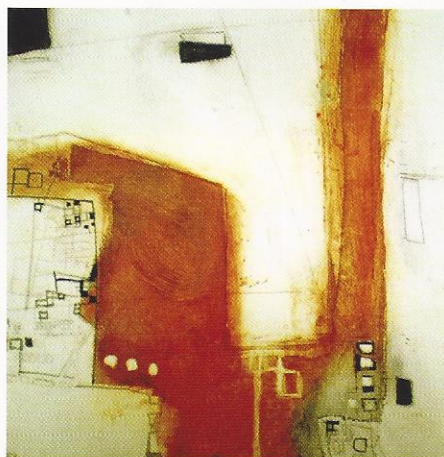


# An Australian abroad: Greg Mallyon's Flight Path to The Scuola Internazionale di Grafica di Venezia

by Sue Forster, Editor, *IMPRINT*



Sue Forster interviewed Greg Mallyon in late February 2014. The artist is currently based in Daylesford in the Central Goldfields region of Victoria.

In 2013 Australian painter-printmaker Greg Mallyon was chosen to undertake a one-month postgraduate artist residency at the prestigious Scuola Internazionale di Grafica di Venezia (Venice International School of Graphic Arts). Not surprisingly, he remains full of enthusiasm for this extraordinary facility overlooking one of Venice's ancient canals. Combining 300 years of history with 150-year-old presses and modern facilities — a computer room, strictly controlled, well-equipped studios for all printmaking techniques and a painting studio — the Scuola offers a stimulating and highly professional work environment. As a resident artist Mallyon received a free studio of his own and shared accommodation in the heart of Venice. He could access the Scuola seven days per week and attend classes as an observer or participant while receiving technical advice and support in English. And all this time he was surrounded by the Scuola's wonderful museum-standard collection of artist books and fine art prints.

Mallyon says that director Lorenzo di Castro is passionate about his business, which he runs with the aid of his generous, philanthropic family, including his mother, artist-printmaker Matilda Dolcetti. As a result there is a family atmosphere about the place and an attention to detail that benefits students and residents alike. The Scuola provides everything that is needed to bring prints to the proofing stage; furthermore translating services are also provided for non-Italian speaking residents.

Surprisingly, Australia remains under-represented at the Scuola (the late Jorg Schmeisser and Jon Cattapan, Associate Dean International at Victorian College of The Arts, University of Melbourne are the only notable Australian artists to have worked there). Most residents and students come from Europe and the USA; established American artists are often attracted by its longstanding affiliations with American universities. Mallyon's residency followed on from a Master of Art at COFA, UNSW, but as a mature artist, a former managing director and part owner of Port Jackson Press Australia (1999 – 2002\*), and former manager of Northern Editions printmaking workshop at Charles Darwin University, NT (2002-04), Mallyon also brought his own ethos and set of printmaking skills to the arrangement. In Venice he noticed that he arrives at his prints 'from a different angle' to European fine craft traditions of printmaking. Honed under extreme weather conditions while working with indigenous artists in the outback, his own highly spontaneous techniques were sometimes considered by Italians to be rough. Mallyon also enjoys print surfaces characterised by loose painterly methods of plate rubbing. His prints and paintings feed off each other, but, whatever the medium, these surface effects are an integral aspect of his subject matter — abstracted aerial topographies.

Dating from childhood experiences of viewing outback Queensland from a plane, and buoyed by his extensive exposure to Aboriginal art as a printer and gallerist, Mallyon is fascinated by aerial perspectives of landscape and their sacred, pragmatic and aesthetic uses. His historical and cross-cultural research on the subject extends right through from European Neolithic petroglyphs to medieval mapping and the work of other

contemporary Australian painters.

During his flight to Venice via the Middle East, Mallyon was able to track the A380 airbus flight path and watch aerial images on its flight cameras. The numerous drawings that he made from these images, along with details taken from satellite photos and maps, provided the starting point for artworks produced in Venice.

At the Scuola, Mallyon worked simultaneously on paintings and plates for a suite of eight etchings titled *The Flight Path to Venice*. To his delight the Scuola went on to publish his prints in an edition of 15 (editioning is not a normal part of the Scuola's services). These were proofed before he left and then editioned with the embossed stamp of the Scuola Grafica Press and shipped out to Australia several months later. Their international collaboration extended Venetian printmakers' skills and experience in editioning while providing Greg with a highly marketable suite as the outcome of his residency. The prints were on show in his exhibition *Flight Path*, 3-12 April at Angela Tandori Fine Art, Collingwood, Victoria: [www.angelatandori.com](http://www.angelatandori.com) •

[www.scuolagrafica.it](http://www.scuolagrafica.it)  
[www.gregmallyon.com.au](http://www.gregmallyon.com.au)

images  
left: Greg Mallyon in the printmaking studio of The Scuola Internazionale di Grafica di Venezia, 2013.  
middle: Greg Mallyon, *Villages in the Persian Gulf* from the suite *The Flight Path to Venice*, 2013.  
right: Greg Mallyon, *Istanbul at 12,000 Metres* from the suite *The Flight Path to Venice*, 2013.  
Artwork: etching à la poupée, edition of 15, 24 x 25 cm, printed and published by The Scuola Internazionale di Grafica di Venezia.

\*Greg Mallyon was also an artist with Port Jackson Press during the '90s prior to becoming its Managing Director.