INFO SHEET

TITLE: POLAROID CREATIVE TECHNIQUES

AUTHOR: POLAROID CORPORATION

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Creative Techniques

This guide is a brief introduction to the creative potential of Polaroid films. The dictionary defines creativity as an ability to invent and to be imaginative. Polaroid films enable you to experiment with these abilities in new and exciting ways, putting you back in touch with the magical process of photographic image making.

Everyone knows that 'messing about' with Polaroid films is a lot of fun. However, once you begin to master the simple processes outlined within, you will recognise the exciting potential Polaroid films have for extending your repertoire of creative imaging techniques.

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Image transfer

The image transfer technique involves peeling ER film after it has developed on the negative, but before it has formed a positive image on the print. After peeling, the negative can be used to make images on interesting surfaces, such as watercolour paper. Any Polacolor ER instant colour print film, such as Type 669 medium format pack film, Type 59 sheet, or Type 559 pack film for 4x5" cameras and Type 809 for 10x8" can be used to achieve beautiful creative results simply, and with no special equipment.

There are several pathways to expose the Polacolor print for transferring. You might want to shoot direct onto ER film in your camera. You might prefer to shoot on slide film first and copy onto Type 669 film in a Vivitar slide printer or Type 809 film in a Polaprinter. You could also print from any format transparency onto any of the ER films by projection printing if you have an enlarger and a darkroom.
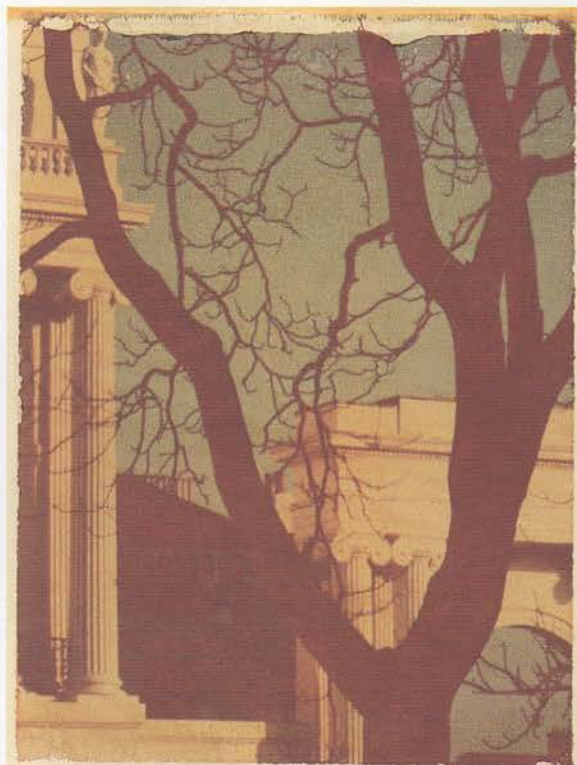
Left: Peter Lester
35mm colour slide printed onto Type 669 in Vivitar printer and transferred onto dry newsprint paper

Step-by-Step

1 Arrange your work space into wet and dry areas. Cut the watercolour paper into sheets of a suitable size. Put warm water into the developing tray.

2 Wet the watercolour paper by total immersion in the dish, remove and sponge off excess water so that the paper is equally damp all over. Place flat on two or three sheets of clean paper.

3 Expose Polaroid ER print by any of the methods mentioned above, pull through rollers quickly and evenly, wait ten seconds and peel apart.

4 Discard what would have been the print, place the remaining image in contact with the damp watercolour paper and press flat. Use scissors to cut off chemical pods if preferred.

5 Set the timer for one *minute, (or use second hand of watch), cover the print with a sheet of clean paper and apply even pressure with the ink roller over the entire surface.

6 Stop rolling after one minute, leave for a further 30 seconds and gently peel apart to reveal the image. Move to a flat surface and leave to dry naturally.

* (Times are only suggestions. Experiment for best results.)

Equipment Check-list

- TIMER
- DEVELOPING DISH
- INK ROLLER
- WATERCOLOUR PAPER
- SCISSORS
- NEWSPAPERS
- DAMP CLOTH / TISSUE
- DRY SPONGE
- WASTE-BIN
- SPOON

The step-by-step guide outlines the most common transfer technique, however, there are many variations. For example, you do not have to transfer onto damp paper. Transferring onto dry paper produces quite a different look. Damp paper diffuses the image, which can make it look more like a painting. As dry transfers retain more detail, they can take on the character of antique photographs.

Dry transferring onto watercolour paper isn't easy, due to the rough texture of the paper. For dry transfers, a smoother surface is more suitable. The surface and colour of the paper, or any other material, you choose will become part of the character of the final image, so it is well worth experimenting. Cloth, unglazed clay pots and wood are some of the unusual surfaces photographers have made successful transfers onto. For some, the transfer is only the beginning. Many photographers have added colour, with crayon or watercolour paints, or manipulated the image in other ways to achieve extraordinary effects.

Right: Alastair Laidlaw
Shot direct in camera on
Type 809, then transferred
onto damp watercolour paper

Transfer Tips

- Choose images for transfer that don't have too many very dark areas in them — these tend to stick to the negative. Don't try to wet transfer images that rely on fine detail as these will disappear.

- If dark areas persist in sticking, try heating the back of the print for a short while with a hairdryer — put the print in a plastic bag to help keep it moist.

- Peeling after ten seconds means that some of the red layer has already migrated to the Polaroid print. This means that transfers tend to have a cold, bluish look. Compensate by adding red filtration when shooting, copying or printing from an original onto the ER film.

- Quickly cut off the chemical pod and the tabs at each end of the print before peeling. This will help prevent too much mess around the image and also helps avoid the tabs from getting trapped in the image area.

- When the emulsion is still wet on the transferred image, you can rub part or all of it away, revealing a faded 'ghost' image underneath, which has an appeal all of its own.

- Don't touch the surface of the print before you peel, this can cause pressure spots on the negative. Also, keep the rollers clean — remember this isn't a proof, it's a picture.

- Temperature is important. Try and work in normal room temperatures. If the room is cold, you may need to add a few more seconds before peeling the ER print.

- Peel the new print starting at one corner, looking for areas of emulsion that haven't adhered to the paper. If you find one, press back into contact and try burnishing the area with the back of a spoon. Alternatively, try releasing the section of emulsion with a scalpel blade.

- Pinholes and minor blemishes can be filled in with watercolour paints and a fine brush, but wait until the print has dried as density and colour may change.

- Discard all Polaroid waste quickly and carefully. Wipe all chemicals off hands and working surfaces as some elements of the reagent are slightly caustic.

Emulsion lift

The basic emulsion lift technique is extremely simple: just soak a Polacolor ER print in hot water until the emulsion comes away from its backing, then transfer the loose emulsion to a new surface. At this point the emulsion can be manipulated in a number of ways to create fascinating distortions of the original image.

The original can be shot directly onto Polacolor ER instant colour print film, using a medium or large format camera with a Polaroid back, or shot on conventional transparency film and printed onto Polacolor (see Emulsion Transfer & Projection Printing), at a later stage. Whichever method you use, the Polacolor print should be left for at least 24 hours after exposure before the emulsion lift process is started. It is well worth practising with old proofing prints first, to become familiar with the technique.

Equipment Check-list

	KETTLE FOR HEATING WATER
	TWO DEVELOPING DISHES
	WATERCOLOUR PAPER OR SIMILAR
	WOODEN SPOON OR SIMILAR
	RUBBER GLOVES (OPTIONAL)
	WASHING-UP LIQUID, OR AMMONIA BASED WINDOW CLEANER (OPTIONAL)
	GUM STRIP

Step-by-Step

1 Arrange your work space into wet and dry areas. Cut the watercolour paper into sheets of a suitable size. Put hot water (80-90°F) into the first developing tray, warm water in the second.

2 Leave the print in the hot water for about five minutes and then gently rub the emulsion away from its backing with your fingers. Wear rubber gloves if the water is too hot.

3 Once the emulsion is free from the backing, scoop it out with your hand, or if preferred, with the handle of a wooden spoon or similar tool. Immerse in a second bath of clean warm water and gently agitate to wash off any particles from the backing that may still adhere.

4 Arrange the emulsion so that it floats on the surface of the water and gently move it into shape. Slide the new paper into position underneath the floating emulsion, bring the paper and emulsion into contact, remove from the bath and place on a flat working surface. Or, remove from the second bath with the spoon handle and arrange on dry paper.

5 While the emulsion is still wet, move it into the shape you require, then place the new print somewhere flat to dry naturally, or gum strip edges to flat surface.

The original Polacolor print should be exposed as normal, with due care taken over the development time and temperature to ensure that the colour and contrast range are correct. Emulsion lifts work best when there is a strong visual link between the technique and the image, therefore it is well worth shooting subjects specifically for use with this process. Those subjects which have an inherent transparency or translucency seem to be particularly enhanced by the physical characteristics of transferred emulsion.

The paper, or other surface, you use to lay the emulsion on will also affect the finished image. The texture of the paper will be absorbed into the image structure, adding a new visual dimension. The most popular medium for emulsion lifts seems to be rough textured, white, 300lb watercolour paper, as this dries very flat naturally, although it is worthwhile experimenting with almost any surface — even metal.

Left and Right: Paul Hampton
Type 59 emulsion lift

Lift Technique Tips

- Plain hot water works well, but some photographers add 'secret ingredients', eg a few drops of ammonia based window-cleaning liquid, or a drop or two of washing-up liquid.

- Emulsion lifting can be just a starting off point for the creation of composite images. Once the transferred emulsion is thoroughly dry on the new paper, you can lay further images onto it. You can also use image transfers as a base for an emulsion lift from another print.

- If you want to combine the emulsion with other images at a later stage, you can store it in water for several days until required.

- Remember that any colour in the paper creates an overall cast in the image and will show through strongly in light or transparent areas.

- The clear emulsion from the ER print's border will form a natural lilac-coloured frame for the transferred image. If preferred, the print's white border can be cut off before immersion in the hot bath.

- If the emulsion breaks during removal from the backing, lift out the fragments and reassemble on the new paper.

- Leave to dry thoroughly before doing any retouching that may be required. The emulsion will darken slightly as it dries.

- Some types of paper may buckle after drying. This can be avoided by sticking the edges of the damp paper to a flat surface with gum strip.

- Prolong the manipulation of emulsion on paper by wetting with an atomiser spray.

Positive/ Negative films

There are two black and white instant positive/negative films; Type 55 ISO 50 for 4x5" cameras and Type 665 ISO 80 for medium format. Type 55 comes in individual sheets for use in the 545i holder, Type 665 is a pack film for use with medium format backs. Both films provide a black and white proof print as well as a high quality negative.

Instant positive/negative films offer a high degree of convenience and time saving for proofing black and white shots. However the print and negative also offer scope for creative photography.

Above: Peter Lester
Solarized by aging Type 55 print

Positive/Negative Technique Tips

- If you want to use the neg for enlarging, adjust the exposure by about 1/2 stop up from that which gave you a perfectly exposed proof print.

- Increase the contrast of negatives by rating Type 55 at ISO 25 and developing for about one minute.

- Printing with Type 665/55 negs: grade three provides a 'normal' contrast range. Condenser and diffusion heads provide the same results.

- To include the perforated edges in a print, use a 5x7" enlarger mask.

- Cold shooting conditions can cause under development and low contrast. For example, at 60°F adjust Type 55 development time to 40 seconds. At lower temperatures, consider taking film indoors to warm up before processing. At 60°F, rate Type 665 at ISO 64 and process for 40 seconds.

- The latent image of Type 55 remains stable for at least a week. In very cold conditions, expose the film and remove from the holder without pulling through the rollers. Reinsert the sheet in warmer temperatures and pull through as normal.

- Negs need to be immersed in a clearing solution of water and sodium sulphite for roughly three minutes, followed by a brief wash in running water before drying. A special positive/negative bucket, incorporating neg holders, is available from your professional supplier.

- Positive/negative prints can be selenium toned for archival purposes and for adding that characteristic selenium hue.

- You can use positive/negative films under the enlarger to make internegs from PolaPan or PolaGraph instant slide films, which can then be used to make conventional enlargements on bromide paper. (See Projection Printing.)

Type 665/55 have become equally popular with photographers wanting to create black and white prints that have a different feel to those produced from conventional, wet process, films. For example, the negative from either film will provide superbly sharp, almost grainless prints with a very long tonal range. Consequently the films reproduce skin tones in a unique way, which makes them ideal for portraits. Also, as the film develops instantly, portrait sessions can be facilitated by discussion of the working proofs.

Creative black and white images requiring multiple exposures are also easier to construct with positive/negative films, as you can proof each stage with the print and use the neg from the final proof, thus avoiding the need to load conventional film and risk slight camera movement.

Negative Solarization

Method 1

1 Expose sheet of positive/negative film as normal. Turn off the lights.

2 Pull through rollers to commence development.

3 Peel open after ten seconds to separate negative and positive. Discard print.

4 Expose with flash or high wattage light bulb close to the neg.

5 Place neg in a light tight box, turn on the lights and allow to develop for 1-2 minutes depending on the density of neg.*

6 Clear and wash as normal.

Method 2

Ageing: After peeling, don't coat the print, leave it in daylight for about three months. Shadow areas gradually lighten and edges between dark and light take on a 'solarized' look. Process can be halted by coating.

* Times are approximate. Experiment to get the results that suit you.

Top Left: José Aragon
Print from Type 665 negative

Left: Peter Lester
Printed from solarized Type 665 negative

35mm instant slide system

There are two colour films in the Polaroid instant 35mm slide system; PolaChrome CS 35mm ISO 40, available in 12 and 36 exposures, and PolaChrome HCP, also ISO 40 but with a higher contrast range, available in 12 exposures only. For black and white photography, the range includes PolaPan CT medium contrast ISO 125 film, and high contrast PolaGraph HC, nominally rated at ISO 400. PolaBlue, a very high contrast, very slow film that gives a white out of blue image, completes the range.

Handling Hints

- It's advisable to take extra care when handling Polaroid instant slides. The base material is much thinner than conventional films and the emulsion is very fragile. If possible, wear clean cotton gloves when cutting and mounting.

- When removing the developed film from the cassette, pull off the end rings, open out the metal casing and lift the film out. This will avoid scratches that could occur on the delicate emulsion if you simply pull it out between the felt lips of the cassette.

- Store in glass slide mounts and dupe, or print, onto conventional material for reproduction.

- Stray light can cause flare on the shiny surface of the developed slide, making it hard to judge exposure. View via a projector, or surround the slide with a black card mask and view on a lightbox with a loup.

- If you are working outdoors and you want to use the slides for proofing, take along a handful of slide mounts, a battery powered single slide viewer and an optional large format focus cloth to act as a temporary viewing booth.

- The backing for the film should be stripped away from the film's edges during processing. If patches still adhere, use a strip of adhesive tape to pull it away. If you leave it on, bits might break away and stick to the image area.


Above: Peter Lester
PolaChrome CS

Cross Processing

Use the processing pack from PolaGraph to process PolaChrome slides. Rate the film at ISO 50 and develop for two minutes. Contrast will be increased dramatically, grain size will also increase and colours appear bolder.

Each film comes with a separate processing chemistry pod, fitted in line with the exposed film, into either a manual or mains powered processor. No special adaptors or equipment are required for shooting, however as the base is thicker and darker than normal film, some exposure compensation may be required when used in a camera with off-the-film metering.

Instant 35mm slides have many advantages for all kinds of professional and creative photography. The uncomplicated processors allow you to proof a 35mm assignment on-the-spot, in daylight, and to see the results in a matter of minutes. All the films in the range are suitable for projection, reproduction or reversal printing.
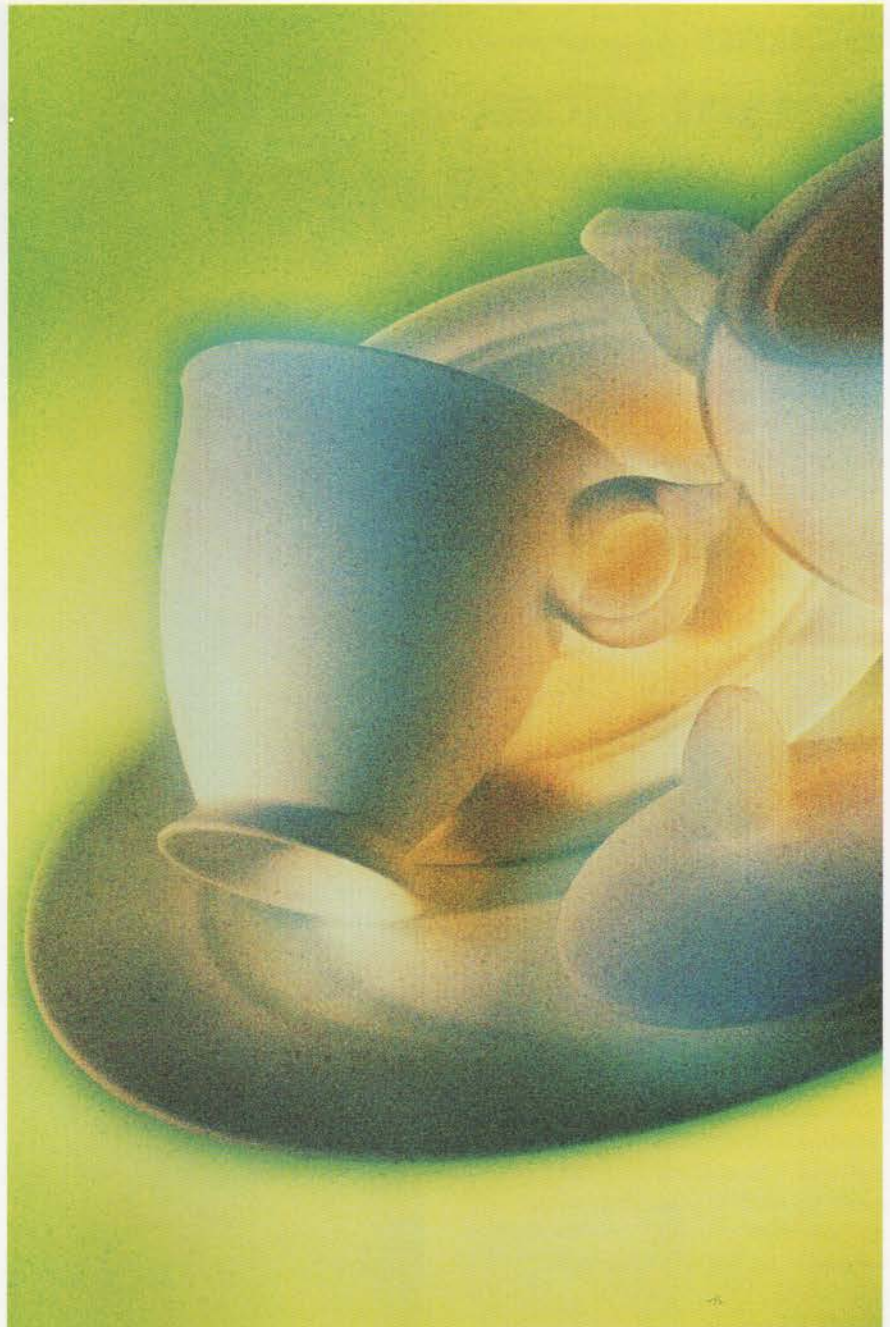
Right: Peter Allert
PolaChrome HCP

PolaChrome Techniques

- Polaroid instant colour slides are formed, like the image on a TV screen, from extremely fine lines in a single layer additive red, green and blue integral filter pack. When enlarged over six times, this 'screen' effect becomes visible, giving PolaChrome images a unique look.

- Sometimes screen clash becomes a problem when PolaChrome is reproduced photomechanically. This problem can frequently be solved by providing a reversal print for scanning rather than an original or a dupe transparency.

- If you intend to make colour reversal prints from PolaChrome, it's advisable to under expose a little when shooting. This gives the right density and saturation for producing excellent prints.

- Occasionally when printing from a PolaChrome slide, chromatic aberration, in the form of slight colour banding, appears in light areas. These are due to clashes between the chromatic balance of the lens and the screen of the film. To prevent these occurring, use an enlarging lens aperture smaller than f8.

- Create stunning colour saturation and a grainy look when duping PolaChrome, by not flashing the film to decrease contrast. Focus on the grain and use a relatively large aperture if you don't want the additive colour screen to record.

- When shooting darker subjects, compensate by opening up half to one and a half stops, as all Polaroid instant colour and black and white slides tend to portray darker tones as black.

35mm instant slide system

Many photographers also use the special visual characteristics of Polaroid instant slide films as final art for personal and commercial assignments. For example, PolaPan has excellent mid and highlight tones, but darker tones change rapidly to black. This gives the film a unique tonality, very difficult to achieve with conventional films without difficult darkroom manipulations.

Always measure the ambient temperature and follow the recommended development time. Temperatures below 60°F/16°C will cause increased contrast, temperatures over 90°F/32°C will cause fogging. When processing below 60°F, develop all films for two minutes. In normal temperatures, 70-85°F, increasing development time has little, if any, effect on results.

The automatic mains powered processor has four fixed development times, 1, 2, 3 and 4 minutes. The manual processor is more flexible; you wind the film and chemistry through and leave it to develop for whatever time you have calculated will give the results you want.
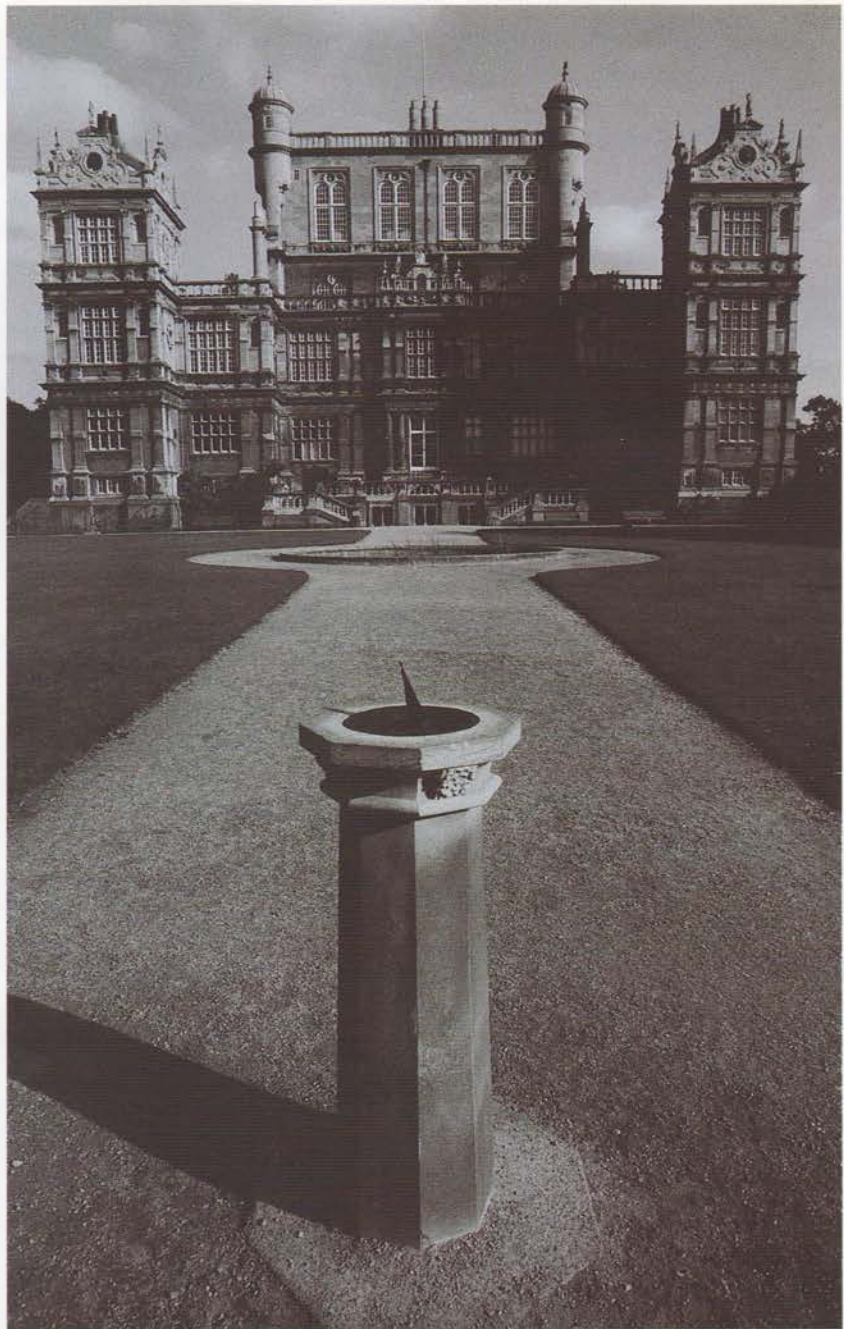
PolaPan and PolaGraph Techniques

- Achieve even tonality and a broader grey scale with PolaGraph by rating it at ISO200 and developing for 60 secs.

- If you want to increase the contrast of PolaPan, for example if the subject was shot under very flat lighting, process at temperatures below 60°F for two minutes. If the ambient temperature is warm, put film and chemistry in the freezer for a few minutes before use.
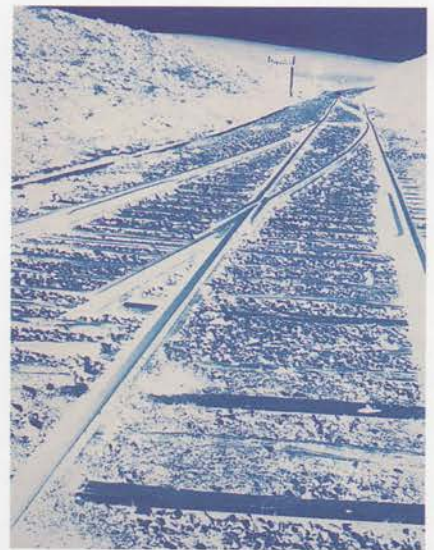
Left: Franco Franceschi
PolaGraph rated at ISO 400

Far Left: Peter Lester
PolaPan

Bottom Left: Peter Lester
PolaGraph rated at ISO 200

Below: Luis Carrasco
PolaBlue

PolaBlue

While PolaBlue is primarily intended for producing white out of blue titling slides for audio visual presentations, it can also be used for creating unusual creative images. Experiment by shooting simple black shapes against white backgrounds. Or use it to dupe conventional negatives or positives.

- Printing onto reversal paper makes it possible to 'tone' PolaPan or PolaGraph images, using the colour head of the enlarger to dial in appropriate hues.

- PolaGraph exposure is very critical, 1/3 of a stop will make a noticeable difference. Bracket all nominal exposures to get results.

- Try sandwiching high contrast PolaPan or PolaGraph images with coloured gels for interesting projection effects.

SPEEDS AND TIMES OUTSIDE NORMAL TEMPERATURES

Temp		PolaChrome		PolaPan		PolaGraph	
		ISO	Time*	ISO	Time	ISO	Time
100°	(38°C)	64	1	250	1	Not recommended	
80°	(27°C)	50	1	160	1	320	2
70°	(21°C)	40	1	125	1	400	2
60°	(16°C)	50	2	125	2	400	2
50°	(10°)	40	2	160	2	500	2
* All times in minutes							

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Projection printing

Projection printing onto Polaroid instant films provides several advantages: you don't need expensive and complicated colour chemistry or processors and you can see the results in a couple of minutes.

Printing from a transparency onto Polaroid films offers many creative opportunities. The Polaroid instant colour prints you make in this way can be a starting off point for creative techniques such as image transfer or emulsion lift. You can also copy original colour or black and white slides onto Type 55 or 665 black and white positive/negative films, using the negative to make conventional enlargements, or onto Polapan Pro 100 10 x 8" to make superb quality instant black and white prints.
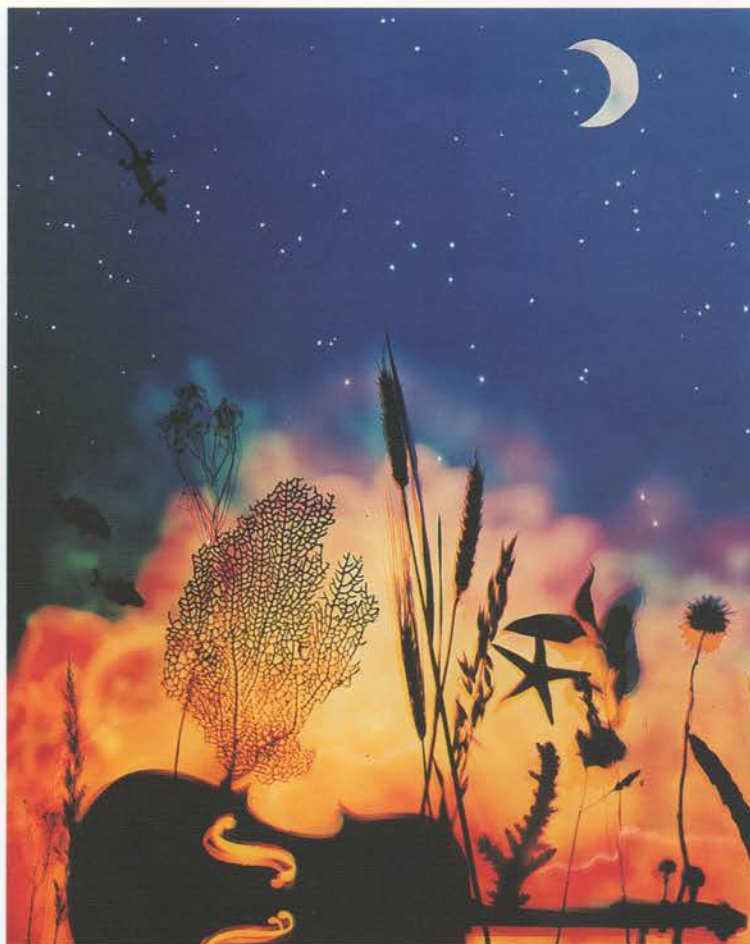
Equipment Check-list

- ENLARGER WITH COLOUR HEAD, OR CC/CP FILTER TRAY
- NEUTRAL DENSITY FILTER (OPTIONAL).
- ER, POSITIVE / NEGATIVE OR OTHER INSTANT FILM AND APPROPRIATE POLAROID FILM BACK.
- WHITE CARD OR PAPER FOR FOCUSING.
- STAND OR JIG FOR POSITIONING POLAROID FILM HOLDER UNDER ENLARGER
- MASK FOR MAKING TEST STRIPS.

Step-by-Step
(ER sheet film)

1 Place an original transparency into the enlarger. If using a Polaroid instant slide, remember to put it in emulsion (shiny) side up.

2 Position the stand for the film holder under the enlarger.

3 Put the white card, or paper, in the film plane, preferably at the same distance from the lens as the sheet of film will be.

4 Focus the image on the paper.

5 Take out the white card, load a sheet of film, check position of film holder.

6 Set initial filtration, add ND filter, stop lens down (see table).

7 Turn off all the lights, including the enlarger and the safelight, pull out the darkslide and make a test exposure strip.

8 Push the darkslide back, turn on the lights, pull the film through to develop, check colour and exposure.

9 Remember: if the print is too dark it's underexposed, too light it's overexposed.

10 Make final print.

The step-by-step guide shown here applies to 5x4" ER sheet film, but the same system applies to other Polaroid films and formats. For example, you can use medium format pack film in the appropriate back with the darkslide out. If you have access to a Polaroid 10x8" film processor, you can make excellent quality colour images from an original transparency in 60 seconds and black and white in 30 seconds. You can even print onto SX-70 film under the enlarger and simply put the pack back into the camera for processing.

You will need to apply a small amount of ingenuity in positioning the chosen film and back under the enlarger. The 5x4" sheet film back has a lever on the underside, so it won't lie flat. However, you can rest the flat area of the back on a shallow

PRINTING GUIDELINES FOR ER FILMS

Format	Dichroic	CC/CP	f-stop	*Time (secs)
35mm	C80 M85 Y50	30B	11	10
6x6cm	C80 M85 Y50	30B	16	10
5x4"	C80 M85 Y50	30B	22	10

* For 10x8, use times and filtrations for 5x4 as an approximate starting off point.

box with the lever parts hanging over the side. It might help to tape some temporary register guides to the enlarger baseboard, so you can be sure that the back/box assembly doesn't move out of position in the dark. (See step-by-step illustrations).

Remember that the films are positive, so you'll need to work from a positive. You can of course experiment with colour negative originals to achieve reversed colour effects. Also remember that instant films are much faster than conventional printing papers, so you may need to use a neutral density filter over the enlarger lens to cut down light to a manageable level.

As well as printing slides onto ER films for emulsion lifts or image transfer, you can use this system for creating a print with a better crop of an original image, or for enlarging a small area of the slide for creative effect. For excellent black and white enlargements in 30 seconds, copy a 35mm PolaPan or PolaGraph instant black and white slide onto Polapan Pro 100 10x8" instant black and white print film. Alternatively, projection print an instant black and white slide onto Type 55 or 665 positive/negative film, and use the high quality negative to make conventional prints on variable contrast papers.

Photograms

You can make exciting photograms on Polaroid instant films by laying small objects that have interesting patterns or shapes onto the film and exposing them to light under the enlarger. Try experimenting with different filters, multiple exposures and masks to create multi-coloured results.

Above: Peter Lester
Cross toned 809/804 films

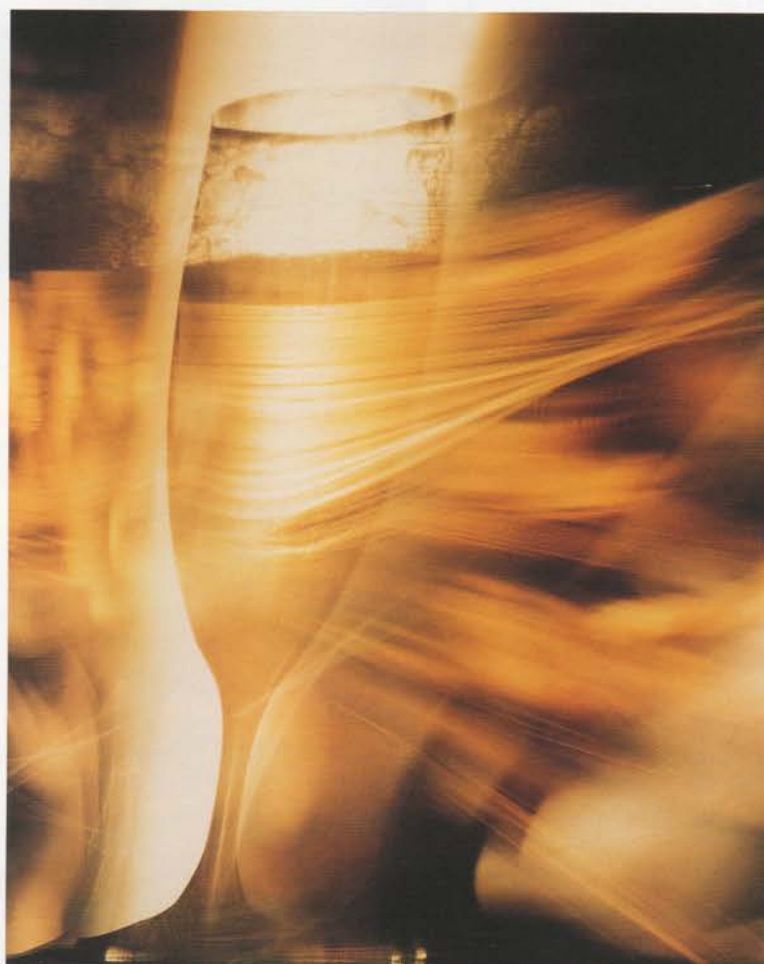**Left and Right:** Emmanuel Gaffard
Photograms on Polacolor ER films

Polacolor ER films

There is a wide choice of Polaroid instant colour print films, suitable for general proofing, specialised tasks and for final art too. The well established Polacolor extended range (ER) instant colour print films are traditionally used for proofing and are available for medium format, 5x4" and 10x8" cameras with the appropriate accessory backs. They have a broad tonal range, good colour characteristics and excellent definition.

ER films are also suitable for final art. The colour palette and tonal range of films such as Type 59 5x4" and Type 809 10x8" sheet films, provide a characteristic 'look' that many photographers like to utilise for portraiture and fashion. ER films of any size are the most suitable for emulsion lift and image transfer. (See pages 4-7). However, there are other techniques which can produce interesting creative results.

Above: Benvenuto Saba
Type 59, 5x4 ER film

Below: Pierre Gayte
Type 809, 10x8 ER Film
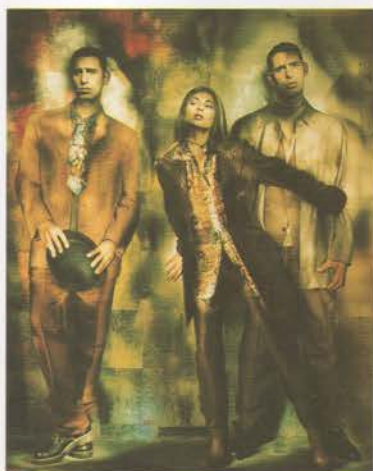
Colour print techniques

- The normal development time for ER films is 60 seconds at temperatures around 70° F. Peeling the film early, at around 30 seconds, results in an image with a useful level of detail, formed from pink/brown tones. If you catch the print at the right moment of development, it takes on an antique look, similar to faded platinum prints from the early days of photography.

- Type 809 can easily be used as final art for reproduction. Shoot directly onto film with a 10x8" camera, or use a stock slide, black and white or colour, and copy onto film in the Polaprinter or by projection printing.

Cross toning, deliberately using the wrong processing chemistry, is one of the most interesting results you can achieve with Type 809, 10x8" ER film. Medium format and 5x4" sheet and pack films have integral chemistry pods. However, Type 809 10x8" instant colour print films come in two separate parts. The negative is loaded into the film back and exposed, then it is matched with the positive (print) sheet, that also carries the processing pod, and put through a 10x8" processor. You can replace the Type 809 positive with a Polapan Pro 100 10x8" instant black and white positive to achieve the distinctive cross toned look.

Cross toning has been used to great effect by some of the best known photographers in Europe. The result is a kind of split-toned look, comprising subtle elements of black and brown which, combined with Type 809's excellent definition and tonality, gives a unique mood to portraits, fashion and still-life shots.

Left and Below: Ben Hofman
Type 59, tungsten lighting

Below: Frank Tielemans
Type 809/804 cross tone
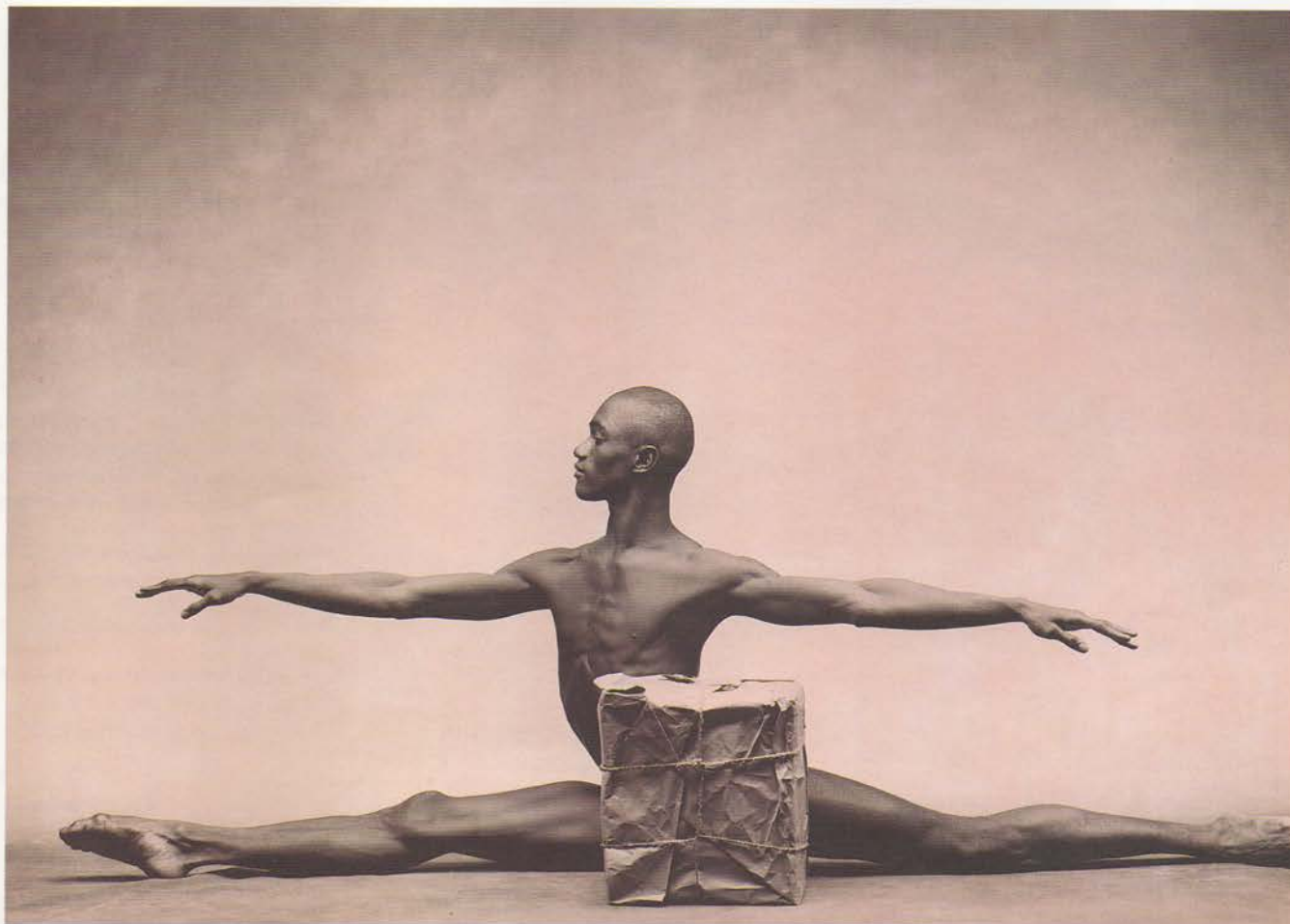
Other techniques

As we have shown, Polaroid films offer several paths to creative image making. However, we haven't exhausted our store of techniques yet. The following is a miscellaneous selection of ideas, some new, some well established, that we hope you will find interesting and useful.

There are two slide printers available from your Polaroid stockist; the Vivitar, which uses medium format pack film, and the Polaprinter which works with 10 x 8" films. As well as being useful instant imaging tools to have in the studio, both provide opportunities for creative experiments.

Left: © Polaroid
Polacolor Pro 100

PC Pro 100

The latest, instant colour print film is Polacolor (PC) Pro 100, for use with medium format and 5 x 4" cameras. PC Pro 100 is winning many friends for its superb colour accuracy and sharpness. If the job requires a high quality colour print, PC Pro 100 can be an instant imaging solution: it matches the quality of any C41 type colour print and it's ready to view and use 90 seconds after exposure. Instant imaging with PC Pro 100 offers the creative photographer extra control through facilitating the development of ideas — it's the shortest path from the initial concept to a final high quality colour image for reproduction.

Below: Ivo Von Renner
SX-70 joiner

SX-70 film has been a favourite with artists and photographers since its introduction in the 1970s. Unlike the latest generation of integral films, the SX-70 image can be manipulated for a short while after development. It's easy to become expert at moving the emulsion around by pressing on it with a blunt pointed tool before it fully dries. Keeping the back of the print warm extends the period in which you can manipulate the image.

Another popular technique is the 'joiner', or composite image. Instant cameras are normally used for this technique, which involves shooting several separate views of the same subject. The individual prints are then positioned together to form one large composite image.

There is another 'instant camera' which has much to offer the creative photographer. The 600SE is a professional quality medium format camera with excellent interchangeable lenses, rangefinder focusing and a removable back. With the 600SE you can shoot directly onto Type 665 black and white positive/negative film, or Type 669 colour print film. With the recent introduction of a new back from NPC, you can also shoot directly onto any 5x4" instant sheet film, creating a larger image area.

Sepia Film

Sepia toning has been a popular technique almost since photography was invented. Sepia prints have a warmth that really enhances certain subjects and now you can achieve this popular look in an instant. Polaroid Sepia film provides superb rich brown prints without toning. The prints are very sharp, maintaining excellent quality when reproduced up to full page, and you can control the density of tone by experimenting with exposure and development.

Sepia film comes in boxes of 20 5x4" sheets for use with the standard 545i film holder. It's a medium contrast, ISO 200 film, which develops in 35 seconds at 75°F. Its contrast range and flattering warmth make it particularly suitable for subjects such as historic buildings, interiors or scenes that might benefit from an antique treatment.

Left: Peter Lester
Sepia film

SX-70 Tips

- SX-70 cameras are not made any more but the film is. You can get second hand cameras from many photo-dealers or you can adapt current 600 Series instant cameras to take the film by the following method.

1 Take a small sheet of stiff card — the darkslide from a spent box of SX-70 or 600 film box will do — and insert it to lie over the small metal bar that prevents SX-70 from being inserted.

2 Slide in the SX-70 pack over the card until it locates in the film chamber.

3 Remove the card and shoot as normal.

- SX-70 film is more sensitive than 600 film. Put a two stop ND filter over the 600's light meter to compensate.

- Use SX-70 under the enlarger for projection printing stock images. To develop, follow the method outlined above. When the film loading door is closed, the exposed print will be ejected and exposed.

Vivitar and Polaprinter Tips

- Use the Vivitar or the Polaprinter to make Type 669, or Type 809, ER prints from stock slides, suitable for image transfers, or emulsion lifts.

- Copy black and white slides onto ER instant colour prints, to make monochrome image transfers or emulsion lifts.

- Use Type 665 instant black and white positive/negative film in the Vivitar to make internegs for enlargements from instant slides, or to experiment with solarization of the negative.

- With the Polaprinter, you can make instant 10x8" black and white prints for final art from PolaPan or PolaGraph 35mm instant black and white slides.