

# HOT SHOTS

## FROM A LUKEWARM PROCESS

PRODUCT developments on the colour printing front are welcome news—particularly when they are aimed at the learner printer. The new Photocolor RT printmaking chemicals have been designed to do just that.

The Photo Technology stable has an already proven record with its Photocolor II (for processing colour prints from colour negs) and Photochrome R chemicals (colour prints from slides). Now comes the new Photocolor RT chemistry, which is based on a completely different printmaking concept. **Low** temperature performance is the key factor rather than the brief, high temperature treatment that's the norm with almost all current print processes (Ektaflex excepted). This turnaround is good news for anyone thinking of starting up in colour printing—particularly the mono worker who will be able to start colour printing with the minimum outlay.

Anyone with a black and white darkroom can easily switch over to 8×10 colour printing with RT chemicals by spending as little as £10. The spend will end there if you have an enlarger with a colour head. If you don't, another £8 will buy a set of red, green and blue filters.

Colour processing with the new Photocolor chemicals can either be carried out at room temperature or, to reduce developing times, the dish of developer may be warmed on a dish heater (or by floating it in a bath of warm water).

***New and easy low temperature colour print processing has arrived. Alison Trapmore tries out the new Photocolor RT (room temperature) chemicals that are set to lure the darkroom worker away from simple black and white printing.***

Dish processing techniques are the same for colour paper as they are for mono—except that agitation needs to be continuous. This is easily done by alternately lifting two adjacent sides of the dish for the duration of the step. Two prints can be processed back-to-back without a problem—provided both are quickly and evenly wetted and the "sandwich" turned over at regular intervals throughout development.

The low temperature option means that the chemicals are well suited to dish development since they give conveniently short development times. With evaporation and oxidation problems kept to a minimum, predictable and consistent results can be expected—a bonus for the beginner as the fewer the variables, the more likely will be the flow of successful results.

On the negative side, it must be stressed that dish processing colour prints does not give maximum economy unless the chemistry is used to exhaustion. Used in dishes, Photocolor RT printmaking costs can be as low as 53p per 8×10 image.

Maximum economy comes from processing in a print drum and using the chemistry on a two-shot basis. In this case printing costs with RT chemicals can be cut to around 50p (for 8×10) which puts it on a par with Photocolor II colour printing.

So how easy is dish processing? And does a change in the temperature of the chemicals affect image quality?

We used 500ml of developer and bleach fix to process our 8×10in prints. We arrived at the correct colour balance (80Y + 60M), dish processing at room temperature. Then, additional prints, given identical filtration and exposure times, were dish processed at the higher and lower temperature limits that winter and summer working might produce.

### CONCLUSIONS

Even though we worked in total darkness, dish processing was easy. None of the prints contained processing marks and all were evenly developed. The paper can be handled in dim safelighting.

Our results show minimal change in colour balance over the selected working temperature range. A slight shift is evident in both density and contrast between the extremes in the range, so filtration information, once obtained, would be valid for a number of different working temperatures.

An additional print was made at 35degC, the very highest recommended working temperature. The result, which showed a slight blue cast, confirmed the information given in the instructions that a slightly increased yellow filtration is needed with RT chemicals when processing at the highest temperatures. A filter correction of 10Y rectified the colour balance. In practice, most RT users would probably find it inconvenient to work at such high temperatures—even with a print drum—and would therefore never need to modify existing filtering data to accommodate the yellow shift.

Overall, Photocolor RT is very welcome. It eliminates one of the two stumbling blocks for the colour printing amateur—temperature control. Whatever the temperature of the room, you can process, saving a lot of warming-up time.

Not only is it economical and easy, but RT is also a good quality colour process. It well deserves to become the process which will introduce thousands of photographers to colour printing.



### DEVELOPMENT TIMES

degC	degF	Dev. time
15	59	9min 55sec
21	70	5min 5sec
27	81	2min 55sec
35	95	1min 20sec

***Wedding Day recorded by Alison Trapmore with a 150mm lens on a Hasselblad camera—Vericolor II film. Printing exposure on Photocolor High Speed Colour Paper—4sec f/11 on the Kaiser VCP6001 enlarger.***

**ROOM TEMPERATURE PROCESSING (20degC)**



**LOW TEMPERATURE PROCESSING (15.5degC)**



**HIGH TEMPERATURE PROCESSING (26.5degC)**