

Engraving the Moon – a new approach to an old process

Ben Goodman

Society of Wood Engravers, UK

Wood engraving is a traditional printmaking technique that rose to prominence during the second half of the 18th Century in Northumberland. Its use as a tool for printing images dominated the publishing world until it was eventually superseded by photographic techniques in the 19th Century. By the early 1900s it was all but extinct in the commercial print world and subsequently, like so many industrial processes, moved to the art world.

Wood engraving remains one of the more obscure printmaking techniques, yet maintains a reputation for finesse and skill. Today it is sustained and promoted by the Society of Wood Engravers and its members, who count myself among their number. In my lecture I will explain the process of wood engraving and how I used it to create an image of the full Moon. The image required inverting the established approach of printing black ink on white paper, which in turn required researching and testing alternative materials.