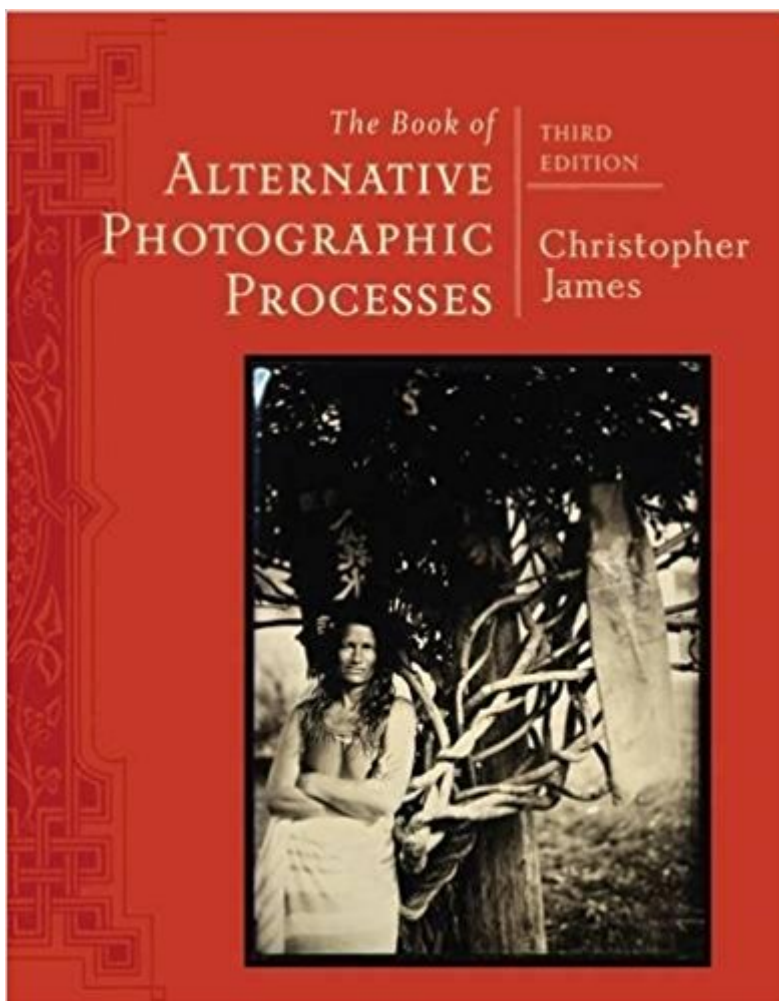


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# The Book Of Alternative Photographic Processes



## Synopsis

Note: Book appears to be a minimal overage and is a style based choice. Written by internationally acclaimed artist and photographer Christopher James, **THE BOOK OF ALTERNATIVE PHOTOGRAPHIC PROCESSES: 3rd Edition** is the definitive text for students and professionals studying alternative photographic processes and the art of hand-made photographic image making. This innovative Third Edition brings the medium up to date with new and historic processes that are integrated with the latest contemporary innovations, adaptations, techniques, and art work. This 800 page edition is packed with more than 700 exquisite illustrations featuring historical examples as well as the art that is currently being made by professional alternative process, artists, teachers, and students of the genre. The third edition is the complete and comprehensive technical and aesthetic resource exploring and delving into every aspect of alternative photographic process photography. Each chapter introduces the history of a technique, presents an overview of the alternative photographic process that will be featured, reviews its chemistry, and provides practical and easy to follow guidance in how to make it work. In his conversational writing style, James also explores the idiosyncrasies, history, and cultural connections that are such a significant part of the history of photography. Featuring traditional and digital contact negative production as well as an array of processes, spread out over 28 chapters, **THE BOOK OF ALTERNATIVE PHOTOGRAPHIC PROCESSES: 3RD EDITION** delivers clear instructions, practical workflows and advice, humor, history, art, and immeasurable inspiration.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Christopher James displays in the third edition of this book all his knowledge on the so-called "alternative processes", and offers the reader historical data, formulas and visual examples, all explained with preciseness and clarity. The most interesting feature in this publication is that it opens perspectives for creative events, encourages the desire to explore techniques that are part of the history of photographic representation, and helps to articulate and to confer meaning on the desire of generating images in the present. In brief, his work allows us to visually explore existence and helps to understand the development of contemporary subjectivity."What a wonderful book! Clear and concise, with all the secrets of the dark arts in one volume. Call it the King James.""

"Christopher James' new edition has expanded right alongside the boom in interest in older techniques, as more and more contemporary artists reach backward to look forward. Covering processes from the first discoveries of the 1830's to the latest inventions and re-inventions, the book includes an astonishing breadth of work and a wide range of artists that show just how rich this field has become. If you need any proof that handmade photography is alive and well in the digital age, here it is, in spades.""

"The 1st edition set the standard for alternative photo books. The 2nd, was a real knockout, totally unexpected, I thought the 2nd was the landmark edition, that Mr. James could sit back and enjoy life again. Then this happened, the 3rd edition. It's like meal in a Michelin 3-star restaurant, the courses keep coming getting better and better. It's a book not only for a photographer making photographs with these processes, but an essential book for anyone concerned with photography. It should be in a handy reach of every curator, photography dealer, art critic, and photo historian. And lastly, it's just a good read, sit back and enjoy."

"It's a phrase that's used too often but in this case it applies: every photographer -- everyone who cares about photography -- should have this book. Even if they never open it to check a formula. Not just because this is the bible for alternative processes or that it represents the fruit of a lifetime of study, teaching and practice by a master. This is also a document of great cultural significance. In an essential way, it shows us where we are photographically, artistically -- in relation to our past and future. It casts an entirely new light on what it means to be "contemporary."

• Lyle Rexer - Author, Educator, Critic, Historian Author of *The Antiquarian Avant Garde*, *The Edge of Vision: The Rise of Abstraction in Photography* October 2014

"The Book of Alternative Photographic Processes: 3rd Edition is extraordinary. Not only in its scale, depth of research and richness of information, but in the way it is written. It makes complex information about chemistry and process spellbinding and weaves social and photographic history into a captivating read that is simultaneously entertaining, accessible and richly informative."

This is no mean feat. As somebody who does not take photographs it has given me even more of an appreciation for those who used (and continue to use) these methods and to fully understand the beautiful magic of traditional and contemporary alternative processes of photography.

— Susan Bright  
Author, Educator, Assistant Curator of Photography National Portrait Gallery, London  
Author of *Art Photography Now*, *Auto Focus*, and *Home Truths*  
— "What a wonderful book! Clear and concise, with all the secrets of the dark arts in one volume. Call it the *King James*." Keith Carter - photographic artist, scholar, author  
Author of 11 books inc. *Fireflies*, *A Certain Alchemy*, *Ezekiel's Horse*, and *Keith Carter Photographs: Twenty-Five*

— "Without a doubt this is the ultimate book on alternative photography. The 3rd edition is like meal in a Michelin 3 star restaurant | the courses keep coming, getting better and better. This is a book not only for a photographer making photographs with these processes, but an essential book for anyone concerned with photography. It should be in a handy reach of every, curator, photography dealer, art critic, and photo historian. And lastly, it's just a good read, sit back and enjoy.

— Dick Sullivan  
artist photographer, author, chemist, entrepreneur, and founder of Bostick & Sullivan  
— "Christopher James' new edition has expanded right alongside the boom in interest in older techniques, as more and more contemporary artists reach backward to look forward. Covering processes from the first discoveries of the 1830's to the latest inventions and re-inventions, the book includes an astonishing breadth of work and a wide range of artists that show just how rich this field has become. If you need any proof that handmade photography is alive and well in the digital age, here it is, in spades.

— Dan Estabrook  
photographic artist, scholar  
— "Throughout the twelve years spanned by three editions of this book, we have watched Christopher James's manual grow at the forefront of its subject in authority and comprehensiveness - in historical content and anecdotal humour to the point where this third edition should now enjoy the status of a magnum opus: a unique sourcebook for practising the arts of 'alternative' photography, which have recently also taken the silver-gelatin medium under their wing. Paradoxically, this renaissance of arcane analogue skills draws strength from the contemporary revolution in digital imaging technology, as James shows us, due to the ease of picture manipulation by computer and the making of large negatives by ink-jet printer. Whether your chosen photochemistry for analogue imaging is based on salts of silver, iron, or chromium, or on plant dyestuffs or on photopolymers, natural and man-made, you will find here all the pertinent instructions that you need, pleasantly enlivened by the author's charismatic style and entertaining digressions, and richly illustrated by the work of artist-practitioners, both historic and contemporary.

— Mike Ware  
author,

photographic artist, chemist, scholar

“Christopher James displays in the third edition of this amazing book all of his knowledge on “alternative processes, and offers the reader its cultural history, formulas and process, and visual examples from past and present, all explained with preciseness and clarity. The most interesting feature in this new edition is that it opens perspectives for creative events, encourages the desire to explore techniques that are part of the history of photographic representation, and articulates and confers meaning on the desire of generating images in the present. Christopher’s new edition allows us to visually explore existence and helps to understand the development of contemporary subjectivity.”

Luis Gonz lez Palma is a photographic artist, author, scholar Author of 3 monographs including, *Poems of Sorrow* and *El Silencio de la Mirada*

“Christopher James is a master of alternative photographic processes, and a magician at illuminating the role of the photographic image in contemporary society. Readers will be sure to enjoy James’s insight, knowledge, and personable and authentic writing style.”

Xtine Burrough is an author, photographic artist, scholar Author of *Digital Foundations* and *Foundations of Digital Art and Design*

Christopher James is an internationally known artist and photographer whose photographs, paintings, and alternative process printmaking have been exhibited in galleries and museums in this country and abroad. His work has been published and shown extensively, including exhibitions in The Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The George Eastman House, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The first two editions of his book, *The Book of Alternative Photographic Processes* have received international critical acclaim and are universally recognized by artists, curators, historians, and educators as the definitive texts in the genre of alternative process photography and photographically integrated media and culture. Christopher, after 13 years at Harvard University, is presently University Professor and Director of the MFA in Photography program at The College of Art and Design - Lesley University. He is also a painter, graphic designer, and a professional scuba diver. His web site is [www.christopherjames-studio.com](http://www.christopherjames-studio.com)

Simply put - this is an incredible, deeply informative and READABLE book. While much of the literature on alternative processes focus primarily on methods and materials, I was interested most in the history of photography when I purchased this book. In this regard, "Alternative Photographic Processes" does not disappoint, because of the clarity with which Mr. James discusses his subjects, but perhaps more importantly - and surprisingly - it has me psyched to experiment with analog photography and hopefully take classes with the author. You will see work and learn about

processes that you never could have imagined existed: anatype and chlorophyll processes (and how some enterprising artists preserve their work in "solid blocks of resin!!), Athenatype, Ziatype - EVERYTHING! And then - you will want to see how those processes could fit into your workflow and developing artistic vision! Just get this book if you have any interest in photography at all.

First, this is the last time you will be likely to see this book as a single volume. It's already like carrying around an unabridged dictionary. Unwieldy, yet irresistible, the next edition will be forced into two volumes (maybe three!). I waited months to get my hands on this. It was worth the wait. Extremely well-written and entertaining too, there is no doubt this is now the gold standard for what is currently called "alternative photography", but will no doubt be called something else in the near future. After all, silver based photography is in fact already an "alternative" to digital. And digital photography is now providing some of the tools needed to practice alternative techniques in greater depth. The great yellow father caused the brakes to be put on most of these "alternative" processes many years ago, and halted progress by amateurs via their repugnant secret keeping. I'm hoping that this book, and others like it, in addition to renewed interest in silver and a desire not to allow just one approach to take over again, will lead to renewed research and experimentation by photographers of all levels. If new and better processes don't result from the publication of this book, I will be very surprised.

Wow. I thought the first edition held more information than I could ever take in. Then the second, expanded edition came out, and I was once again blown away. The third edition is so massive and packed with processes (old and new) and additional information that I hardly know where to begin. Making pinhole cameras -> calotypes -> anatypes -> salt prints -> albumen -> gum bichromate (HUGE variety) -> wet plate (a chapter that could be a book on its own) -> Bayard's direct positive process -> carbon prints -> hand-applied emulsions -> various paper and other substrate preparations -> and this is just scratching the surface! Christopher has a fun and entertaining way about him that translates well to the written word. He has been a teacher and mentor to many successful artists through the years, and his style is casual and easy while being very thorough. In his books, you get a little history that leads you into a chapter with everything from basic table set-ups, to different chemicals to use and how they affect the process, to different papers and other substrates, to loads of other types of information that is simply too extensive to list

here. There are also many, MANY beautiful images used as examples throughout the book that intrigue and delight. This is one not to be missed!

There is no doubt that Christopher James is an exceptional practitioner and teacher in alternative and historical photographic processes. At every workshop I have attended on these processes, his first and now this second edition is the most discussed and referenced. Some reviewers have pointed out discrepancies, errors and gaps, and some who have worked with some of these processes may be at odds with some of the workflow and chemistry, but nonetheless it is a landmark book on the subjects presented. The text reflects James's work as a teacher and artist, so there is reality to workflow, materials, and chemistry described. The first edition encapsulated the selected alternative processes in some 324 pages. This edition has been greatly expanded to a whopping 601 pages! A book can't cover every known process, but that would probably double the size of any possible third edition. The greatly expanded "Safety Considerations" Appendix saves a lot of time chasing down MSDSs, and the addition and updates to processes presented, such as New Cyanotype, Argyrotype, and new Chrysotype are a welcome addition. A nice touch is dividing the bibliography into Contemporary and Early & Historical. What are missing are the Oil processes, such as Oil Print and Bromoil. Inkjet is covered briefly, and although James covers combination printing, such as Cyanotype with Gum Bichromate, they are scattered around the various processes. I would have liked to have seen a whole section on combo printing, but this is an evolving area and many are experimenting with every conceivable combination of processes, analogue, digital, hand applied and even camera-less methods, such as chemigrams. This is my go-to book for alternative processes, and although not every process is included, it would take years to work through those that are covered. I especially enjoyed "The Cyanotype Mural Experience" as a teaching experience. "The Book of Alternative Photographic Processes" is highly recommended!

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