

DICHROMATED GUM PRINT – Process foreword

The dichromated gum print or simply 'gum' is undoubtedly the most potentially creative among the ancient photographic processes, certainly the less photographic and the closest to painting. The one with an almost absolute 'manual versatility', which makes it possible to intervene in every minimum step, which produces results whose forecast is constantly subject to variable conditions even during the same working day.

Its execution is simple and linear, its conclusion uncertain and surprising.

The 'gum' generates images with a strong personality; material and granular, very recognizable, not reproducible through other printing method; unsuitable for the reproduction of details but still line-cut and sharp.

Because of its proximity to painting, often – even today – it is used to create grainy and evanescent, diaphanous and improbable images like green landscapes, violet nudes, sepia twigs,

The versatility of the process encourages you to constantly personalize the process by practically inexhaustible possibilities of intervention starting from the supports, the colors, overlaps of other techniques, manual interventions,

The '*multiple gum*' method – the one that needs the greatest expertise and gives maximum satisfaction – recalls a forgotten working slowness and generally generate a good number ... of failures!

What can be pointed out are simply some dexterities and paths that are able to highlight once again both the difficulties and the peculiarities of the method.

For experimentation kits are on the market to prepare the mixtures:

http://www.antichetecnichefotografiche.it/kit-tecniche-fotografiche/Gomma_Bicromatata/25/IT

<https://www.bostick-sullivan.com/cart/?target=search&mode=search>

... but – with an equipped darkroom – stuffs are available with little effort, one by one.

For this reason some suggestions and concepts are suggested, which make the idea of the particular 'nature' of the process and at the same time to give some suggestions for a process that certainly needs a specific attention and care handling the sensitizer, for which it is necessary the constant use of appropriate clothing and precautions suitable for the recovery of all working liquids and drips.

(see for example https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFjwkYB_ILI).