

Christina Z. Anderson
Spring 2008 Traveling Portfolio

I have included 7 works, not 2 or 3; please store all, stacked, in my allotted 2 slots—they are workprints. Feel free to handle and inspect. I thought it best to include a bunch to more clearly show what my current research is about.

Since 2005 I have been doing tricolor gum, mostly tricolor gum over cyanotype with curving individual layers separately. I found that each color pigment requires a different curve, information readily apparent when doing the Precision Digital Negative system and plotting curves on the spreadsheet included in the software. The PDN system also uses colorized negatives—no black ink for various reasons too lengthy to go into here.

This fall I wanted to go back and experiment with simple negatives—ones that you just pressed a button and had the printer do its thing. My motive was this: how to teach gum to a group of people who do not know Photoshop? All of my students, by the time they get into my class, are well versed in Photoshop, but this is not the case when teaching a workshop at some place like Penland or Photographer's Formulary. I found this out last summer when introducing PDN to Lewis' bromoil workshop. In fact, I would guess that most people who are older and have the discretionary income to attend such workshops were not "raised" on Photoshop as the Twentysomethings are today. Thus my reasoning for going back to the drawing board, trying all sorts of easy negative making methods, with a few artsy fartsy techniques thrown in for good measure. My final determinations will be included in my gum book, *Gum Printing, Then and Now*, which if I cannot find a publisher to pick it up, I will again self publish by the end of the year. In this portfolio, all is a "work in progress". Included are some PDN negative images, too, for comparison.

1. **Art Show:** PDN curved negatives, tricolor gum over cyanotype, automatic development. This is a bit of poking fun at art shows—everyone standing around looking so intense and in fact enjoying lots of free wine ☺ myself included.

2. **Merry Christmas:** PDN curved negatives, tricolor gum over cyanotype. This image was a test to see how *small* I could go effectively with a gum print. The thousands of white gravestones in white snow was stupendously beautiful, and I like this little print but the prints I have done of this subject matter in a 13x19 size are much more effective. Size is a very interesting phenomenon to explore with images, though.

3. **Julie:** this is about 5 or 6 layers of gum only, with golfball size grain added to each RGB separation negative to attempt an old, yellowed, *autochrome* look. Lots of brushing. Truth be known, this was the image of this bride I just loved, and when I was working on it I discovered the dreaded banding issue with the Nikon D200 camera. It was horrendous all over her face! So I had to "grain up" the image if I was even going to use it. I will say that Nikon replaced my CCD for free when I sent them this picture. Can you imagine shooting a wedding and then finding this out????! This autochrome method has real possibilities but I have not gotten it to the point of perfection.

4. **Bucking Horse sale:** This is also golfball size grain added to each layer to attempt the *autochrome* look. Better but not quite there.

5. **For Sale:** This is one simple BW negative no curves black ink only with different colored gum painted directly on a base layer of exposure. Legs were painted flesh, dress green etc. and

the base layer was done in both blue and magenta. I find this such a sad little image...it fits in my gender series. VERY fun to make. Great technique to teach.

6. **After Monet:** This is a **CMYK**, all inks uncurved negatives, gum only with no curving done. I do not like CMYK. It is, IMHO, one more layer to print that could be done with just an RGB, but that is my opinion based on a bias of working for years with RGB. I also do not like a black layer in gum! It's dull and a blue works much better. Also, if curves are not used magenta becomes a bit of an issue. I probably had to print 6 or 8 layers on this PITA print to get it to even come close to something I would like. I also experimented with *blur* in this image.

7. **Domestic Violence:** This is one all ink, uncurved, simple *bitmap* negative, printed 4 times—2 black layers, 1 magenta and 1 yellow, gum only. Bitmap was 360 input 600 output. Image was heavily brushed during development. I love shooting old, gritty things. I personally like this image which has a tad of Warholesque silkscreen color and feel in the hot pink and scratchiness. This is a great “first print” method to teach to get a person hooked on gum.

Things I discovered: I cannot, *cannot*, use Photowarehouse OHP film all inks in my Epson 2400. I print an image and the negative scratches or even leaves black on the image. It is Pictorico all the way for me, period. Two, if cyanotype is used as a base layer you must curve it or you can end up with a too dark print. Curves are essential for “one shot” printing like cyanotype or pt/pd base layers. Three, you can suit practice to fit an uncurved negative. When combining that with tricolor, though, it is a bit dicier to get the color balance correct when not curving each color correctly when you are adjusting the other variables to make the exposure correct (time, thickness, amount of dichromate, etc.). So press-the-button negatives are certainly viable with gum, *bitmap* negatives produce fun images, too for a very low tech low ink method, but correct curves make it so easy to print gum it is a shame that it can't be easier to teach non-Photoshop users.