

# Best Color Photos of 1937

By GUY MURCHIE JR.

LOOK WELL at the three color photographs on this page, for they are a milestone and a prophecy. They are the high-tide mark in newspaper color photography and printing for 1937, and the tangible harbingers of a new art that is not yet over its birth pains. Although color photography is as old as 1891, when G. Lippmann of Paris produced the first color plate by interference heliochromy, the art remained long in embryonic development. Only within the last decade have the difficulties of inventing color-sensitive film emulsions, triple-exposure cameras, and subtractive printing processes been sufficiently overcome to make natural-color photography commercially practicable. And in 1937 The Chicago Tribune,

continuing its leadership in the field, adopted the policy of printing color photographs on a wide scale throughout its Sunday feature sections. In all during the year more than 200 such photographs have been made and printed by The Tribune.

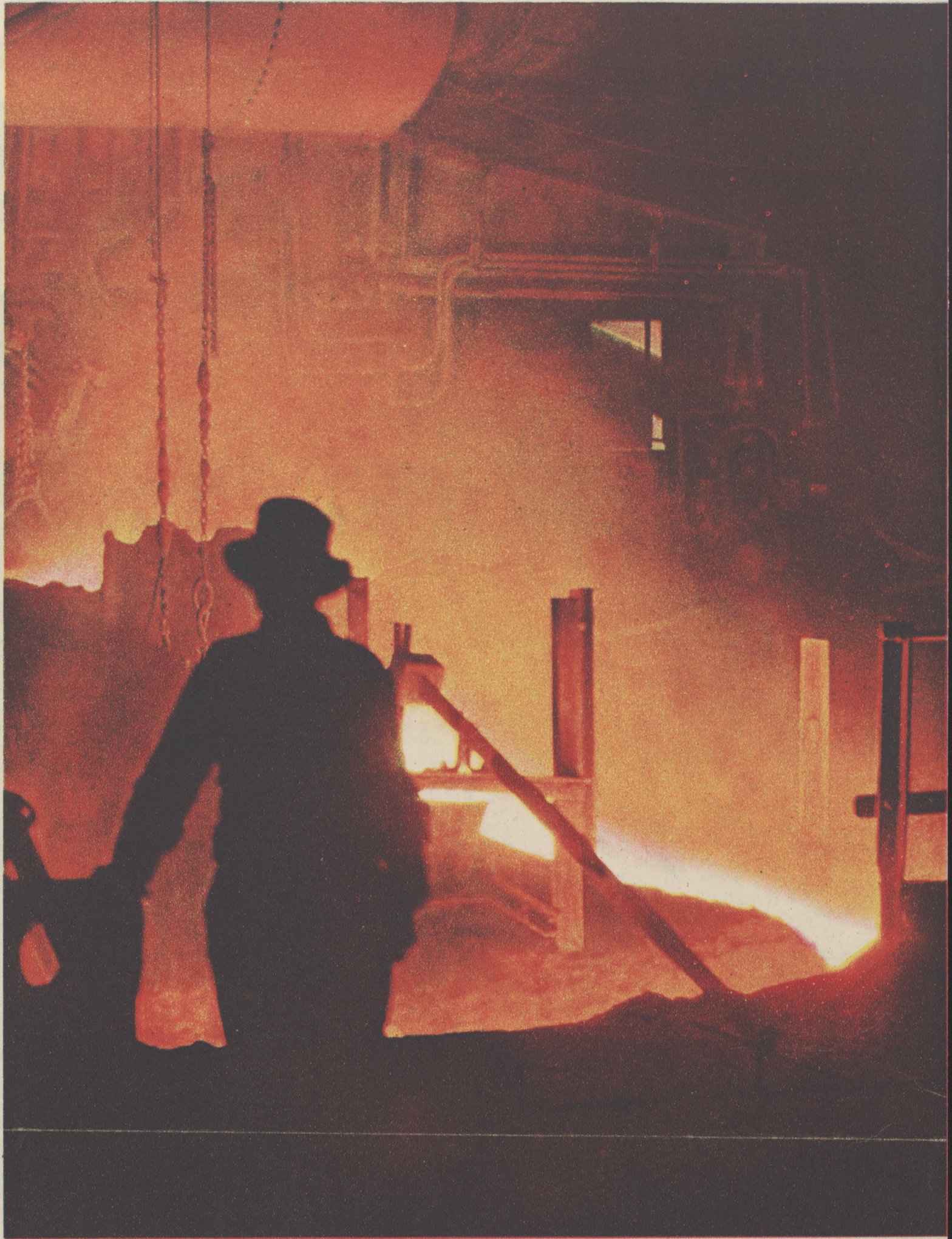
● The variegated trio of pictures here reproduced was chosen from the Tribune color studio's crop of the year. They were picked as 1937's best color pictures by four first-rank artists and art critics. Valentino Sarra, a Chicago photographer who is well known for his color work, was one. E. Scaioni, color photographer of Paris, was another. The other two were Fred Shafer and Charles Killgore of The Tribune's copy and art department.



Chiefly because of its spontaneity, this study of Harriet Hoctor was second choice of the judges. Actually dancing before the camera, the ballerina was snapped the moment she reached a point and acquired a pose previously decided upon.



The four judges selecting the best color photographs of 1937. Left to right: Valentino Sarra, Chicago photographer; E. Scaioni, color photographer of Paris, France; Fred Shafer and Charles Killgore, the last named two members of the Tribune copy and art department.



Adjudged by four first-rank artists and photographers the outstanding color photograph of 1937, this steel mill scene is considered a triumph in composition and a splendid achievement in exposure, timing, and color value.

● The steel mill scene took first place without argument. It impressed every one of the judges as a masterpiece both of artistic restraint and of technical excellence. Taken under conditions of extreme heat, dust, vibration, and unfavorable light, it stands as a monument to modern photographic ingenuity and perseverance. It was adjudged a triumph in composition as well as in the solving of problems of exposure, timing, color value, etc., for the prosaic and utilitarian interior of a steel mill does not lend itself to camera composition as readily as one might suppose. And the simplicity and restraint revealed in this picture were acclaimed as something refreshingly new in color photography, where the natural first tendency has been to use a wide variety of colors in each picture in order to gain the fullest possible effect from a new medium of art.

● The judges' second choice of "The Ballerina," a spirited study of the première danseuse Harriet Hoctor, appeals chiefly because of its spontaneity. The quality of spontaneity was unheard of in color photography until very recently because of a technical limitation making it necessary for the subject to remain still for many seconds while filters and plates were shifted. In this photograph, however, the swift-moving ballerina actually danced before the camera, reaching her designated pose at an exact point planned and rehearsed by the studio directors, who at that instant snapped her in the delightful attitude you see here.

● The third photograph chosen, one of several taken in a theater of members of the cast of the play "Pride and Prejudice," was chosen for its soothing balance of composition and color. But of course it must be remembered that after such a picture is actually taken an elaborate and delicate developing and printing process has still to be accomplished—and that plays an equally vital part in the fineness of detail and color tone that you see here on this page.



A soothing balance of composition and color made this richly toned photograph of two members of the cast of the stage play "Pride and Prejudice" the third choice of the four judges. (Tribune Color Studio photos.)