

COLOR FILM TRANSFORMATIONS

Shooting Color Negatives as Slides

by Jack and Sue Drafa

With all the sophisticated, high-tech cameras on the market today, you'd think that making an incorrect exposure would be impossible. But low light situations, color temperature, difficult lighting situations, and extreme scene brightness range can cause havoc with photographers shooting slides.

The trade secrets of a good photographer who shoots slides include a good working knowledge of obtaining proper exposure, an accurate light meter, and most importantly, the fact that they bracket exposures. Slide films have such a narrow exposure latitude and color balance, especially the higher speed films, that several exposures are necessary to guarantee pleasing results.

But wait! We offer a possible solution to this problem! A few months ago we reviewed several Kodak and Fuji color negative films. As we generally shoot slides 100% of the time, we were a little hesitant to try the new color negative films, but we were shocked at the color, sharpness, and exposure latitude of what most photographers considered amateur films.

After completing our initial test reports, we decided to take our research one more step and reversed the negatives into slides. The results were excellent! Here was a process that allowed us to take photos with a six-stop latitude, that could be color corrected under almost any lighting condition, yet maintain full color saturation even at speed of ISO 1600!

Our color negatives were reversed into slides using a slide duplicator and a special Kodak film called Vericolor Slide Film (SO-279). Each color negative was exposed on the slide duplicator through a tungsten light source,

and the Vericolor film was then processed in C-41 developer. We found that with our duplicator a 30-watt tungsten lamp required a five-second exposure at f/8 with a five-point yellow filter pack.

Extreme care must be taken to blow off the negative completely so that no dust remains. If one particle of dust is on the negative, it will show up as a white speck, not like black dust when using slide duplicating film. A white piece of dust on Vericolor slide film usually means remaking the reversal slide.

Over- and underexposures, as well as strange color balances, can now be corrected in the lab instead of on location. The Vericolor film is just like 5071 slide duplicating film in that it requires a different color balance for different types of films. Therefore, you need to standardize on the same type of color negative film for consistent results in making slides from your color negatives.

FILING THE NEGATIVES

There are all types of methods for filing your slides, from pages that hold 20 or 36 slides and can be stored in binders or filing cabinets, to old shoe boxes. We have always filed our slides in plastic pages, each page in its own specific category in a filing cabinet. But when we started to shoot color negatives we had to find a way to file color negatives so they were as easy to find as our color slides. We decided the method we were currently using for filing slides would also work for color negatives.

We cut up the color negatives and mounted them in special slide mounts called Snap-its, available from Spiratone for \$5.50 per 100. These special

slide mounts allow you to mount and unmount slides without damaging the slide or the slide mount. Mounted negatives can easily be placed in the slide duplicator for making reversal slides, and can be filed in specific categories in your filing system right next to the corresponding reversal slide.

If you later decide to make a color print, simply go to your file, and select the desired negative. Pop the mount apart and send it in for color printing. Mounting the negatives in mounts allows you to pull out just one negative instead of the whole strip.

If you do your own color prints, insert the Snap-it mounted negative into a slide carrier and make your prints, without the worry of the negative being scratched by the negative carrier.

It has become more and more common for images to be used for a variety of media, from black-and-white to color prints as well as slides, forcing the photographer to take several cameras with different films for each use. We

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1. This waterfall was originally photographed on Kodacolor VR-G 100 color negative film. A color slide was then made by copying the negative onto 35mm Kodak Vericolor Slide Film SO-279, using a slide duplicator. All originals here were 35mm color negatives.
2. Here's a sample of a Fujicolor HR 200 negative original, converted to a color slide by duping it onto SO-279.
3. Even high-speed color negative films take well to the treatment: Here, the original shot of crayons was made on Fujicolor HR 1600 negative film.
4. This image, like the waterfall, began as a Kodacolor VR-G 100 color negative.
5. Pro films reproduce well on Vericolor Slide Film, too. This image was recorded originally on Kodak Vericolor III professional color negative film.

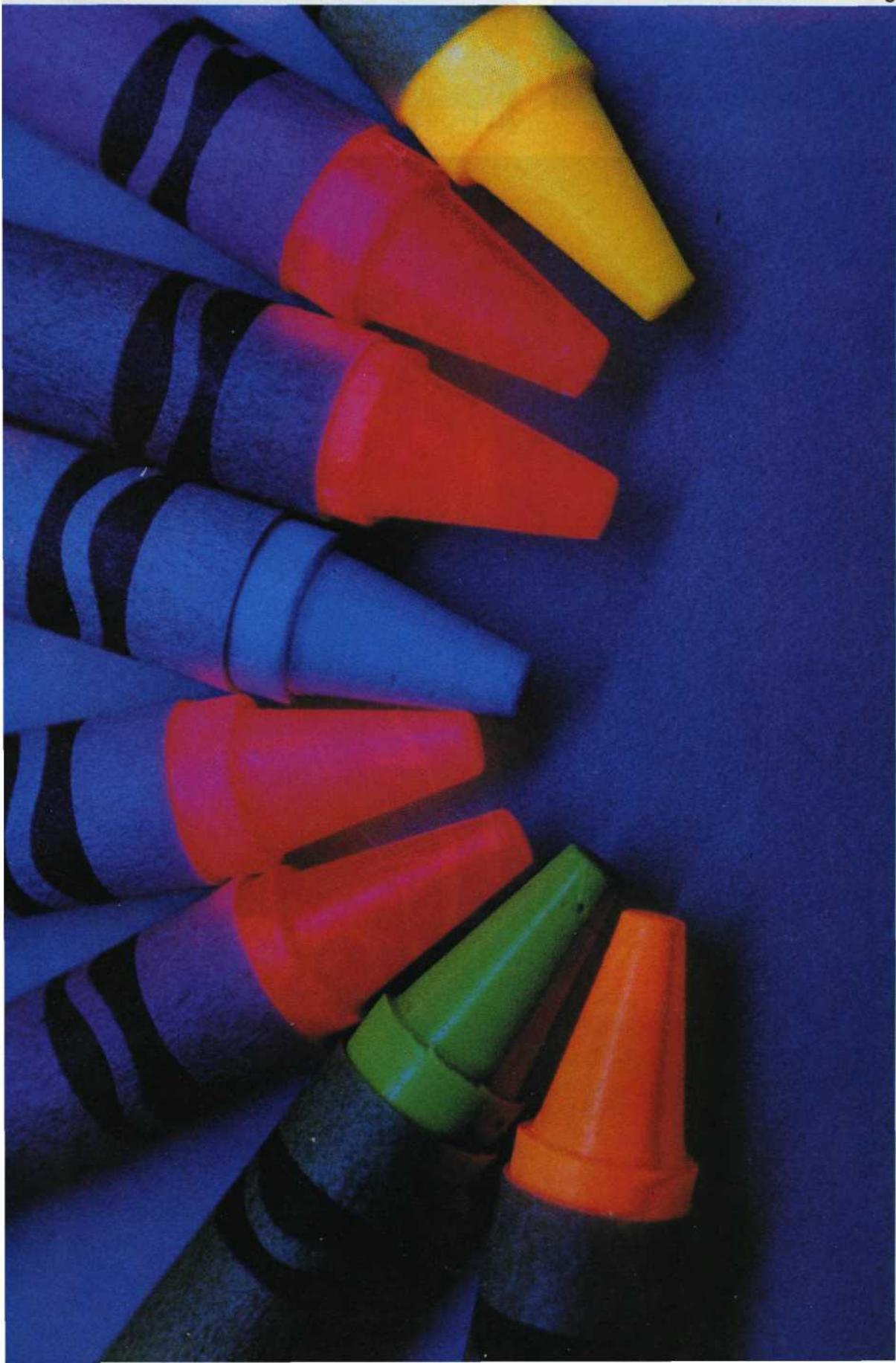


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ALL PHOTOS BY AUTHORS



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COLOR NEGS

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contend that just shooting color negative film may help solve some of these problems.

We have already discussed reversing negatives to slides, and most people make color prints from color negatives, but few realize that high-quality black-and-white prints can also be made from color negatives using two types of Kodak Panalure panchromatic paper. The standard Panalure paper displays a contrast range suitable for exhibitions and display. The second Kodak Panalure paper is a reproduction grade paper and is one paper grade lower. Panalure paper is harder to use in that it must be used in total darkness or with color safelight such as the Minilux by Jobo. Polycontrast paper with high filtration can be used but the quality suffers.

Because of the added conversion time and added cost we don't recommend totally switching to color negative. We only suggest that when you must absolutely, positively get the photo, give color negative film a shot and have your slides too! 