



"Light Reveals Kaitlin's Passion for Film"
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Kaitlin Trataris is a senior at San Diego State University. She's double majoring in Fine Arts, concentrating on film photography and Women's Studies. She started shooting film at a young age, experimenting with her father's old Chinon E-40 he bought in Europe during the 1980's.

She relayed to me via e-mail this summer that she's set up a darkroom. She said "the endless possibilities of darkroom printing was so creatively stimulating I spent hours researching techniques and experimenting with my own."

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Kaitin went on to say, "Along with my work in photography (both digital and film) I also paint, make books, sculpt and draw. In my digital work I use a Nikon D80 and in my film work I use mostly my Chinon E-40 35 mm camera and my Holga 120N. I also own a few other cameras, including a 35 mm pinhole camera I assembled out of paper. I use Kodak color 35 mm film, Ilford 400 black and white 35 mm film and Ilford 400 and 3200 medium format black and white films. I will basically try any camera or film so that I can get a wide variety of results. My peers at school tend to encourage the use of film (more as an art form and less as a way of documenting) but many photographers I meet outside of school are convinced that film is inconvenient, expensive and outdated. I was very lucky to have an enlarger loaned/given to me to use when I moved back home for the summer. So I set up my bathroom with all the necessary equipment to have a working darkroom. I blacked out the windows, set up my enlarger, installed a safelight, and diluted all of my chemicals. The trickiest part of having an at home darkroom was keeping the chemicals at the correct temperatures during the developing process, especially the film developing process, as it can affect the way your negatives turn out.



My work has two purposes: first is to reveal parts of reality that are often overlooked or under appreciated and second is to manipulate the things we see to invite the viewer to see things through my perspective. The process of experimenting in film is so enthralling that I pursue all aspects of it, trying to create something new. Being so involved in photography elevates my engagement in my surroundings and being able to express my view through the medium enriches my life and the vision I expound."

Upon hearing about the details of Kaitlin's work using film, FPP donated a Polaroid Automatic Land camera and some film for her continued experiments.

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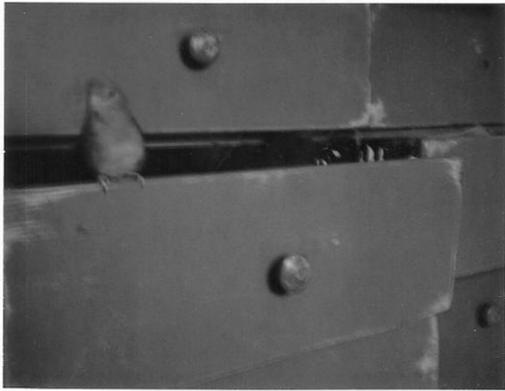
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"After a summer of shooting film and never quite getting around to printing, I was really excited to get my hands on the Polaroid 230 Land Camera. I started with the Fujifilm 3000b film and spent a few mornings just shooting in my room to see what this camera could do. Along with the help of my self-timer, I was very impressed with the images this camera produced.



The tonal range is incredible (so many greys!), the blacks are gorgeous (I love those deep blacks) and the camera is very user friendly. It reminded me of my Holga 120N, enough control to create a quality image but with so few controls that you may wind up with some beautiful "happy accidents". The first quality of the camera I had to adjust my shooting process for was matching the darkness setting for the lighting of the subject, along with adjusting for daytime versus nighttime and natural light versus synthetic light.



I prefer images to be a little on the dark side and with each shot I began to understand how to adjust the setting to get the desired printed result. I was so used to being able to adjust exposure times in the printing process that I had forgotten that an instant camera incorporates it right into the shooting process! The Fujifilm 100c (color) film seemed to always come out a bit lighter than I intended and the 3000b was the opposite. I also had a bit of a struggle with the paper tabs used to get the image out of your camera. The second pack I tried to shoot I wound up losing about half of my images: either because the pack wasn't loaded as well as it should have been or because I wasn't being patient enough with the paper tabs, as most of them ripped. Removing the developing paper from the image is not difficult, and I haven't noticed a difference in waiting longer than the stated developed time says to.

Each print comes out very true to form and almost always as I intended. The prints also come out somewhat wet and I always let them dry really well before stacking them, which became a little difficult while shooting on the street, but it's better than trying to tear apart prints that are stuck together and risk ruining your images. Despite the initial struggles I had with the camera I enjoyed both shooting with this camera and the results it gave me. It feels like I have my own darkroom on the go and the quality of the images leaves nothing to be desired. People on the street would also inquire as to what kind of camera I was using and it made for some great conversation with strangers. As well as some great participation with strangers to be a part of my work! Working with an instant camera has been a great experience and this camera will most definitely be incorporated into my future film photography work."