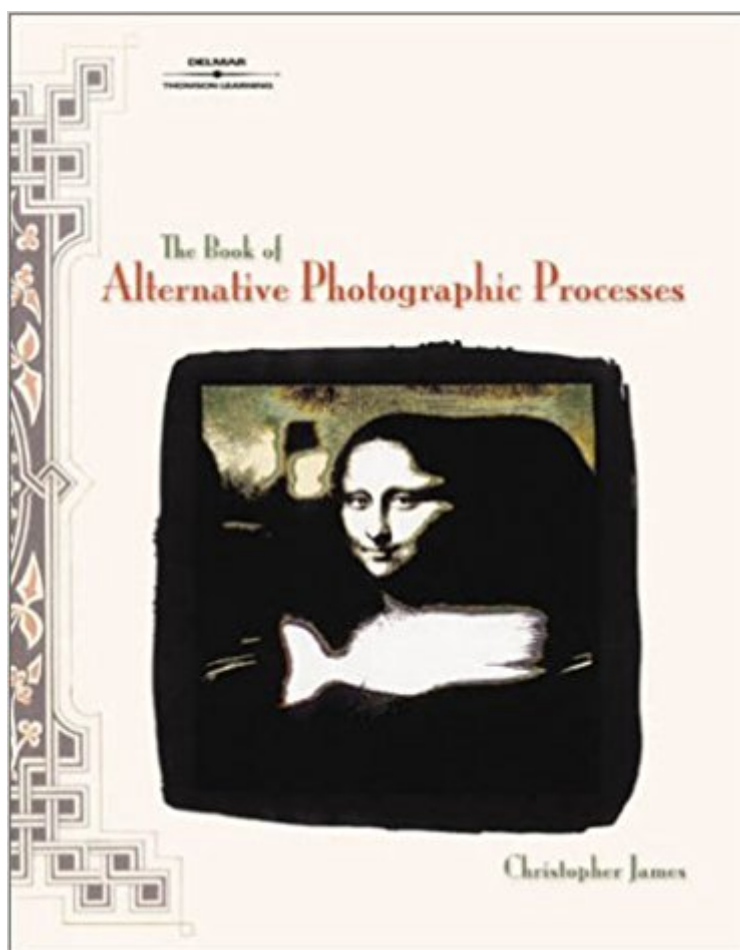


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# The Book Of Alternative Photographic Processes



## Synopsis

Photographic artists will gravitate to this full-color, comprehensive technical resource which explores every aspect of alternative photography. Written in a user-friendly, conversational style, each chapter introduces the history of a technique, presents an overview of the relevant alternative or non-silver photographic process, reviews its chemistry, and provides practical guidance in how to make it work. Traditional and digital contact negative production plus an array of processes such as cyanotype, Van Dyke, Kallitype, gum bichromate, platinum/palladium, Ziatype, Ambrotype and hand-applied emulsions are included. The book offers a wealth of visual inspirations and sophisticated techniques, and at the same time includes ample information to satisfy even the most demanding technician. When techniques presented in the book are practiced patiently, and with attention to detail, amateurs and professionals alike will delight in their ability to transform the science of photography into an art.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As far as I am concerned, this is THE BOOK. It is so incredibly useful and I've learned so much from reading it. It's very well written, easy to follow, tons of references. Wow. I recommend this book to anyone interested in alternative process photography. Anyone interested in photography even. It is wonderful. Basically, in photography, Silver is used a lot in the photographic papers. Alternative processing uses anything BUT silver. Platinum/palladium, gold, Iron.. even berries and various

plants. This book gives a wonderful over-view of it all and tells you how to do it. There is even a bit of history about the different processes complete with wonderful pictures. I love this book.

As a working professional and someone involved in the arts, it really is a magical thing to find a book that not only informs, but also inspires. Christopher James' *Book of Alternative Photographic Processes* is a wonderful example of what all 'how to' books should aspire to. Certainly, those interested in a workbook covering the materials, procedures, and skills required to produce various alternative process images will be more than pleased with the information provided but thanks to James' entertaining and enlightened approach to the subject, readers will find themselves coming back to this book not only for its technical knowledge, but also because it is simply a joy to read. Mr. James makes even the more demanding practices seem well within the reach of those who would like to experiment and always elevates the reader with his positive, straightforward style. This is not a dry science book, nor is it a subjective treatise on what 'art' should be; reading it is akin to spending time with a good-natured yet extremely knowledgeable companion who has agreed to pass on their photographic mastery. Aside from the enjoyable (and often witty) text, the selection of photographs and artwork illustrating the book is superb and a fantastic resource for those curious what can be achieved by artists who invest themselves in these techniques. It is telling that James' students created many of these wonderful works and James' own photos, taken with toy cameras, are stunning and reflect the sensibilities found in the text. While it may be possible to find volumes with more detailed explanations of the chemistry, history, and variations of specific processes, the *Book of Alternative Photographic Processes* is much greater than the sum of its parts. Yes, if you read this you can learn to make a gum print. But of much greater import, you will find yourself captivated and excited about making gum prints or working with any of the other techniques described. Most highly recommended and I hope to see more from Mr. James soon.

Christopher James has been satisfying the art world for 20+ years now, combining his gifts as a photographer (who has been pushing the creative envelope all along) with his equally successful foray into the studio of the painter. In both areas Christopher has started with the keen observing eye. Representing what those investigating eyes have captured has always included experimenting with the medium: watercolors are painted on a paper ground that has been altered with gum arabic/graphite/jade resist and photographs that have been pulled through a Diana camera or glazed and adroitly enameled so that viewing becomes a three dimensional experience. But Christopher is also highly regarded as a short story writer and it is this last variation of his artistic

temperament that makes his new book so successful. This is an invaluable book, an exemplary resource text about Alternative Photographic Processes. But, and here is the Christopher James rule of thumb, this "text" is deliciously readable. Even for collectors who are looking for some degree of insight into the magic of the medium this book has much to offer. I found myself actually **READING** the text, not just paging through a beautifully designed tome on great photographs. Highly recommended for the artists who need to know these techniques.....and equally highly recommended for those of us who marvel at the variations of contemporary photography.

Christopher James has written the most reader friendly, technically demystifying, and visually rich books that I have seen in a very long time. The "Little History" sections that begin nearly every chapter are fun to read and full of the connections, anecdotes, and colorful characters, that has made the photographic arts so compelling to historians and artists. Technically, the book is clear and informative (winner of the Golden Light Technical Book of the Year in 2001) and goes to great lengths to be sure the reader will have little difficulty comprehending and working with the myriad processes covered. Besides James's very accessible writing style, which reads like conversation between friends, the collection of illustrated work is truly outstanding. It is significant that of the over 300 illustrations, a good percentage were made by James's students and those of other artists, and teachers, represented in the book. It is important to note that the production values in this full color book are outstanding. James has collected a rich contemporary survey of alternative process work, likely the most comprehensive in print, and this alone makes his book a terrific resource for students of any age. For teachers, it clearly "sets-the-bar" with a buffet of visual possibilities. I viewed an exhibition of the work in the book last fall, at The Art Institute of Boston, and can assure you that the quality of reproduction is first rate. All in all, this is a wonderful book to read, work with in the studio, and to enjoy purely for the images. If you've ever had an interest in alternative process photography, this is The Book to have.

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