

Jack Richeson Baby Press

Recently I had the pleasure of adding a baby press to my studio and the experience has been exactly what I'd hoped and felt I should share. Printmaking has been an interest just out of reach for years due to lack of access to a press. Well, things are different now, the Jack Richeson Baby Press has been the answer I've been looking for. So let's talk press specs.

The J. Richeson Baby Press weighs in at an impressive 40lbs(69 including the crate), 11 inches wide , and arrives ready to print if purchased with the blanket package. The press bed is an 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ "x 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ " sheet of galvanized steel and the press has an easy-to-install 2 point handle.

The press itself has stoppers built into it to prevent the bed from sliding out. Once you crank past a point the bed will drop into the stoppers and lift off of the rollers. This is an especially useful feature, however if you need to run the press again, you will have to guide it back through by hand to get it back on track.

(Note) Personally I prefer a 3 point handle, but once I took this press for a ride, I found the 2 point to be more than enough leverage to crank my plates through.

It ships in a sturdily constructed crate to which it is bolted to. This is an important detail as the crate serves as the perfect container for protection and portability. It will also ensure that the impressive 2-year warranty remains intact as it needs to be shipped back in that crate, otherwise it voids the warranty.

I recently had the opportunity to show my Richeson Press off at Art and Frame of Sarasota, where they carry the presses in all available sizes and at a significant discount. But, we'll talk pricing a little later, for now lets take a look at some photos from the demo.



Here's the press with an active copper plate on, ready to go. What you see on the rollers is a pusher blanket (not included), cushion (included), and a sheet of newsprint to protect my blankets.

You'll notice two adjustment handles on either side, which are non-intrusive and easy to turn. What might not be visible are the pressure notches that make leveling your roller, extremely easy and precise.



There I am by the press, for scale, and laying down some paper.

(Note; You can't hear it, but there is a lot of "Oohs and Ahhs during this part of the demo, feel free to imagine it and join in.)

If there were one drawback of this piece of equipment, it would be the lack of stand. The baby press is not available with a stand, but as I love to flex my Craftsmen's muscles, I intend to build one or convert a butcher's block to accommodate my press.

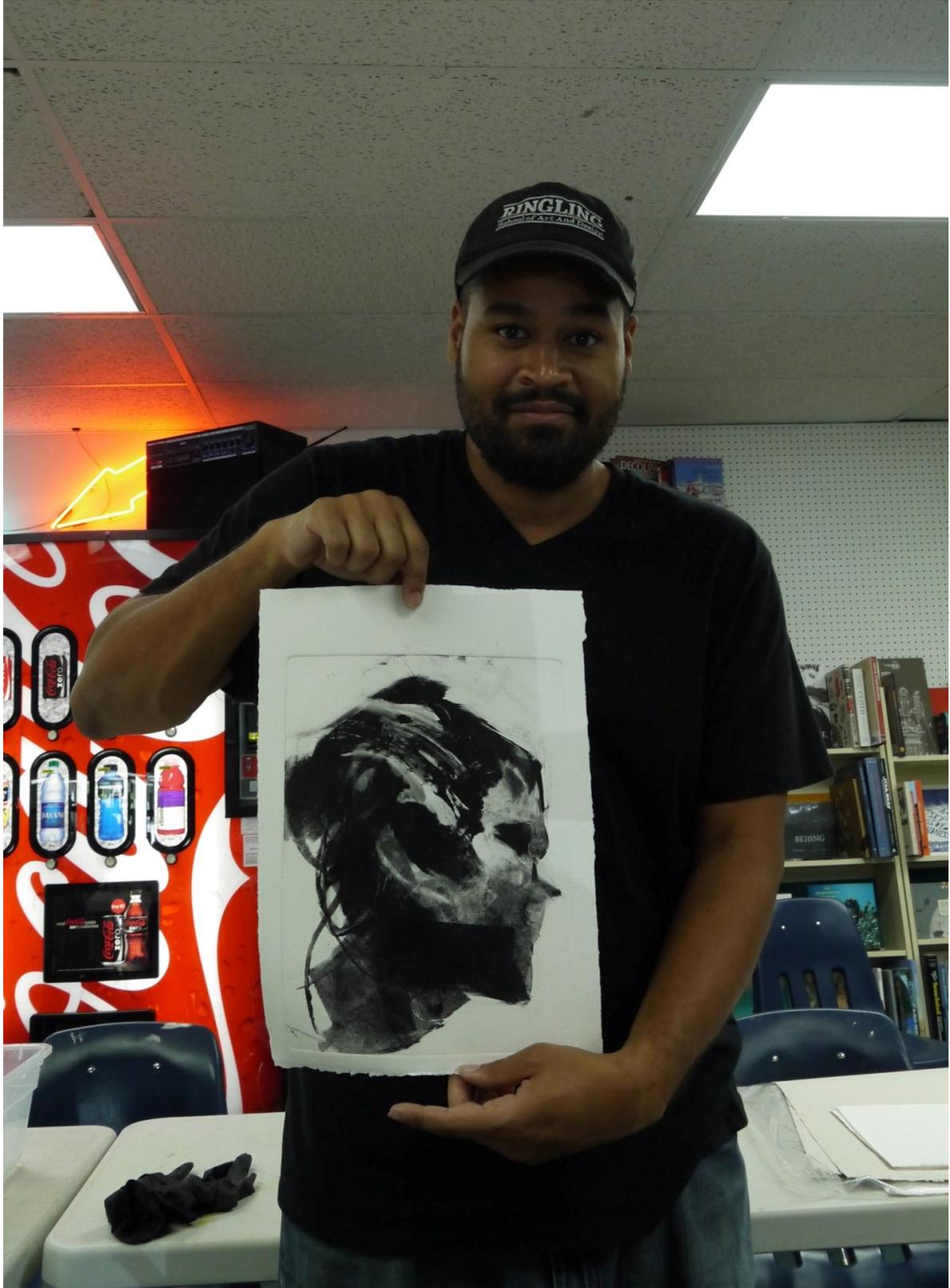
Since the hard rubber feet are removable, it would not take much effort to bolt it down to a rolling cart, or butcher block, or table top.

(You'll notice the bungee cords keeping my press steady on this metal cart, which also worked just fine.)

The other press sizes, (Small , Medium and Large) are available with stands.



Taking a peek.



And the final product!

As you can see you can still pull a decent size print from this press. The plate used for this demo was 9x12 and it fit quite well on the press bed. You may need to pull your plate back through the rollers to starting position in order to remove your print, but that also ensures a solid transfer.

The Richeson Presses are completely full service, able to run thick mounted linoleum blocks as well as thin sheets mylar. There is nothing you can't do with it.

The press can absolutely produce quality and high transfer prints. Despite its size, it definitely packs a punch.

Another talking point is its ease of use. Because there are not many moving parts to be installed, anyone can jump right on and pull prints. Because it's also so portable, this is the perfect press for demonstrations, workshops and classroom use.

(Teachers, don't wait for your department to approve buying a full size press, this press is perfect to move between your personal studio and classroom.)

Lauren Ireland, talented artist and manager at Art and Frame of Sarasota, was also on hand to help demonstrate how easy it is to use.

Lauren had not pulled a print before and was excited to get some hands on experience. Here she is peeking at her first print.



Here is Lauren with her pulled print, and with it is the expression of sheer joy that is common among printmakers who own a Jack Richeson Press.



OK, now the big question. “How much is this thing gonna cost me?” When I first used a press and fell completely in love with it that was my first question. This was during my time at Art school and I was a little more than crestfallen to hear that my first press would cost multiple thousands of dollars. Unbeknownst to me was that presses came in smaller sizes.

Thankfully, you’re not going to have to go through the same heartache. Richeson baby presses are priced to move. You may still need to skip a couple of meals out with friends, but you won’t need to take out a loan to get it.

The Baby Press Package retails for about 850.00USD, but at Art and Frame of Sarasota, you can pick it up for 637.50USD.

I’ve owned mine for a few weeks now and have already made enough art to make it an integral part of my studio and process, easily money well-spent.

I hope this review is helpful when deciding the next addition to your studio and as always, stop in to Art and Frame of Sarasota and pick up a brochure or ask one of their employees some questions.

*It should be noted that the Baby press is indeed smaller than the “Small Press”.