

AGFA'S TRIADE FILM SYSTEM

Three Optimized Color-Print Films

by Jack and Sue Drafa

PHOTOGRAPHIC'S USER REPORT

Photographers today have camera systems, lens systems, lighting systems, tripod systems, and even background systems. The idea behind these equipment "systems" is to allow the photographer greater flexibility and versatility when using specific equipment. It seems only natural that a manufacturer would follow up with a film system, enabling photographers to apply specific films to specific tasks. The Agfa Triade System offers three pro color-negative films, each optimized for a specific type of photography.

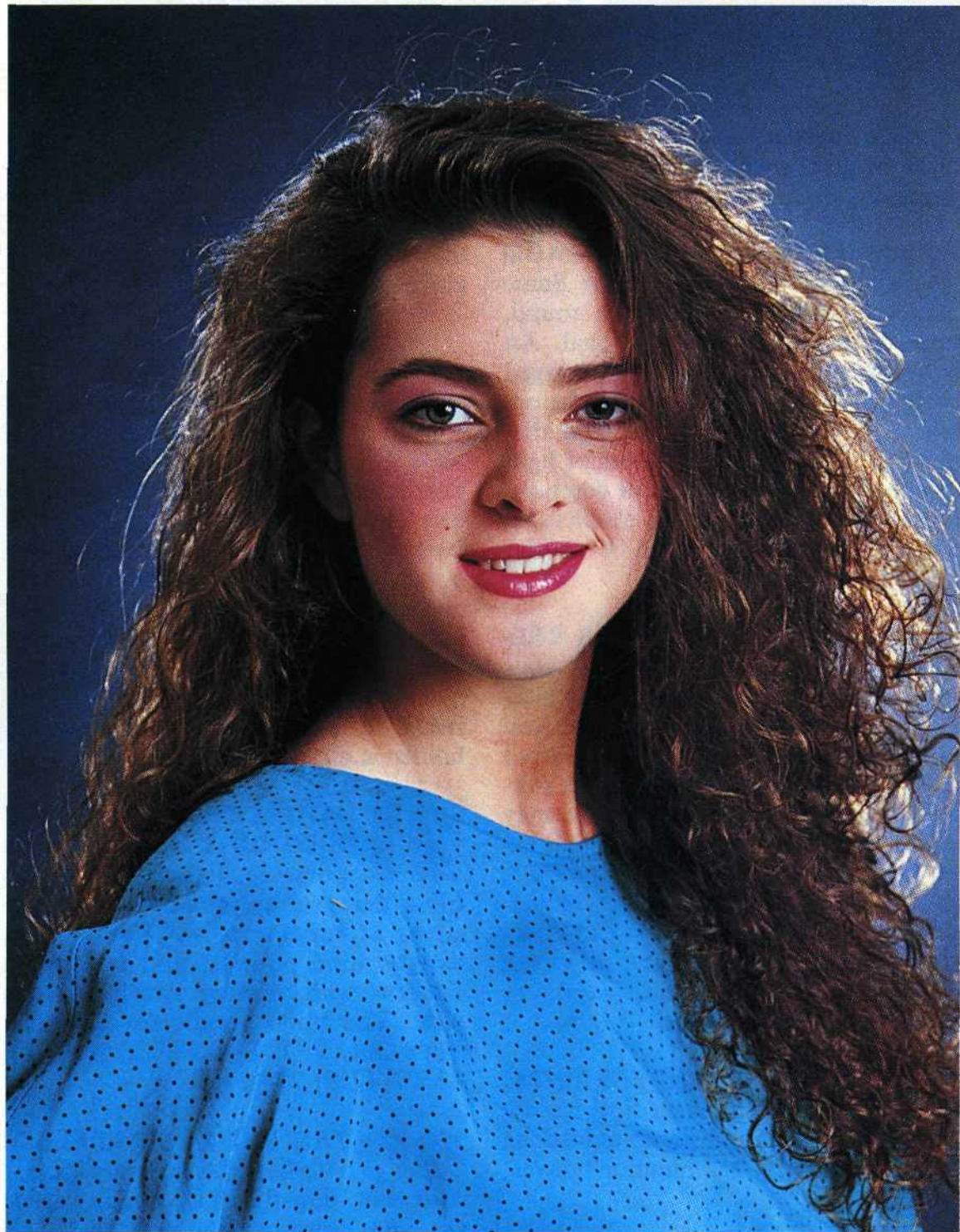
A NEW DIMENSION IN FILM TECHNOLOGY

Agfa's primary goal was to develop a series of films that would provide the professional and serious amateur photographer with film emulsions to match specific photographic applications. They wanted to provide films with different degrees of color saturation. Ultra 50 has ultrahigh color saturation (and relatively high contrast), while Optima 125 has natural color saturation (and normal contrast), and Portrait 160 has relatively muted saturation (and lower contrast).

The Triade films' color reproduction is achieved in large part through control of inter-image effects, which counteract color crossover (and thus reduce unwanted color shifts and increase color saturation): The inter-image effects are stronger in the more-saturated Ultra 50 film, and weaker in the less-saturated Portrait 160 film. Sharper spectral sensitivity for red light, and (in Ultra 50) a new particularly pure magenta dye also improve color saturation.

Another improvement in color reproduction is due to the employment of three colormasks, instead of the usual two—a first in any color-negative film. The new third mask compensates for faulty yellow absorption, thus producing cleaner reds and brighter yellows.

Image sharpness has been increased through the use of improved DIR couplers, which produce very strong edge effects. Improved grain structure is provided by new developments in particle size, tighter distribution, and a more homogeneous crystal structure.



Agfa Portrait 160

AGFA ULTRA 50

When you are in photographic situations where high color saturation, extremely fine grain, and high contrast are desired, then Agfacolor Ultra 50 should be your choice. We found this high-contrast color-negative film to be ideal for outdoor situations where low contrast impairs overall color saturation. Foggy, overcast weather is a perfect candidate for such a film, even when the color in the scene seems to be somewhat muted. Ultra 50 is also great for architectural photography, where

the photographer wants to accentuate lines and give maximum contrast to the shape of the structure.

Indoors, we found the Ultra 50 to be great for studio-lighting situations where you need to use flat lighting, but still wish to maintain maximum color saturation. We found that colored subjects on a white background photographed very well on the Ultra 50. The whites stayed clean, and the color saturation was at its maximum.

We also found the Ultra 50 to be well-suited for scientific and medical

photography. In the microscope, for instance, lighting tends to minimize the contrast and color saturation of most conventional films. The Ultra 50 keeps the contrast high while maintaining an excellent level of color saturation. Other specialized situations, such as UV (black) lighting, high-contrast color copy, and multiexposures all lend themselves to the Ultra 50 emulsion.

We found exposures acceptable from -1 to +2 stops, with little loss of quality. We did find that you could adjust the contrast a little higher or lower by intentionally overexposing/underexposing the film within its acceptable limits. When exposure times exceeded one second, we found a +0.5-stop reciprocity-failure correction necessary. Exposures beyond 10 seconds required at least 2 stops' more exposure. Copy work with 3200 K lights required an 80A filter and an additional 2 stops of exposure, rating the film at EI 12.

Printing the Ultra 50 negatives required a 20-point red increase over most of our standard printing filter packs. Because of the higher contrast, we also found that testing had to be on a tighter spread than we were normally used to. We found printing Ultra 50 negatives very similar to printing Ektar, Kodak's higher-contrast color-negative film.



AGFA OPTIMA 125

For situations requiring accurate reproduction of the colors and their various shades, Optima 125 would be your best choice. Outdoor scenics in full sunlight and or bright shade lend themselves to the Optima emulsion. With an exposure latitude of -1.5 to +3 stops, this film is versatile and accurate in its reproduction of subtle hues to fully saturated colors. We found we could also "tweak" the contrast a little more by intentionally over- or underexposing

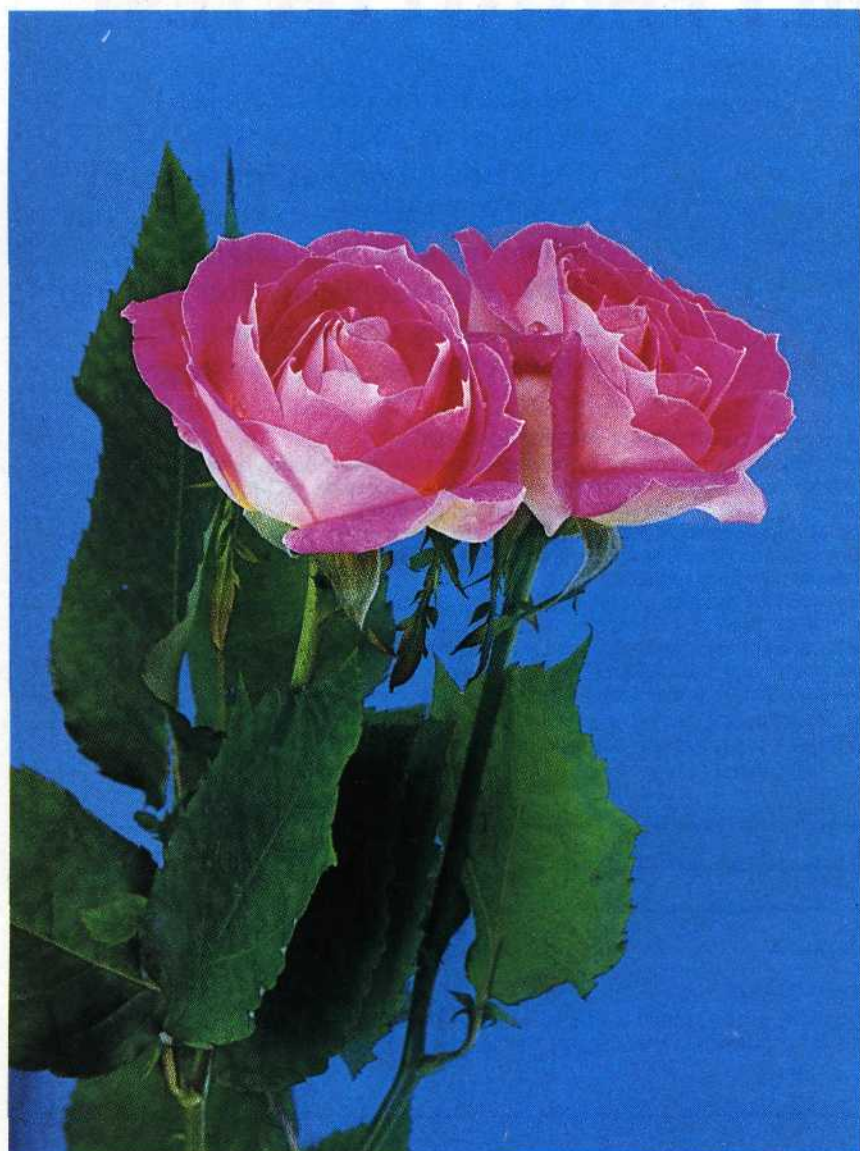
within the exposure-latitude limits of the film.

Indoors, we found the contrast and reproduction levels were very well suited to both direct flash for journalism and reflected flash for studio work. When we used the Optima 125 with tungsten lighting, we found it best to use the 80A filter and increase the exposure by two stops (EI 32). Reciprocity failure of the Optima 125 emulsion was very similar to Ultra 50, which required +0.5 stop for exposures over 1 second and +2 stops for exposures over 10 seconds. Printing packs for the Optima 125 emulsion required an additional 15 points of red.

AGFA PORTRAIT 160

When photo conditions dictate lower contrast and color saturation, then you might try the new Portrait 160 emulsion. Here, Agfa has restrained color saturation as well as contrast to capture those details in the deep shadows, yet still keep the highlights from burning out. Portrait photography is well suited for this emulsion, as it usually requires these features. We found the higher speed helpful for studio flash photograph, where we wanted as much control over depth of field as possible.

With a -1-stop to +3-stop latitude, Portrait 160's contrast can be tweaked



Agfa Optima 125



Agfa Ultra 50

AGFA'S TRIADE

considerably by varying the exposure. Portraits on this emulsion had clean highlights, detail in shadows, and a very lifelike appearance.

We found that this emulsion also had several ideal applications in the photo lab. Because of its lower contrast, we found that Portrait 160 could be used as a continuous-tone copy film for both black-and-white and color flat art. Again, we recommend the 80A filter and +1-2 stops' exposure compensation. We also found that this emulsion could be used for making good copy negatives from color slides in the slide duplicator. Printing packs required 10 points of red added to our standard color-negative printing pack. We found the Agfa Portrait 160 very similar to Kodak's VPS III in printing and final presentation.

CONCLUSION

Agfa's introduction of variable-color-saturation films provides photographers with more tools to use in controlling the final image. These new films allow photographers to choose just how much color saturation they need,

while still maintaining neutral grays. The Triade films are available in 24- and 36-exposure 35mm rolls, as well as in 120 format. The 120 roll films can be retouched on both sides of the film. Agfa's Triade film system helps open new doors to expand a photographer's creativity.

Agfa films are distributed by Agfa Corp., 100 Challenger Rd., Ridgefield Park, NJ 07660; (201) 440-2500. ■