

PAUL L. ANDERSON
36 WASHINGTON STREET
EAST ORANGE, N. J.

August 12, 1940

Miss Laura Gilpin,
317 Cheyenne Road,
Colorado Springs, Colorado.

My dear Miss Gilpin:

Didn't I use your picture, The Prelude, in my book, The Fine Art of Photography? And haven't I seen pictures of yours from time to time, since then? Of course I remember you! And very pleasantly, too, as one of the few pupils of the White School who, in the slang phrase, "really had something."

About your allergy. You are only the second person I have ever heard of who suffered this way, the other being Clarence White. And when, to-day, I called Dr. Schumpelt, of Baker & Co., he had never heard of such a case. So the best I can do for you is this:

The trouble might be due to one of two causes.

(1) Dust from the dry paper being drawn into contact with the mucous membrane. (2) Ferric oxalate being absorbed through the skin in handling the paper and developer. This latter, I think, is doubtful.

So I would suggest (1) Wearing rubber gloves throughout. (2) Wear a respirator and goggles, tape them down to the skin with surgeon's adhesive tape, so as to make the joint air-tight; and put a wet pad of gauze into the respirator, because if it's wet it will catch the dust much better than if dry. It might help, too, to wet the pad with a mildly alkaline solution, say

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a 5% solution of sodium carbonate, since the sensitizer is slightly acid. Three of four thicknesses of gauze should be enough, and should still let you breathe all right. Of course the respirator should cover the mouth as well as the nose.

If this doesn't help, the only other thing is an allergy test and immunization, which is a nuisance that I certainly hope you'll be able to avoid.

As to the paper. It is sold by Charles Bainbridge's Sons, 20 Cumberland Street, Brooklyn, New York, though I don't believe he'll sell less than 100 sheets, about 20x26 inches - he is a wholesaler, you know. However, you can of course order it in smaller quantity through your local stationer. There are two grades, Bainbridge's Bristol and Bainbridge's Studio Bristol; the latter is the one you want, as it is much better than the other. Also, there are two finishes, kid finish and plate finish, the latter being smoother than the other, though the kid is far from rough - about like the old Willis & Clements Smooth. I think I have some scraps around, and if so, I'll enclose samples. You must remember, though, that the plate finish will not be so high a surface after processing; the solutions dull it somewhat. The only trouble with it is an occasional tiny metallic spot, which doesn't show up until the print is in the developer, and has to be picked out of the dry print with a needle. But I have tried almost every available paper, Whatman, Michallet, Strathmore, Crane, Eaton, and a score of others, and this is the best. Incidentally, here is an interesting thing; this is a wood pulp paper, but it stands up much better, and darkens much less with exposure to light, than does any of the pure linen

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papers. I tried it with Whatman and Eaton papers, for 14 hours under a quartz-tube Hanovia ultra-violet lamp; the Whatman turned a nice rich brown, the Eaton a deep tan, but the Bainbridge hardly discolored at all, and when it got the same exposure with a piece of ordinary window glass over it, it didn't change color visibly. The answer of course is that the manufacturers have got all of the rosin out of the wood, leaving only pure cellulose.

For enlarged negatives, the technique that suits you best is the one to use. If the Metallographic plate does what you want, by all means stick to it. For myself, I still stick to the Standard Orthonon or the Seed's L Ortho Non-Halation - they give me the results I look for. But as a matter of fact, almost anything will do - I sometimes use Pentagon film, sometimes Adlux, or, in fact, almost anything that is handy, though I like the Seed plate best. But you must use a plate if you print by sun.

You are absolutely right about there being too much technique and too little art - I have been preaching that for years, but it hasn't done much good; the only persons who have paid any attention are the ones who believed it already. But the amateurs of to-day are thinking so much about gamma and DK-20 and Champlin 15 and Weston meters, and so on, that they haven't any time left to think about Rembrandt and Velasquez and Vermeer and Goya. But go ahead and write an article about this, only don't send it to Photo Technique; Henney wants only "practical" stuff - art means less than half of nothing to him, as you might guess from the illustrations he uses. Did you ever see anything much worse than the "moonlight" scene on page 30 of the August number?

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While I think of it, if it's at all possible, you should have a well ventilated room, entirely apart from your regular workroom, for your platinum work - a good husky exhaust fan would be advisable. These allergies sometimes become very troublesome; I knew a man who developed such an allergy to any chromium compound that he couldn't even pass an evening in the club rooms of the Orange Camera Club without breaking out with horrible sores all over his arms and hands and face, even though neither he nor anyone else was doing any work there at the time. So if it is the dust that's making your trouble, you don't want it around your darkroom.

It was very nice indeed to hear from you, and I hope that these suggestions may be of value. If at any time I can advise or help in any way, please don't hesitate to let me know; I'm always glad to do what I can to assist.

Yours sincerely,

Paul L. Anderson

Bainbridge Studio Bristol
kid finish

Use either side