

Diatom Press

Joe Buchanan

8 September – 31 October 2020

...the press

Diatom Press is set up in one of the old railway huts in Joe's mum's back garden on the Kāpiti Coast, not far from New Zealand's capital city Wellington.

Letterpress work is done with type collected as various printers moved offset. Joe uses an 8 x 5 Adana platen press.

Joe's lino practice is evolving. Where possible Joe draws from life, transposes his drawings to lino blocks using secret* methods, cuts with Japanese woodworking tools, uses a variety of ink and prints and prints with his Adana or a French stencil cutting press.

*Still deciding what works best

...diatoms

Diatoms are single celled microalgae (can't be seen with the naked eye). They live in the sea and rivers , in fact any water, a teaspoon of slimy gutter water has hundreds probably thousands of diatoms. Drawing carbon from the atmosphere they have a major role in moderating the Earth's climate.

They can be beautiful. Their silica cell walls are patterned with minute holes, grooves and spines, arranged in intricate geometrical patterns. They can look a bit like a printing plate.

Irrelevant fact: diatoms in bone marrow are used as proof of drowning.

Mahara Gallery