Fujichrome Sensia

The third generation is the best

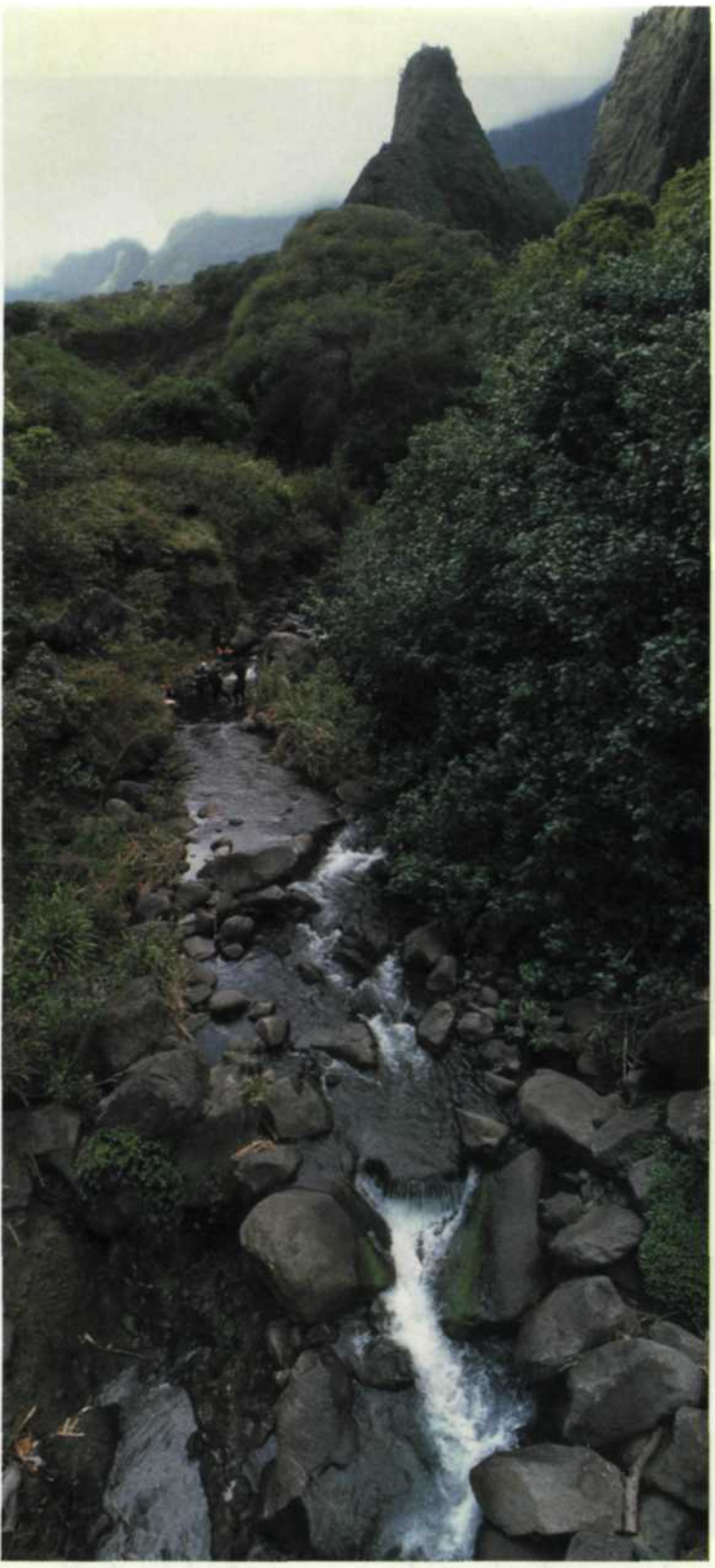
Photos and text by Jack and Sue Drafahl

Recently, there was some confusion when Fujifilm introduced their new Sensia slide film. How could this Sensia be new when the most recent version was Sensia II? So, super sleuths Jack and Sue went to work investigating. It seems that years ago when Fujifilm originally announced this slide-film family, it was called Sensia. Advancements in slide-film technology led way to a new and improved version called Sensia II. The new slide family included Sensia II 100, Sensia II 200, and Sensia II 400. Whew, too many numbers to remember! If Fujifilm were to continue improving these emulsions, it would become even more confusing. The solution was simple. Call the new film by its original name, change the box design, and give the Drafahls the assignment of telling you about the film's improvements.

Sensia 100, originally known as Sensia II 100, has not changed except its name and distinctive new packaging. New Sensia 200 and 400 emulsions have been upgraded to include Fujifilm's Super-Fine Σ (Sigma) Crystal Technology. In years past, the trade-off for the versatility of higher-speed color-slide films was larger grain. The Super-Fine Σ Crystal Technology further improves the efficiency of both the light-gathering properties of the crystals and the latent-image forming to achieve finer-grained images.

All three emulsions are daylight balanced and have true ISO speeds. This means that for most photographic situations, if you have a good camera meter, you will not have to make any exposure adjustments.

Reciprocity failure does not occur until exposure times are shorter than 1/10,000 second or longer than four seconds. At 16 seconds and beyond, 5M + 2.5R filtration and +1 stop



When light levels and subject matter permit, Sensia 100 provides the best image quality of the new Sensia films, with the richest colors, finest grain and greatest sharpness. And ISO 100 is fast enough for lots of shooting situations, including bright overcast. Above is an image of mountain peaks and a river stitched together digitally from two scanned Sensia 100 shots—our widest-angle lens wasn't wide enough to get the whole scene in. All three Sensia films scan beautifully—great news for those who like the benefits of both film and digital imaging.

exposure compensation is needed. You can expose Sensia under tungsten light, but will need a color-correction filter such as the Kodak 80A. You should also bracket your exposure toward the + side with a target exposure of 1⅓ stops more than indicated.

Application for each of the three emulsions depends upon lighting conditions and subject movement. Sensia 100 is ideal for nature, scenics, and subjects in full sunlight featuring minimal action. It is a great color slide film for snapshots since this emulsion allows for natural skin tones and accurate color reproduction. This film's rich tonal gradation and its ability to resolve fine detail also make it the perfect solution for macro and close-up flash photography.

Fujichrome Sensia 200 is a perfect candidate for those situations with a mixture of good lighting and faster action. For example, the quick action of children darting in and out of the shade may require Sensia 200. With the added film speed, you can increase your shutter speed to compensate for subject movement. Even if you don't need the increased shutter speed, you might need the extra stop of exposure to increase your depth of field. In addition, this ISO 200 film gives you vivid colors, fine grain and exceptional sharpness.

Sensia 400 is best suited for fast-action and low-light situations. The two-stop increase may not seem like a lot, but it may be just what you need when your meter reads ⅛ second wide open with Sensia 100. The extra film speed from Sensia 400 will give you a shutter speed of 1/30 and thus a sharper

Sensia 200 is Fujifilm's jack-of-all-trades, a great all-around film with the speed to handle many shooting situations, and excellent image quality. Colors are rich and realistic, contrast is snappy, and tonal range is excellent. Sunsets/sunrises, close-ups, direct sun, outdoor action, open shade—Sensia 200 can handle it all.

image. Sensia 400 is great for stop-action sports, telephoto lenses and even compact zoom cameras, especially when its fine grain rivals that of ISO 100 slide films.

Putting Sensia to the Test

We were all packed for Maui when the Sensia family decided to join us. Although we had promised ourselves we wouldn't bring any work with us, who can resist taking pictures while on vacation? After checking the Maui guide book, we planned a couple of garden tours, a relaxing hike, some typical tourist stuff, but mainly some sun, sand, sea and Sensia.

We loaded one Nikon F5 with Sensia 100, a second with Sensia 200, and then rotated Sensia 400 into the first available camera. If luck was with us, subjects would match the appropriate film speed we had loaded. As we cruised the curio shops looking for photo subjects and a trinket or two, it wasn't long before we spotted a red English telephone booth. We photographed a red booth for a previous film test and were accused to have fudged and used a shot from England. Since then it seems that we find one of those red boxes on almost every film test we do. This phone booth was overgrown with plants and even had a mannequin inside for special effect. The booth was in deep shade, but we still had enough exposure thanks to Sensia 200.

As we wandered around, we ran into a brightly colored Santa waving to the crowds. The lighting was bright overcast, so this wooden Santa was easily captured with Sensia 100. We noticed that many of the local stores had painted patterns and scenes over the doors and electrical pipes. This weird building art became the study for the next couple of rolls of Sensia 100.

We headed out for a hike in an area that boasted picturesque mountains, streams, easy hiking trails, and an oriental garden. The lighting was again bright overcast, so Sensia 100 was our pick. The scenery was spectacular. We put on our widest angle lens and found that even it could not capture the full scene. No problem. We took several overlapping frames so we could reassemble them later using some of the stitching software programs available. As we relaxed in the gardens, we decided that the vivid red pagoda would really test this film's color saturation.

Cowabunga—let's hit the water! We loaded up our

Sensia 400 is a fine choice for action, long-lens work and shooting in lower light levels, with its ISO 400 speed and truly remarkable image quality for an ISO 400 slide film. Color reproduction is excellent and grain is tight. Image quality is so good that we were able to mix Sensia 400 slides with Sensia 100 and 200 images in a slide show without the audience noticing.

amphibious Sea & Sea MX-10 camera with Sensia 200, and waded out into a group of beginning surfers. The sun was bright and the action mild enough to get some good close-up action. Well, not really too close . . . remember that we said beginning surfers? Anyway, that salt water sure felt refreshing.

Our last stop was on the other side of the island where the wind surfers worked the waves. The action was fast and required a telephoto lens, so we grabbed a 300mm lens and loaded our F5 with Sensia 400. Most of the shots were taken at 1/1000 at f/5.6. Once the test was completed, we laid back to catch some rays. It's a tough job, but someone has to do it.

Back at the lab, processing a test roll verified that the chemistry and processing times were right on target. We processed the remaining rolls and waited impatiently. When the film was dry, we looked over the three emulsions to analyze the grain structure. Sensia 100 was almost grainless, as we had discovered in previous tests. Sensia 200 and 400 were not far behind, with very tight grain, even in the out- of-focus areas. Color saturation was excellent in all three emulsions, and the image detail was superb even when the images were enlarged 15X. The overall quality of each Sensia film speed closely matched the others so images could easily be intermixed in a slide show without the audience noticing.

The final task was stitching the pan images together to create several Sensia 100 composites. The most spectacular was one vertical pan starting at a mountain peak and sweeping downward toward the river below. Wow!

We may have poked a little fun at the Sensia name, but the films themselves are nothing to snicker at. These three emulsions furnish quality images for both projection and enlargement printing. With their variety of film speeds, Sensia 100, 200 and 400 will prove to be great companions on your next photo adventure. For further information about Fujifilm products contact Fujifilm at 800/800-FUJI or check out their website at www.fujifilm.com. ■