



Konica Centuria Super Films

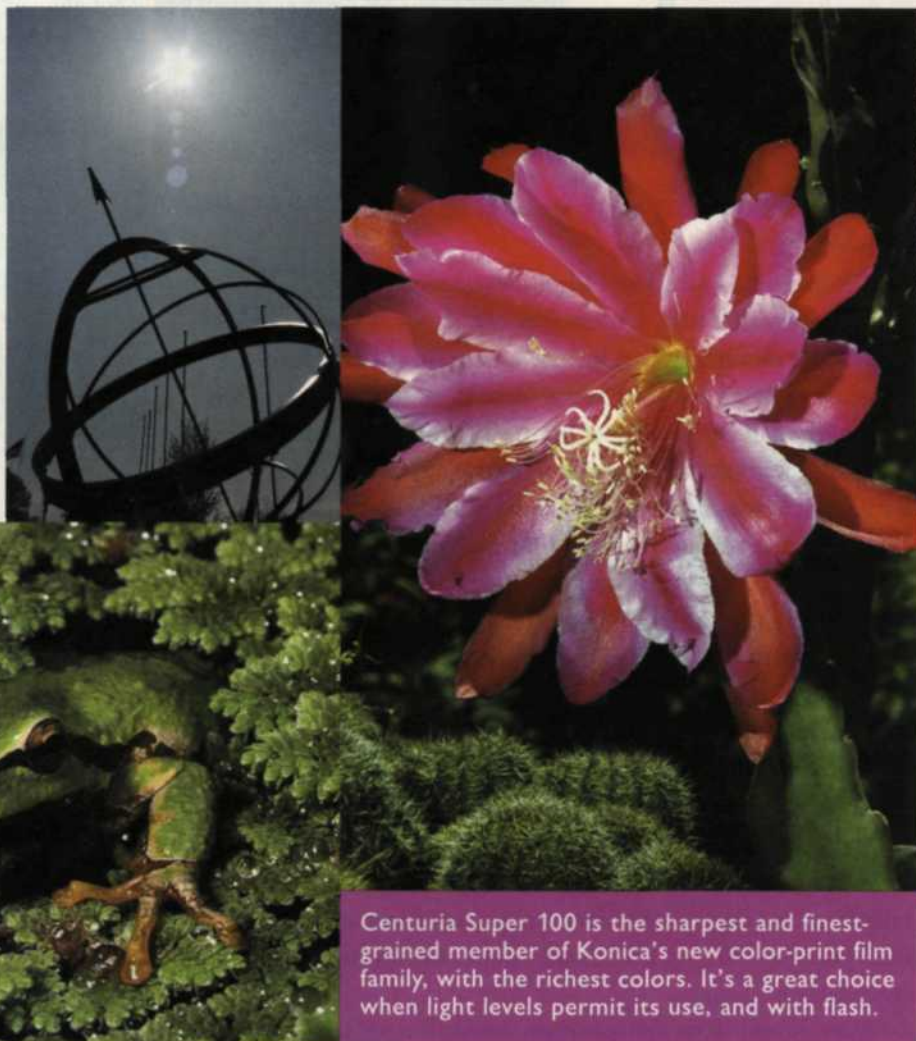
Five hot color-print emulsions from ISO 100–1600

by Jack and Sue DrafaHl

Konica Photo Imaging reinforced their commitment to the traditional film industry with their introduction of a new series of films called Centuria Super. The Centuria name is from the previous emulsion, but the ISO 100, 200, 400, 800 and 1600 films present a totally new chapter in emulsion technology.

The Centuria emulsions use a Super Multi Coated Crystal technology that features fog-suppression layers which inhibit heat and natural radiation fogging to keep films fresh longer. They also increased photo sensitivity on the edge of each crystal, increased the flat surface area and made the crystals even thinner. This new technology more evenly disperses the crystals for improved granularity in each emulsion. The result is a series of fine-grain films that provide smooth tonal gradations.

Konica also



ALL PHOTOS BY JACK AND SUE DRAFAHL

Centuria Super 100 is the sharpest and finest-grained member of Konica's new color-print film family, with the richest colors. It's a great choice when light levels permit its use, and with flash.

developed the Ultra-Consistent Crystal Technology to help create more evenly sized dye clouds for improved granularity. The new Centuria Super emulsions also include a new yellow filter layer to better control the blue light as it strikes the emulsion. This same filter also improves the accurate capture of green in the emulsion. New Color Enhancers in the Centuria Super emulsion greatly improve color reproduction, film speed, and stability for each emulsion throughout the entire photographic process from exposure to final printing.

The Centuria Super line of films offers something for everyone. The five emulsions provide a wide selection of film speeds to cover all photo situations from macro to low light. All five emulsions can be treated as one in the printing phase. This compatibility allows the photographer to intermix different film speeds without any difference in color, contrast, and overall image quality.

Centuria Super 100 is a slow-speed, high-quality emulsion designed for full sunlight or flash when you have control over subject movement and depth of field. This emulsion has the finest grain of the five films with an RMS granularity of 4, which allows for extreme enlargements. It is the perfect choice for nature and landscape photographers so the grain in out-of-focus areas and blue skies can be kept to a minimum.

Centuria Super 200 adds an extra stop of film speed for situations when the lighting fluctuates from full sunlight to cloudy bright. It's great, too, for when you need more depth of field, control over subject action or when using a macro lens with an $f/32$ setting. With an RMS of 4, it has grain quality that rivals Centuria Super 100.

Centuria Super 400 is at the center of this Konica film series, and is our candidate for most photo situations. With two stops more speed than the 100 emulsion, it can handle both conditions in bright sun and subdued lighting. Surprisingly, the RMS granularity of this emulsion is 4—the same as both the 100 and 200 emulsions. If you are uncertain about lighting conditions or scene action, then this would be the best film choice.

Centuria Super 800 is designed for photo situations with lots



Centuria Super 200 gives you another stop of film speed for more depth of field or less camera-shake blur, while producing excellent image quality and color reproduction. Its granularity is very close to that of Super 100.



of action, or low light levels. With an RMS granularity of 5, the grain level is slightly increased, but this film has the ability to freeze the action, or provide increased depth of field by three stops over the ISO 100 emulsion. This emulsion is highly recommended for sports action, kids, pets, and subjects that are hard to control.

Centuria Super 1600 is for those extremely poor lighting situations like tungsten night scenes, candle light, or low-light situations where flash cannot be used. With an RMS granularity of 6, this emulsion is great for school plays, weddings, sleeping children, extremely long lenses, and low-light portraits. It can also be used in combination with flash and long lenses to reach across great distances and still get great exposures.

When we conduct a film test, we like to take our time. This is especially true when we have several film speeds for analysis. We asked our editor for an extension to allow us to shoot this group of Konica film over an extended period of time. With a relaxed deadline, we had the freedom to take the Centuria Super



The fast Centuria Super emulsions, 800 (below) and 400 (the other photos on this page), are great all-around films, providing extra speed without costing much in terms of image quality or color saturation. Super 400 could be used for anything, and Super 800 is great for hand-holding tele lenses.



all the colorful flowers. Suddenly we had a strange feeling of *déjà vu*. It seems that in early 1999, we ran another film test at this same spot. Although we didn't plan it, the previous film test just happened to be on the original Konica Centuria films. Much had changed in the town, but we were still able to

shoot some of the same subjects for further emulsion

comparison. We were blessed with good weather and little wind so most subjects were motionless, and we were able to use the ISO 100, 200 and 400 emulsions. It was during that trip that we happened upon Earle the squirrel. Upon closer examination during our film test, we informed the owner that they might consider changing the squirrel's name to Shirley. We got some great close-up photos and we heard later that mother and babies were doing fine. Over the next few weeks we made several trips looking for a variety of nature subjects, as well as some color and design test subjects. As we rounded the bend of the road one day, we came upon a man ready to jump off a high cliff. We immediately stopped and grabbed our cameras—one loaded with ISO 100 and the other with ISO 400. Wait, don't think of us as paparazzi looking for the photo of a lifetime—this

film series wherever we went over a five-week period. The largest Hawaiian luau on the mainland is held yearly at a local college, Pacific University. This is a great photographic opportunity as it features low lighting, flowers, local color and plenty of action. We were some distance from the subjects, so we used a 75–300mm zoom with a compatible flash set to tele zoom. The lighting was extremely low, so our film selection for the evening was ISO 400, 800, and 1600, depending on our subject to camera and flash distance. For most of the shooting, the Centuria Super 800 and flash provided great exposures. When the fire dancer came on stage, we switched to the 1600 emulsion and were able to maintain shutter speeds above $\frac{1}{500}$ and shoot without flash.

During a convention trip, we made a stop in the small town of Pella, Iowa, where their yearly tulip festival was being held. We thought it would be a great test for this Centuria Super with

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Superfast Konica Centuria Super 1600, as would be expected, is grainier than its slower siblings, but allows you to capture the flavor of dim existing light, shooting hand-held and without flash.



guy had a parasail, not a death wish. When a big wind gust came, he was off as our motor drives quickly ran through the remaining film in the cameras.

This film test was unique as we had images taken on the original Konica Centuria film at the same location. Although the angle and lens focal length was not necessarily the same, we could still compare overall film quality and characteristics.

The results were very conclusive. The most obvious change in the new emulsions was the grain reduction apparent in all speeds. The normally grainy blue skies were very fine compared to the original test. Each film also had a better color rendition than in the previous emulsions, and the tonal gradations were very smooth. We were very impressed with the higher-speed films' ability to closely assimilate the small grain and versatile tonal range of the lower speed films.

Most impressive was the color compatibility from one emulsion to the next. When we scanned all the emulsions into the computer, we were able to use one filter pack for all the different emulsion scans.

Over the years, film has continually improved thanks to technological advancements, and this new Konica Centuria Super film series is proof. With a choice of five different high-quality emulsions, you now have full control over any photo situation that may arise. For more on Konica films you can log on to www.konica.com. ■