



Caligo Safe Wash Etching Printmaking Inks Product Information

Linseed Oil based ETCHING inks that can be cleaned with soap and cold water.



Applications:

All types of etching / Intaglio printmaking.

Product Description:

Caligo inks are oil-based and will therefore handle and print like traditional oil-based printing inks. However, Caligo Safe Wash Etching inks will wash away safely and easily with liquid soap and COLD water alone, without the need for solvents. These inks have good lightfast ratings (Blue Wool Scale 6 or higher) and are highly pigmented.

Modifying and Mixing:

As the inks are highly pigmented, the strength of colours can be modified by the addition of Caligo Safe Wash Transparent Extender. The majority of the colours are made from single pigments, so the inks make excellent

bases for creating vibrant colour mixtures. Or, starting with just the four process colours, mixed in varying proportions, a range of blues, purples, greens, reds and oranges are achievable. Colour mixing guides can be downloaded from the Cranfield website.

The inks can be thinned with a small addition of Caligo Safe Wash Oil (WTCI 83948).

Printing:

Caligo Safe Wash Etching inks behave in the same way as traditional oil-based etching inks. They are suitable for printing on dry or damp paper, however it is recommended that paper is kept fairly dry and there is no surface water on the paper or plate. Dampening just the back of the paper with a damp sponge works well.

It is the printmaker's preference and practice that dictates whether they wish to use a heated plate for softening inks or use additives such as wiping compound or plate oils.

Paper Choice:

It is important to use dedicated Printmaking papers.

The term that a paper is suitable for 'ink', generally refers to liquid pen and water-based inks rather than oil based. Papers that are designed for water colour (for example) have an invisible impervious surface-coating (called a size) making them unabsorbent for oil-based inks.

Printmakers should be aware that coloured paper, especially black paper is associated with very slow ink drying and ink driers are therefore required. We recommend conducting a small print trial before the production of a larger edition on any coloured or demanding substrate.

Paper with a high recycled content will contain short and damaged fibres which are not conducive to even absorption or steady drying of oil-based inks.

Oil based inks are slow to dry in an acidic environment, so acid free papers are preferable.

Ink Drying advice:

Caligo Safe Wash Etching Inks will dry in the same way as traditional oil-based inks. (by absorption into paper, surface oxidation and slow polymerisation of the remainder of the printed ink film).



The printmaker should apply minimal thickness of ink (it's tempting to apply thicker layers especially if trying to create a strong colour or to hide overlapped layers). Due to the high pigment loading, only a little ink is required to achieve a strong colour. If opacity is an issue, light colours are improved by adding a small amount of opaque white, and dark colours by adding a little carbon black.

Plenty of warm, dry, moving air and daylight over the surface of the print will speed up the drying process. If it's been raining or in a high humidity building, keeping the prints warm AND DRY once printed will be important. Printmakers who are producing large numbers of prints may consider constructing a print drying box containing drying rack, a low-level heat source and a fan to initiate air

movement.

It is problematic to wait a long time before overprinting, as the first layers once dry will be almost impenetrable meaning subsequent overprinted ink will not absorb, and the drying process will be indefinitely interrupted.

When printmakers have used unsuitable paper or employed challenging methods, technical help is available from hello@cranfield-colours.co.uk.

Caligo inks already contain a small quantity of driers, but the speed of the drying process can be easily increased by the addition of Printmaker's wax drier. (WTCN 84356). This easy-to-mix blend increases drying speed AND provides greater rub and scuff resistance to the finished print.

Alternatively, the addition of liquid Cobalt or Manganese Driers can be used depending on local restrictions.

Small quantities of left-over ink can be retained for a short period wrapped in kitchen cling-film or silver foil if they might be of future use.



Ink Storage:

All oil-based Inks will eventually dry and form a skin when exposed to the oxygen in the air. To stop ink from drying and forming a skin in the tin, pockets of air in the ink surface are smoothed with a knife and exposed surfaces of the ink are re-covered with the protective disc. The lid should be replaced securely, and the tape reapplied.

The thread of an ink tube should be clean with a rag so that the cap can be easily replaced.

Unlike acrylic systems, oil-based inks are generally resilient to colder conditions but should be kept out of direct sunlight and high temperatures which can instigate drying.

Ink Removal/Wash Up:

Caligo Safe Wash Etching inks are designed to wash away with soap and COLD water alone without the need for harmful solvents. For best results, use liquid hand soap or detergent or a laundry liquid (most brands work well) and COLD water.

Excess ink is removed with a knife or a dry rag and newsprint is used to remove as much ink as possible from plate and tools before washing up. Next, liquid soap / detergent is squeezed directly onto the inky surfaces and worked with a clean brush or a soft sponge.

Hot water should NOT be used when cleaning as it opens not only the pores of the skin but can also make the emulsified ink turn into an unpleasant goo.

Tartan cloth / cheesecloth / scrim cloth used for wiping the etching plate of excess ink prior to printing, can be washed out in soap and water and once dried can be re-used.

Finally, the ink-soap mixture is wiped away with a damp sponge or a paper towel. Carefully drying all surfaces before storage.

If any stubborn patches of ink remain, liquid soap should be reapplied and worked into the ink until it starts to lift away. Cleaning rags can be washed out and reused many times.

There is a temptation to use too much soapy water. It is helpful to have the rag relatively dry to provide 'tooth' to mechanically loosen the ink. Lots of coloured soapy water is difficult to keep on the slab. A window squeegee is a useful way to clear the remaining soapy water from the glass slab.



For current colour range, consult www.cranfield-colours.co.uk