

PHOTOGRAPHS

by
SYL LABROT

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

Gallery of Photography

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Syl Labrot was born in New Orleans in 1929. At present he is living in Stepney, Connecticut. He began working with photography about ten years ago. Soon after he was active as a professional, specializing in color for magazines and advertising. In a recent letter he states: "I did almost every sort of freelance stock picture there is - landscapes, sports, babies, pin-ups, magazine covers, etc. Cover credits included The Ladies' Home Journal, Farm Journal, This Week, and many smaller trade publications. I had photographs appear in almost every national publication (Life, Time, Saturday Evening Post, etc.) in one form or another. About five years ago I stopped doing this because it was in such opposition to my personal aims and what I wanted to do in photography and though I still do professional work it is a different thing from the high-priced clichés I was turning out. Up until five years ago my photographs had been mostly in color, perhaps because so much of my professional productions had been in color. In the last year, however, I have been devoting more time to black and white and I feel there is a certain purity in monochrome which, largely for technical reasons, is difficult to achieve in color photography."

"The color prints have been made either by dye transfer, carbro or Duxachrome process. All three are based on the same principle (separation negatives, and then positives, either by dye transfer or, in the two latter processes, by gelatin relief images which are combined). It is sometimes hard to tell which were done by which process, but by holding the print to the light, the carbro and Duxachrome processes give a slight relief to the image. The most recent work I have done (the nature subjects) have been with the Duxachrome process which is almost unknown outside of Germany. There it has been in limited use since 1936. It is a sort of combination of dye transfer and carbro principles, with most of the characteristics of carbro and the ease of dye transfer."

One-man exhibitions of Syl Labrot's work have been held at George Eastman House, Rochester, New York; The Colorado Springs Fine Art Center; Carl Siembab Gallery, Boston. His photographs have been shown several times at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, most recently in the photographic exhibition, The Sense of Abstraction, and a number of them were part of a three-man show held at the Poindexter Gallery in New York, an exhibition which is now being circulated throughout the country by the American Federation of Arts. Syl Labrot collaborated with Walter Chappel and Nathan Lyons in the book, Under the Sun, published late last year by George Braziller, and which contains a representative selection of his photographs, both in color and in black and white.

Original prints of these photographs may be purchased. Inquiries about them should be made in the Glore Print Study Room in the Department of Prints and Drawings.