

Macquarie Editions: Advancing the digital printing workflow

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CASE STUDY



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Stephen Best - MD, Macquarie Editions

Situated in Canberra and with a heritage in digital printing going back to the earliest days of colour inkjet printing, Macquarie Editions is rapidly gaining a name for itself as a photographic and fine art digital printmaker putting quality above all else. The company's founder and managing director, Stephen Best, is himself an award-winning photographer; and with the combination of a critical eye and Epson's advanced 8-colour large format printers with UltraChrome K3 ink, he is setting a new standard in digital printmaking quality.

The new foundation

After early explorations, Best deferred his digital printmaking efforts simply because he believed there was no large format inkjet printer available that met the quality and display life standards he had set for Macquarie Editions' digital prints. But this changed dramatically in 2005 with Epson's introduction of the Stylus Pro 4800, 7800 and 9800 printers, which utilised the latest in pigment ink technologies – Epson UltraChrome K3.

Challenge

- ◆ Achieve black-and-white prints that meet the highest levels of quality
- ◆ Provide clients with prints—black-and-white and colour—that will last a lifetime
- ◆ Improve the digital printing workflow

Solution

- ◆ Epson Stylus Pro 4800
- ◆ Epson Stylus Pro 7800
- ◆ Epson UltraChrome K3 Ink

Benefits

- ◆ Elimination of colour shift in black-and-white prints
- ◆ 200 per cent improvement in print times
- ◆ Gallery-quality prints with up to 200 years* lightfastness
- ◆ Black-and-white prints that exhibit the same tonal qualities as a platinum print, and at a fraction of the price

"When I saw the quality that these printers and the new ink were capable of generating, I was one of the first to buy the Stylus Pro 4800 and 7800," Best states. "It was, as far as I was concerned, the first time that a vendor had released a large format printer and ink solution that delivered perfect fine art and photographic prints."

Meeting highest standards

Working exclusively with photographers and artists, Best is growing his business while maintaining a strict policy of being his own most harsh critic. "Whatever standards my clients expect of the prints I create, I see it as being crucial that my standards are even higher," he states.

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"Essentially," Best continues, "this means that I'm now able to provide my clients with black-and-white prints that exhibit the tonal qualities of a platinum print, but at a fraction of the price."

Life and light

In creating prints that will be used by his clients in exhibitions and then on-sold to

been confronting digital printmakers. "Print longevity tends to be something that a number of printmakers like to ignore; simply because they're unable to guarantee anything longer than a year or two," he says. "When I provide my clients with a print, though, I want to know that it's going last a lifetime, because that's precisely what *they* want."



collectors, Best's use of the Stylus Pro 4800 and 7800 printers along with UltraChrome K3 ink ensures almost total freedom in display lighting conditions.

Resulting from the UltraChrome K3 ink's dramatically reduced metamerism, each Macquarie Editions print exhibits high levels of colour consistency, regardless of the lighting conditions under which they are displayed. "This means that when my clients approve and pickup their prints, the colour and tonal quality will be just the same when exhibited at a gallery *and* when hung in a purchaser's home."

Adding even greater advantage with Best's use of Epson UltraChrome K3 ink is a lightfastness rating of up to 200 years* - a feature that Best believes resolves one of the most important issues that has

Speed *does* count

While quality is of paramount importance to Best, there is also the need to provide that quality to clients in an on-time manner. "I have always been much more concerned about quality rather than speed," he says. "But in a business environment, where meeting tight deadlines can often be an issue, the print speeds of the Stylus Pro 4800 and 7800 are a major benefit."

Even using the printers' Super Fine Mode of 2880 by 1440 dpi, Best estimates that print speed is at least two times greater than with previous models, ensuring he is able to provide absolute quality in a fraction of the time.

"It gives me a digital printing workflow that is far more advanced than anything I've ever experienced before."

For more information on
Epson Large Format Printers
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reference 40040

* Refer to www.epson.com.au for further
information on Epson UltraChrome K3 Ink
lightfastness rating information