

# Ian Cartwright

We are always involved in the history and future of printmaking. Prints hold a fascination, which has been felt by many artists over the centuries. It could be said that the earliest art ever made was affected by an urge to replicate an image. The first repeatable likeness was a portrait of the self. The muddy imprint of a hand on a rock-face enchanted primitive man and the spell remains with us.

Every milestone reached in this history, is part of an evolution of printmaking. Each new way of printing is in itself unique but inseparable from a wider human need for invention. Digital printing is just a continuity of this evolution. Artists will continue to explore new ways of seeing and need to express this in a way that is culturally significant. They will use the very latest tools to using old craft in new ways. They will encompass unusual mixtures of different processes old and new. A medium need not sit in isolated purity.

For a while there had been uncertainty and scepticism as to whether we could print not only a good quality but also one which would be stable and archival. We have exceeded that and more. We have come some way since the early days of Digital printmaking, when Richard Hamilton could be heard screaming "give me hard-copy." This book is a fine testament to that.

