

Test One, Sept. 12: Hawthorne linseed oil based inks

Maria and I worked together for this test run, and she handled the ink for the most part, but she reports favorably. I conducted the physical printing and cleaned up. We used Rives BFK, white and gray, and mixed a mid-tone slate gray for ink.

Printing went quite well. We hand printed for this first test, to get a sense for the ink before implementing the inking system. The ink rolled up smoothly and behaved much like traditional oil based ink.

Maria conducted an initial clean up, trying oil and vinegar; dish soap (both diluted and non) and water; and EP-67. She reports further on the results but was satisfied with all combinations. Between printing runs, I blotted excess ink with a dry shop towel, wiped the remaining ink with a shop towel dampened with EP-67, and then blotted dry with another dry towel. This process was sufficient for between prints.

Final cleanup was a bit more difficult. For the type, I first did the above but found there was still ink on the letters, especially in the lower areas. I then wiped them with a vegetable oil soaked rag and cleaned the crevices with q-tips, followed by EP-67 and a dry towel as above. The ink was still rather stubborn but ultimately came off most of the letters.

At that point, the ink had been exposed to the air for about four hours. It had started to form a skin on the palette. The palette, however, was not difficult to clean. I scraped up the excess ink and then wiped the palette thoroughly with a dry shop towel, removing most of the evident ink. I then wiped the surface down with a dish-soapy towel, followed by water and then EP-67, leaving the palette completely clean and degreased in a very short amount of time.

The roller proved most difficult to clean. The ink had started to dry on its surface and to settle into the pores of the rubber. Dish soap without water, as recommended, was futile. Vegetable oil removed most of the looser ink, but some areas remained stubborn. By diligently scrubbing with an oil soaked rag, I was eventually able to loosen the ink. I then washed the roller with soap and water and dried it thoroughly. Maria and I had speculated how long the ink could stay out: apparently, about four hours. It is probably recommended to cover the ink with wax paper when not in use and to wash the roller mid-way through printing to keep it from drying on the surface.

The palette knives I cleaned with an oil-soaked rag and then degreased with EP-67. I suspect because the surface is non-porous, it was much easier to remove the ink than on the roller.