

# Relief Printing on Washi

*Relief printing, which today includes woodcut, linocut, hand set type (letterpress), rubber stamps etc., is the oldest printing method and is extremely well-suited to using washi, especially when hand printing as the image can easily be seen through the back without lifting.*

## TIPS & THINGS TO CONSIDER

- If you dampen your paper do so by misting or placing between layers of dampened newsprint in a damp pack (should be done several hours ahead)
- a carrier sheet can be useful when working with dampened washi, esp. larger sheets
- many papers print well without dampening, especially gampi
- ink can go right through thinner papers when printing: consider printing with a layer of newsprint behind to protect baren or press
- thinner papers dry out quickly – print with first layer of newsprint dampened as well as impression paper; an additional dry newsprint layer will allow baren to glide more easily
- When choosing inks be aware of the method of drying for that brand: inks that rely on absorption are best avoided when printing on thinner papers. The use of drying additives may be advised.

## PAPER SUGGESTIONS

- most types of washi will work, though kozo is strongest
- when printing with a press slightly heavier papers are often preferred including those with some wood pulp content
- *Kozuke White & Ivory* (sized) and *Risoh* (unsized) for proofing
- *Kiraku Kozo*, *Iwami Natural & White*, *Uwa Senka* are excellent mid-grade papers
- *Gozen*, *Seichosen*, *Inshu Kozo Ryudou* are best quality
- don't discount using thin papers – great results can be achieved with some extra care.

## ARTIST PRECEDENTS

- Brian Kelley (contemporary) [www.japanesepaperplace.com](http://www.japanesepaperplace.com) (Inspiration Gallery)
- Shiko Munakata, Japanese woodblock artist who coloured his prints from the back
- Walter J Phillips, (1884-1963) Canadian woodblock artist

