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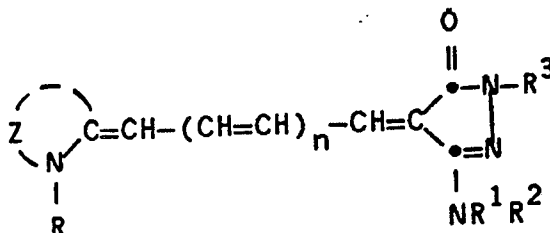
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(54) **N-alkyl- or n-aryl-aminopyrazolone merocyanine dye-donor element used in thermal dye transfer.**

(57) A dye-donor element for thermal dye transfer comprises a support having thereon a 3-(N-alkyl- or N-aryl-amino)-2-pyrazolin-5-one merocyanine dye dispersed in a polymeric binder, the merocyanine dye being capable of transfer by diffusion to a dye-receiving element upon the application of heat and being incapable of substantial photolysis, the merocyanine dye being substituted or unsubstituted on the bridging methine carbon atoms.

In a preferred embodiment, the merocyanine dye has the formula:



wherein:

R represents a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group of from 1 to 6 carbon atoms or a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group of from 6 to 10 carbon atoms;

R¹ and R² each independently represents hydrogen, with the proviso that only one of R¹ and R² may be hydrogen at the same time; a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group of from 1 to 6 carbon atoms or a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group of from 6 to 10 carbon atoms; or R¹ and R² may be combined together with the nitrogen to which they are attached to form a heterocyclic ring system;

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R^3 is R;

n represents 0 or 1; and

Z represents the atoms necessary to complete a 5- or 6-membered substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic ring.



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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 4)
X,E	EP-A-0 257 578 (EASTMAN KODAK CO.) * Page 8, lines 1-10; claims * ---	1-10	B 41 M 5/26
A	FR-A-2 272 217 (CIBA-CEIGY AG) * Whole document * ---	1-10	
A,D	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN, vol. 10, no. 70 (M-462)[2127], 19 mars 1986, page 158 M 462; & JP-A-60 214 994 (RICOH K.K.) 28-10-1985 -----	1-10	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.4)
			B 41 M 5/00 D 06 P 5/00
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 24-04-1989	Examiner BACON, A. J.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			