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(54) **HIGH VISCOSITY HEAT SENSITIVE INK PRINTING PROCESS**

DRUCKVERFAHREN MIT WÄRMEEMPFINDLICHER TINTE VON HOHER VISKOSITÄT

PROCESSUS D'IMPRESSION D'ENCRE THERMOSENSIBLE À FORTE VISCOSITÉ

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Description**FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

5 **[0001]** This invention relates to a method of inkjet printing of heat activatable colorants.

[0002] Inkjet digital printing has been widely used in many applications. Its refined image quality, comparing with conventional analog technologies such as offset printing, screen printing, lithographic printing, digital inkjet printing technologies generate much convenient, efficient and environmentally clean results.

10 **[0003]** However, aqueous digital printing on materials other than paper may be inferior to other processes due to lack of color intensity and speed due to some shortcomings of digital inkjet printing methods. Among those, low viscosity, low colorant content aqueous inks with especially small droplet size requires much more ink materials to generate comparable final image output. This is greater problem when the colorants used in the inkjet ink are not soluble dyes, but are pigments or other insoluble colorants. High color saturation and so called super saturation of the color image may be difficult to achieve when using these inkjet inks.

15 **[0004]** One means of creating aqueous ink is adding viscosity control agents that are high molecular weight natural synthetic polymers, higher viscosity water soluble or miscible glycols, high alcohols, accompanied by higher concentrations of colorants. Several problems are associated with such simple approach. The use of high molecular weight polymers may result in an aqueous system that deviates from physical property requirements of the inkjet printer used to print the ink, such as Newtonian fluid behavior. Therefore, the ink improperly responds to the jetting mechanism. The high molecular weight polymer in combination with increased levels of colorants, especially non-soluble type of colorants, can create clogging of the print head nozzles, even when using newer print head technology designed for higher viscosity inks, since such printers are not specifically designed for use with colorants that are solids when printed.

20 **[0005]** Heat activatable colorants have been used in digital inkjet printing. The image quality is dependent on how effectively and efficiently the heat activatable colorants are transferred or fixed to the substrate. Hale et al., U. S. Patent No. 5,642,141 and Xu et al., U. S. Patent No. 5,488,907 teach inkjet printing methods using finely divided heat activatable dye solids. These methods incorporate an ink having a viscosity generally around 2 to 4 mPa.s (cP) at ambient temperature. These patents do not specifically teach one how to create a high transfer efficiency ink using heat activatable dyes and having relatively higher viscosity. The document US 6284004 B1 discloses an ink jet printing process utilising inks comprising a disperse dye. The inks used are not suitable for producing high quality images in a large format modern ink jet print head.

30 **[0006]** High viscosity inkjet inks may impose further problems for heat activatable inks when a high concentration of colorant is present. Agents for controlling or modifying physical properties of the ink may hinder the heat activation efficiency of the colorant, due to high boiling points, affinity for the heat activatable dye at the activation temperature, or entrapment/encapsulation of the dye particle due to the long polymeric chain structure of the chemical/agent. These issues may be more pronounced when the particle sizes of the colorants used in the inks are very small. For example, a high concentration of glycerin may alter the heat activation efficiency of a small dye particle under normal heat activation temperature and duration. Further, a thickening agent, such as carboxy methyl cellulose (CMC), may create a non-Newtonian system, while also hindering activation or sublimation of the heat activated dye.

35 **[0007]** Ink jet printer print heads, including Drop on Demand (DOD) piezoelectric print heads, have of nozzles and orifices of varying sizes. These nozzles and orifices dictate droplet size, print speed, and jettable ink viscosity, and also the tolerance to non-soluble colorants or polymeric particulates. An appropriate range of dye particle sizes based on the nozzle or orifice size is important when formulating the higher viscosity heat activated inks.

40 **[0008]** There is a need for a higher viscosity ink that comprises heat activatable dye solids for digital printing, including transfer printing or direct printing, that will not clog the print head, will yield high heat activation efficiency, and be environmentally safe, and which is suitable for high viscosity ink printers, which is printers that require liquid inks having a viscosity of 5.0 mPa.s (centipoise) or greater at ambient temperature.

SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

50 **[0009]** In a first aspect, the present invention is a method of printing a design according to claim 1.

[0010] There is provided a high viscosity inkjet ink that is useful for printing heat activatable images using ink jet printers such as Drop on Demand piezoelectric printers. The ink comprises heat activatable colorant solids that are not activated during the inkjet printing process, and are printed onto a substrate in the form of an image that can be activated and transferred to a subsequent or final substrate by applying heat and intimate contact between the two substrates. The ink can also be heat activated onto the substrate without further transfer by applying heat at a temperature that is suitable for the activation of the colorant.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0011] There is provided a liquid inkjet ink having a preferred viscosity of not less than 6.0 mPa.s (cP), and may have a viscosity from 6 to 100 mPa.s (cPs), with total water content of not less than 30% by weight of the total ink formulation. A preferred viscosity range is from 7 mPa.s (cP) to 30 mPa.s (cP). A heat activatable colorant is present in the ink as printed in the form of solid particles or particulates. The specific amount of the colorant(s) is supplied to achieve proper color intensity and image quality upon heat activation. The colorant is preferred to range from 1% to 15% by weight of the total ink formulation.

[0012] In one embodiment, the ink contains a substantial amount of viscosity control solvents/co-solvents such as diol, triol, glycols, polyol, high alcohol, amines, polyamine, amino oxide, etc. either alone or in mixture including but not limited to: glycerin, ethylene glycol, diethylene glycol, triethylene glycol, propylene glycol, dipropylene glycol, caprolactum, polyethylene glycol, polypropylene glycol, urea, sorbitol, 2-pyrrolidinone, N-methylpyrrolidinone, polyvinylpyrrolidinone (PVP), polyvinylalcohol (PVA), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), 2-methyl-1,3-propanediol, 1, polyethylene polyamines, etc. These are high viscosity water soluble or water miscible solvents/co-solvents that will not substantially change the hydrophilicity of the ink system, but which increase the viscosity of the ink. These materials have little to no tendency to solubilize the heat activatable colorants. Furthermore, these solvents, co-solvents, or viscosity control agents will not substantially alter the Newtonian fluid behavior (incompressible) of the aqueous system. This behavior may be expressed by the following equation:

$$\tau_{ij} = \mu \left(\frac{\partial u_i}{\partial x_j} + \frac{\partial u_j}{\partial x_i} \right)$$

with comoving stress tensor P (also written as σ)

$$\mathbb{P}_{ij} = -p\delta_{ij} + \mu \left(\frac{\partial u_i}{\partial x_j} + \frac{\partial u_j}{\partial x_i} \right)$$

where,

- τ_{ij} is the shear stress on the i^{th} face of a fluid element in the j^{th} direction
- u_i is the velocity in the i^{th} direction
- x_j is the j^{th} direction coordinate

[0013] Other materials which may be used to adjust viscosity are polypeptides such as abietoyl soy polypeptide, undecilenoyl soy polypeptide, alcohol/glycol soluble prolamine, ethoxylated fatty alcohol, ethoxylated fatty amine, acrylic amide, 2-ethyl-oxazoline homopolymers, copolymer and/or terpolymers.

[0014] Depending on the specific viscosity requirement of the printer and/or print head, viscosity control solvents/co-solvents may weigh at least three times as much, and up to twenty times as much, as the heat activatable colorant solids of the total formulation weight of the ink in order to maintain both high viscosity and jettability. The total viscosity control solvents/co-solvents may comprise between 15% and 60% of the total formulation by weight.

[0015] Other ingredients may be used for stabilizing the colorant, and for fine adjustment of the physical properties of the ink such as surface tension, pH value, conductivity, and density. Further, non-heat activatable dyes and other colorants may be used in combination with the heat activatable colorant(s) to enhance image quality and properties in certain applications. Self-dispersing colorants, and/or pre-stabilized colorants may also be used.

[0016] Aqueous inkjet inks having the desired viscosity may have different stabilization requirements, due to physical property changes, such as ink density, Brownian movement of the particulates, and electric conductivity. These changes impact the particulate size distribution profile, and especially the upper limit of the particle size distribution requirement. The following empirical equation may be used for help selection of the upper particle size distribution limit, if the particle size distribution does not deviate substantially from a normal distribution model:

$$\phi \geq \left(\frac{5D}{1-f} \right)^3$$

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where,

Φ is the narrowest ink pathway inside the print head such as nozzle/orifice diameter (in micron)

D is the particle size presented as 95% from total particle size distribution (in micron)

f is the colorant weight fraction of the total formulation weight (<1)

For example, a print head having 35 μm (micron) nozzle/orifice diameter indicates a particle size, at 95% distribution, of equal to or less than 0.62 μm (micron) in diameter, if the colorants are 5% of the total weight. This formula helps in creating an ink that will not clog the narrow path inside the print head.

[0017] Heat activatable colorants suitable for use may include various disperse dyes or sublimation dyes that are activated or sublimed by applying heat to the printed substrate or transfer substrate. Generally, the heat activation temperature does not exceed 505K (450°F), and most preferably, does not exceed 483K (410°F). Examples of colorants, in varying ratios, include but are not limited, to C.I. Disperse Orange 13, 29, 31:1, 33, 49, 54, 55, 66, 73, 119 and 163; C.I. Disperse Red 4, 11, 54, 60, 72, 73, 86, 88, 91, 92, 93, 111, 126, 127, 134, 135, 143, 145, 152, 153, 154, 159, 164, 167:1, 177, 181, 204, 206, 207, 221, 258, 278, 283, 288, 311, 323, 343, 348 and 356; C.I. Disperse Violet 33; C.I. Disperse Blue 4, 13, 56, 73, 113, 128, 148, 154, 158, 165, 165:1, 165:2, 183, 197, 201, 214, 224, 225, 257, 266, 267, 287, 358, 359, 360, 379, Disperse Brown 26, 27; and Disperse Yellow 5, 42, 54, 64, 79, 82, 83, 93, 99, 100, 119, 122, 124, 126, 160, 184:1, 186, 198, 199, 204, 224 and 237. Depending on the specific application, other organic and inorganic pigments, and soluble and insoluble dyes, such as direct dyes, acid dyes, reactive dyes, vat dyes, cation dyes, basic dyes, luco dyes, thermochromatic, and photochromatic colorants may also be used.

[0018] The colorant will remain as a particulate in order to be heat activated or sublimed. This is not a significant issue for water insoluble colorants, such as sublimation dyes, in lower viscosity applications where little to no glycol or other viscosity increasing agents are present. The difference between the boiling point of water and the ink heat activation temperature, which is typically greater than 27.8K (50°F), indicates that activation or sublimation of the ink solids will occur after the aqueous components vaporize, so that activation or sublimation is not materially hindered by these components of the ink.

[0019] The relatively high concentration of high boiling point of glycols, polyol, and other viscosity control ingredients can create a high boiling system which makes the activation or sublimation of the colorants very difficult. The boiling point may be near, or even above, the heat activation temperature of the dye, such as within 11.1 K (20°F) of the heat activation temperature. Particles with smaller diameters may temporarily, or even permanently, bond with these ingredients and not activate, due to hydrogen bonding, entrapment, or forming a high boiling point co-boiling system. Solvency of the non-polar portion of these ingredients may also contribute to the hindering of the colorant, especially the outside portion of the colorant particulates at a temperature near the boiling point of these solvents or agents. Only the inside portions of the colorant particles, which are not in contact with the "bulk" ingredients of the ink, may activate or sublimate.

[0020] In one embodiment of the present invention the particulate size of the heat activatable colorants are limited so that sufficient colorant molecules are be successfully activated or sublimated. The following model is indicative of the particles sizes of the dye:

$$d \geq \frac{2 a T_s}{1 - K^{1/3}}$$

where,

d is the minimum particle size in diameter (in micron) to ensure heat activation efficiency K

K is the heat activation efficiency ($K < 1$)

T_s is the molecular size of heat activated colorant in the longest dimension (in nanometer, generally $T_s = 1.25$)

a is the solvency hindering impact parameter, for high viscosity aqueous inks, $a \geq 1$

For relatively high viscosity inks having more than 20% by weight of high viscosity solvent, $a = 3$, meaning about three layers of molecules of the colorant particulate may be hindered. Therefore, the relationship between the particle size and heat activation efficiency can be defined as:

$$d \geq \frac{7.5}{1 - K^{1/3}}$$

where,

d is the minimum particle size in diameter (in micron) to ensure heat activation efficiency K
 K is the heat activation efficiency ($K < 1$)

5 [0021] One embodiment of the invention has a heat activation efficiency higher than 65% (K) for the colorant particulates. Substantially all particles of the colorant having a diameter of less than 50 nanometers are excluded from the ink. The low transfer efficiency caused by the high concentration of the viscosity control solvents/co-solvents to these particulates is thereby substantially eliminated.

10 [0022] The present invention may be used with inkjet inks for continuous inkjet, drop-on-demand thermal or bubble inkjet, drop-on-demand piezo electric, ultrasonic or mechanical inkjet printhead delivery systems. Physical properties of the ink may be adjusted suitable for specific printhead requirements. A preferred printer for printing an ink according to the invention is a RICOH GELSPRINTER® inkjet printer, which is designed to print OEM inks having a viscosity of about 7. This printer is known in the industry as a printer for high viscosity inks. Inkjet printers designed for inks having a viscosity of 5.0 or greater are preferred.

15 [0023] Heat activation is according to known processes for heat activation of the dyes. For example, a heat press may be used to activate and/or transfer inks comprising sublimation dyes according to the teachings of Hale, U.S. Patent 5,488,907.

20 [0024] The follow examples illustrate the general composition of the high viscosity heat activatable ink.

Example 1:

25 [0025] An ink for use with a Ricoh GelSprinter® ink jet printer, nozzle size 35µm (microns), and having a viscosity of about 7.5 mPa.s (cPs):

| Ingredient | Weight % |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Disperse blue dye (pre-stabilized) | 3.5% |
| Glycerin | 40% |
| Poly(2-ethyl-oxazoline) | 2% |
| Non-ionic Surfactant | 3.5% |
| Proxel® GXL | 0.1% |
| Other agents | 2.0% |
| De-ionized Water | balance |

35 [0026] The ink according to the ins example is produced with an upper limit (95%) of particles at 0.3 µm (micron) and a lower limit to 0.05 µm (micron). Transfer printing of an image printed with the ink on polyester fabric using 478K (400° F), with a 35 second heat activation time produces an image having an optical density (cyan) of 1.25 or greater as measured by an X-Rite densitometer.

Example 2:

45 [0027] An ink for use with a Spectra Skywalker inkjet printer, nozzle size 45 microns, and having a viscosity of about 15 cPs:

| Ingredient | Weight % |
|-----------------------------------------|----------|
| Disperse dye mixture (pre-stabilized) | 5.6% |
| CAB-O-JET® aq. Black pigment dispersion | 1.5% |
| Diethylene Glycol | 20% |
| e-caprolactam | 15% |
| Non-ionic Surfactant | 3.5% |
| Proxel® GXL | 0.1% |
| Other agents | 2.0% |
| De-ionized Water | balance |

55 [0028] This ink has a particle upper limit (95%) at 0.6 µm (microns), and a lower limit to 0.05 µm (microns). Direct

printing onto polyester/cotton (50/50) with heat activation of the dye at 483K (410°F), at 30 seconds, produces an image with an optical density of 1.30 or greater as measured by an X-Rite densitometer.

5 **Claims**

1. A method of printing a design by means of an ink jet printer using heat activatable colorant solids, comprising the steps of:

10 preparing a liquid ink suitable for use in an ink jet printer which uses liquid ink, said liquid ink comprising water, particles of heat activatable colorant solids, and a viscosity control agent, wherein the liquid ink has a viscosity of not less than 6.0 mPa.s (centipoise), wherein the heat activatable colorant solids are sparingly soluble in the viscosity control agent,

15 supplying the ink jet printer that prints liquid ink with said liquid ink;
 15 printing said liquid ink in a desired image by means of said ink jet printer on a substrate to form an image, wherein the particles of the heat activatable colorant solids are solid at the time of printing; and heat activating the heat activatable colorant solids, wherein, after heat activation, the image has an optical density of not less than 1.25 when measured by an X-Rite densitometer, **characterized in that** the viscosity control agent comprises not less than 15% by weight of the liquid ink and that not less than 95% of the particles of heat activated colorant
 20 solids have a diameter of 0.05 microns or greater.

2. A method of printing a design by means of an ink jet printer using heat activatable colorant solids, according to claim 1 wherein an upper limit of a distribution of particle sizes of particles of the heat activatable colorant solids is a function of the narrowest ink pathway inside a print head of an ink jet printer used to print the liquid ink, and the total
 25 weight of the heat activatable colorant solids to the total weight of the liquid ink, according to the following formula:

$$\Phi \geq \left(\frac{5D}{1-f} \right)^3$$

30

where,

35 Φ is the narrowest ink pathway inside the print head such as nozzle/orifice diameter
 D is the particle size presented as 95% from total particle size distribution, and
 f is the colorant weight fraction of the total formulation weight (<1).

3. A method of printing a design by means of an ink jet printer using heat activatable colorant solids, according to either
 40 of claims 1 or 2 wherein the weight of the viscosity control agent present in a volume of heat activatable ink is at least three times the weight of the heat activatable colorant present in the volume of heat activatable ink.
4. A method of printing a design by means of an ink jet printer using heat activatable colorant solids, according to either
 45 of claims 1 or 2 wherein the viscosity control agent is glycol and the weight of the glycol present in a volume of heat activatable ink is at least three times the weight of the heat activatable colorant present in the volume of heat activatable ink.
5. A method of printing a design by means of an ink jet printer using heat activatable colorant solids, according to any
 50 of claims 1 to 4 wherein the weight of the viscosity control agent present in a volume of heat activatable ink is 15-60% of the total weight of the volume of heat activatable ink.
6. A method of printing a design by means of an ink jet printer using heat activatable colorant solids, according to any
 55 of claims 1 to 5 wherein the heat activation temperature of the colorant is not substantially higher than the boiling point of the viscosity control agent.
7. A method of printing a design by means of an ink jet printer using heat activatable colorant solids, according to any
 of claims 1 to 5 wherein the heat activation temperature of the colorant is not more than 11.1 K (20 degrees Fahrenheit) higher than the boiling point of the viscosity control agent.

8. A method of printing a design by means of an ink jet printer using heat activatable colorant solids, according to any of claims 1 to 5 wherein substantially all particles of the colorant having a diameter of less than 50 nanometers are excluded from the ink.

5

Patentansprüche

1. Verfahren zum Drucken eines Musters mittels eines Tintenstrahldruckers unter Verwendung wärmeaktivierbarer Färbemittelfeststoffe, mit den Schritten:

10

Bereitstellen einer flüssigen Tinte, die zur Verwendung in einem Tintenstrahldrucker, der flüssige Tinte verwendet, geeignet ist, und die flüssige Tinte Wasser, Teilchen von wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffen und ein Viskositätssteuerungsmittel enthält, wobei die flüssige Tinte eine Viskosität von nicht unter 6,0 mPa.s (Centipoise) aufweist, wobei die wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffe in dem Viskositätssteuerungsmittel schwer löslich sind,

15

Versorgen des Tintenstrahldruckers, der flüssige Tinte druckt, mit der flüssigen Tinte;

Drucken der flüssigen Tinte in ein gewünschtes Bild mittels des Tintenstrahldruckers auf ein Substrat, um ein Bild zu bilden, wobei die Teilchen der wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffe zum Zeitpunkt des Druckens fest sind; und Wärmeaktivieren der wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffe, wobei, nach Wärmeaktivierung, das Bild, wenn durch ein X-Rite-Dichtemessgerät gemessen, eine optische Dichte von nicht weniger als 1,25 aufweist, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** das

20

Viskositätssteuerungsmittel nicht weniger als 15 Gewichtsprozent der flüssigen Tinte enthält, und dass nicht weniger als 95% der Teilchen der wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffe einen Durchmesser von 0,05 Mikrometer oder mehr aufweisen.

25

2. Verfahren zum Drucken eines Musters mittels eines Tintenstrahldruckers unter Verwendung wärmeaktivierbarer Färbemittelfeststoffe nach Anspruch 1, wobei eine obere Grenze einer Verteilung der Teilchengrößen der Teilchen wärmeaktivierbarer Färbemittelfeststoffe eine Funktion des engsten Tintenweges innerhalb eines Druckkopfes eines Tintenstrahldruckers, der zum Drucken der flüssigen Tinte verwendet wird, und dem Gesamtgewicht der wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffe zu dem Gesamtgewicht der flüssigen Tinte gemäß der folgenden Formel ist:

30

$$\phi \geq \left(\frac{5D}{1-f} \right)^3$$

35

wobei

ϕ der engste Tintenweg innerhalb des Druckkopfes wie Düsen-/Öffnungsdurchmesser ist

40

D die Teilchengröße dargestellt durch 95% der Gesamteilchengrößenverteilung ist, und

f der Färbemittelgewichtsanteil des Gesamtformulierungsgewichtes ist (<1).

3. Verfahren zum Drucken eines Musters mittels eines Tintenstrahldruckers unter Verwendung von wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffen nach einem der Ansprüche 1 oder 2, wobei das Gewicht des Viskositätssteuerungsmittels, das in einem Volumen der wärmeaktivierbaren Tinte vorliegt, zumindest dem dreifachen Gewicht des wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittels entspricht, das in dem Volumen der wärmeaktivierbaren Tinte vorliegt.

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4. Verfahren zum Drucken eines Musters mittels eines Tintenstrahldruckers unter Verwendung von wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffen nach einem der Ansprüche 1 oder 2, wobei das Viskositätssteuerungsmittel Glykol ist und das Gewicht des Glykol, das in einem Volumen der wärmeaktivierbaren Tinte vorliegt, zumindest dem dreifachen Gewicht des wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittels entspricht, das in dem Volumen der wärmeaktivierbaren Tinte vorliegt.

50

5. Verfahren zum Drucken eines Musters mittels eines Tintenstrahldruckers unter Verwendung von wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffen nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 4, wobei das Gewicht des Viskositätssteuerungsmittels, das in einem Volumen der wärmeaktivierbaren Tinte vorliegt, 15-60% des Gesamtgewichtes des Volumens der wärmeaktivierbaren Tinte beträgt.

55

6. Verfahren zum Drucken eines Musters mittels eines Tintenstrahldruckers unter Verwendung von wärmeaktivierbaren

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Färbemittelfeststoffen nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 5, wobei die Wärmeaktivierungstemperatur des Färbemittels nicht wesentlich höher ist als der Siedepunkt des Viskositätssteuerungsmittels.

- 5 7. Verfahren zum Drucken eines Musters mittels eines Tintenstrahldruckers unter Verwendung von wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffen nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 5, wobei die Wärmeaktivierungstemperatur des Färbemittels nicht mehr als 11,1K (20 Grad Fahrenheit) höher ist als der Siedepunkt des Viskositätssteuerungsmittels.
- 10 8. Verfahren zum Drucken eines Musters mittels eines Tintenstrahldruckers unter Verwendung von wärmeaktivierbaren Färbemittelfeststoffen nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 5, wobei im wesentlichen alle Teilchen des Färbemittels, die einen Durchmesser von unter 50 Nanometer aufweisen, aus der Tinte entfernt sind.

Revendications

- 15 1. Procédé d'impression d'un dessin au moyen d'une imprimante à jet d'encre utilisant des substances solides de colorants thermo-activables, comprenant les étapes de :

20 préparer une encre liquide apte à être utilisée dans une imprimante à jet d'encre qui utilise de l'encre liquide, ladite encre liquide comprenant de l'eau, des particules de substances solides de colorants thermo-activables, et un agent de contrôle de viscosité, où l'encre liquide a une viscosité non inférieure à 6,0 mPa.s (centipoises), où les substances solides de colorants thermo-activables sont légèrement solubles dans l'agent de contrôle de viscosité,
alimenter l'imprimante à jet d'encre qui imprimé l'encre liquide en encre liquide ;
25 imprimeur ladite encre liquide dans une image recherchée au moyen de: ladite imprimante à jet d'encre sur un support pour former une image, où les particules des substances solides de colorants thermo-activables sont solides au moment de l'impression ; et thermo-activer les substances solides de colorants thermo-activables, où, après la thermo-activation, l'image a une densité optique non inférieure à 1,25 lorsqu'elle est mesurée avec un densitomètre X-Rite,

30 **caractérisé en ce que** l'agent de contrôle de viscosité comprend une quantité non inférieure à 15% en poids de l'encre liquide et qu'une quantité non inférieure à 95% des particules des substances solides de colorants thermo-activées ont un diamètre de 0,05 microns ou plus grand.

- 35 2. Procédé d'impression d'un dessin au moyen d'une imprimante à jet d'encre utilisant des substances solides de colorants thermo-activables selon la revendication 1, dans lequel une limite supérieur d'une distribution de tailles de particules des substances solides de colorants thermo-activables est une fonction du chemin d'encre le plus étroit à l'intérieur d'une tête d'impression d'une imprimante à jet d'encre utilisée pour imprimer l'encre liquide, et le poids total des substances solides de colorants thermo-activables au poids total de l'encre liquide, en accord avec la formule suivante :

40

$$\Phi \geq \left(\frac{5D}{1-f} \right)^3$$

45

Φ est le chemin d'encre le plus étroit à l'intérieur de la tête d'impression comme le diamètre de buse/orifice, D est la taille de particule présentée comme 95% de la distribution de tailles de particules totale, et f est la fraction pondérale de colorant du poids de formulation total (<1).

- 50 3. Procédé d'impression d'un dessin au moyen d'une imprimante à jet d'encre utilisant des substances solides de colorants thermoactivables selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 ou 2, dans lequel le poids de l'agent de contrôle de viscosité présent dans un volume d'encre thermoactivable représente au moins trois fois le poids du colorant thermoactivable présent dans le volume d'encre thermoactivable.

- 55 4. Procédé d'impression d'un dessin au moyen d'une imprimante à jet d'entre utilisant des substances solides de colorants thermoactivables selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 ou 2, dans lequel l'agent de contrôle de viscosité est le glycol, et le poids du glycol présent dans un volume d'encre thermoactivable représente au moins trois fois le poids du colorant thermoactivable présent dans le volume d'encre thermoactivable.

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5. Procédé d'impression d'un dessin au moyen d'une imprimante à jet d'encre utilisant des substances solides de colorants thermoactivables selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 4, dans lequel le poids de l'agent de contrôle de viscosité présent dans un volume d'encre thermoactivable représente 15-60% du poids total du volume d'encre thermoactivable.

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6. Procédé d'impression d'un dessin au moyen d'une imprimante à jet d'encre utilisant des substances solides de colorants thermoactivables selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 5, dans lequel la température de thermoactivation du colorant n'est pas sensiblement plus élevée que le point d'ébullition de l'agent de contrôle de viscosité.

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7. Procédé d'impression d'un dessin au moyen d'une imprimante à jet d'encre utilisant des substances solides de colorants thermoactivables selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 5, dans lequel la température de thermoactivation du colorant n'est pas plus que 11,1K (20 degrés Fahrenheit) plus élevée que le point d'ébullition de l'agent de contrôle de viscosité.

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8. Procédé d'impression d'un dessin au moyen d'une imprimante à jet d'encre utilisant des substances solides de colorants thermoactivables selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 5, dans lequel sensiblement toutes les particules du colorant d'un diamètre inférieur à 50 nanomètres sont exclues de l'encre.

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REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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NYOMTATÁSI ELJÁRÁS NAGY VISZKOZITÁSÚ HŐÉRZÉKENY TINTÁVAL

SZABADALMI IGÉNYPONTOK

1. Eljárás minta nyomtatására tintasugaras nyomtatóval hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok alkalmazásával, amely tartalmazza az alábbi lépéseket:

előállítunk egy folyékony tintát, amely folyékony tintát alkalmazó tintasugaras nyomtatóban alkalmazható, ahol az említett folyékony tinta tartalmaz vizet, hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok szemcséit és viszkozitást szabályzó anyagot, ahol a folyékony tinta viszkozitása nem kevesebb, mint 6,0 mPa-s (centipoise), ahol a hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok rosszul oldódnak a viszkozitást szabályzó anyagban,

a folyékony tintával nyomtató tintasugaras nyomtatóba betöltjük az említett folyékony tintát;

az említett folyékony tintát kívánt képből nyomtatjuk az említett tintasugaras nyomtatóval egy szubsztrátumra, és így képet képezünk, ahol a hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok szemcséi szilárd állapotban vannak a nyomtatás időpontjában; és a hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagokat hővel aktiváljuk, ahol az aktiválás után a kép optikai sűrűsége nem kevesebb, mint 1,25, X-Rite denzitómméterrel mérve,

azzal jellemezve, hogy a viszkozitást szabályzó anyag a folyékony tintának nem kevesebb, mint 15% részét teszi ki és a hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok szemcséi nem kevesebb, mint 95%-ának átmérője 0,05 μm vagy ennél nagyobb.

2. Az 1. igénypont szerinti eljárás minta nyomtatására tintasugaras nyomtatóval hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok alkalmazásával, ahol a hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok szemcséi szemcseméretének eloszlása felső határa egy, folyékony tintát alkalmazó tintasugaras nyomtató nyomtatófején belüli legkeskenyebb tintaút és a hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagnak a folyékony tinta teljes tömegéhez viszonyított teljes tömege függvénye, az alábbi egyenlet szerint:

$$\Phi \geq \left(\frac{5D}{1-f} \right)^3$$

ahol

Φ jelentése a legkeskenyebb tintaút a nyomtatófején belül, így fűvóka/nyílás átmérő

D jelentése a teljes szemcseméret eloszlás 95%-ának megfelelő szemcseméret, és

f jelentése a színezék tömeg frakciója a teljes készítmény tömegén belül (<1).

3. Az 1. vagy 2. igénypont szerinti eljárás minta nyomtatására tintasugaras nyomtatóval hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok alkalmazásával, ahol a hővel aktiválható tinta egységnyi térfogatában jelenlévő viszkozitást szabályzó anyag tömege legalább háromszorosa a hővel aktiválható tinta egységnyi térfogatában jelenlévő hővel aktiválható színezék tömegének.

4. Az 1. vagy 2. igénypont szerinti eljárás minta nyomtatására tintasugaras nyomtatóval hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok alkalmazásával, ahol a viszkozitást szabályzó anyag glikol és a hővel aktiválható tinta egységnyi térfogatában jelenlévő glikol tömege legalább háromszorosa a hővel aktiválható tinta egységnyi térfogatában jelenlévő hővel aktiválható színezék tömegének.

5. Az 1-4. igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás minta nyomtatására tintasugaras nyomtatóval hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok alkalmazásával, ahol a hővel aktiválható tinta egységnyi térfogatában jelenlévő viszkozitást szabályzó anyag tömege a hővel aktiválható tinta térfogata teljes tömegének 15-60% részét teszi ki.

6. Az 1-5. igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás minta nyomtatására tintasugaras nyomtatóval hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok alkalmazásával, ahol a színezék hővel történő aktiválásának hőmérséklete nem lényegesen magasabb, mint a viszkozitást szabályzó anyag forráspontja.

7. Az 1-5. igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás minta nyomtatására tintasugaras nyomtatóval hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok alkalmazásával, ahol a színezék hővel történő aktiválásának hőmérséklete nem többel magasabb, mint a viszkozitást szabályzó anyag forráspontja, mint 11,1 K (20 fok Fahrenheit).

8. Az 1-5. igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás minta nyomtatására tintasugaras nyomtatóval hővel aktiválható színes szilárd anyagok alkalmazásával, ahol az 50 nanométernél kisebb átmérőjű színezék szemcsék lényegében teljesen ki vannak zárva a tintából.