

Small is beautiful

Alice Springs' vibrant art scene sees many artists explore their creativity at CDU's busy art department. One artist, **ANDREW MOYNIHAN** creates monoprints pressed from a copper plate to reveal beauty on a small scale.



LEFT Working fresh ink on to the copper plate.
CENTRE The paper is gently saturated by water.
RIGHT A new piece separates from the now warped copper plate.

ABOVE
Artist Andrew Moynihan

TEXT
Jason McIntosh

IMAGES
Jason McIntosh

Hunched over a warm light, the artist gently presses and twists the tip of a cotton bud on to the small copper plate. A fine layer of ink on the surface shadows the movements, leaving a trace of swirls and patterns.

It's a process Alice Springs artist Andrew Moynihan has repeated hundreds of times to create images that are run through a traditional press and finally imprinted on to freshly soaked paper.

Andrew is nearing completion of his art project, a series of 100 monoprints of volcanic eruptions that sees the copper plate persistently refreshed in a cycle between artist and machine.

Each individual end result is a small oval image no wider than a business card with delicate tonal atmospheres surrounded by the large white void of the paper. It's perhaps some of the smallest and most unusual work to be produced at the art studio on CDU's Alice Springs campus.

The well-travelled artist gains great joy from his work, often committing a whole day to make four or five prints that reflect life in miniature. A few prints carefully laid out on his work table show volcanic eruptions among brewing storms and crashing waves formed through steady hands and fingers.

Andrew started exploring monoprints last year under the guidance of local artist and art teacher Suzi Lyon and, from there, began his major project in February. It's one of many works by Andrew, who was influenced by a highly creative mother.

"I grew up on classic '70s art including ceramics and charcoal drawing and was always surrounded and encouraged to explore art," he said.

After attending art schools in Brisbane and Hobart, and living in towns and cities across Australia, Andrew visited Alice Springs for a holiday. "I visited Central Australia, discovered the vibrant art scene and four years later I'm still here," he said.

"I love the art and people here, but I struggle in the wholeness of the environment which is beautiful and brutal at the same time. But it's been highly valuable to be in this part of Australia around such high calibre artists."

Andrew plans to exhibit his works later this year and then combine them into a coffee table book. "It would be a wonderful end to this project," he said.