

Along the River **Kyoko Imazu and Damon Kowarsky**

In April this year a grant from the Japan Foundation took Melbourne artists Damon Kowarsky on a cultural research trip to Kyoto Japan. The major work resulting from this trip was a panoramic drawing of buildings, old and new, which extend along the river in that city.

Since 2010 Damon has been working in collaboration with Japanese/Australian artist Kyoko Imazu. Their collaborative way of working is based on obvious respect for, and enjoyment of each others ideas and a fundamental sense of fun. Damon makes a drawing which he hands over to Kyoko for her to 'vandalise'. Then Damon makes a copper etching plate and again Kyoko goes to work on it.

After their return from Japan Damon and Kyoko devised a project, generously supported by Arts Victoria, which would take them to The Art Vault residential printmaking studios in another river city Mildura, to make a new series of etchings based on the big Kyoto drawing.

For 'Along the River' Damon's cityscape panorama has been realised across fourteen copper plates which he has then handed over to Kyoko for her to finish. The result is a sequence of images which, while still describing the original riverside buildings, are made both curious and whimsical.

Damon's images of cities draw the viewer in to the compelling detail of a maze of buildings and the myriad worlds that they contain. Kyoko's fantastical animals and aliens, drawn variously from childhood fascinations, Japanese mythology and the teeming contemporary mind of the artist, work with her collaborator's sensibility to create magical scenes which invite the viewer to enter a magical world that is both familiar and strange.