

# 3 ILFORD SLIDE FILMS

*Ilford has recently launched three new colour slide films. Lynne Barber reports.*

**T**HE NAME ILFORD IS almost interchangeable with the term black and white. Keen photographers associate the company with films such as XP1 and Pan F or mono printing papers like the famous Ilford Galerie.

Although it has made forays into the world of colour this isn't where Ilford has made its name—but now it has launched three new colour transparency films, all balanced for daylight, electronic flash or blue bulbs and compatible with E6 processing.

The most obvious aspect of the film at the three speeds—ISO 50, 100 and 200—was its subtlety. If



you're looking for pillar-box reds or yellows that dance off the page like daffodils in spring then you'll be disappointed. Ilfochrome colours are very natural and more muted, rather like Agfa. If Fuji is the Joan Collins of the film world—colourful and a little brash—then Ilfochrome must be the Meryl Streep.

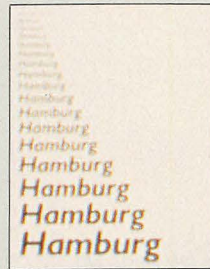
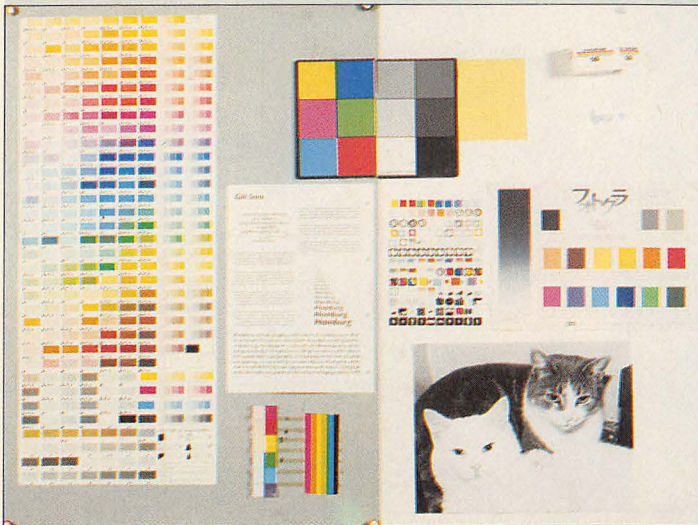
## **NEUTRAL AND SUBTLE**

That's not to say colours aren't saturated. They are, but they lack the unnatural vibrancy of other films, which some photographers prefer. Greys were neutral throughout the speeds and colours on the whole were accurate. Whites were clean, not taking on any noticeable

ILFOCHROME 50	ILFOCHROME 100	ILFOCHROME 200
<p><b>INDOORS, TUNGSTEN</b> Brown rather than orange until -2 stops when it goes orange. Very muddy at +1 and +2</p>	<p>Definite brown cast. Black becomes dark brown by +2 but whites improve</p>	<p>Lighter brown than the other two films. Going yellowish at +1 and +2 but extremely washed out. Dirty and muddy at -2 stops</p>
<p><b>INDOORS, STRIPLIGHT</b> Slight green cast but colour balance well maintained</p>	<p>Better results at +1 with whites almost white but a little burned out. Orangey reds</p>	<p>Even blacks looked green. Best results at -1 stop. Completely washed out by +2</p>
<p><b>DAYLIGHT</b> Neutral if somewhat pale greys, looked slightly overexposed but weren't because colours were good. Whites bright and accurate. Greys neutral at -1 and +1 stop</p>	<p>Very accurate, neutral greys but dull white. Not such good exposure latitude as 50, -1 and -2 very dark. +1 acceptable but not +2</p>	<p>Neutral grey, even more accurate than 100 film. Slightly cooler whites. Dirty and dark at -1 and -2 and too burned out at +2</p>
<p><b>FLESH TONES</b> Very pale—sometimes warmer skin tones are more pleasing</p>	<p>Natural and less pale than ISO 50. Subtle and pleasant</p>	<p>Slightly cool although natural looking. Grain detracted from smooth skin tones</p>
<p><b>GRAIN</b> Fine grain, as expected from ISO 50 film</p>	<p>Fairly tight, evenly structured grain—no evidence of clumping</p>	<p>Most grainy of the three. Usually 100 and 200 would be similar but this was closer to a 400</p>
<p><b>SHARPNESS</b> Good—can read 'Hamburg' on test chart to almost the smallest size—but low contrast means it looks flat</p>	<p>Sharp, but have seen better 100 films</p>	<p>Seemed less sharp than ISO 50 and 100. Starts to lose fine detail</p>
<p><b>COLOUR SATURATION/ACCURACY</b> Despite pale greys colours neutral and well saturated. Nice blues. Accurate and neutral</p>	<p>Brighter, stronger colours than 50 and more contrast. Whites not so clean</p>	<p>Dull compared to 100, especially yellows and red. Grey more accurate. Very subtle but not always pleasing, although perhaps more accurate colours than the other two</p>
<p><b>OVERALL PERFORMANCE</b> Slightly anaemic looking. Tight, well-controlled grain and pleasantly sharp. Accurate colour rendition. Reasonable exposure latitude</p>	<p>Nice bright colours with good saturation. Not very great latitude but worked better in striplight and daylight overexposed rather than underexposed</p>	<p>Accurate colour rendition but a little dull. Rather grainy for an ISO 200 speed film, although grain structure seemed even</p>

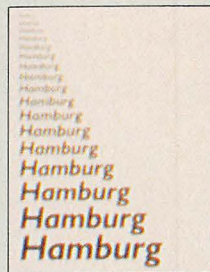
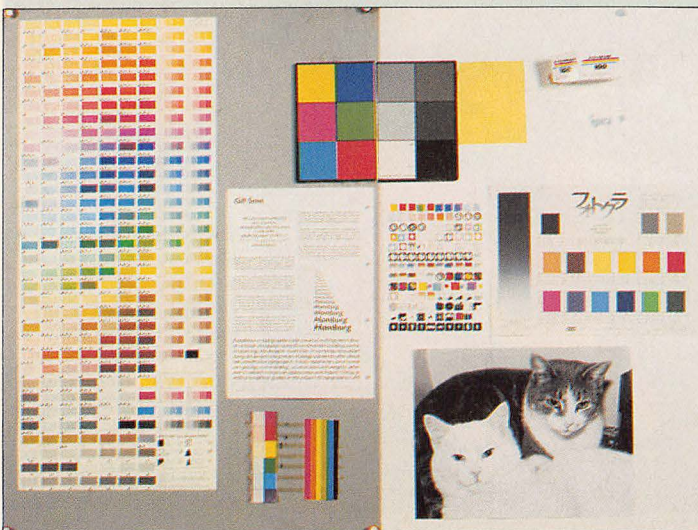


## ILFOCHROME 50



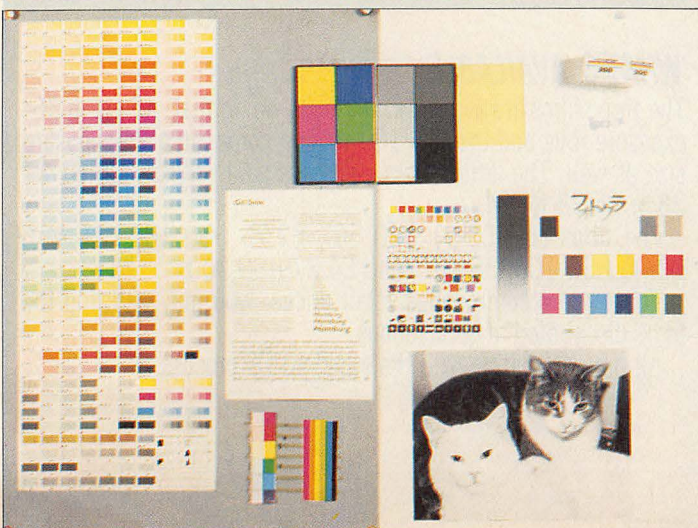
*Neutral and pale greys were the hallmarks of this film with good blues and colour saturation generally, although not very punchy. Whites were quite bright. Rather low-contrast results but sharp. It's possible to read the word 'Hamburg' down to very small sizes.*

## ILFOCHROME 100



*This gave the brightest colours of the three films and was generally a more contrasty film, although results were still slightly flat. Colours appeared to be fairly accurate with neutral greys, although whites weren't as bright as the ISO 50 film. The 'Hamburgs' show the sharpness but it was a little disappointing for a film of this speed.*

## ILFOCHROME 200



*Very accurate colours but slightly dull and marginally cool. Yellows and reds were the worst offenders for dullness. Greys were neutral and probably the closest to the actual colour of our test chart. Results didn't seem as sharp as those from ISO 50 and 100.*

colour cast, but not very bright.

The ISO 100 film gave the brightest colours, aided by the fact that it was a little more contrasty than the other two. However, colours in the ISO 200 emulsion were rather dull and flat, although still with very accurate rendition.

Exposure latitude was best with the ISO 50 film, where greys were still neutral at one stop over and one under in daylight conditions. Underexposed shots of the ISO 100 were very dark, one stop over was acceptable but there was a big difference between that and two stops overexposure, which was very burned out. Again, with the ISO 200, two stops over gave very burned-out results, while one and two stops under were dirty and dark.

All three films coped well with striplight and the colour balance was well maintained. Better striplight results were obtained when ISO 100 was overexposed by a stop and the 200 film underexposed by one stop.

In tungsten lighting all films veered towards sepia brown rather than orange, but that's not uncommon for reversal film—they were muddy rather than warm. Even the blacks tended to look chocolate brown.

Grain was reasonably fine and well structured, with no evidence of clumping. The only exception to this was the faster film, which was more grainy than expected from an ISO 200—in fact it was closer to a 400 film.

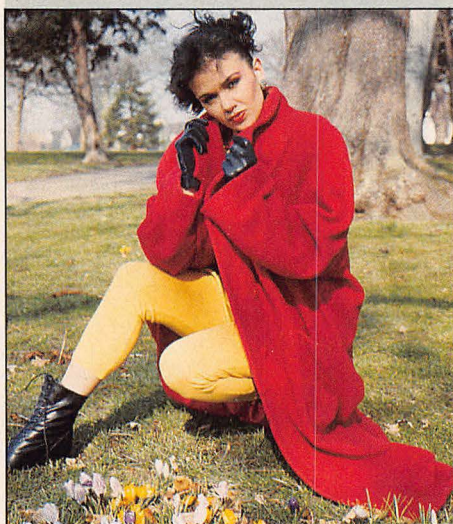
### CONCLUSIONS

Subtle, neutral colours make for good, natural flesh tones so bear these films in mind for portraiture, especially the ISO 50 and 100. The low contrast also makes them quite flattering, if a little flat. But they lack warmth.

The new emulsions are, in fact, reminiscent of Agfa. We're not saying it is the same film but the test results, the actual film base colour and the edge markings are very similar. And it is made in West Germany. We've drawn our own conclusions. What do you think?



**ILFOCHROME 50**



*Very pale greens and yellows from this film outdoors. Our model's trousers look very washed out. Slight underexposure seemed to give the colours in her clothes a little more depth. Skin tones are natural but many people prefer a pinker healthier glow.*

**ILFOCHROME 100**



*Reds and yellows from the ISO 100 were stronger although the green of the grass remained fairly subtle and natural looking. The added contrast over the ISO 50 gave the colours a little more zest. Flesh tones also improved, with a little more colour in the model's cheeks but still very natural.*

**ILFOCHROME 200**



*Nice enough colours but the yellow has turned lemon and the red is beginning to look pink/orange in places. Skin tones are still natural but slightly cool and pale. The greens are a little yellow too.*

**FUJICHROME RDP 100**



*The colours of the Ilfochrome are all fairly pleasing and very subtle. The reds and yellows look lively enough until you compare them to those on the Fuji film. These aren't necessarily better but they certainly pack more punch and vitality. And flesh tones are warmer, which is generally more acceptable.*

**AGFACHROME CT 100**



*Spot the similarities between this and the Ilfochrome, especially the ISO 100. The subtle pastel colours are almost identical.*

**WHAT'S AVAILABLE**

The three films are available now in 35mm format. All are in 36-exposure rolls and the ISO 100 version comes in a 24-exposure size as well. The latter offers a process-paid service—£6.61 for 36 or £5.33 for 24.

The films cost £2.91 (ISO 50), £2.76 (ISO 100, 24-exp), £3.45 (ISO 100, 36-exp), and £4.37 (ISO 200).

These are recommended retail prices—you may well find the films discounted at some shops.

All are compatible with the standard E6 process.