnish, cover the surfaces you want to remain white.

La profondeur de champ (PDC)

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## 2. Applying the rosin

Vigorously turn the crank of the dusting box: this will project powdered rosin resin to the top of the box.  
Place your plate in it.

Leave it for approximately twenty seconds: the resin will settle on your plate and it will be covered with a layer of resin dust.

La profondeur de champ (PDC)

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### 3. Cooking the dust

Place your plate on a grid and heat it using a spirit lamp. The resin will become translucent as it melts.

The dust particles will bubble slightly as they heat. Don't do this for too long as the dust could be overcooked.

La profondeur de champ (PDC)

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### 4. Biting

Submerge the plate in a tray filled with fresh ferric chloride

Immersion time necessary for this engraving is 3 minutes.

Take the plate out and rinse abundantly with water. Drain it and dry it.

**Tip:** : remember to protect the back of your plate with tape and make a tab with the tape to facilitate the immersion process.

La profondeur de champ (PDC)

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### 5. successive biting

Cover the parts you want to keep clearer with spirit varnish. Let the varnish dry and submerge the plate in the tray of ferric chloride again for 4 minutes. Rinse well with water.

Repeat this operation, leaving the plate in the ferric chloride for the same length of time. Rinse abundantly with clear water and dry with a clean cloth. Clean the plate with methylated spirit.

## La profondeur de champ (PDC)

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## 6. Inking the plate

Ink the bottom of the plate with sepia ink and the top with blue ink for example.

Wipe each colour separately with a piece of tarlatan until the image appears, then finish wiping the rest of the plate

(Cf. Tricks of the trade: [how to ink, wipe and print produce good prints](#) [7]).

## La profondeur de champ (PDC)

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<https://www.cansonstudio.com/sites/default/files/Ed-Art-Pas-a-pas-Aquatinte-etape-7.jpg>

## 7. Printing the engraving

Place your inked plate on a paper on which you previously drew a frame to centre it.

Place your Canson® Edition paper, previously dampened. Pull down the felts and put through the press. Your proof is printed!

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### Canson® Edition

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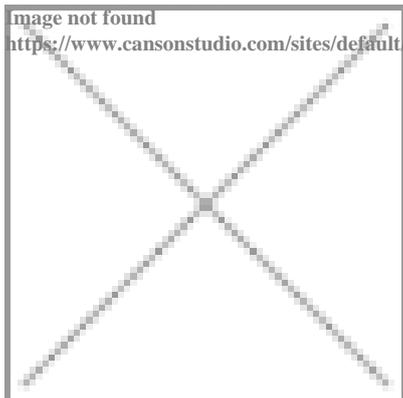


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## See also

### Basic tools for engraving: Press, Engraving tools, Varnish and Mordants

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The material will not be the same for etching as for line engraving. The following list will provide you with some basic references so that you can make your first purchases with an easy mind.

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### Making a woodblock print (xylography): Fishermen's huts

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Would you like to try woodblock printing like Paul Gauguin, Félix Vallotton, Edward Munch, Hokusai or Hiroshige? By following these simple steps you can make your first ever xylography...

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