

Developing 120 film with ILFORD DD-X in the Lab-Box

Nov 16, 2019



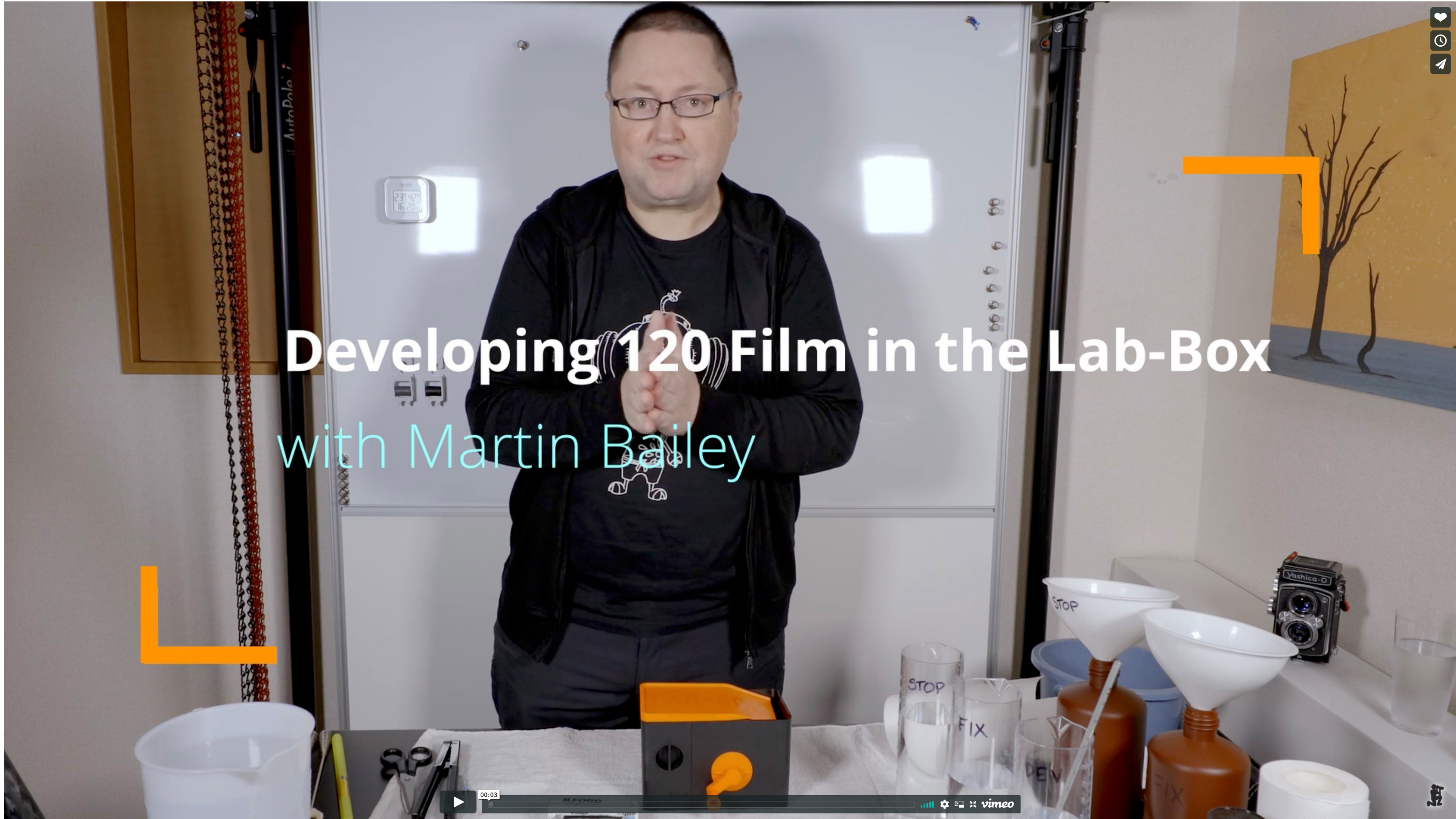
For advice on the best viewing
settings visit <https://mbp.oc/pdf>

For this week's post I have created a video starting with the loading of a 120 format roll of Ilford Delta 100 film into the Ars-Imago Lab-Box and then go on to develop it using Ilford chemicals. You'll notice that in the video I was pretty nervous, as this was my first time developing film with the Lab-Box, and actually the first film I've developed for almost four years, as I guess I found the Paterson Bag a little too tedious.

Towards the end of the video, as I really got into the process, I was pretty much just mumbling to myself rather than making a video, but you should be able to follow along with the process and hopefully find this useful.

[Click here](#) to visit the blog post and watch the video. Read on though, as the highest resolution images that I scanned after making this video are only available in this eBook.

I shot the video in 4K so that I could zoom in but then I filled a 128GB card on one camera in just over 20 minutes, so I had to record the ending again. All in all, it's a bit of a mess, but the process is covered, so please take a look if you are interested, and there is more



information below, so please check that out too.

Massive Dev

Note that I was using the [Massive Dev app for iOS](#) as my timer, and I also find this app invaluable for calculating the new development time based on the

temperature of the water. This changes up to a few minutes with every degree of variance, so having an app that just spits out the new time as the temperature changes is really useful.

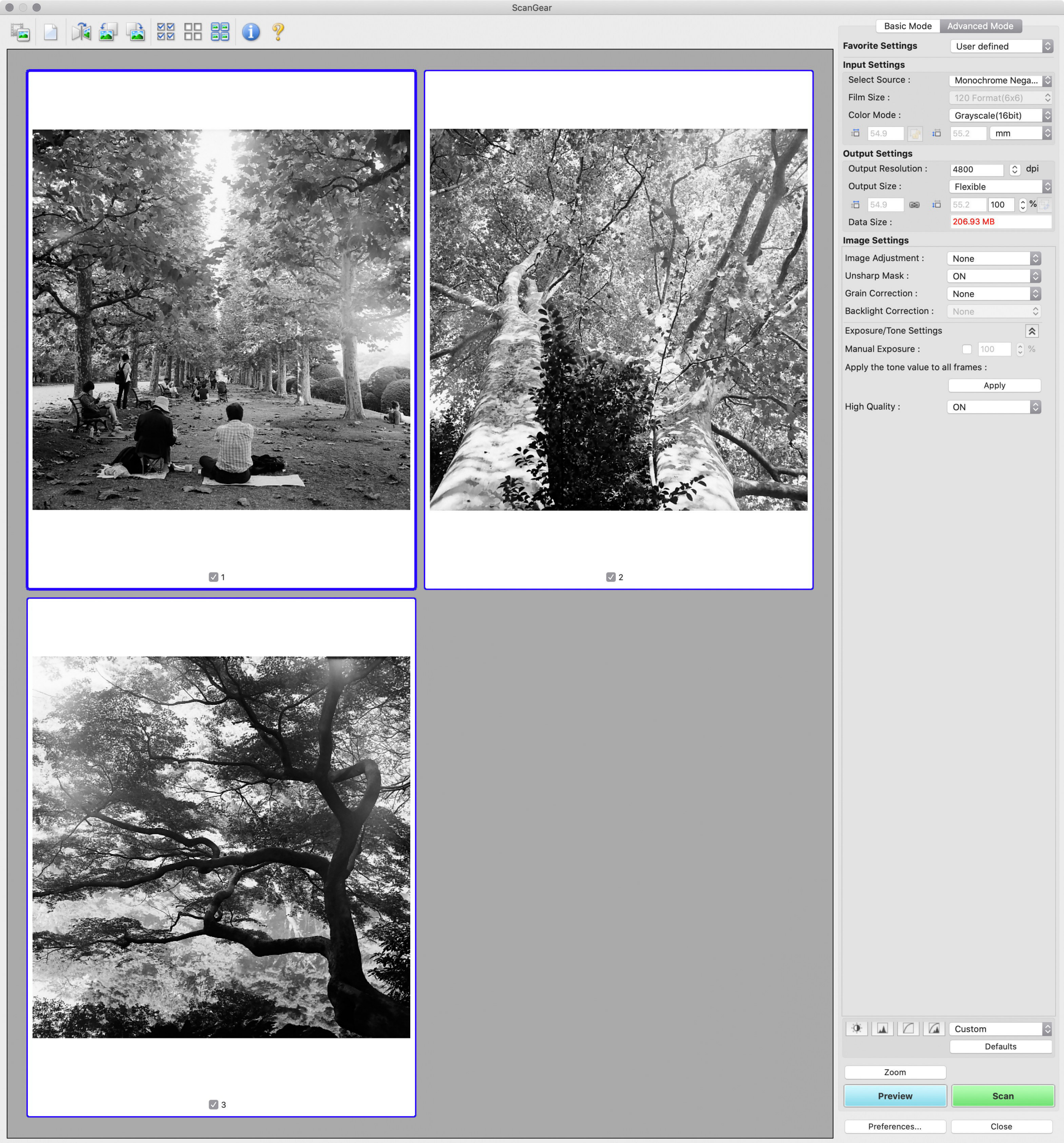
Also, if you'd like me to post a link to my Excel Spreadsheet that I use a cheat sheet when processing, just let me know

in the comments and I'll add a download button.

CanoScan 9000F MarkII Scanner

When I completed my Film Fun series in 2016, we finished with an episode in which I walked you through the process of scanning the film using an Epson Scanner that I bought a little over ten years ago. Although I was happy to see that Epson had released Catalina drivers for the scanner, unfortunately when I plugged it into my computer for the first time in a few years, it had given up the ghost. I have scanners built into multifunction printers that I use for document scanning, so I didn't really want to buy a new scanner, but because all of the dedicated film scanners that I could find online are all relatively low resolution, I decided to buy a Canon CanoScan 9000F MarkII scanner, and I'm actually really pleased that I did.

The quality of the scans is incredible, and the software makes it really easy to scan in a row of three 6 x 6 medium format negatives without really having to do much more than feed in the film, close the lid and press a few buttons. I did a few tests before I scanned the entire roll to see how high I could take the resolution and still see increased detail in the scans. I saw a difference up to 4800 dpi, but doubling that to 9600, the highest resolution of the scanner, did not give me any more detail, just much larger files, so I'm scanning these shots in at 4800 dpi, which is giving me just over 100-megapixel images to work with. Here is a screenshot of my settings in case this is useful for anyone.



Gallery

Over the following pages I'm adding nine of the eleven images that I developed in the video. There are some with a bit of flare in them, as there is no hood on my Yashica-D TLR camera and a definite film-feel that I think you'll be able to appreciate. The shots were just from a walk in the Shinjuku Gyoen Park here in Tokyo, and I believe I shot these four years ago, in the autumn of 2015, not three years ago, as I mentioned in the video. There was one that was a little too nondescript to include, and I shot two frames of the single lady looking at her phone, and on close inspection, the first of the two was slightly blurred. I suspect I'd felt myself move as I released the shutter and shot a second frame as a replacement.

Links

On the [blog](#) I've included a B&H Photo widget with a list of the chemicals and tools required to develop the film as I did in the video. Note though that at the time of publishing this post the list still contains the Paterson Changing Bag and Tank, which I no longer recommend. The Lab-Box is currently back-ordered, but will be available here: <https://mbp.ac/lab-box>

Also, don't forget to add the optional crank to your order. It makes life much easier than the standard knob.



A Meditative Process

Last week was a bit hectic, as I fought with broken computers and a few too tasks than I could reasonably handle, but now that I have a little more time, I'm adding this final few paragraphs in closing.

On Saturday morning, after releasing the video and initial blog post, with my first hour to breath for a few days, I developed my second roll of film that I'd exposed in 2016 and kept in my fridge.

Without the need to reach over the Lab-Box so that you could see my hands in the video, I pulled up a chair and sat down at my table, and took my time to load the film.

The warm morning sun was pouring into my studio as I did so, making me feel relaxed, but also appreciative of the fact that I could sit in the sun developing film!

I finished loading the film into the lab box, then prepared four beakers of chemicals. I'd ordered a fourth beaker so that I could prepare my final wetting agent before I started, to make life easier.



I cranked up the Massive Dev app and found that the Delta 400 I was about to develop needed 8 minutes and 40 seconds in the DD-X, and I started the timer.

This, along with the three minutes for fixing and a 3-minute final wash provided me with around 15 minutes of almost meditative bliss. No video to worry about, just me, my roll of film, the Lab-Box, and some quirky smelling chemicals.

With how good it felt to develop this roll of film I was sold. The Lab-Box is absolutely the way to go when developing at home. I've just ordered some more 120 format film, and now I'm looking forward to developing them too now. As much as I love digital photography, I think film has found a place in my work again, after a 20-year hiatus.

















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