Contemporary Analog and Digital Color Photographic Prints: Dye and Pigment Print Process Descriptors, Naming Conventions, Dating, and Permanence Characteristics

By Henry Wilhelm
Wilhelm Imaging Research, Inc. and The Center for the Image.org
Grinnell, Iowa 50112 USA www.wilhelm-research.com

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Introduction:
Drawing on the many years of research associated with The Wilhelm Analog and Digital Color Print Materials Reference Collection – 1971 to 2014, this paper describes the wide range of color print processes that comprise the modern era of color photography.

The era of analog silver-based color photography is rapidly drawing to a close. It is believed that on the order of ninety-nine percent of all prints now being produced are being printed with digital technologies.

Whether for wall labels, auction catalogs, captions in magazines and books, or with museum acquisition records, there are a number of important considerations to make when determining the name of a print process:

1) The name or names that describe the materials used: for example, Kodak’s and Fuji’s product literature, data sheets, and websites do not use the terms “chromogenic” or “dye-coupling” to describe their traditional silver-based color papers. Rather, these products are referred to as “silver-halide color paper” or, more often, simply, “silver-halide paper” (it should be noted that Kodak no longer manufactures B&W paper).

2) What do the photographers and print-making labs call their prints? This is where things have become really complicated and convoluted.

3) What do the museums, libraries, archives, and archives use? For example, Kodak’s and Fuji’s product literature will be made available in updateable eBook and Print-on-Demand (POD) editions to better address this constantly evolving field.

The Wilhelm Analog and Digital Color Print Materials Reference Collection

Using the Printers, Processing Chemicals, and Inks of Their Time

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