

## **Test Two, Sept. 14: Akua Intaglio Inks**

Akua is a little runnier to work with than Hawthorne, but some trouble shooting gave satisfying results. It is certainly worth printing a lino-cut in black to see how the ink behaves unmodified on a larger surface, and also to ink the roller system to eliminate human error.

For this testing, I ran text proofs for a book project requiring specific, muted tones of ink, thus requiring transparent base and opaque white. Both the white and the base are the runniest consistency Akua offers. My initial roll-up was too thick, and the ink had a tendency to fill in around the letters

(though subtly, due to the transparent tones). Ultimately, a thin layer of ink on the roller (thinner than a standard roll-up) and a single firm but light pass over the text proved to work best, with the least fill-in. It seemed more difficult to ink consistently than with the Hawthorne ink, but this may be due to my own inexperience, hence the recommendation to try the inking system.

I also tested using a darker gray tone, matched as closely as possible to the gray we mixed for Hawthorne, in order to be able to compare. This ink contained less transparency and white than the others I mixed, and the letters did print more crisply, though not quite as well as Hawthorne (again, possibly due to human error). I mixed some mag into this ink to stiffen it, which gave the best results.

Clean-up was far easier than with Hawthorne. Between proofs, simply blotting up the remaining ink with a dry shop towel was sufficient. At the end of testing, I used a dry towel followed by one sprayed with EP-67, followed by another dry towel, and the letters came perfectly clean. The rollers, palette knives, and palette I effectively cleaned with soap and water, per the method recommended by Akua (see intaglio notes or Akua instruction manual).