



photography
Monte Nagler

Understanding intricacies of color

Film is a photographic "miracle" we take for granted. Most of us who have been using color film for years probably haven't given much thought as to how it really works.

Color film contains three separate layers of light-sensitive emulsion that create an image according to the intensity of light falling on it during the brief instant of exposure.

One layer is sensitive only to red light, one to green, and the other to blue. At a particular stage in the development of the film, the image is dyed to the appropriate shade in each layer to reproduce the full range of colors in the original subject.

There are two basic types of color film, transparency (slides) and negative (prints).

A negative film records light areas in the original scene as dark tones and dark areas as light tones. Colors are shown in reverse so that anything blue will appear as a mixture of red and green, which is yellow, anything green will record a mixture of red and blue called magenta and anything red as a combination of green and blue, which is cyan.

These are the complementary colors. To make a print, the negative must then be exposed again to a similar emulsion on a paper base to convert the colors and tones back to those of the original subject.

Late afternoon light produces subtleties and tones not obtainable under a noon-time sun in this photograph, which Monte Nagler took on a trip to the southeastern states earlier this summer.

With a color transparency, all of this process takes place when the film is developed. Modern technology has made color films sensitive to even the slightest changes in the color quality of light. Unfortunately, we tend to notice only the drastic changes in light quality because the brain makes adjustments for what we see.

For example, grass will almost always appear to be green regardless of the color of light used to illuminate it, simply because we "know" that grass is green.

We are rarely aware of color changes in daylight, yet it varies as surely as the sun rises and sets and these variations are faithfully recorded on film. This accounts for the many surprises, and sometimes disappointments when you see your processed prints for the first time.

The color quality of light is measured on what is called the Kelvin scale and is recorded as a color "temperature."

Most daylight balanced films are designed to give a correct color balance when the light source is about 6,000 degrees Kelvin or approximately a noon sun.

However, light from a rising sun can be as low as 3,000 or as high as 8,000 degrees on a hazy day. When you consider that a variation of only a few hundred degrees will be quite noticeable when re-

corded on film it becomes easy to understand how a photograph can appear with different tones of color than you thought you saw. It also explains how sunset and sunrise pictures have color values unlike those shots lit by a noon time sun.

In the next column, I'll tell you how to capture fall's magnificent color change on film.

Architecture series starts

John Hartray will give the first program of the Lawrence Institute of Technology school of architecture's Architecture series at 7:30 p.m. today.

He is responsible for the design of Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art, the Auditorium Theatre Restoration and the Clark Street Plaza. The lecture in the architecture auditorium on the campus, 21000 16th Mile, Southfield, is open to the public free.

His topic will be "Chicago: 150 years of Modern Architecture." Hartray, a principal of Nagler, Hartray & Associates, is adjunct professor

Sculpture exhibited at CMU

Current work by Sergio DeLuati is on exhibit at Central Michigan University's Creative Arts Gallery through Friday. The artist is pictured at right with his recently completed, "The Flying Dutchman," formed of hydrostone. De Luati, born in Italy, now living in Detroit, has taught at Wayne State University and the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association. He has had one-man shows at Sheldon Ross Gallery of Birmingham and participates in many invitational shows in the region.



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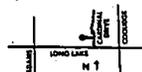


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