



The best fake silver prints yet?

Colin Dixon tests a new type of fibre-base look in inkjet papers – PermaJet Classic Fine Art Fibre Base Gloss 295gsm. It offers an image and ‘feel’ like double weight unglazed chlorobromide.

PermaJet Classic Fine Art Gloss is a new paper which follows on from their PermaJet Textured Art Silk. This new paper has a glossier surface finish and PermaJet state it has a microporous surface gloss coating on an acid free paper base.

Being introduced as a typically heavy weight paper of 295gsm alerts photographers to the fact that this company is trying to create a product reminiscent of the heavier fibre based papers beloved of traditional darkroom printers.

Better than real life?

PermaJet go so far as to claim that it is uncannily reminiscent of traditional fibre-based materials with its ever so slightly textured gloss surface. They also claim that it has a D-Max of 2.2D-Max which is virtually identical to that of Agfa Record Rapid and allows this paper to create an excellent greyscale making it a viable alternative, when printing in black and white, to the darkroom fibrebased print.

Unlike traditional black and white photographic papers this fibre base gloss paper can also be used to print in colour. The first print I made was a colour print and as means of comparison, and to help me get a feel for the PermaJet paper, I first printed it on Ilford Galerie gloss inkjet paper which is a paper I'm familiar with. The picture was of a Tibetan monk who was the Abbot of a monastery in Southern India. Then I made the same print on the PermaJet paper.

With the gloss Ilford paper it was obvious that the ink was taking longer to dry whereas the PermaJet paper came out of the printer essentially dry to the touch. I left both these prints for a time to allow for full drying, and for any digital dry down to take place, and then looked at them closely.



Above: the PermaJet Fine Art Gloss result. Below: Epson Premium Glossy Photo.





Left: Ilford Galerie Gloss default settings colour. Right: similar settings on the new PermaJet paper.



100 per cent size details



What was immediately apparent was that the PermaJet paper was a heavier paper. The Galerie paper was 240gsm weight and was a substantial paper, but the PermaJet was noticeably heavier and was much better to handle. It actually felt like a traditional fibre based paper. The Ilford paper had a true gloss finish and the surface of the PermaJet paper

was not a high gloss finish but had a fine lustre to it and that trace of texture or tooth which I like. I preferred the look of the PermaJet paper.

However the most significant differences were in the look of the image. The PermaJet paper had more of a warm cast than the Ilford and this showed in both the skin tone of the Abbott and in the colour of his robes and – once again – I preferred the look of the PermaJet print. However the most surprising thing was in the amount of extra shadow detail of the PermaJet print. The picture was made inside a fairly dark monastery with on camera flash which meant a dark background. In the print on Ilford paper monks in the background were barely visible yet in the PermaJet they were much more visible and became a real presence and component of the image.

Next I printed a black and white image and used the same technique of first making a print on another paper as a control to give some means of comparison. This picture shows the frescos of San Isidro, León, Northern Spain.

This time I used Epson Premium Glossy Photo Paper which has a weight of 255gsm. At this stage I wasn't too concerned about what print colour I was getting with my black and white prints being more

interested in the comparison. I was using my Epson 1160 printer with Epson inks for both the colour and black and white prints I was making.

Again the comparison between the two prints, made with identical printer settings was fascinating. The print on the Epson paper had quite a strong greenish-blue hue in the midtones which would have needed further corrections in *Photoshop*. It also had fairly blocked up shadows.

However the print on the PermaJet paper came out looking almost as though it were on silver gelatine paper which had been split toned in Selenium. This was turning into an impressive debut for this paper. Again I found more detail in the shadows and the surface finish of the PermaJet paper was the one I preferred.

I carried on making both black and white and colour prints on

this paper and it continued to impress me. PermaJet have given fine printers, working with digital images, an excellent and exciting new product. It has a very wide colour gamut if printing in colour and that 2.2 D-Max will endear it to black and white workers.

PermaJet wanted this to be an exceptional paper for black and white printing but it has created a paper which has exceptional colour and beautiful skin tones too. The surface is scuff resistant and quite tough and the extra weight paper is extremely pleasant to handle. It made me think very seriously about getting a printer with the latest Epson K3 ink set. For this dyed-in-the-wool traditional darkroom worker **PermaJet Classic Fine Art Fibre Base Gloss** has made me sit up and take notice.

See: www.permajet.com



Code	Weight	Size	Pack	Ex VAT	Inc VAT
FIBRE BASE GLOSS SHEET PAPER					
22613	295gsm	A4	25	21.23	£24.95
22614	295gsm	A4	50	41.66	£48.95
22623	295gsm	A3	25	42.51	£49.95
22624	295gsm	A3	50	84.21	£98.95
22633	295gsm	A3+	25	55.28	£64.95
22643	295gsm	A2	25	85.06	£99.95
FIBRE BASE GLOSS ROLL PAPER					
22658	295gsm	17" Roll	15m	85.06	£99.95
22668	295gsm	24" Roll	15m	110.60	£129.95