

JACQUES HENRI LARTIGUE: Lartigue in color
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LARTIGUE IN COLOR

Born to a wealthy family at the end of the nineteenth century, the French photographer Jacques Henri Lartigue began taking photos as a young boy, capturing with rare visual wit and style the recreations of his elite Parisian milieu. He remained an avid photographer and painter throughout his life, but it wasn't until the age of sixty-nine that his work was discovered by the art world, when the MOMA curator John Szarkowski organized an exhibition of his childhood work, establishing his reputation as one of the medium's most brilliant early amateurs. But apart from a famous 1974 portrait of the French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, shot against the backdrop of the French flag, Lartigue's color images have remained largely unseen. A new book, "Lartigue: Life in Color," coming in February from Abrams, collects this little-known work for the first time, from the Autochrome images he made in his teens to his work in color film in the sixties and seventies. In contrast to the black-and-white pictures that made him famous, with their jolts of spontaneity and motion, his color photographs are painterly compositions, relishing quiet moments in brilliant reds and blues. "For me, life and color are inseparable," he wrote. "I have always been a painter. So I see everything with my painter's eye."

