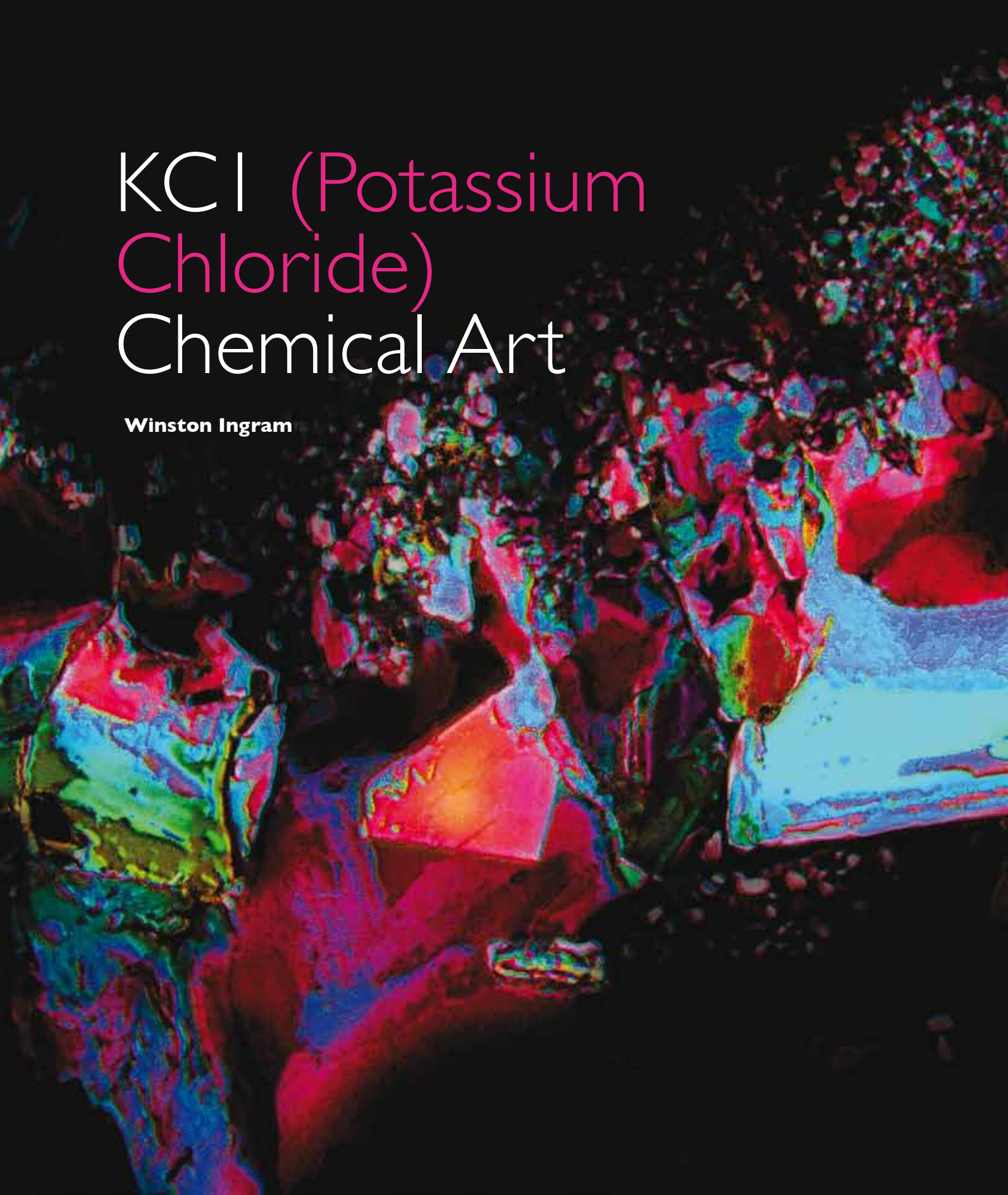




KCl (Potassium Chloride) Chemical Art

Winston Ingram

This experiment was conducted using only one slide. I prepared it by dusting the glass with a very fine coating of the chemical Potassium Chloride KCl. I wanted to see how many different photographs it would be possible to produce with just this white powder; to my surprise I found I could go on forever with variations.

It was most fortunate I came across a gentleman on eBay who produces a series of Rheinberg Filters and after a few emails between us I found he was very co-operative in sending me a set to experiment with. I started by taking photos with normal polarising techniques.

The original shots were all using my Leitz Ortholux II with the polarising filter giving full variations of cross polarisation. The set using the Rheinberg filters was with my Leica Stereo; this is not normal practice so I developed a technique where I placed the different filters just above the transmitted light source which on this instrument is an LED. I then added reflected light from a 60W pearl spot lamp, moving the filters back and forth and side to side gave me the artistic effects.

These filters come in two main types although they were all round and made from plastic. The first type is a single colour centre with an outer rim of mixed colours. For example green centre with red yellow red yellow outer rim, and green centre with half red half yellow outer rim. The second type has graduated rims from the outer going to a centre colour. For example yellow blue and pink rims with a red centre, and red yellow and green rims with a blue centre. This type can produce a rainbow effect behind the subject with a single or even multi-colour effect. What was most surprising was the results were so similar to regular polarisation but with a subtle difference all of their own.

The filters were all 35mm diameter and could have been used in a standard filter holder. I did not do this as I felt it wouldn't give me such interesting artistic effects as moving them into different positions on the larger diameter light source of the stereo microscope.

Included here are all the original shots together with the experimental Rheinberg filter photos for comparison; I hope you enjoy the results.

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