

# Case study

## David Nixon

### Details

**What:**

David Nixon is a visual artist who produces works on paper and art videos. David undertook a collaborative residency with master lithographer, Satoru Itazu in Chofu, Tokyo where they produced a series of lithographs together.

David first worked with Satoru Itazu when David was a Queensland College of Art (QCA) student and Satoru was in Australia working with the QCA students. They produced a lithograph together at that time, and after almost ten years this residency continues the collaborative process that was begun in 2006.

The residency provided David with the opportunity to experiment with new methods of printmaking and he anticipates this will open up new audiences for his work. He has also consolidated his working relationship with Satoru and hopes to continue this into the future.

David travelled around Japan, visiting museums and galleries such as the Tokyo National Museum and the 'art islands' of Naoshima and Teshima. He found these cultural experiences visionary and inspiring.

While in Japan, David forged a creative link with some Japanese artists and will participate in an exhibition of five artists in Tokyo in 2015.

**When:**

November 2014

**Where:**

Tokyo, Japan



David Nixon at Itazu Litho-Grafik, Satoru Itazu's art-complex in Tokyo. Photo: David Nixon

**Arts Queensland contribution:**

\$3400– Individuals Fund

**Contact for further information:**

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**Links:**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Itazu-Litho-Grafik-TOKYO/183421985108532>

## Outcomes

- David was able to develop new ways of making works on paper with lithographic methods. He trialled lithographic pencil and cray-pas on aluminium plate. He also worked with stone plates enjoying their responsiveness and potential for tonal nuance.
- The collaborative working relationship with Satoru Itazu has been consolidated and they have established ways of working that can continue into the future.
- Through new contacts established in Japan, David will participate in an exhibition in Tokyo in 2015.
- David has set up processes, based on what he learned during the residency, to make lithographs back in Australia.
- David will exhibit his new lithographs in galleries such as Print Gallery and the Brisbane Institute of Art in 2015.



David Nixon at Itazu Litho-Grafik, Satoru Itazu's art-complex in Tokyo. Photo: David Nixon

## Learnings and reflections

The residency with Satoru Itazu gave David the chance to experiment with new ways of working:

*The most surprising discovery for me was using cray-pas on aluminium plates, working very rapidly. This generated a completely new way of working for me. The process of working quickly is evident in the work, which is texture-based. Consequently, an expression of energy and immediacy is held in the work. Collaborating with Satoru enabled us to be very discerning regarding colours. Furthermore, this method was combined with using gum on aluminium plates, a different method that can be developed in the future. Drawing quickly on plates is a method that I can share with Satoru in future workshops, possibly in Australia, which is relevant to others in our industry.*

*My residency was balanced pragmatically with much slower ways of working on limestone, a process new to me, which taught me a great deal, especially about responding creatively to these materials.*

Satoru's Japanese culture informs his technical perfectionism and David appreciated the opportunity to work with and be guided by Satoru:

*Satoru's printing was impeccable. Allowing me creative space, he observed my efforts sensitively. Regarding materials, Satoru made vital suggestions, guiding me towards new ways of working. The great value of collaboration is that it liberates an artist from their established processes. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. A creative intersection comes into play, generating work in a way that is not possible from the artist's singular initiative.*

*The Japanese appreciation of aesthetics in horticulture re-awakened my understanding of gardening as a metaphor for creativity and art, a strong theme of my residency. Furthermore, I used the traditional Japanese water wheel as a visual point of departure in one of my lithographs.*

*My residency was demanding and fulfilling. I immersed myself into an uninterrupted space of creativity. It was a significant privilege to work with Satoru Itazu.*