Bracken Press print-workshop

Damp Box manufacture

For half imperial water colour paper

Overall size of board is half a full sheet of water resistant board. 48 x 48 inches.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">19.75 x

6

InchesI

(Side)</td><td rowspan="2">19.75 x

6 inches

(Side)</td><td>Size 26 x 6 inches (Front) To be hinged</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Spare</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Size

20.5 x 27.5 inches</td><td>Size

21.5 x 27.5 inches</td><td>Size

6 x 27.5</td></tr>
</table>

(Base)	(Lid) To be hinged	(Back)

On of the things one needs when printing either etchings, letterpress work or wood engravings is a way of keeping the paper damp. Often this is done by immersing the paper in a basin of water, letting the excess drip off and then placing the sheets between clean blotting paper. Often the paper is too wet and needs to be blotted dry, if there is surface water on the paper it could reject the oil based intaglio ink. Using water based ink then 'bleed' can happen.
Using the above method can cause another problem has happened being the edges of the paper start to dry out, this can cause cockling of the paper when it goes through the press. So it's a good idea to have some way of keeping the paper at a constant 'wetness'.
A damp box is just that, an enclosed box with a hinged front side and a hinged top cover. Inside the box it is first waterproofed, or by using a water resistant board. I've taken to using some pieces of laminated board and when that ran out, cutting MDF to size and covering it with formica.

My first damp box fully assembled, but not lined with foam. This smaller version accommodates a quarter sheet of paper.

Lining the box, I used 1" (one inch) thick foam purchased from a local retailer . There was enough to cover the box with a little spare left over.
Note that the side foam is 1" below the lid, this allows for the lid foam to totally encapsulate the box.

Experiments with the 'damp box' have been very encouraging. Once loaded with the damp paper and left overnight, the paper was still good to print.
2nd day the paper was still good to print on.
Most surprisingly on the 3rd day the paper was still good to print.
4th day it was a little too dry.

How to damp the paper.
Further reading .

Requirements
Saw, electric or circular saw.
Screwdriver
Screws 65 mm x 8 (Sides & back to base.)
Screws 25 mm X 4 (for hinges)
Square (T square)
Glue wood
Piano hinge 1.4 mtrs
Copydex glue to attach foam to board

Cut list
1 @ 20.5 x 27.5 inches (515 x 698mm) ***Base***
1 @ 21.5 x 27.5 inches (545 x 698 mm) ***Top to be hinged***
1 @ 27.5 x 6 inches (545 x 698 mm) ***Back***
1 @ 26 x 6 inches (533 x 152 mm) ***Front to be hinged***
2 @ 19.75 x 6 inches (502 x 152mm) ***2 sides***

To assemble:

Attach 2 sides to base by standing them ontop of the base, screw & glue from below.
Attach back to 2 sides and to base. With screws & glue
Stand front into opening at front, attach piano hinge cut to 26 inches (530mm)
Make sure the hinge works smoothly and front door marries to sides in height.
Attach lid making sure it is level with the back of the box & operates smoothly.

Foam. The box is designed to take 1 inch thick (25mm) foam.

This can be bought in sheet form from Dunelm (retail store) they also sell it online if you would prefer. 4 possible suppliers below.

http://www.dunelm.com

https://www.anyfoam.co.uk

https://www.efoam.co.uk

http://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/BLACK-NEOPRENE-PLAIN-SPONGE-FOAM-RUBBER

To attach the foam to your box, this can be done with Copydex glue or other rubber based glue NOT water based glue.

Just been to the DIY store for a sheet of 18mm exterior ply. Cost £32.90 & no cutting service.
So called at the local Jewson and can buy a board 4' x 8' (feet) for £30.00 + VAT @ 20% making it £36.00, so going to go with Jewson and have the rest for another project, they also cut to size.

Costings

18 mm exterior ply @ £36.00
1 large container of Copydex glue @ £9.45
2 sheets blue foam 56 x 100 cms @ £12.00
1 piano hinge 1.4 mtrs @ £6.00

Total cost £63.45

Images of the construction can be found in my blog February 14th & May 1st

The ½ imperial box is shown below before and after the foam addition.