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(72) Inventors:  
• **Vermeersch, Joan  
2640, Mortsel (BE)**  
• **Wilkinson, Sue  
2640, Mortsel (BE)**  
• **Kokkelenberg, Dirk  
2640, Mortsel (BE)**

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(71) Applicant: **AGFA-GEVAERT  
2640 Mortsel (BE)**

(54) **Heat-sensitive lithographic printing plate precursor**

(57) A heat sensitive lithographic printing plate precursor comprising in the order given (i) a lithographic base having a hydrophilic surface, (ii) an image recording layer comprising hydrophobic thermoplastic polymer particles and (iii) a contrast layer, wherein the precursor comprising an infrared absorbing compound present in at least one of said image recording layer or contrast layer and wherein the contrast layer further comprises

a colorant capable of providing a visible image after exposure and development of the precursor and wherein the image recording layer is substantially free of the colorant. The printing plate formed after image-wise exposing and processing exhibits an improved image-contrast and reduced staining.

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Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 27 September 2005	Examiner Whelan, N
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	

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
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