retro photographic

RETRO PHOTOGRAPHIC 'Original Pyro' DEVELOPER

IMPORTANT: PYRO IS TOXIC AND STAINS SKIN AND CLOTHING. WEAR LATEX OR RUBBER GLOVES. Do not inhale any of the powders, it is recommended that you wear a dust mask. Read the safety labels on the packaging.

Introduction.

Retro pyro developer is a pyrogallol based developer formulated especially for retro photographic and is an updated version of one of the older pyro recipes.

Pyro developers can be traced to the very origins of photography and were the currency of the day until metol based developers came along. Pyro differs significantly from other developers in that while silver halides are reduced to metallic silver – as is the case in 'normal' developers – the negative is also stained around the silver, the size of the stain in proportion to the amount of silver, the degree of staining dependent upon the film being processed.

Preparing the developer.

Retro pyro consists of two packs, Part A and Part B. Part A and B are prepared to make 2 stock solutions from which the working developer is then made.

To prepare the stock solutions.

Solution A:

Pour 100ml of distilled water into a measuring cylinder.
Open the packet marked 'Part A' add to 100ml of water and stir until dissolved. Add distilled water to make up to 125ml.
Pour this solution into a bottle (preferably brown glass)
Clearly label this bottle 'retro pyro Solution A'

Solution B:

Pour 100ml of distilled water into a measuring cylinder.
Add the contents of the packet marked 'Part B' to the 100ml slowly and while stirring. Stir until dissolved.
Add distilled water to make up to 125ml.
Transfer this solution to another (preferably brown glass) bottle.
Clearly label this bottle 'retro pyro Solution B'

Storage of the solutions.

Both Solution A and Solution B will keep for months in filled containers.
The solutions will deteriorate in partly full bottles – discard any discoloured solutions.
The solutions do not have to be kept in brown glass bottles, glass is best though, plastic bottles may react and deteriorate unpredictably.
Heavy polythene seems ok.

NEVER USE BOTTLES OR CONTAINERS THAT ARE USED FOR FOOD.

tel 01869 240345
www.retrophotographic.com info@retrophotographic.com

Preparing the working solution.

The normal dilution is 1+1+50, i.e. 1ml Solution A + 1ml Solution B + 50ml water.
So to prepare 500ml of developer, add 10ml Solution A and 10ml Solution B to the 500ml of water, final volume 520ml.

Developing your film.

Pour the developer into the tank and invert continuously for the first 30s.
Invert the tank every 5 seconds after that until the development time is up.
Pour the developer out BACK INTO THE MEASURING CYLINDER
Fill the tank with water and invert continuously for 15 seconds
Pour the water out and fix the film in you usual fixer for the recommended time.
After fixing, pour the developer you saved back into the tank and swish it around gently for 1 to 2 minutes.
Discard the developer and wash the film the 'Ilford Way'.
Dry as normal.

Note: Experiment with adding the used developer back – some films don't need it and others do. The staining improves the final print quality but some films stain better than others so you'll need to play around to find the best for your particular film.

Developing Times.

All films behave differently in Pyro developers and for this reason it is difficult to give precise timings for all films. Start with 7 minutes at 21 degrees Centigrade. Expose the film normally at its rated speed.

CAPACITY

Use as a one-shot developer only.

Safety

Read the safety information on the labels.
Do not eat, drink or smoke whilst handling any chemicals.
Avoid skin contact and splashing or wiping into the eyes.
If any material is accidentally ingested, drink plenty of water or milk and SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION giving the following information:-

Contains alkaline Metol and pyrogallol.

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