

Classic CAMERA





When electric motors were still only a separate accessory used as an option on a handful of professional 35mm cameras such as the Nikon F, Topcon RE Super, Spotmatic Motor Drive or the Contarex SE, and having them built into the camera was unthinkable (with the exception of the medium format Hasselblad 500EL), Minolta released its Minolta SRM camera.

Unique among 35mm reflexes at that time, the Minolta SRM utilized an electric motor incorporated into the enlarged base plate of the camera. Power was supplied from eight normal penlight batteries housed in the side hand-grip and shooting speed was three frames per second. Available in black finish only, limited production of the Minolta SRM began in April 1970 and although it did not include a TTL exposure meter, it did have mirror lock up, motor driven rewind and 250-shot back magazine. It could also be operated without the motor utilizing traditional manual film advance.

Original and innovative, the Minolta SRM was without imitators in its day.

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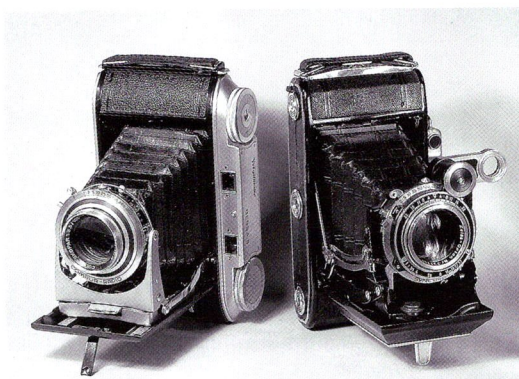
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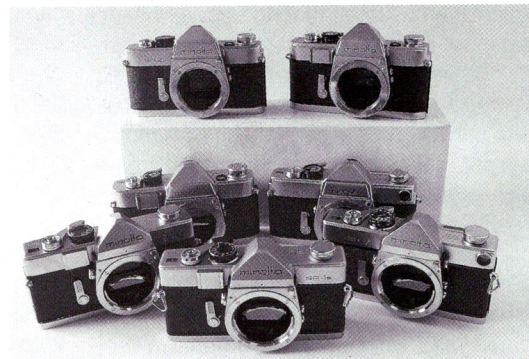
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CLASSIC CAMERA

MAY 2002



Bessa II and Super Ikonta 531/2.



Pre TTL Minolta reflexes



Carpentier Cinématographe, various accessories, a letter in Louis Lumiere's hand and a projector. Christie's auction price: £49,350.

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SAFARA'
DYLAN DOG no. 182
 Bonelli Editore

Dylan Dog is a fairly prominent comic book character, the nightmare investigator born of the creative pen of Tiziano Sclavi.

Dylan Dog has been around for over fifteen years and is perennially involved in amazing and often tongue-in-cheek escapades including starving zombies, thirsty vampires, ferocious werewolves, possessed witches, demonic psychopaths, wild serial killers, disturbing neighbors and monsters of all shapes and sizes. Dylan Dog has nothing to do with camera collecting, but issue no. 182 does have as its co-protagonist an old twin lens Rolleiflex. Naturally, it is a paranormal, not a normal, camera and when its photographer-owner

decides to junk it in favor of the latest in digital camera technology, he realizes that ... Naturally, we don't want to ruin the reader's enjoyment by telling the whole story or revealing the ending.

We just want to point out how old collectible cameras can break free of the environment of collecting nostalgia to enter (to a greater or lesser extent) the world of mass culture through literature, movies, art and even comic strips.

This particular Dylan Dog episode may even be of interest not only to cartoon experts, but also those camera collectors who do not usually read comic strips. After having read the story, they may be a bit wary and view their old twin lens in a new light. Or they may decided to call an exorcist.

GESCHICHTE DER DRESDNER FOTOINDUSTRIE
LINDEMANN'S, STUTTGART 2000
 Herbert Blumtritt

If someone wanted to trace the geographical history of the photographic industry, marking with a small flag the location of each photography-related optical, mechanical or chemical company on a world map, there would be a significant concentration of flags in Germany and Japan. Further centering in on Germany, our researcher would note an exceptional number of flags in Saxony and specifically around its capital, Dresden. Dresden represented the cradle of the German chemical and mechanical photographic industry and was the headquarters of a number of top Germany companies in that sector including Huttig, Wunsche, ICA,



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Ernemann, Ihagee, KW, Certo, Pouva, Beier, Welta, Balda, Altissa, Korelle, Zeh and first Zeiss Ikon and later Pentacon. A number of books, almost all in German, have been dedicated to cameras manufactured in Dresden, including *Auf den Spuren der Contax* by Kuc, *Ernemann Cameras* by Gollner and *Spiegelreflex Kameras aus Dresden* by Hummel. Because each book begets the next, and thanks to the fact that there is no dearth of interesting material regarding Dresden, the subject has been taken up once again by Blumtritt, an aeronautics engineer who switched over to the photographic industry in the early Sixties, specifically to the area concerned with Patents, Documentation and Information. Now in retirement, he devotes his time to the collection in the Dresden Museum of Technology, concentrating on the history of

the Dresden photographic industry. Thanks to the wealth of detailed information and enormous amount of documentary material collected and examined, Blumtritt reconstructs the photographic history of Dresden down to the last detail, citing information and dates regarding the founding and development of the various companies, change in ownership, the effects of the war, post-war reorganization and nationalization, up to the consolidation under the Pentacon name and its liquidation following German reunification. Starting in 1839 with the daguerreotype experiments of Enzemann, up to the end of the Nineties, the history of Dresden's photographic and cinematographic industry is told and documented here in all its facets. With the abundance of quotes and figures published, perhaps the one aspect that remains unjustifiably

a bit in the shade are the cameras themselves that are viewed from an almost purely economic standpoint, above and beyond their technical features and often-innovative makeup. For collectors on the lookout for information, this book—highly technical and written exclusively in German—is perhaps a bit dry with very few illustrations that are often generic in nature or taken from fairly well-known advertising sources. However, those capable of integrating the information offered in this book with that from others will find that Blumtritt's work is extremely valuable and aids in understanding a number of aspects. Unfortunately, as Borges ventured, the perfect book that forms a compendium of all others in a library, does not exist. But as far as the bibliographic sources regarding Dresden are concerned, Blumtritt's book comes very close.

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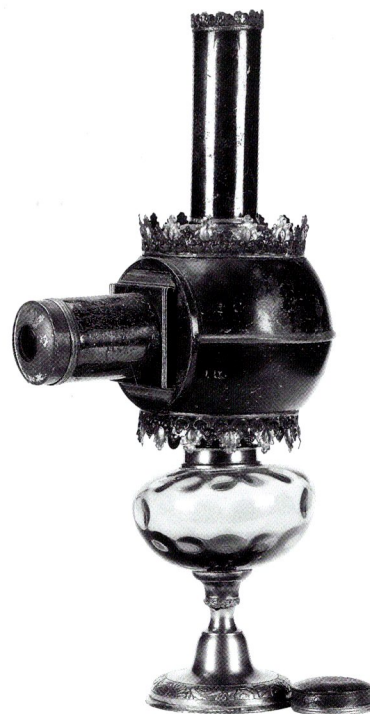
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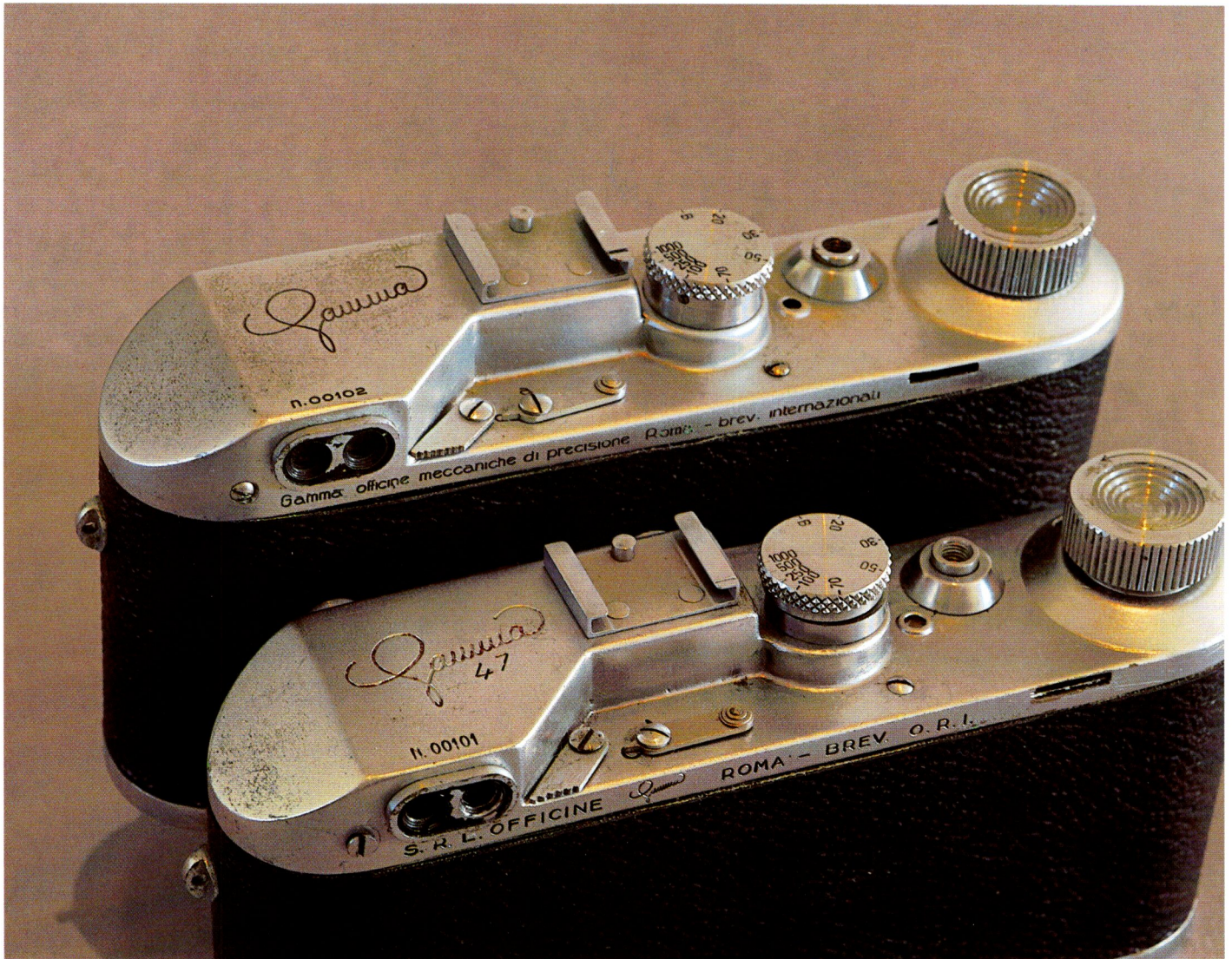
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A LEICA (copy) BORN ON THE TIBER

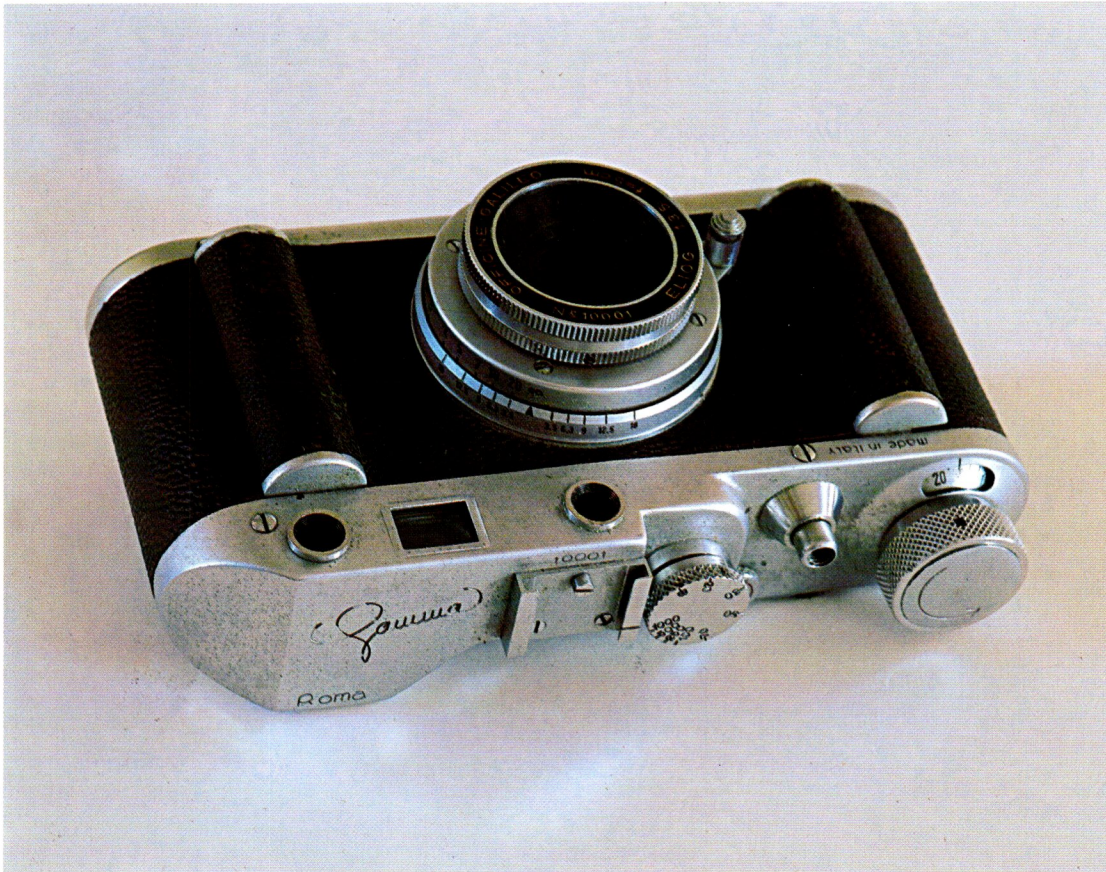


I believe these to be the first two Gamma cameras built and they were perhaps first shown at the 1947 Milan trade fair. I think that, as with Leicas, the first was numbered 101 followed by two zeros like all Gamma bayonets. Note the "47" inscribed on the top (its year of birth!) and the various, individual inscriptions on the back of this one-of-a-kind piece: "S.R.L. OFFICINE Gamma ROMA - BREV. O.R.I." which stands for the patent information "Brevetto/i Officine Rossi Ireneo". The second piece, number 102, has already been standardized with the inscriptions common to other first series Gammas. On this camera, the rangefinder lever with dial is in the "3 o'clock" position of the lens panel bayonet. The lens is a 50/3.5 Gamma Koristka-Victor.

I was only six, but I was already fascinated by cameras, primarily for the creative potential they represented. My mother, Maria Scalaberni, used her old Kodak 6x9 bellows often and with pleasure, succeeding in taking perfectly acceptable pictures of those events which for many

families of the day were real holiday outings, a luxury: a three-day visit to Ostia (with 30km of super-highway!), a weekend at Ladispoli (40km on the ancient Via Aurelia — all curves), a month at Corchiano in the countryside around Viterbo (60km from Rome) from which

we returned with the car loaded with vegetables, salami, prosciutto, flour, oil and ... wine, which at the time I hated. I remember that on our return "the photographer" took at least a week to develop and print the roll (rarely was there more than one) before returning to us, with



I believe this is the first of the second series Gammas to be built, equipped with 39/1 Leica screw mount lenses and bearing the number 10001. Note that the Officine Galileo 50/3.5 Eliog lens has the same number! The rangefinder lever and dial are in the "6 o'clock" position of the lens panel. Screw mount Gammas in the "00" series have also appeared, but these are pieces that have been modified recently to solve the problem of non-availability of proper lenses with the Gamma bayonet mount.

Among the second series Gammas, which often have times as long as 1 second, are a number of cameras specially-made for the Airforce, all of which have the insignia engraved on the top front left. The military cameras I have examined, when equipped with lenses, had a Galileo 50/2 Eptamitar, a perfect copy of the Leitz Summitar, with the marking "A.M." on the barrel. Proof that the Italian air force trusted in the Rossi cameras, but apparently this did not suffice ...



the air of some master alchemist, those coveted images with their jagged borders, those eight masterpieces of life itself, group shots carefully posed under exacting maternal direction. A slow but fruitful effort. It was 1947 and there was not even the

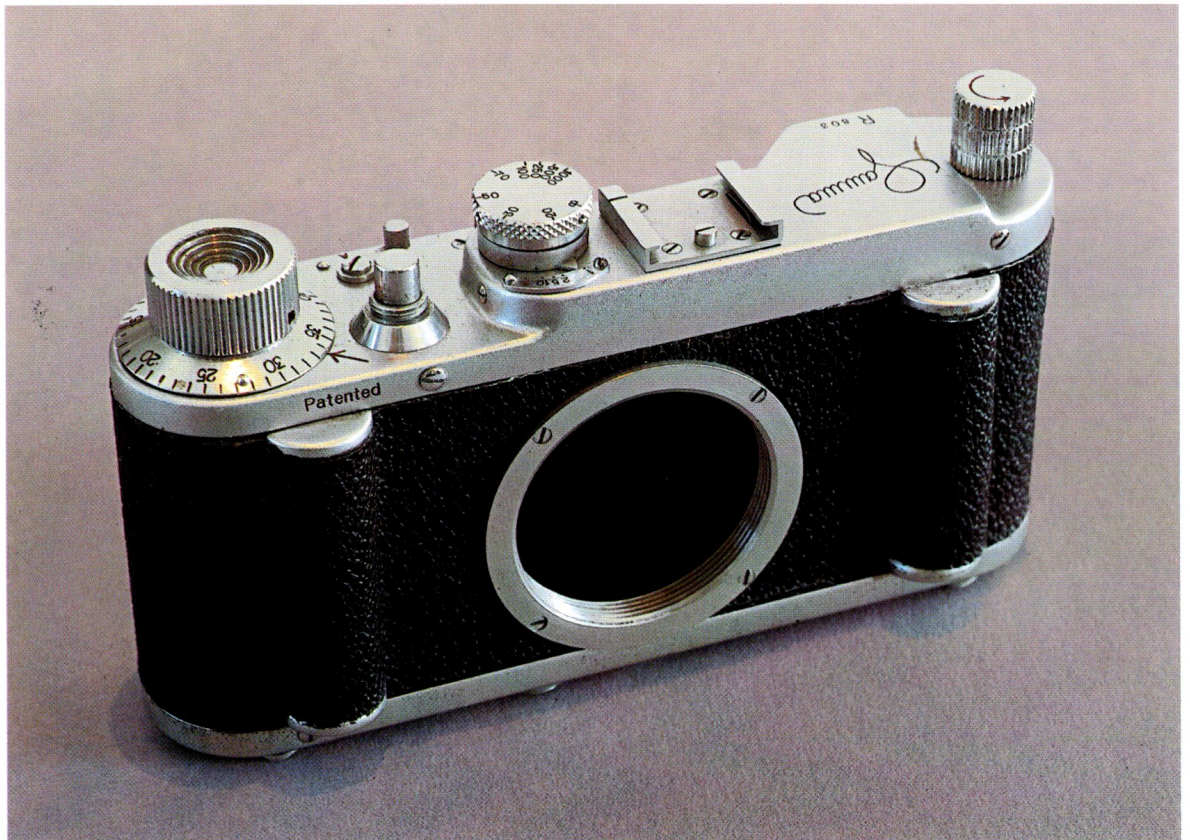
shadow of a Leica around. Who in Italy could have had one? Ex-fascist party members, industrialists, high-ranking officials, famous lawyers and doctors, successful actors and directors, perhaps a cardinal here or there. Although the Genoa firm of Engineer Ippolito Cattaneo had

done well its job of importing "For Italy and the Colonies", Leica cameras were certainly not a widespread phenomenon among Italians. Plus, given the fact that it was a number of years since Leicas had ceased to arrive, first because of the war, then because of



Our all-too-incomplete examination of the Gamma comes to a close with these pieces, often defined as "prototypes". The truth is, we do not know exactly how many of these "atypical" cameras were manufactured and distributed. But they are unquestionably very rare. With the number 05001 and bayonet mount lens, this is the only Gamma I have encountered with a view finder, but not a rangefinder. Evidently it represents the first step towards the production of less-expensive models, later realized in the Perla to be followed by the simple, but rare and lovely, Stella, Alba and Atom cameras.

Equipped with long exposure times and screw mount, this Gamma number R 803 was almost certainly intended for medical applications, like the Leica X Ray (the R stands for "Roentgen" and a finder is not needed). The base plate is different, there is no film cutter and, on the top (completely different) is a film rewind knob with release lever. To-date, I have seen two such pieces.





This, the last of the “out-of-the-ordinary” Gammas, bears the number 806, has long exposure times, screw mount and the same top plate as the R 803 but without a finder and rewind knob. It also has a film cutter the purpose of which is a total mystery to me!

post-war reconstruction problems, in Rome as in other Italian cities further north, some had correctly decided that there was a void to be filled, a “demand for Leicas” that should be satisfied. And so, following a rapid — and in my view intensely creative and courageous — period of gestation, a new, all-Italian rangefinder camera was presented at the 1947 Milan fair: the Gamma, created by the “Officina Rossi Ireneo, Via Margutta 81, Rome”.

Today, as I write this, I have had the opportunity of speaking with the person who designed this camera, Mr. Silvano Rossi, born in 1920, impeccably-mannered and son of Ireneo, owner and manager of the shop. I asked Mr. Rossi only a few questions because it was clear that recalling that period was emotionally taxing for him. Of course his bitterness over having seen disappear in the course of just a few years a product that deserved

a very different future was obvious, and I can only share his disappointment about this. When will the Italian government learn that (valid) enterprises must be protected and supported?

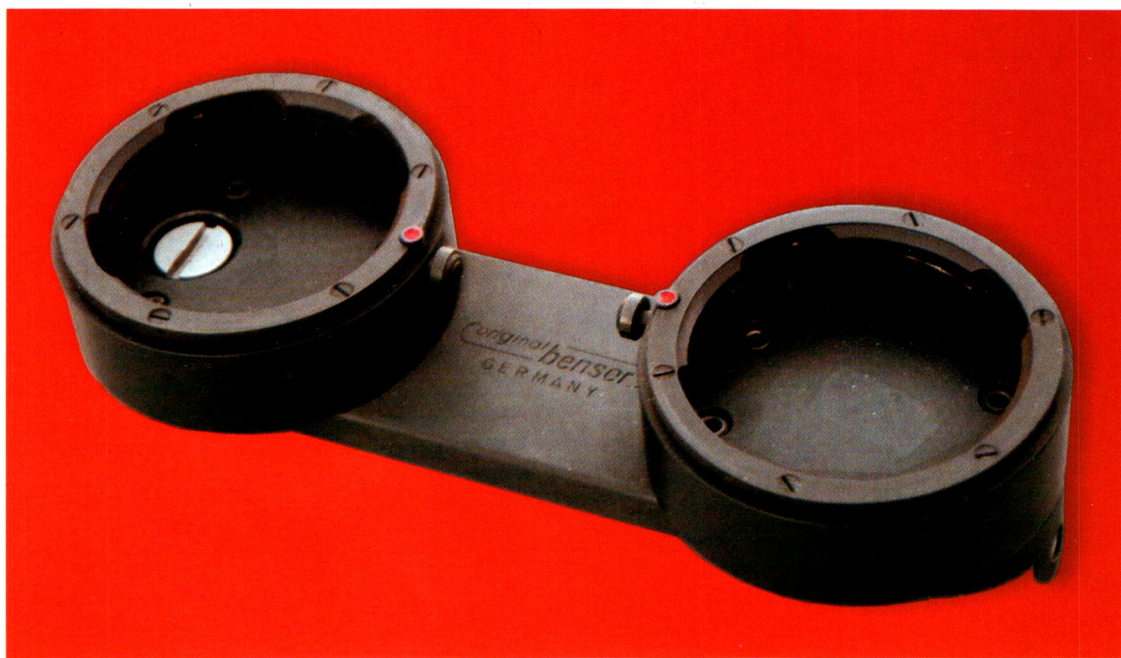
The Gamma was arguably the most innovative of the many Leica copies produced, but I find it simplistic and unjust to consider it just a copy. It must be said that it resembled the Leica for its rangefinder and the similarity in shape, but right from the beginning (1947) it had a bayonet mount, shutter release signal in the finder, a very useful correct film advance index, and indestructible (even if somewhat bulky) rigid metal focal plane shutter, flip-over pressure plate, cartridge-to-cartridge film winder and built-in blade to cut and “pre-develop” the part of the roll that had been exposed! There are other innovative features and details that could be mentioned about the Gamma, the result of it being a hand-crafted product involved

in a continuous, and perhaps frenetic, search for new and better solutions. But I believe every owner of this rare camera (less than 2,000 in all its various models) could carry out their own investigation and offer a personal list of the “special features” of his or her Gamma. Anyone who wishes should feel free to contact me about them.

In addition to Mr. Silvano Rossi, I would like to offer the belated thanks of enthusiasts to the others involved in the production of the Gamma: Serafino Leoni, today, with his son, an esteemed repairman; Franco Rusca, another camera “wizard”; Franco Bessi; department foreman Mr. Nicoli and shop foreman Mr. Colmani. They should be proud of their work that we appreciate today and others will appreciate in the future, astounded as they will be by the quality of the “Gamma-Roma”.

Luigi Crescenzi

EXTREMELY RARE BENSER LENS PANELS



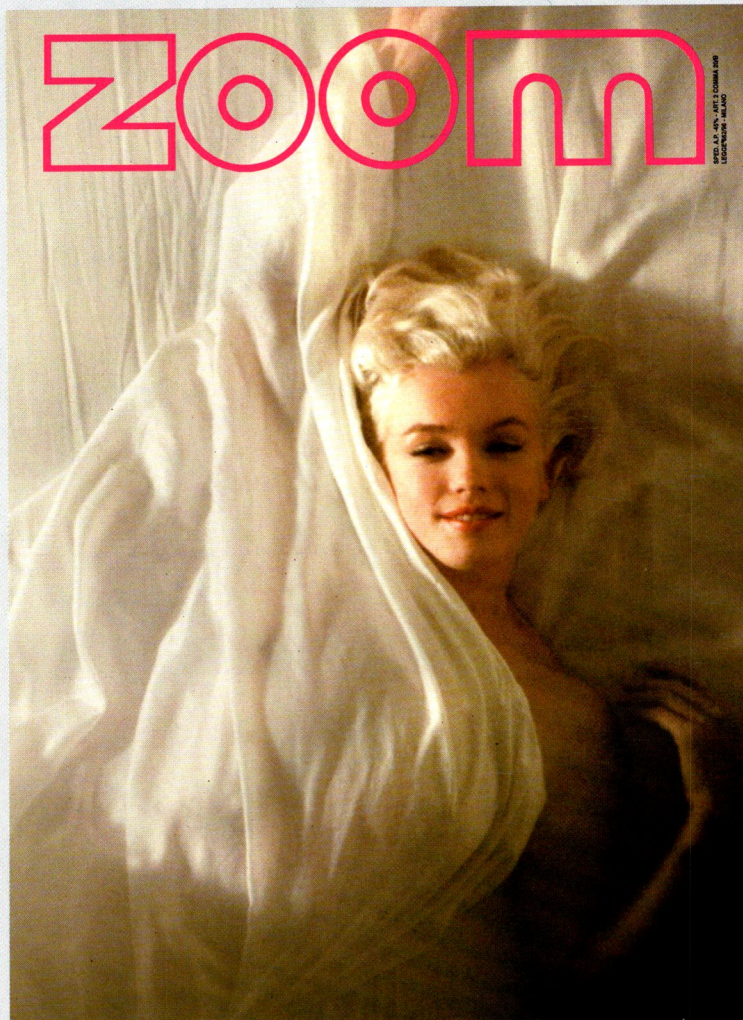
Precursor of the current Leica lens panel for Leica M cameras (code: 14404), the Benser lens panel was manufactured and sold from the end of the 1950s to the end of the 1960s by the Walther Benser KG company, with the consent of Leitz. It should be recalled that Walther Benser, creator of the famous accessory case for Leica cameras, was a well-known photographer and Leica lecturer.

The Benser lens panel, attached directly to the camera body above the base plate of the Leica M3, MP, M2, M1 and MD, made it possible to carry two lenses or optical systems, with the exception of the 21 and 28 mm focal length wide angle lenses of that period. The Benser lens panel was manufactured primarily in silver chrome finish, with the exception of just a few pieces made in black chrome for black painted Leica M3, MP and M2 cameras.

Today, even the illustrated booklet of the Benser lens panel is extremely rare (the booklet measures 211mm x 149mm).

Paolo Ascenzi

Technology, Art, Creativity



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Una notte con Marilyn

Fotografie di Douglas Kirkland

Evoluzione e rivoluzione della Stock Photography:

Il contratto capestro proposto
da Getty Images ai suoi fotografi

HERNING DANISH MUSEUM

Small but unique and comprehensive, the Herning Photography Museum is the only museum of its kind in Denmark. A visit by collectors on their way to the Jutland is a must.



Exterior of the building that houses the Danmarks Fotomuseum



Museum atrium and stairway

Display cases in room 2 containing an overview of photographic and camera history

A short stay in Denmark offered the opportunity of visiting the Danmarks Fotomuseum in Herning, often cited in the magazine *Objektiv*, the official publication of the Danish Photography Collectors' Club, but rarely even mentioned in general tourist guides. The museum's location in Herning is somewhat strange, a charming town of 60,000 inhabitants located in the very center of the Jutland, but decidedly out of the way of the Danish capital and the major Kolding

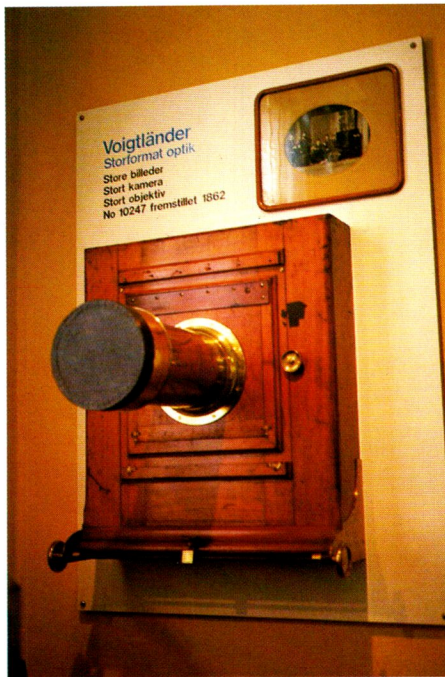
Aarhus Aalborg highway. But Herning is not far from another town, Billund, home of the famous Legoland theme park and a popular tourist attraction.

The Danmarks Fotomuseum is dedicated primarily to cameras and the history of photographic technique: This is not as singular an initiative as might appear since Denmark is the home of a wealth of small museums covering an array of subjects ranging from bicycles, farming implements,

fishing and woodworking to streetcars, dolls, glass, automobiles, pipes and music, not to mention those dealing with history, local customs and fine and contemporary art. But the Danmarks Fotomuseum should not be confused with the other Danish museum dedicated to photography, or better, photography as an art form — the Museet For Fotokunst [Museum of Photographic Art] in Odense, which is dedicated exclusively to photographers and their work



The small daguerreotype "cannon" produced by Voigtländer in 1840



Front of a large-format wooden camera dated 1862



Folding camera for roll film from the early 20th century



Demon microcamera in metal



Kodak wooden camera for roll film

and always has interesting group and personal shows on exhibit. But it does not concern itself at all with the technical aspects or materials used in taking photographs.

In contrast, the Danmarks Fotomuseum in Herning hosts an extensive collection of cameras from all periods, from Daguerre to the 1970s and illustrates the evolution of photographic technique with all relevant information clearly captioned. The museum is housed in an austere, two-storey brick building next to the Herning Town Museum in the Museumgade which is not centrally-

located but is easy to reach on foot from the center of town using the pedestrian route that crosses over the railway tracks.

The museum has 500 m² of exhibition space that is organized into eight exhibition areas of various sizes. Off the atrium, rooms 2 and 3 have fifteen numbered display cases that outline the history of photography and cameras, from daguerreotype, calotype, wet plate and gelatin on glass up to medium, small and very small format film. Room 4 is dedicated to photography using artificial light and flash. Each display case has a number of cameras from a specific era with

their respective instruction manuals, plus a number of examples of photographs taken using a range of methods. All captions are in Danish only without any other language that might be more familiar to European tourists, but at the entrance an explanatory brochure in German is available.

Alongside the wooden giants of the 19th century and the prized folding cameras in metal and leather from the beginning of the 20th, are many more modern and famous cameras from makers such as Ermanox, Exakta, Leica, Rolleiflex, Contax and Hasselblad. The majority of



Leica display



Zeiss Ikon display



Rolleiflex display



Voigtlander flash cameras



Travel cameras



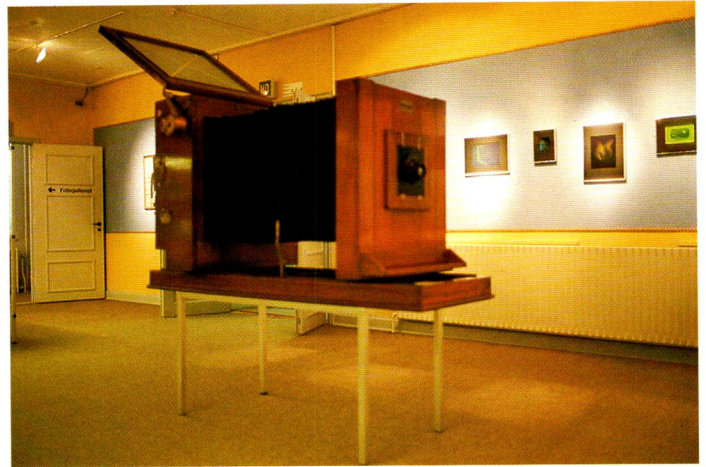
Aerial cameras



From camera to projector



19th century portrait studio



The "giant" in the gallery



Photography gallery

the cameras are German, but there are also American, French, English and Soviet representatives. In the cases dedicated to the Sixties and Seventies there are also Japanese cameras, including Olympus, Minolta, Topcon and Pentax. The collection of photographic equipment seems to break off at the end of the 1960s, leaving it up to the visitor's imagination to reconstruct the last thirty years of photographic history dominated first by electronic and more recently by digital technologies. But perhaps this limitation is a conscious choice rather than a failure to renovate with the times.

Continuing the visit is room 5 dedicated to Danish photography, displaying contributions from the Norka and

Multifoto companies, as well as approximately sixty photographs taken of the writer Hans Christian Andersen, significant for their era. There is also the reconstruction of a late 19th-century photographer's portrait studio as well as display cases dedicated to equipment from major companies such as Leica, Zeiss Ikon, Voigtländer and Rollei. There is a wide sampling of the products of each company spanning a number of decades and including various types of equipment. Among the pieces displayed is a Zeiss Ikon 6x9 folding Mirax without back that was mounted on special brackets on a Zeiss Ikon enlarger or projector to double as a projection lens including adjustable bellows for focusing. Among the Japanese

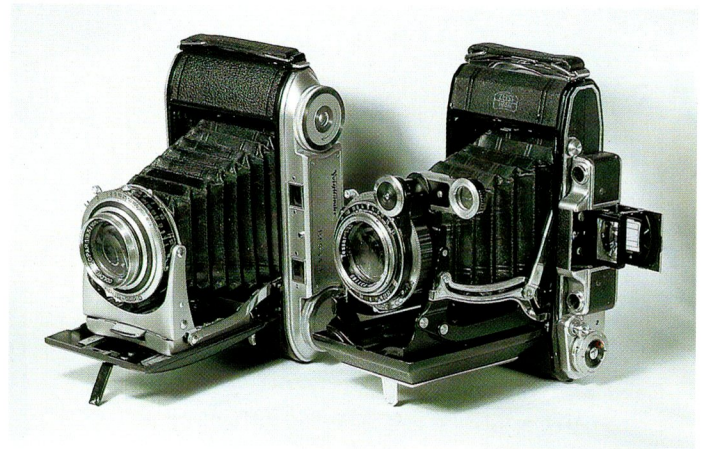
cameras is a splendid 1952 Nikon S. Rooms 6 and 7 are dedicated to photographs with both permanent and temporary collections of works of photographers from the present and past and educational displays dedicated to stereoscopic photography and holograms. Room 8 on the upper floor is dedicated to special types of photography, such as scientific, aerial and panoramic. A delightful surprise is a panoramic color shot one meter high and twelve meters long that is joined in a ring in which the viewer can enter to enjoy a 360° view of the roofs of Copenhagen. A truly unique experience that alone is worth the price of admission.

Danilo Cecchi

THE SIX-BY-NINES FROM BESSA TO SUPER IKONTA



Bessa II and Super Ikonta 531/2 open for size comparison.



Bessa II and Super Ikonta 531/2 compared showing the dimensions of the external rangefinder arm with wedge prisms in the Zeiss camera.

Despite the unquestioned market supremacy and widespread professional and general use of the 35mm format, and despite the slow-but-steady advance of the APS format and the faster, sweeping progress being made by digital photography, the medium format is enjoying today a revival of interest among camera companies and photographers. Alongside the traditional square 6x6cm format, monopolized for decades by the European companies Rollei, Hasselblad and Pentax, the slightly larger 6x7cm format promoted by some Japanese companies including Pentax, Mamiya and Fuji, has also been popular for a number of years. The smaller 6x4.5 format has been the object of more recent rediscovery and unexpected blossoming with the manufacture of a number of autofocus cameras by Pentax, Mamiya, Fuji, Contax and, recently also Bronica. With cameras whose weight and price tag are equivalent to those of 35mm equipment, the 6x4.5cm format produces photographs with almost three times the surface area. With the

6x7cm, this is even greater, but so are costs and camera size.

From six-by-six to six-by-nine

The larger modern-day cameras stop at the 6x7cm format, considered the optimal compromise between the rectangular shape of the photographic paper and that of the negative. In the past, the smallest acceptable size was considered to be 6x9cm, obtained using either plates or 120-type film. A good number of 6x9cm cameras were built at the beginning of the 1900s and between the two world wars, as well as in the period immediately after WWII. Because 120-type film is still manufactured (with some slight changes in thickness, medium and black paper), these old 6x9cm folding cameras are still happily usable. The models equipped with coupled rangefinder make it possible, using the 105mm focal length lenses with which these veterans are normally equipped, to obtain still-appreciable focusing precision starting from a meter-and-a-half up to infinity. Out-of-production since the end

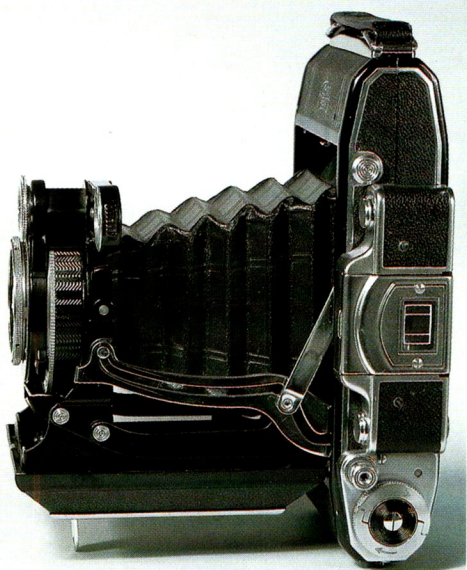
of the 1950s, after almost a half-century of hibernation, the folding 6x9cm cameras with rangefinder are not only of interest to collectors, but also those looking to rediscover the manual art of photography. If this era of the triumph of fast food has seen the birth of the trend towards "slow food" as a reaction, it could prove a stimulating and satisfying experience to rediscover the pleasure to be derived from rangefinder focusing, manual film advance while checking the markings on the back, skilled setting of shutter and aperture speed, manual cocking of the shutter, or the delicate, gradual pressure of one's finger on the shutter release button while listening for the unique, metallic "click" of the shutter. In short, the joy of slow photography in this age of quick focus. Sufficiently compact in size and weight when folded to fit in the pocket, but magnificently impressive when opened, folding 6x9cm cameras embody the spirit of an entire age. Technologically obsolete thanks to the assault of the rangefinder 35mm from the early 1930s, small and



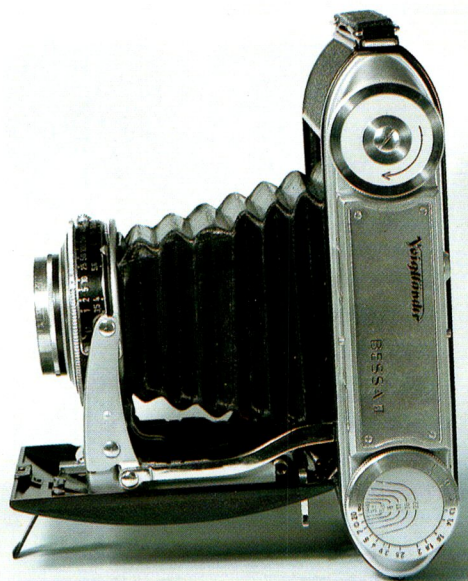
Super Ikonta 531/2 closed showing the folding viewfinder in its closed position and shutter release button on the top plate.



Bessa II closed showing the viewfinder coupled to the rangefinder and the film advance and focusing buttons.



Super Ikonta 531/2 open with viewfinder closed and the frames for 6x9 and 6x6 formats.



Bessa II showing, on the bottom, the focusing button with the depth of field scale and shutter release button.

quite heavy given their size but versatile in performance and with their 6x6cm twin-lens system that was rigid and boxy but fast and precise to use, the folding 6x9cm cameras recognized that their end had come and, with dignity, slowly moved towards extinction. Cumbersome dinosaurs incapable of producing anything more than 8 images per roll compared with the 12 of the Rolleiflex, 16 of the half-frame 6x4.5cm and 36 of the Leica and Contax and despite the very high quality of the large images it so generously produced, following a period of uneasy cohabitation in a world dominated by the philosophy "small-is-beautiful", the folding 6x9cm was forced to succumb.

The Zeiss Ikon six-by-nine

Among all the recent six-by-nines manufactured during the period between the end of World War II and the mid-1950s, the most interesting and reliable were those produced by Zeiss Ikon and Voigtlander. As is well-known, Zeiss Ikon unveiled its first Super Ikonta 6x9cm with coupled

rangefinder in 1934, giving it the number 530/2 and equipping it with a wedge prism rangefinder mounted on a mobile arm and with Tessar 105mm lenses with speeds of f/4.5 or f/3.8, as well as the more economical Triotar and Novar lenses. In 1936 the Super Ikonta was modified with a double exposure safety lock and re-baptized with the number 531/2. The end of the war did not interrupt production of the Super Ikonta 531/2, but the 105mm/f3.5 Tessar lens was replaced by a Xenar with the same focal length and speed. Equipped first with Compur Rapid and later Synchro Compur shutters, the Super Ikonta 531/2, hung on until 1955. In 1951, alongside the Super Ikonta 531/2, production was begun on the Mess Ikonta 524/2 in which the rangefinder system was modified (incorporated within the upper case together with the finder) and the wedge prism eliminated. The best of the Mess Ikonta 524/2 models had a 105mm f/3.5 Tessar lens on a 1/500th Synchro Compur shutter and remained in production until 1957.

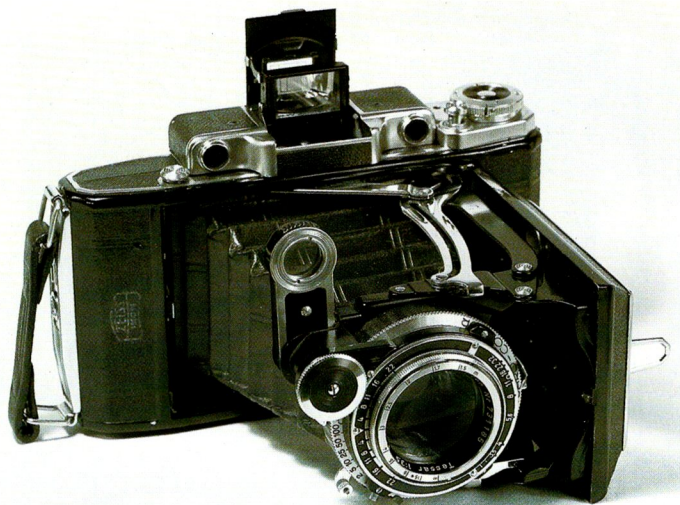
As proof that it did not believe wholeheartedly in the 6x9cm format, right from the birth of the Super Ikonta, Zeiss Ikon paired the 530/2 model with the 6x4.5cm half-frame model 530 and with much fanfare in 1935 introduced the 6x6cm square format 530/16 model paired with the very fast 80mm f/2.8 Tessar.

The Voigtlander six-by-nine

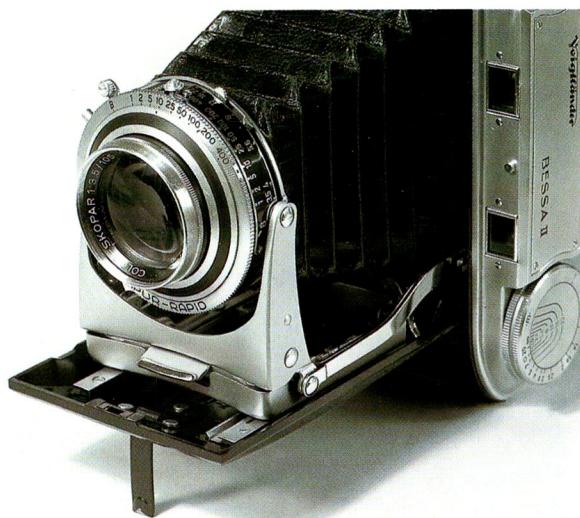
Voigtlander presented the rangefinder coupled version of the Bessa 6x9cm in 1938, calling it the Bessa E for "Entfernungsmesser" and equipping it with the 105mm f/3.5 Helomar or Skopar or Heliar lenses, all with Compur Rapid shutter. The upper part of the Bessa E housed both the viewfinder and the rangefinder unit using a modern solution that was much more practical than the one used in 1933 on the Prominent folding 6x9cm. After the war, the Bessa 6x9cm with rangefinder returned to production and was equipped with 105mm f/3.5 Color Skopar or Color Heliar lenses on Compur Rapid. In 1951, the Bessa was modified



Bessa II in shooting position.



Super Ikonta 531/2 in shooting position with viewfinder open.



Detail of the Bessa II with Color Skopar lens and lens unit mounted on wheels for focusing.



Detail of the Super Ikonta 531/2 with Tessar lens and external focusing ring connected to the external rangefinder arm.

by the coupling of the rangefinder to the finder, and the Synchro Compur shutter began to be used, while the 105mm f/4.5 Apo-Lanthar lens also began to be mounted on the Bessa 6x9cm, a lens in which rare-earths, in particular lanthanum, were utilized. Production of the Bessa 6x9cm was stopped in 1955, as was that of the Super Ikonta 531/2.

Alongside the Bessa 6x9cm, Voigtlander also began production in 1951 of a 6x6cm format alternative, calling it the Perkeo, and the Perkeo E with coupled rangefinder, dating from 1954, provided indirect competition to the Bessa.

The Super Ikonta and Bessa in operation

As unpleasant and only marginally useful as it is to make comparisons, let's look at both a Super Ikonta 531/2 with 105mm f/3.5

Tessar lens and a Bessa II with a Color Skopar of the same focal length and speed. Both are cameras dating from the early 1950s with almost a half-century behind them.

The Super Ikonta 531/2 has the classic all-black Zeiss Ikon finish with the Von Albada bright-line viewfinder that had been in use since 1936. The camera body is 16.5x9.5cm and weighs 860 grams. A single button simultaneously opens the folding viewfinder and the front door so that the bellows and entire frame unit may be pulled out with the lens and shutter. The rangefinder eyepiece is very small and the frames in the viewfinder are used to delimit the 6x9cm or 6x6cm format sizes. To use the rangefinder the arm on which the rotating wedge prisms are mounted must be pulled out. The shutter and diaphragm controls are on the lens mount together with the focusing dial and shutter cocking

lever. A pre-war uncoated Tessar lens made by Carl Zeiss Jena, a post-war coated Tessar made by Zeiss Opton or a Xenar Schneider lens may be used. Either a Compur Rapid or Synchro Compur, both with speeds up to 1/500th and self-timer may be used. The camera is equipped with a safety lock against accidental double exposure and is sturdily-built using top-quality materials. The self-ejecting frame that holds the lens is sturdy and guarantees perfect positioning between the lens unit and film plane.

The Bessa II, of similar size and weight, utilizes different structural features that are very practical and inventive. Whereas the design of the Super Ikonta is still based on a pre-war concept, the Bessa II's design is completely new in terms of both its technical solutions and styling with a plethora of excellent-quality and -finish chrome parts. Focusing is accomplished



Super Ikonta 530/2 and 531/2 compared. The only difference is the double exposure safety lock near the shutter release button.



Pre-war Bessa E and Bessa II compared. There are a number of differences, including the coupled rangefinder viewfinder and different controls layout.



A Moskva 2 dated 1947, similar to the pre-war model of the Super Ikonta.

on the Bessa II using a button located on the machine body, symmetrically positioned in relation to the film advance button. This solution was also adopted by Voigtländer in its Vito III and Prominent 35mm rangefinder cameras and represents a slightly non-conformist, but intelligent choice. The position of the shutter release button that disappears when the camera is closed is particularly creative and intelligent, as is the decision to equip the Bessa with a button to release the stays to close the camera. In other folding cameras, including the Super Ikonta, the two bellows stays could only be released by pressing on them simultaneously. For focusing, the Bessa does not utilize the traditional rotating lens system, but rather the movement of the entire lens panel connected to the bellows movement. This is a better, but more delicate system that requires the use of a greater number of complex mechanisms and moving parts which, over time, could become worn and manifest a certain amount of play, thus compromising the positioning between the

lens and film plane. The rangefinder coupled to the viewfinder provides the Bessa with faster and more accurate focusing than the Super Ikonta. The product of a meticulous, modern design, the Bessa 6x9cm seemed to be a few steps ahead of the older philosophy found in the Super Ikonta 6x9cm, but it did not enjoy the commercial success it would have deserved and it was taken out of production prematurely due to a small and not-very-receptive market. Today, the Bessa 6x9cm seems to be enjoying the popularity on the collecting market it failed to win in the 1950s and, compared with the Super Ikonta of the same format, it sits a notch or two higher, even bring astronomical prices for cameras equipped with the Apo Lanthar lens.

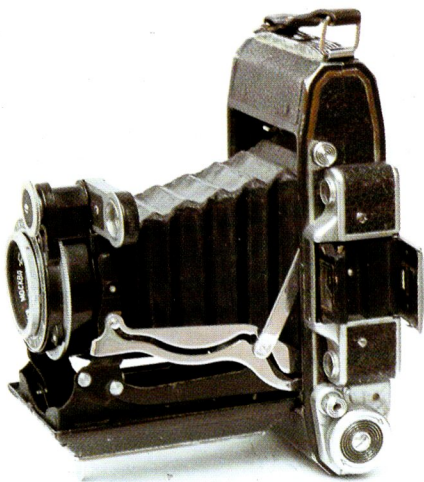
Collecting the Super Ikonta and Bessa

Prices for the Super Ikonta 6x9cm are not particularly high on the collecting market and start from DM 350-400 for pre-war models with f/3.8 Tessar, up to DM 450-

500 for post-war models with f/3.5 Tessar. Estimates regarding the rangefinder Bessa are more differentiated, starting from DM 200 for Bessa E models and ranging up to DM 600-700 for the Bessa II with f/3.5 Skopar or Heliar lenses. But these prices exceed DM 1,000 for cameras with the Color Heliar and even reach DM 2,000 for the rarer and more highly-esteemed pieces equipped with Apo Lanthar lens.

The low-priced Moscow version

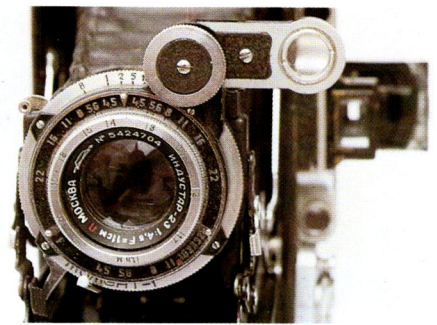
As is well-known, following their occupation of Dresden, Soviet troops confiscated the equipment for making the 35mm Contax and transferred it to Kiev. But they also transferred much of the Carl Zeiss Jena lens-making technology, producing the Jupiter lenses that corresponded to the Sonnar and Biogon lenses. But neither did the Super Ikonta escape this vast operation of a transfusion of German technical expertise into the Russian homeland, and after the war manufacture of the folding 6x9cm Moskva (Moscow) began in Krasnogorsk. With the



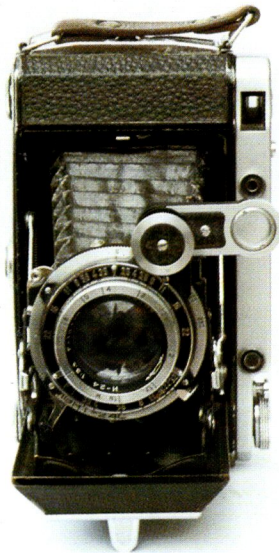
Moskva 2 with viewfinder open.



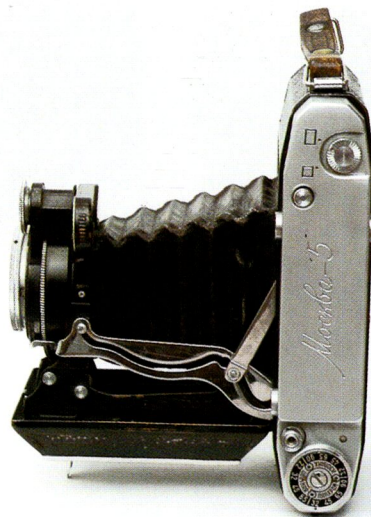
The back of the Moskva 2 with just the 6x9cm frame counter window.



Detail of lens and shutter. The lens serial number also indicates 1954 as the manufacturing year.



Front of a 1956 Moskva 5 with rangefinder viewfinder closed inside its case.



Top plate of the Moskva 5 with smooth upper case, viewfinder switch between 6x9cm and 6x6cm formats.



Back of the Moskva 5 with counter windows for both 6x9cm and 6x6cm formats.

styling of the Ikonta, the Moskva 1 and Moskva 3 models are without rangefinder, but the Moskva 2, Moskva 4 and Moskva 5 models are equipped with precise, rotating wedge prism rangefinders. The Moskva 2, born in 1947, is equipped with a Tessar-type 4-element 110mm f/4.5 Industar 23 lens mounted on either a German-built Compur leaf shutter or the corresponding Soviet Moment 1 with speeds ranging from 1 second to 1/250th and B exposure. The viewfinder extracted as on the Super Ikonta and is included among the twin eyepieces of the rangefinder rotating wedge prisms mounted on the mobile arm. Production of the Moskva 2 continued until 1956 and close to 200,000 of these cameras were made. In 1995, a variation baptized the Moskva 4 appeared with the same viewfinder, same rangefinder, same lens and same shutter to which the synch socket has been added. The Moskva 4 was also modified for 6x6cm frame conversion using a normal film plane mask and dual frame counter system using two red windows on the back. The Moskva 4 remained in production until

1958 and less than 63,000 were manufactured. Moskva cameras are marked with the serial number preceded by the number of the year it was produced on the back near the eyepiece. The lens mount also bears the shutter serial number on the shutter mount, again consisting of the number plus the year it was produced, while the lens serial number found on the front lens ring is just the progressively-assigned number and does not necessarily indicate the period in which it was manufactured. Production began on the Moskva 5 in 1956 and this model utilizes a viewfinder with rangefinder coupled to the lens movement, housed in a sleek, compact chrome casing that makes it resemble somewhat the Mess Ikonta, but it continues to use the extractable wedge prism located on the external lens mount. The wedge rotates together with the front lens element for focusing between 1.5 meters and infinity. The lens is a 105mm f/3.5 Industar 24 with anti-glare coating that stops down to f/22 and was built on the Tessar design. The leaf shutter is a Moment 24C with speeds ranging from 1 second to 1/250th plus B

exposure, and is equipped with synch socket. The shutter is cocked from the front, but its release is controlled using the button positioned on the top plate which cannot be pressed if the film has not been advanced. A red marking indicates if the film has been advanced or not. For intentional double exposure, the auxiliary shutter release lever on the lower front of the camera must be utilized. On the Moskva 5, either the 6x9cm or square 6x6cm frame may be selected using a normal film plane mask. The back includes red counter windows for each with its own independent door, and the viewfinder has a shifting internal frame to select which format is in use. With over 200,000 produced between 1956 and 1960, the Moskva 5 was the last of this type of camera to be manufactured in the Soviet Union. Available on European markets at prices just slightly over DM 100, the Moskva 5 offers a valid alternative to the German models and has a certain level of collecting interest.

**Danilo Cecchi
and Pierpaolo Cancarini**

COLOR ROBOT DE LUXE



Robot IIa with green finish no. C98193, 40/1.9 Xenon lens no. 2028007.



Robot IIa with beige finish no. C115388, 40/1.9 Xenon lens no. 3188909.

Only three models released by the Robot company have had the privilege of having some cameras finished in various colors. They are the Robot IIa dated 1951, the Robot Star I from 1952 and the Robot Star 25 from 1996 known as the Star Classic. When each of the first two models was first marketed, the changes were made in a very small number of cameras that is not exactly quantifiable, but certainly totals no more than a few dozen. These cameras even preceded the official release of the new models to be marketed. For example, the Robot IIa shown here has the serial number 98193, while the numbering of this camera series began with number 100,000.

Beige, green, red or white, these camera bodies of which very few were made, were created for important clients and those visiting the factory. In addition, female clients represented an important market segment in the 1950s, a segment that was just opening to photography. The small size of these cameras, ideal for fitting into a woman's purse, and their attractive colors were

important factors in seducing the fairer sex. The Robot company did not keep a production list of these colored camera bodies in its archives as did Leica with its Luxus cameras, so it is not known exactly how many were produced. For the IIa and Star I models, two German experts have estimated that a maximum of ten cameras were built in each of the various colors.

To verify the authenticity of a Robot De Luxe and avoid buying a forgery, first of all ascertain that the camera base plate is the same color as the lining of the camera body. It is all too easy to just replace leather lining. Another point to check is the quality of the finishing on these cameras which is always impeccable and extremely meticulous. The colored Robot Star and Robot IIa are often equipped with two eyelets for the leather neck strap.

The two models

Some information regarding the features of these two models distributed by the Düsseldorf company.

The Robot IIa

This new camera manufactured by Robot was unveiled at the Köln Photokina in 1951. With its 24x24mm frame, the Robot IIa has a mechanical motor that makes it possible to expose 24 frames one after the other. Its serial number is preceded by the letter C. On the outside, it resembles the Robot II and can be differentiated by the accessory clip located on the upper casing and a double X contact synch sockets for electronic flash and F for slow combustion bulbs. On some cameras, this socket is marked "M" for the use of magnesium bulbs. But the most important change in the IIa model was the ability to use standard 35mm cassettes. Users who wanted to prepare the cassettes themselves utilized those bearing the letter "T". Once the N film spool was full, it was sent directly to the lab for developing given the fact that rewinding was not always possible on the Robot IIa. A large-crown 48-exposure version was also available, but it is less common than the 24-exposure version. In



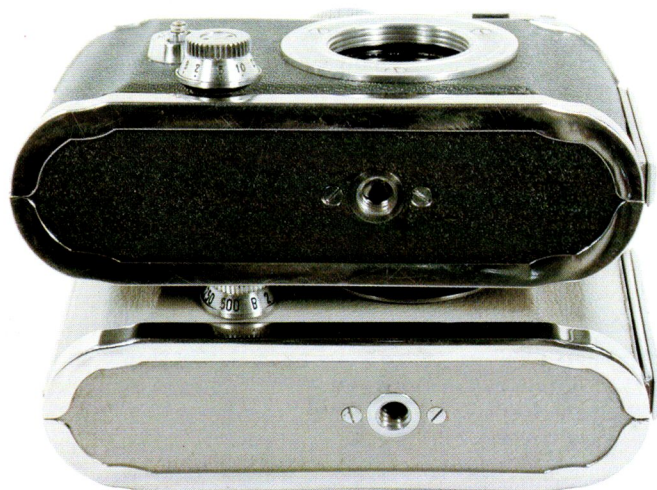
Robot Star I with green finish no. D114332, 40/1.9 Xenon lens no. 3446393.



Robot Star I with beige finish no. D114449, 40/1.9 Xenon lens no. 3188909.



Robot Star I with red finish no. 115112, 40/1.9 Xenon lens no. 3506603 (from the collection of Dr. Rolf Beltermann).



Top plates of the Robot Star and Robot IIa beige.

Base plates of the two cameras.

1951, a watertight body for the Robot II and Robot IIa was released for underwater shooting to depths of 30 meters.

The Robot Star I

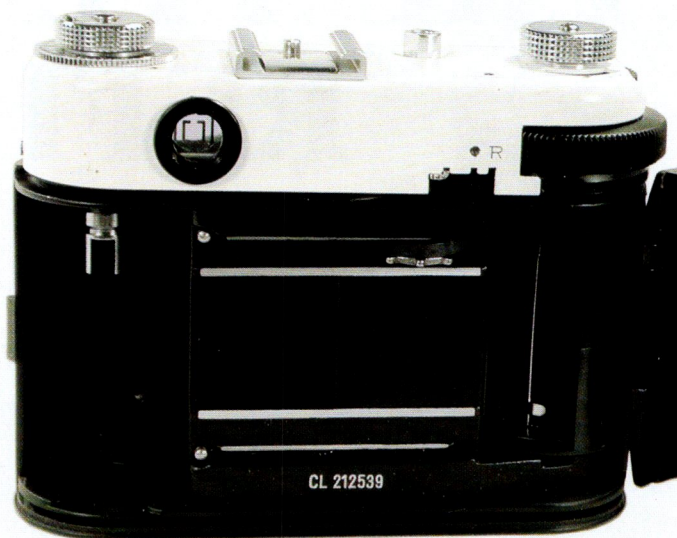
In production from 1952 to 1960, the classic Robot Star I is easily identifiable

by the name engraved on the front of the camera, accompanied by two gold stars. Its serial number is preceded by the letter D and it still has the side viewfinder. Shutter speeds are the same as those on the previous model as are the XM sockets. On some bodies, the symbols of

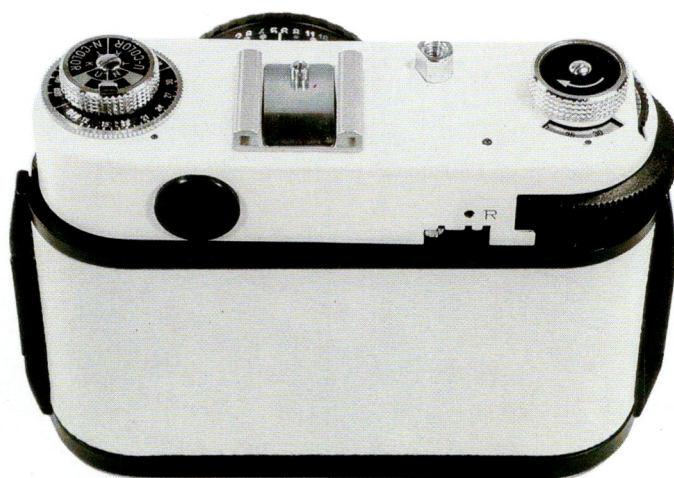
a lightning bolt and bulb replace the letters XM. The primary innovation on this model was the presence of a rewind button on the upper body. Positioned near the accessory clip, this lozenge-shaped button had to be lifted to be turned. This made it possible to return the film to its



Robot Star Classic with Schneider 38/2.8 Xenar lens no. 13249150.



Robot Star Classic, open, with serial number CL212539.



Back and top plate of the Robot Star Classic.

original cartridge before sending it to the lab. In this period, color film cassettes sold with processing included were only developed if returned in their original cartridge. This enhancement became a must on Robot cameras, given the fact that it had been standard on those of their competitors for some time. It is a shame that Robot users had to wait for the company's fourth model, the Star I, to take advantage of this improvement. However, for proper functioning of the Robot Star I, the N winder spool was still necessary. It also had a 48-exposure version, as well as a model with two neck strap eyelets. Some Robot Star I cameras were used by the Swedish army under the name Rka19, but these were black-finish. The raised stars near the Star I name are smaller on the cameras of the first series and more prominent on the last series. In 1952, its price was DM 458 with the new 40mm f/1.9 Xenon lens by Schneider.

The Robot Star Classic

The last of the colored cameras, the Star 25, made its appearance at the 1996 Photokina. Normally black in color, an updated white version called the Robot Star Classic was also produced. This limited series of 500 cameras embodies an operating concept going back sixty years. Even today, its mechanics represent the best in German engineering of years past. Its famous spring motor made it possible to shoot in sequence with a capacity of twenty-five frames with a full load. The camera had a bright-line viewfinder with frames for three different focal lengths. The outside frame was for the 38mm f/2.8 Xenar and 40mm f/1.9 Xenon. The center one for the 75mm f/3.8 Xenar telephoto and the internal frame for the 150mm f/4.0 Xenar telephoto. Available shutter speeds were B exposure, 4 8 15 30 60 125 250 and 1/500 of a second. The frame counter could be reset manually. A setting disk under the rewind

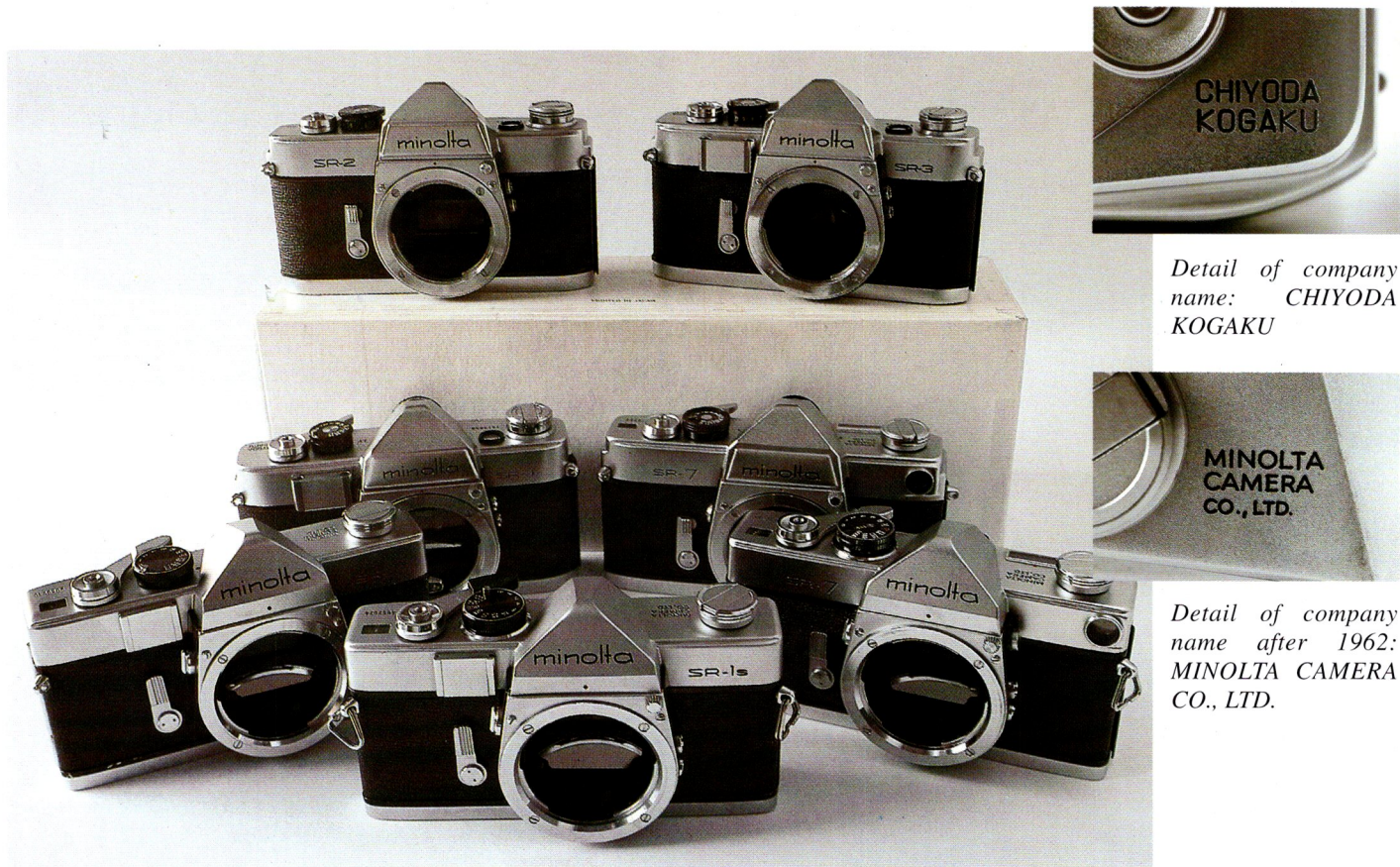
button made it possible to set the type of film in use. The standard cartridges available on the market could be utilized without problem on the Star Classic, but the use of the TR loaders facilitated film advance, avoiding scratching. At Photokina 96, the Star Classic was being sold for DM 3060 with the Schneider 38mm f/2.8 Xenar lens. A certificate of authenticity accompanied the sale of each camera.

In this century of full-automation and for those who have retained even a basic notion of photography utilizing manual diaphragm and shutter settings, the Star Classic is extremely easy to use and it is truly a pleasure to be able to rediscover the satisfaction derived from personal exposure setting and the square format held in such high esteem by photographers of generations past.

Text and photos by Claude Bellon

With thanks to Dr. Rolf Beltermann

PRE-TTL MINOLTA REFLEXES



Main SR cameras on display: Top: left, SR2; right, SR3 Rear: lower left, SR1; right, SR7, Front: left, SR1 V; right, SR7 V; center, SR1s

Minolta is a company that has always offered an extensive selection of each category of camera it has ever produced. For 35mm reflexes alone, which it has been producing for over forty years, Minolta is famous for its wide array of models and their continuous updating. To each of the originals, subsequent models were added that were almost identical but with just slight variations and different model IDs. For example, the Minolta SRT 101 was released in 1966 and over the next fifteen years, seven versions were issued, all slightly different and each with its own model number. In 1971, the SRT101 was modified and the SRT100 born. In 1973 the modified SRT303 was presented and in 1975 the SRT303b and SRT100b models arrived. Finally, in 1977, the SRT family

was completed with the SRT101b and SRT100x models. Added to these model numbers used in Europe were the different series numbers utilized on models with the same features, but destined for sale in other markets such as the United States and Japan. For example, there were the American models identified as SRT102, SRT200, SRT201 and SRT202, in addition to those with more "creative" model names sold in major outlet chains such as K-Mart and J.C. Penny. The policy inaugurated with the Minolta SRT was later also followed with the electronic reflexes and more modern autofocus reflexes. But Minolta also stands out for the courageous innovations it unveiled over time. The Minolta SRT101 represented a milestone with its contrast compensation TTL

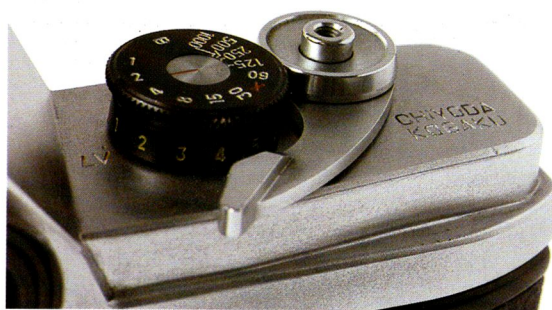
metering and original aperture simulator. The electronic Minolta reflexes taught the entire industry something introducing the concept of programmed exposure before any of its competitors. The Minolta 7000 Maxxum inaugurated the era of autofocus reflexes and the Dynax further developed the concept of built-in automatic features. Taking a step back into the Fifties and Sixties and Minolta's first single reflexes, we find the same underlying restlessness. In fact, the rapid succession of model numbers and variations is an indication of their great innovative courage and demonstrates the company's desire to constantly update the models in production to the possibilities offered by technology in constant evolution. For Minolta collectors, the overlapping of the different



Minolta SR2 no. 1105836, year 1958. Front view with 55/1.8 Auto PF Rokkor no. 1204222. The diaphragm is partially closed, unusual for a mounted Minolta lens, but normal for the SR2 model in which the diaphragm only opened automatically when the shutter was wound-on.



The SR2 advance lever and shutter speed dial. Note the irregularly-spaced times up to 1/1000th and the red 1/50th X sync positioned separately from the other timing sequence. The dial on the SR2 had to be lifted to be turned and it also turned freely from the bulb exposure to 1/1000th or 1 second. Also note the shutter release button housed in the fulcrum crown of the film advance lever, a position that would be maintained in all models up to the SRT and XM.



As above, but showing a detail of the LVs engraved in yellow. LV0 corresponds to 1 second and LV10 to 1/1000th.

variants hidden under the apparently identical SR2, SR1, SR3 and SR7 logos represents a rich and apparently inexhaustible field of research.

From Chiyoda Kogaku to Minolta

During the pre-war period, the Chiyoda Kogaku company of Osaka built a number of medium-format cameras, primarily folding but also twin-lens rigid cameras, calling them, in turn, Minolta, Semi Minolta and Minoltaflex. It was only after the war that Chiyoda Kogaku began making a number of 35mm film cameras. The first 35mm Minoltas utilized rangefinder focusing and were vaguely influenced by Leica cameras with which they shared the same 39x1 screw mount. The Minolta 35, however, was all-new in its exterior design and finder-rangefinder coupling. In the second half of the 1950s, Chiyoda Kogaku presented the Minolta A with non-interchangeable lens on a central Citizen shutter, and at the end of the decade, it released the Minolta Super A with Seikosha central shutter and

interchangeable lens. Alongside these cameras which made the Minolta name known outside Japan, Chiyoda designed a 35mm single-reflex with focal plane shutter and interchangeable lens. It was still just the second half of the 1950s in a period in which reflex cameras were only in their infancy and very few 35mms were actually being produced. Specifically, the Japanese camera industry only had the Asahi Pentax with screw mount and the Miranda with interchangeable finder. Right from the planning stage, the Minolta reflex stood out for its new design and more-than-respectable performance. The Minolta reflex was not only designed with creativity but also special attention to detail and it was released on the international market a few months ahead of other Japanese reflexes such as the Topcon R, Nikon F, Canonflex and Petriflex.

Minolta SR2

October 10, 1958 marked the start of production of Chiyoda Kogaku's first 35mm reflex, the Minolta SR2. The initials

SR were used to stand for the English "single reflex" and because the name Minoltaflex had already been used for their twin-lens 6x6cm. The number "2" had no particular significance, but it did give a hint that other new SR models were to follow. The Minolta SR2 was a compact, elegant reflex that immediately differentiated itself from the German reflexes. Its body was square with rounded corners and flat upper cover from which protruded the peaked, but not sharply pointed, hood of the fixed pentaprism finder. At the base of the hood on a slightly-raised plate, the name "minolta" in all lower-case letters was engraved. The lens mount was a large-diameter quick bayonet mount with a latch tab and small external release button. The camera utilized a click delay mechanism with large loading lever prominently visible on the front. It had a hinged back and the main controls were located on the top plate. On the right was the elegant film advance lever with built-in, coaxial threaded shutter release button and shutter speed dial marked with eleven



55mm f/1.8 lens seen from above. Note the LV scale engraved in yellow next to each aperture value. On the right side is the catch of the aperture ring which, on these models, does not move freely and must be released using the catch for the value to be set.

Detail of the lens changing catch and prism. Note the 3-prong bayonet that remained unchanged on all of this marque's non-autofocus models. The upper part of the self-timer lever hides the start knob of the self-timer itself. On the lower left, the lens changing catch with the automatic diaphragm release with a different shape and position than on later models to permit immediate opening. On the upper right, the traditional knurled lens release knob that remained unchanged right up to the SRT models of the 1980s. On the side, note the two X and FP synch terminals with standard coaxial connection.



numerical settings ranging from one second to 1/1000th as well as X synch corresponding to 1/50th and the bulb exposure. Engraved on the outside edge of the dial were light values from 0 to 10 corresponding to speeds of 1 to 1000. The outside crown of the speed dial had to be lifted before being turned to select. On the left of the top plate were the extractable chrome rewind lever and small frame counter window. The Minolta used a fabric focal plane shutter with horizontal movement and instant return mirror. It had a brighter viewfinder screen used like a fresnel lens. The FP and X synch terminals were on the left side of the mirror box and the lens release button was on the camera front on the base of the pentaprism. The standard lens with automatic diaphragm closing was a six element PF Rokkor with

55mm focal length and f/1.8 that could be stopped down to f/22. The front element was anti-glare coated, the screw mount filters were 55mm in diameter and the focusing ranged from half a meter to infinity. The lens lineup was promising and included focal lengths from 35mm to 600mm. The front of the camera bore the inscription "minolta" in the center and the SR2 logo was engraved on the right side of the front. The serial number appeared on the top plate next to the rewind lever while the name Chiyoda Kogaku was engraved next to the shutter release button. Attractive, modern, easy-to-handle, fairly compact and sufficiently sturdy, the Minolta SR2 enjoyed a certain commercial success and marked the first chapter in what was to become a long story, but it was replaced after less than two years by

an improved model.

Minolta SR1

At the end of July 1959 a second reflex was created alongside the Minolta SR2. Only a slightly simplified version, this new camera was baptized the Minolta SR1 and was completely identical to the Minolta SR2 in terms of its aesthetic design and performance, the sole difference being that its highest shutter speed was just 1/500th and, as a consequence the light values were limited from 0 to 9. To justify the lower price tag, the Minolta SR1 was equipped with a six-element PF Rokkor lens with 55mm focal length and maximum speed of f/2.0. Unlike the Minolta SR2, the Minolta SR1 remained in production for a period of time that extended over 10 years and it remained the lowest-price member

View from above of the SR3 with its SR Meter inserted. Note the double, partially overlapping white/red scale, selected using the knob to the right of the meter. Note the LV values still in yellow on the lens. There is a small red infrared reference "R" on the depth of field scale; this refinement can be found even on the very earliest lenses of this marque.



The SR3 with selenium exposure meter towering over the speed dial; below note the diffuser for reading incident light that could be inserted into the clip on the cell.



Pair of SR3 cameras. Only chrome versions and no black versions of this model have been chronicled. Note the SR Meter with mounted diffuser.

Minolta SR3 no. 1193139, year 1960. Front view with 58/1.4 Auto PF Rokkor lens no. 1201744. Note the contoured plate and two holes for the SR Meter bracket. This plate caused the SR3 logo to be shifted to the other side. Otherwise it is very similar to the SR2 except for the shutter speed dial which still has the LV scale in yellow but it no longer must be lifted for setting, and it is also equipped with a chrome tab for exposure meter insertion and all speed settings are uniformly spaced around the dial. Also note the size of the formidable 58/1.4, substantial for its day weighing more than 300 grams.

of the SR family. Despite its lower price, the Minolta SR1 was produced in a range of variations that mirrored the development of the higher-priced and more-prestigious SR models. In August 1960 the first change in the Minolta SR1 was made with the modification of its speed dial. As in the new Minolta SR3, the external ring no longer had to be lifted before turning and the new speed selected by directly rotating the inside of the dial.

Minolta SR3

In August 1960 the Minolta SR2 was taken out of production and substituted by the SR3 model. Although it had the same features and casing as the previous model, the Minolta SR3 came equipped with a

new standard lens, the faster six-element 58/1.4 Auto PF Rokkor, as well as a front clip for an external exposure meter with selenium photocell. The exposure meter was mechanically connected to the shutter speed dial using a small raised tab. To make room for the exposure meter accessory, the SR3 logo was shifted to the left side of the front. The focusing screen was also replaced by one with fresnel screen lines and stigmometer in the center. The clip-on exposure meter could be set for film speeds between 6 and 3200 ASA. In August 1961, a year after it was introduced, the Minolta SR3 was modified for automatic aperture stop-down and reopening following each shot using the new lens designed with this option. The Minolta

SR3 with this type of modification came to be known as type 2 and remained in production until the Minolta SR7 with built-in external CdS photocell was presented on the market.

Minolta SR1

At the same time the type 2 Minolta SR3 was presented in August 1961, the Minolta SR1 was also modified to include automatic aperture stop-down and reopening, clip-on selenium exposure meter accessory and new standard 55/1.8 lens with automatic diaphragm opening. In this variant of the Minolta SR1, the SR1 logo was shifted to the left of the front while the right side was occupied by the metal plate for the meter accessory clip.



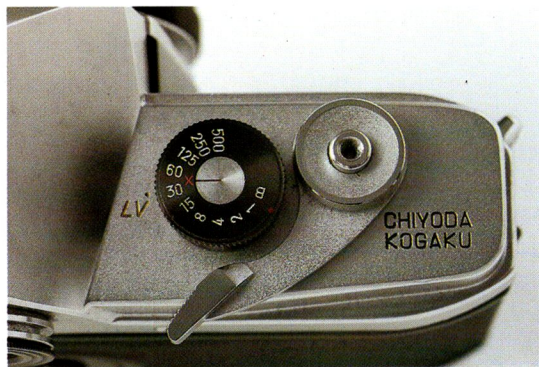
Minolta SR1 no. 1152633, year 1960, model 2. Front view with 55/2 Auto PF Rokkor no. 1330101 in original box, leather case and the classic PASSED stamp of the JCI, individually numbered and tied to the machine body with a ribbon.



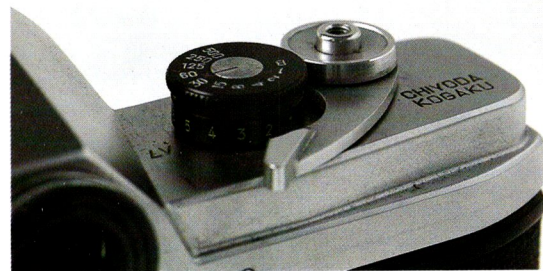
Minolta SR1 no. 1152633, front view with lens. Note that the diaphragm also remains closed to the set value on this model if the shutter is not wound-on. Basically the same as the SR2 model except for the SR1 logo which is in green instead of exclusively black as on the SR2 and SR3.



View of the SR1 from above. Note the speed ceiling of 1/500th and uniform spacing on the dial. This indicates its destination for amateur use as opposed to the SR2 and SR3 models that also included the prestigious 1/1000th. The lens kit was also more for amateurs with the modest 55/2 instead of the 55/1.8 and 58/1.4 of its more exalted brothers. Note the PASSED stamp.



Detail of the shutter speed dial and advance lever. This model also has an X setting of 1/50th that corresponds to an exact position on the dial which no longer requires lifting to be turned and is click marked.



Detail of yellow LV markings.

Detail of 55/2 Auto PF Rokkor 1330101. Note the yellow LV markings, the half-settings, extremely detailed depth of field scale, IR index, white scale for meters and green scale for feet. This color differentiation was maintained unchanged until the early 1980s. At the extreme left, note the latch on the aperture ring.

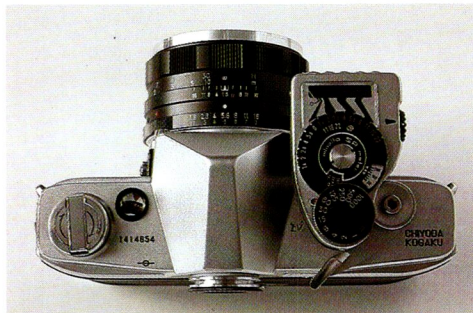


Detail of the FP and X synch terminals, frame counter, rewind lever and SR1 logo in green positioned on this side of the front to leave space for the exposure meter clip.

Minolta SR1 1414854, front view, with 55/1.8 Auto PF Rokkor no. 2419376. This lens maintains the yellow LV markings but has been updated with click marked diaphragm settings and the consequent removal of the release latch. The camera body also has an improved diaphragm mechanism that now opens following the shot independently of shutter cocking. The SR1 was also equipped with the 55/1.8. The exposure meter plate is contoured with two thin chrome strips, identical to the plate on the SR3.



Minolta SR1 1414854 with lens and selenium SR Meter.



Minolta SR1 1414854 seen from above. The SR METER was produced in only a single version with the 1/1000th setting that remained unutilized on the SR1.



Minolta SR1 1414854 without exposure meter. Note the two holes on the exposure meter plate. A special cap was supplied to cover it when the exposure meter was not mounted.

Minolta SR1 2055415, year 1962, model 5b. View from above with 53/2 Auto PF Rokkor 1011699. This is the first SR1 marked MINOLTA CAMERA CO., LTD. and no longer CHIYODA KOGAKU.



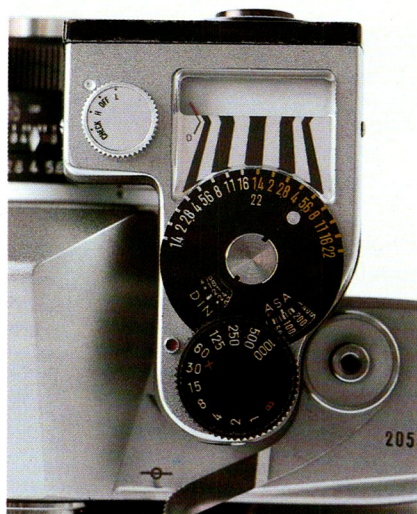
Note the different rewind button, the shifting of the frame counter from the left side to the extreme right and the changing of its shape from round to rectangular. The serial number position was also shifted along with that of the frame counter. The shiny end of the advance lever has changed shape, the exposure meter plate is squarer and its front is no longer contoured. The yellow LV markings are no longer to be found on either the body or lens.

Minolta SR1 2055415, front view with lens. Note the tapering of the exposure meter plate prism; the unusual green color of the SR1 has been changed to the more traditional black. The uncommon 53mm focal length characterizes this amateur-market lens with speed setting limited to f/2. This focal length was not to be offered ever again.



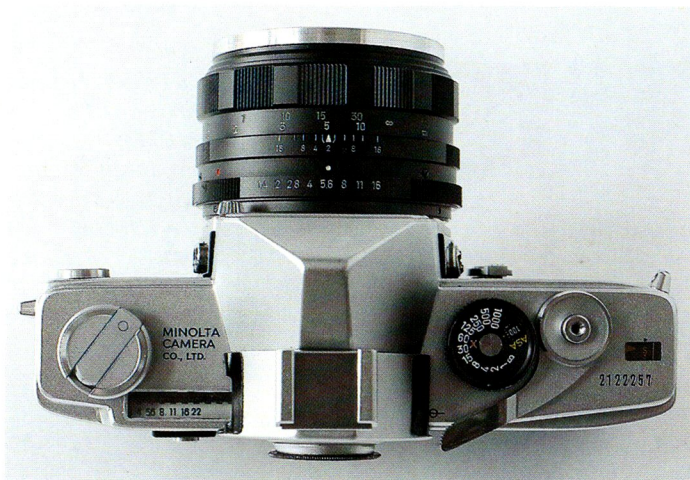
Minolta SR1 2055415, front view with SR Meter 2. Below the exposure meter body note the grooved black cover to the battery compartment; the CdS photocell is covered with a special calibrated blue filter for color correction.

SR METER 2 CdS exposure meter. Note the larger size compared with the previous selenium model. In addition to selecting the white and yellow speed scales, the selection knob is used to test battery level and to shut off the exposure meter. Despite this change in the plate, either the CdS or selenium model may be mounted. This perhaps explains the presence of the 1/1000th setting not utilizable on the SR1, but which might have made it possible to equip the old, out-of-production SR3 with the new exposure meter.



Minolta SR1 2418495, year 1964, model 5d with 45/2.8 TD Rokkor 1101062. Note the different shape of the self-timer lever that is identical to that later adopted on all SRT models; the same is also true of the rewind button. This is the last SR1 model before the switch to the V models and their totally revolutionized shape. Even if not indicated on the front ring, the 45/2.8 lens is automatic as on all previous models. The uncommon focal length and limited speed betray a Tessar-type lens scheme and the desire to create a unique piece. Its dimensions are quite limited, just 17mm wide and weighing only 130 grams. This lens, aimed at the amateur photography market, was not particularly successful and only a limited number (perhaps five thousand) were made, making it fairly rare.





Minolta SR7 2122257, year 1962, model 1b with 58/1.4 Auto PF Rokkor 1277015 lens with flash shoe. Note the rectangular window in which the exposure meter index displays the manual aperture setting to be made on the lens. When the button on the back near the window is pushed, the meter shifts to the maximum film speed scale. Note that the shutter speed dial on all SR7 cameras includes the 1/1000th setting as well as a scale for setting the speed of the film in use.



Minolta SR7 2122257, front view. Note the impressive 58/1.4 lens with which the SR7 was equipped and the CdS photocell located at the extreme right of the front. The power supply batteries were housed in the base plate of the camera body. Early models did not have the exposure meter switch (mod. 1). Only later models were equipped with the ON-OFF button (mod. 2), and it was not until the V models that the battery check option was also included.



Minolta SR7 2122257, detail of the rewind lever, exposure meter maximum speed scale selection button and optional flash shoe designed expressly for the SR7 because of the contoured hollow to permit an unobstructed view of the meter window.

Minolta SR7 2122257 detail of the self-timer lever, advance lever and shutter speed button (it lifts to vary the ASA settings), as well as the lever to manually lift the mirror. This SR7 Mod 1b lifts the mirror only when the shutter is wound-on, therefore causing a frame to be lost. To do this, the round lever must be turned 45 degrees to position the red dot in its up position. Following the shot, the mirror remains raised. To lower the mirror, the lever must be returned to its original position.

The metal plate was low and elongated with two holes on the upper part. A further variant of the Minolta SR1 came in 1962 with the shifting of the frame counter to the right side of the top plate, the moving of the serial number to the back, the elimination of the light value scale and the using of a new clip-on SR Meter II with CdS photocell. During this period, the company name changed to MINOLTA CAMERA CO., LTD. and on the cameras with the new name, the serial number was returned to the top plate. Other changes that followed included the redesign of the shape of some of the controls, such as the

film advance lever, self-timer and rewind button.

Minolta SR7

In mid-July 1962 production started on the Minolta SR7 which, from the standpoint of its aesthetic design, casing and shutter performance, was identical to the Minolta SR3 but was equipped with a small built-in exterior CdS cell at the far left of the front. The addition of the external cell brought about the return of the SR7 logo to the right side of the front and the shifting of the frame counter window to the right side of the top plate. Located on the left

were a long window for viewing the galvanometer needle, while on the back was a switch for low-light readings. The engraved Chiyoda Kogaku name was moved next to the rewind lever. The film speed dial for ASA 6 to 3200 was incorporated into the shutter speed dial which no longer included the light value scale. The Minolta SR7 was equipped with a mirror lock up button so that the new high-performance 21mm focal length wide-angle lens could be used. The 21/4.5 W Rokkor wide-angle was composed of nine elements following the layout made famous by Biogon Zeiss and sat far back



Minolta SR7 2122257, equipped with 21/4.5 W PI Rokkor 1101301 lens and its corresponding clip-on finder. This non retrofocus was set deep into the camera body and, at the time, could only be used by the SR7 with its manual mirror lock up mechanism.

Minolta SR7 2433990, year 1964, model 2b with 58/1.4 Auto PF Rokkor 203300 lens. Note the change in the rewind button and the disappearance of the shiny part of the advance lever from the previous model, making the modifications identical to those in the SR1 models of the same period.



Minolta SR7 2122257 with 21mm lens seen from above. The finder is attached to the eyepiece and locked in place using the screw-in black ring nut located on the finder of all SR bodies.

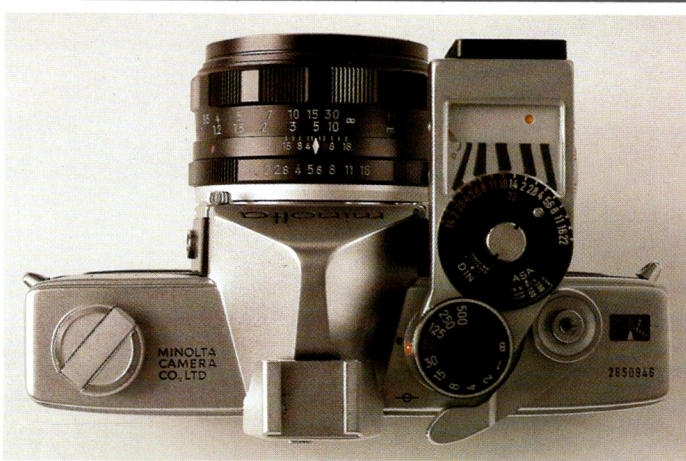


Minolta SR7v 3016811, year 1965, model 2 with 58/1.4 Auto PF Rokkor 2056370 lens with clip-on flash shoe. Note the differences in shape compared with previous SR7 models, similar to those of the SR1 V. The exposure meter film speed scale has been moved from the back to the upper right side of the lens changing catch. This SR7 is also equipped with mirror lock up without frame loss.

into the camera body without causing interference with the movement of the curtain, although it did with the mirror movement. Use of the 21mm wide-angle required a special optical finder mounted on an accessory clip inserted into the rim of the focusing screen eyepiece. The 21mm Rokkor was redesigned in 1964 and reduced to eight elements with maximum speed of f/4.0, but it maintained the optical and operating features of the first type. The Minolta SR7 saw the confirmation of the trend to offer cameras in two finish versions — traditional silver chrome or black paint with white inscriptions. The black finish had appeared sporadically in the earlier SR2 and SR1 models, but with the Minolta SR7 it seemed to become

standard. There are, therefore, Minolta SR7 cameras in the version with the Chiyoda Kogaku inscription in chrome finish and perhaps even black finish, as well as the version with the Minolta Camera inscription again in either chrome or black. In the type 2 Minolta SR7, a switch for the exposure meter circuit was also added to the base plate that would be used in the future also for checking battery status, together with improvement in the mirror lock up mechanism so that it would operate without frame loss. In May 1965, the Minolta SR7 changed appearance and underwent a number of practical changes. The body was modified, becoming squarer and taller, but also slimmer overall, and the form of the

pentaprism hood was also made more compact. The finder eyepiece was given a more rectangular shape with side guides for accessories. Shutter changes included an increase in curtain speed and synchronization was brought from 1/50 to 1/60. The new version of the camera still carried the SR7 logo, but it was called the “new SR7” while in the instruction booklet carried the logo Minolta SR7v. The “minolta” inscription was still in all lower-case letters and was engraved on the front of the prism hood, but on the upper slanted part instead of on the base of the pentaprism. The Minolta SR7 with built-in external exposure meter remained in production until the birth of the famous Minolta SRT 101, the first TTL reflex from



Minolta SR1V 2650946, year 1963, model 2 with 55/2 Auto PF Rokkor 2206007 and SR METER V and added flash shoe. Note the totally changed shape from all previous SR models, the disappearance of the 1/50th synch that here coincides with 1/60th, the new change in the advance lever and the sleeker line of the new exposure meter whose function switch has been moved to the right. The exposure meter connection is no longer compatible with previous models and was manufactured explicitly for the SR1 V without the 1/1000th setting. The Minolta logo has been shifted to the upper part of the prism that is narrow and tapered. The top plate is also flatter and sleeker than previous models and very similar in shape to that later used on SRT models. The finder has become rectangular instead of round in shape and all the viewing accessories that attached to the finder were redesigned, in particular the accessory clip shown here.



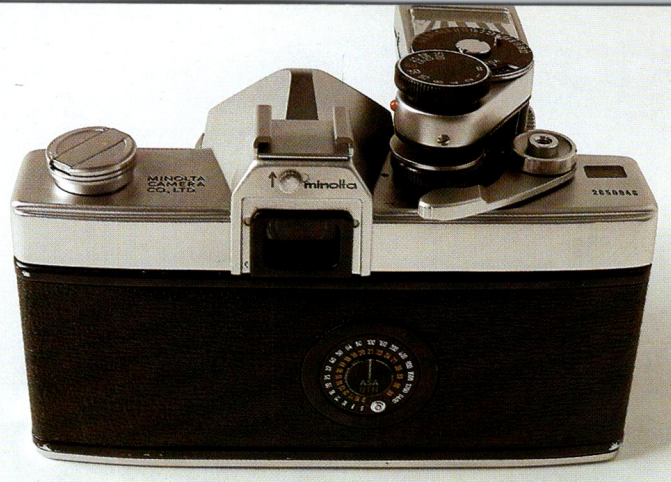
Minolta SR1V 2650946 seen from above without exposure meter. Note the frame counter identical to the one on the SRT. The shutter speed dial, on the other hand, is flat and broad and the exposure meter plate no longer utilizes the two large attachment holes and has, instead, two thin side guides.

this company that went into mass production in April 1966.

Minolta SR1v

In May 1965 the Minolta SR1 was modified to include the same aesthetic variations as on the Minolta new SR7, thus becoming the Minolta new SR1 or SR1v distinguishable by the shape of its body and prism and by the presence of the mirror

lock up. The Minolta SR1v was finished in either silver chrome or black and was just another variation on the theme of the SR1 model. The Minolta SR1v remained in production even after its sister, the SR7v, had stopped being made, and a new clip-on exposure meter, dubbed the Minolta SR Meter V, was put into production for it. The new meter was characterized by its restricted 30° reading angle and film speeds



Minolta SR1V 2650946 seen from behind and above. Note the rectangular finder and the flash shoe equipped with release button. The film speed disk is identical to the one that would be used on the SRT.



Minolta SR1V 2650946, front view. Note the different shape of the prism, the position of the MINOLTA logo and the different exposure meter plate. From here on the lenses will also have "LENS MADE IN JAPAN" on the front ring. This was previously inscribed, not painted, on the lens barrel. On the left side of the lens changing catch, just under the meter plate, is a small rotating chrome lever. This was used to manually lift the mirror, making it possible to utilize collapsible lenses such as the 21mm non-retrofocus without losing frames.

from ASA 6 to 6400. It also utilized a different type of accessory clip than on older models, and for this reason it could not be used on cameras previous to the SR1v model.

Minolta SR1s

Alongside the Minolta SRT101, the Minolta company felt it was important to keep alive the 35mm reflex without TTL



Minolta SR1V 2650946, front view, with SR METER V exposure meter. The hole in the center of the square on the front of the meter houses the CdS cell. Using the button on the side of the exposure meter, a drilled disk can be removed to select the more sensitive scale.



Minolta SR1s 4052024, front view without exposure meter. The exposure meter plate is identical with that of the SR1 V and, in fact, the meters are interchangeable.



Minolta SR1s 4052024, year 1967, model 1 with 55/1.7 MC PF Rokkor 2387796 with SR METER 3. From the front, it is essentially identical with the SR1 V. This model was supplied with an MC lens and therefore equipped with self indexing lens to TTL meter coupling, like that on the SRT 101 presented the year before in 1966. The 55/1.7 MC Rokkor for the SR1s are equipped with a lever for previewing depth of field. This lever is not found in the same versions of the 55/1.7 for the SRT 101 because this function is integrated inside the camera body.



Minolta SR1s 4052024 seen from above with SR METER S. Basically identical to the SR METER V, it has a 1/1000th setting like the camera on which it was used. Note that neither the SR METER V or the SR METER S are marked with their names which only appear in the technical documentation. However, they are easily identifiable.



Minolta SR1s 4052024 seen from above. Note the self indexing tooth of the MC lens on the chrome aperture ring. It has no companion piece and is therefore not utilized because of the lack of a TTL meter. The advance lever has been modified once again. Covered in black plastic, it is identical in shape to the one on the SRT 101 of the same period. The SR1s offered 1/1000th and was the only SR1 model with this feature.



Minolta SR1s 4052024, detail of the body/exposure meter coupling mechanism. The prominent meter disk is hooked onto the tab on the shutter speed button. Note the button on the side of the meter. When pressed, it sets maximum film speed. When the crown is turned, it turns it on or selects the battery level check.

Two SRM cameras, front and back view. Note the motor driven rewind lever and frame counter button to program the number of frames in a sequence. The SRM is the only SR equipped with a fixed, non-removable flash shoe, and also the only one without self-timer but equipped with T and B exposure. It does not include either an internal exposure meter or hook-up for external models (the SRM prototype had connections for the SR METER S, but these were not included in the version here). The rewind lever is mounted on ball bearings to reduce friction during motor driven rewind. It has a manual mirror lock up without frame loss and may be used without the power supply hand-grip for non-motor driven use using the traditional shutter release button with coaxial advance lever. Its fastest setting is 1/1000th.



Comparison between the black SR7 V and SRM Opening.



Minolta SRM 1001371, year 1970 with 250-shot back 111945 and 55/1.7 MC PF Rokkor 2752309 lens with which the SRM was equipped. The hand-grip attached to the back using a quick-shoe that contains the batteries that supply power to the SR motor, connected using the electrical cable visible on the right.

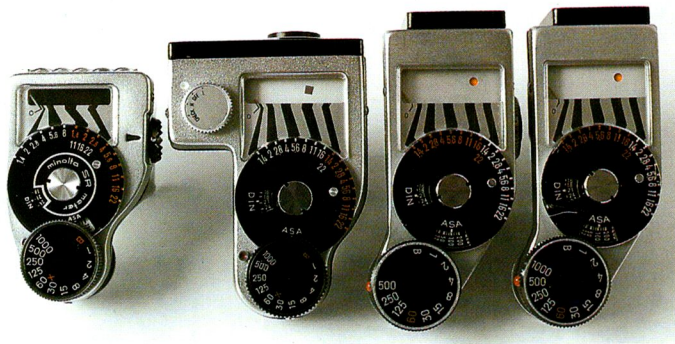
exposure meter. This was the same company philosophy also seen with the Spotmatic and Asahi Pentax SL or the Nikkormat FT and Nikkormat FS. In order to survive next to the SRT101, improvements were made in the Minolta SR1 and it underwent its final change in June 1967. The last of the Minolta SR1 cameras was designated the Minolta SR1s and the 1/1000th setting it had lost back in 1959 was restored. The Minolta SR1s offered as an accessory the new clip-on exposure meter with CdS photocell baptized the SR Meter S that derived from the SR Meter V and had the same features with the added 1/1000th stop. The Minolta SR1s utilized the same meter coupled MC Rokkor lenses as the Minolta SRT 101 without, obviously, making use of coupling to aperture indexing, and was offered with the standard 55/1.7 MC PF Rokkor modified with an additional button for manual diaphragm closing. The Minolta

SR1s was the last evolution in Minolta reflexes before the triumph of the TTL, a triumph that definitively made reflex cameras without exposure meter out-of-date and obsolete, despite the fact that these cameras still work perfectly today and are a joy to collect.

Minolta SRM

A history of the Minolta reflex without TTL would not be complete without the Minolta SRM, an anomaly among reflexes, that began to be manufactured in April 1970 in black finish only and, for the first time in reflex history, including an electrical motor firmly attached to its base plate. The standard SRM had been preceded in 1968 by a prototype based on the SR1s and, like the latter, did not have an accessory clip on the prism, but it was equipped to accept clip-on exposure meters. The standard Minolta SRM was also derived from the SR1s model but,

instead of the meter clip, it utilized a fixed accessory shoe on the pentaprism hood (slightly modified in shape for this reason). Equipped with mirror lock up, rewind lever and even a manual advance lever, the Minolta SRM did not include a self-timer but was the only Minolta reflex to have a time exposure. The base plate of the SRM was extended to include an automatic film advance motor with a speed of 3 frames per second. Although born four years after the Minolta SRT 101, the Minolta SRM did not utilize any type of photocell and it represented a camera absolutely unique of its kind. While Nikon, Topcon and even Pentax motorized their top-of-the-line TTL reflexes, Minolta preferred thinking of the motor as a feature completely separate from the rest. Rather than a camera to which a motor could be attached, the Minolta company preferred a camera with built-in motor, imitating the approach taken by Hasselblad with the 500 EL motor



Front view of the four exposure meters.

The four exposure meters. All meters are set to the same film speed (ASA 100 - DIN 21) and shutter speed (1/500th). This simplifies the various photocell speeds:

- SR METER, selenium, minimum reading 2.8, but in practice 4
- SR METER 2, CdS, minimum reading 1.4, in practice 2
- SR METER V, CdS, minimum and actual reading 1.4
- SR METER S, same as above



driven model. Power was supplied to the motor of the Minolta SRM using eight 1.5 volt batteries housed in a removable hand-grip on the side of the camera. Among the Minolta SRM accessories were a magazine back to hold 10 meters of film for 250 shots, as well as remote control, timer and intervalometer. In combination with the 250-shot back, there was a cable that connected the hand-grip with the batteries and motor, and the hand-grip itself could be assembled on the base plate under the back. Created for a professional market and equipped with the same lens standard on the Minolta SR1s, only a limited number of Minolta SRM cameras were ever made. It is a unique chapter in reflex history and today represents a tasty morsel for those collectors with more refined tastes.

Collecting interest in the Minolta SR

Minoltas of the SR family do not command especially high prices on the collecting market, but it is an interesting group of cameras because of the slight differences found between the various models. Because identical model numbers often camouflage a range of variations, collecting and cataloging Minolta SR cameras is a fascinating endeavor. In Europe, the cost of a Minolta SR body ranges between DM140 and DM160, irrespective of the model. An SR1 in excellent condition with clip-on meter and standard lens could sell for as much as DM300-350. In the US, the value of a Minolta SR3 or SR1, including standard lens, will fluctuate between \$65 and \$100. Only the SR2 model has a slightly higher estimated value and may reach \$150, while the SR7 models with exposure meter are estimated between \$75 and \$125. The SRM with motor is the most sought-after model and it may go for \$300, but this is a very conservative estimate. In Europe, the same camera easily sells for DM1000.

CHRONOLOGY OF NON-TTL MINOLTA REFLEX CAMERAS

1958	MINOLTA SR2	1/1000			Rokkor PF 55mm f/1.8
1959	MINOLTA SR1	1/500			Rokkor PF 55mm f/2.0
1960	MINOLTA SR3	1/1000		clip-on	Rokkor PF 58mm f/1.4
1961	MINOLTA SR1	1/500		clip-on	Rokkor PF 55mm f/1.8
1962	MINOLTA SR7	1/1000	6-3200 ASA	CdS	Rokkor PF 58mm f/1.4
1965	MINOLTA SR7v	1/1000	6-6400 ASA	CdS	Rokkor PF 58mm f/1.4
1965	MINOLTA SR1v	1/500		clip-on	Rokkor PF 55mm f/1.8
1967	MINOLTA SR1s	1/1000		clip-on	MC Rokkor PF 55mm f/1.7
1970	MINOLTA SRM	1/1000		motor drive	MC Rokkor PF 55mm f/1.7

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Chinese Minoltas

The Minolta SR was so successful that, at the end of the Sixties, this camera was literally copied by the Chinese who manufactured tens of thousands of them in their famous Shanghai plant. The Chinese version of the Minolta SR was named the Seagull DF1 and it was also marketed outside the celestial empire. The Seagull DF1 was a direct descendent of the Minolta SR, even if it had a few distinguishing features such as its squat pentaprism hood topped by a direct contact flash shoe. The DF1 body was very similar to that of the type 1 Minolta SR. Its shutter reached a speed of 1/1000sec and the camera included a self-timer but not a mirror lock up button. It is not known if the Seagull was produced on the basis of a formal business agreement between these two Far East nations, or if it was a purely illicit

venture. The Chinese openly exported the Seagull DF1 to Europe in the early Seventies, equipping it with a Chinese-manufactured 58 mm f/2.0 Haiyou lens with Minolta bayonet mount and perfectly compatible with the Osaka Minoltas. But the story of the Chinese Minoltas did not end with the Seagull. A few years afterward, production was started in Sichuan province on a second Chinese reflex, named the Zhe Jang 201 and modeled on the Minolta SR. The Zhe Jang had the Minolta bayonet and controls similar to those on the Minolta SR. Like the Minolta SR, the Zhe Jang had no exposure meter, but it did include a removable finder that was never employed on any of the Minolta SR family cameras. And probably no Minolta SR collection is complete without at least one of its Chinese cousins.

Andrea Agrà and Danilo Cecchi

RUSSIAN LENS PROTOTYPES FOR THE LEICA M



Side view of the 40mm f/1.8 MC Helios 113 lens with aperture ring and depth of field scale.

Side view of the 100mm f/2.8 MC Kaleinar 5 lens with aperture ring and depth of field scale.

It is common knowledge that the output of the photographic industry of the Soviet Union and ex-Soviet bloc has always been irregular and uneven. Alongside mass-produced models of which hundreds of thousands were produced, we find others of which barely a thousand were made and others whose output was stop-and-go with interruptions lasting a number of years followed by abrupt re-starting of production. It is for this reason that when little-known Soviet cameras or lenses arrive in Western collecting markets, they are regarded with mixed curiosity and distrust while an attempt is made to understand if they represent some production "niche", prototypes, new offerings or reworked pieces ably created by some skilled trickster. This sense of curiosity and distrust is the result of the veil of mystery that has always surrounded Soviet output and by

the erratic nature of planning and production in ex-Soviet block countries. Faced with two Soviet lenses with Leica M mount, our curiosity and distrust are fully justified and it is not any easy task to assign them a definitive place in lens history.

MC Helios 113

The first of the two lenses is a standard MC Helios (or GELIOS) 113 with 40mm focal length and f/1.8 that can be stopped-down to f/16, black finish, focusing from 80cm to infinity and side quick-focus lever. The mount is unquestionably for Leica M and FED is inscribed on the front ring. The initials MC before the name signify Multi Coated and do not refer to the mount, but there is no serial number that could serve to date it. Nor is any lens of this type described by Princelle. It is known that

Helios refers to a series of lenses derived from the Biotar design and produced to equip the Zenit reflexes, as well as to the standard lenses of the last Kiev rangefinders, but it was never used with FED lenses. The creation of the Helios 113 with the FED logo could indicate that there had been plans to begin production of a FED camera with Leica M bayonet mount, plans that were later put aside, or it could indicate intent to begin producing new lenses at Harkov. In fact, there is no indication that a 40mm Helios was ever put into production, even with mounts other than that of the Leica M.

MC Kaleinar 5

The second lens is a Kaleinar 5, 100mm focal length with f/2.8 that could be stopped-down to f/16, black finish with focusing from 1.50 meters to infinity.



Front view of the 40mm f/1.8 MC Helios 113 lens with FED logo.



40mm f/1.8 MC Helios 113 lens set to its minimum focus position.



Front view of the 100mm f/2.8 MC Kaleinar 5 lens no. 9000008.

Again here, the mount is unquestionably a Leica M and on the front ring together with the name and focal length is the serial number 9000008 that indicates 1990 as the year in which the lens was made, but there is no logo that could aid in tracing it to one of the known manufacturing plants. This lens is not described by Princelle, either, but it should be remembered that the name Kaleinar was used in Kiev to identify a number of lenses, including a rare 100mm f/2.8 known as the Kaleinar 5N with Nikon F bayonet mount for the Kiev 19. As with the Helios 40mm, there are no markings that could place this lens within the context of Soviet production and planning, so we are only able to offer hypotheses. We are not even able to discern if the Kaleinar 5 for Leica M came before or after the production of the Kaleinar 5N with Nikon mount.

Theory of the Leica CL

A certain similarity in the finish and detailing leads to the conclusion that the

40mm Helios 113 and the 100mm Kaleinar 5 might date from the same period and might have been part of the same project. What this project was, we can only guess. It should be recalled that from 1973 to 1976, Leitz in collaboration with Minolta built the small Leica CL camera with Leica M mount and that in the Eighties, Minolta continued production of the Minolta CLE equipped with the same mount. Leitz created two lenses specially for the Leica CL, a standard black finish, 6 element 40mm f/2 Summicron C with minimum focusing distance of 80 cm, and a black finish, four element 90mm f/4 Elmar C short tele with minimum focusing distance of a meter. Later, Minolta produced three Rokkor-M lenses for the Minolta CLE: a 28mm f/2.8 wide angle, a standard 40mm f/2 and 90mm f/4 telephoto. Comparison between this output and the two Soviet prototypes would seem inevitable, even if the time periods do not coincide. We should reject the idea of an agreement between Leitz and the Soviets,

even if a (failed) agreement with Rumania was mooted for the assembly of a standard 4 element 40mm f/2.8 Elmarit C for the Leica CL. However, we know that attempts were made at establishing an agreement between the Soviets and Minolta, even if no concrete results were ever achieved. It is possible that the lenses with Leica M mount were built in the Soviet Union as a sample for Minolta, but it is also possible the Minolta intended turning over the Minolta CLE production lines to the Soviet Union. Or perhaps neither of these hypotheses is valid and it was just an attempt to revive production of a rangefinder camera on its way out even in the Soviet Union at the end of the Eighties. With hindsight, and given the renewed interest in rangefinder cameras at the dawn of this new millennium, this last hypothesis may be anything but outlandish and perhaps deserves reconsideration.

**Danilo Cecchi
Antonio Savini**

A CAMERA DISGUISED AS A ROLL FILM

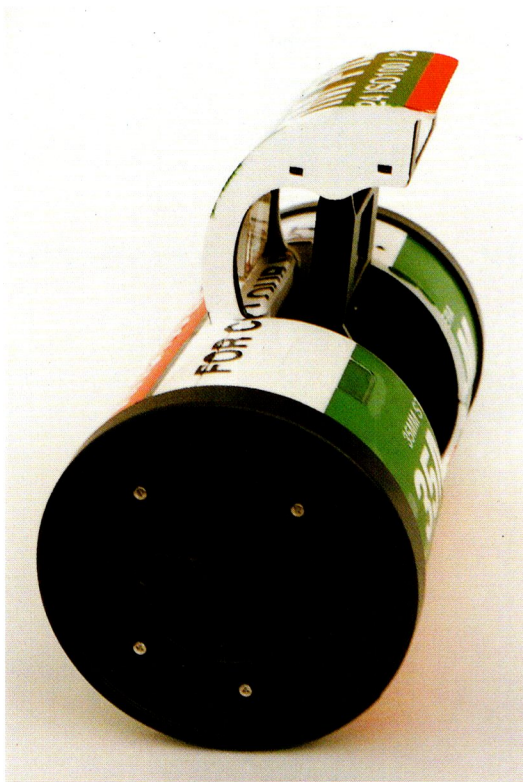


Speaking of the Coca-Cola Can Camera for the Pocket 110 format, I noted that it was curious that none of the modern camera disguises included a roll of film, that classic cartridge of 135-type double perforation 35mm film in rolls of 36 or 24 shots. The shape of these rolls has been used by creative designers to camouflage other types of objects from lighters to toilet paper holders.

In 1998, a Chinese company, Qiqu Camera (Douglas St Denny could give us some information about them), began selling a curious camera shaped as a roll of 35mm film. The camera, called simply “35mm film”, is cylinder-shaped, 65mm in diameter and 125mm long and is made entirely of multi-colored plastic, has a built-in pull-out flash attached to the viewfinder (also pull-out), and uses

standard 35mm cartridges to produce full-frame 24x36mm negatives. Film advance, shutter winding-on and rewinding of the exposed film are all accomplished by turning the black ring located on one of the cylinder bases.

With its fixed-focus and just one shutter speed, the results obtained from this camera — almost a toy as its packaging attests to — are quite limited. But what



more can be expected from a simple roll of film? Compared with the other throw-away cameras with the same features, this Chinese “35mm camera” is at least not throw-away and may be used over-

and-over and even collected. Qiqu Camera has also released at least one other camera of the same type, also cylindrical in the shape of a pencil. In fact, it is called Pencil Camera, even if

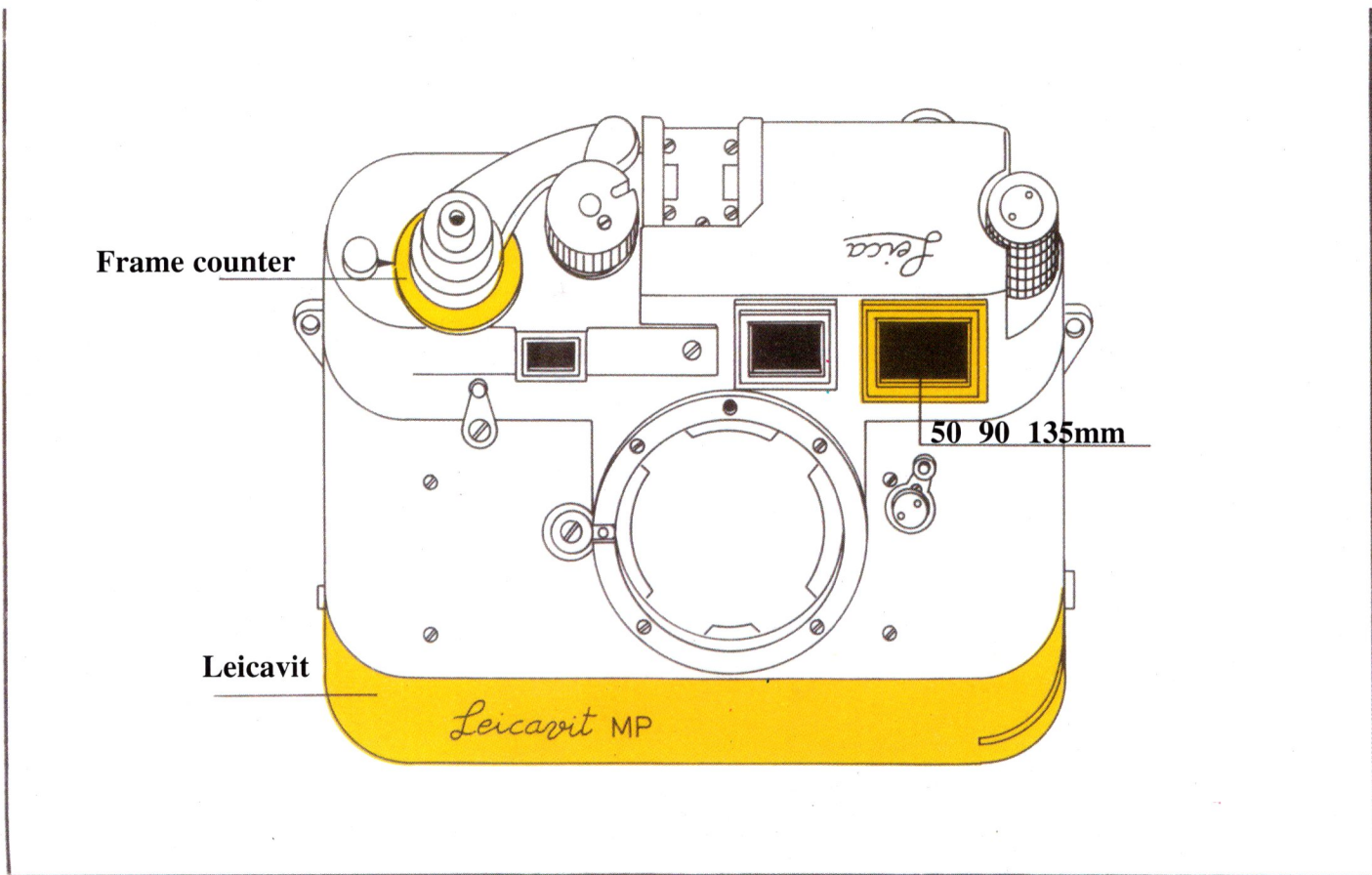
it resembles a light artillery shell or giant suppository more than a pencil. But, of course, to fully appreciate this type of camera, one needs a sense of humor and some imagination.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION SHEETS

BAYONET LEICA

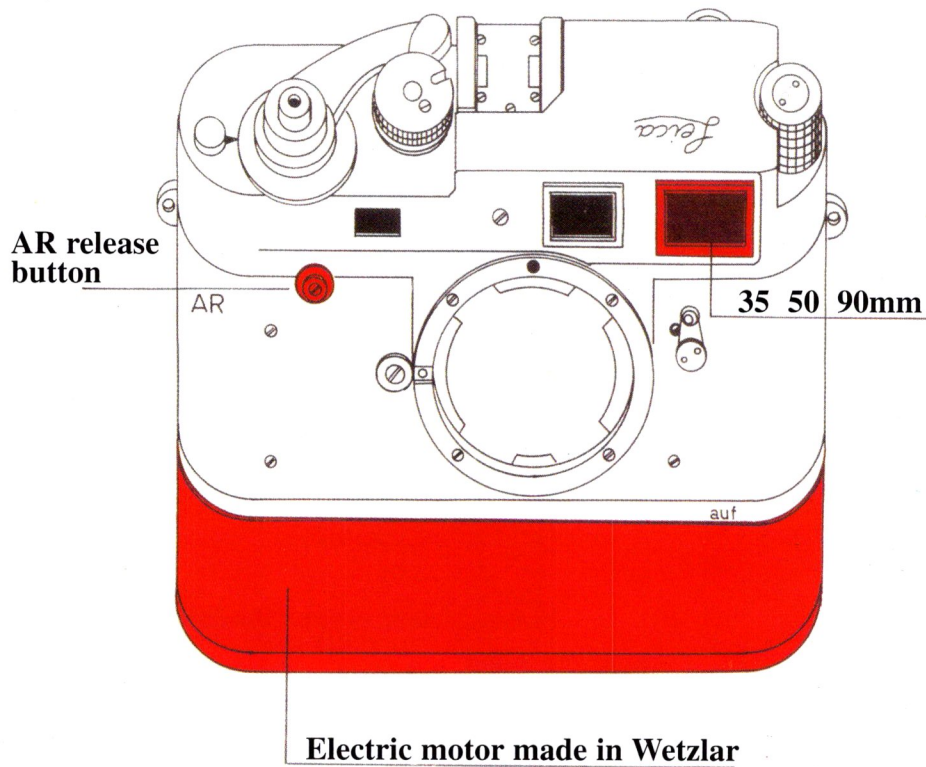
LEICA MP

YEARS 1956-1957



How to motorize a Leica was a problem that presented itself right from the earliest days of this camera's manufacture and for which the Leitz company developed a range of solutions over the course of its history. One of the most interesting was offered in 1938 by a timer accessory called the Leica Motor that was connected to the base of IIIc cameras. The Leica Motor was attached to the Leicas instead of the normal base plate. A simpler solution that appeared in the pre-war period for the Leica IIIa and IIIb cameras was that of a special, modified base plate with a lever for rapid shutter tensioning and film winding. This accessory was improved and applied to the Leica IIIc, IIIf and IIIg under the name Leicavit which transformed screw

Leicas into rapid winding lever-equipped cameras. In 1955, the Leicavit concept was used on some modified Leica M3s, and in the two year period from 1956 to 1957, a total of less than 400 special Leica MP Leicavit-equipped cameras were built. Of these Leica MPs, just over 300 examples were manufactured in chrome finish and slightly under 140 in black finish. The Leica MPs have the trademark etched on the top plate, are equipped with a manual reset external frame counter disk and utilize the same view finder found on the Leica M3, except for a few examples that use a view finder modified for 35, 50 and 90mm lenses, as for the Leica M2.



The Leica MP-2 was the logical evolution of the Leica MP and, for the first time, made use of a removable electric motor that was entirely designed and built by Wetzlar. The body of the Leica MP-2 closely resembles the early Leica M2s without self-timer and with an AR release button. The multi-focal view finder is identical to that on the Leica M2. With only a very few examples ever built, the Leica MP-2 is perhaps the Leica M model most sought-after by collectors.

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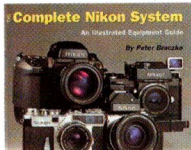
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The Complete Nikon System
An Illustrated Equipment Guide
By Peter Bracsko

The Complete Nikon System
By Peter Bracsko. **A Complete Guide to Cameras, Lenses & Accessories.** Published October 2000, Softcover, 9-1/2 x 8-1/2", 448 pages, over 1200 illustrations. The Nikon Handbook provides an overview of the entire Nikon System. All camera models and lenses ever made are listed, as well as all variants and special editions described in text & illustrations. Other important system components such as viewfinders, motor drives, macro accessories, filters, flash equipment, and connecting cables are also included. The author has developed a coding system especially for this book to make it easier for Nikon users and collectors to search for information about the world's most extensive photographic system. Contents:

- *A short history of Nikon
- *Nikon Rangefinder Cameras
- *Lenses for Nikon Rangefinder Cameras
- *Nikon SLR Cameras
- *Underwater Cameras
- *Nikkor Lenses for Nikon SLR Cameras
- *Nikon Compact Cameras
- *Nikon Accessories
- *Nikon Special Models
- *Nikkor Lenses for Zenza Bronica Medium Format Cameras
- *Nikkor Special Purpose Lenses
- *Cameras with Fixed Nikkor Lenses
- *Nikon Cameras and Lenses for Film & Video
- *Nikon Digital Cameras
- *Protokina 2000 - New Products

ID #: BracskoNikonSystem

As everyone knows, the Internet offers camera collectors a wealth of services including documentation, information exchange and purchase opportunities. The web pages that deal directly or indirectly with issues connected to camera collecting may be of very different types. For example, there are appealing commercial pages in which sellers, who often directly sell to the public as well as participate in the main shows, display their wares accompanied by a description (sometimes detailed, other times cursory) and relative prices. There are sites with general or historical information, sometimes requiring payment of a fee, but often completely free, administered by dealers interested in selling their products or individual enthusiasts eager to share their knowledge with others. There are also other, highly-specialized sites administered by clubs or experts in individual marques that are often very detailed and in constant evolution. Finally, there are those sites created directly by camera firms (the ones still in business) some of which willingly offer a

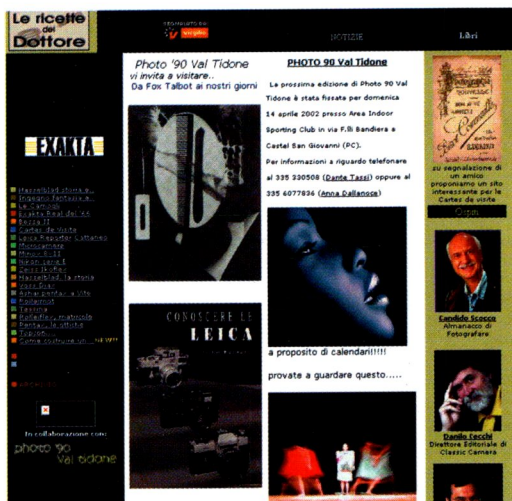
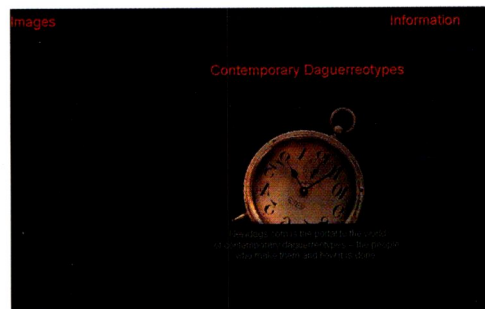
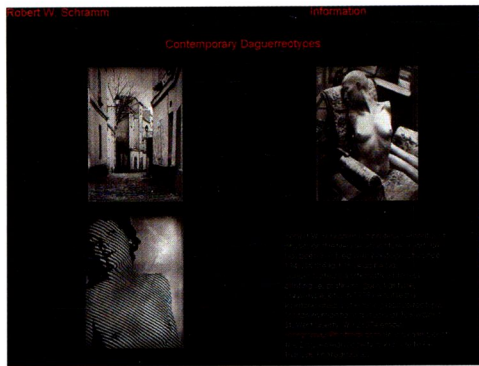
rich retrospective of their productive output from its origins to the present day, while others seem to ignore their roots completely. It goes without saying that the major part of the business, informational and historical sites are in English, with many in German and a good number in Japanese, the latter of which usually append an English version. Collectors who feel at home with today's technology and can get around in a foreign language, can easily find the information he or she is looking for, deepen his/her own knowledge, check data, get updates on the availability of specific pieces and their prices and even order the selected material. Given the fact that the world of the Internet is quite complex and popular, it is not always easy to navigate around in it, but it is also possible that unexpected treasures may be found in those sites that are less-known and seem the least likely.

www.camerabooks.com

This is the address of an extremely well-stocked bookstore with texts primarily in

English and German dealing with photographic and cinematographic collecting and photographic technique in general, including the vast world of photographs. The guide to this virtual bookstore is run by Petra Kellers and is divided into approximately twenty areas of interest.

The most notable are those dedicated to the famous houses such as Leica, Nikon and Rollei, or types of cameras—35mm, medium format, large format, mini-format, stereoscope, cinema, up to and including the new frontier in digital photography. Each sector has a very complete bibliography that includes classic texts as well as those that are less-known and -publicized. For each book, the cover is shown together with a brief description, sometimes the complete table of contents and an internal spread of the book itself. There are separate categories for manuals, guides, rare books, technical books, books of photographs and even the best sellers of the month. Also very interesting the section on new releases that includes those



newly-published books that might have slipped one's attention or which enthusiasts might even be completely unaware of. In an ambient such as that of the camera collecting world that is based on seemingly insignificant daily discoveries, up-to-date information on new books represents something of special interest.

www.newdags.com

In this age in which the introduction of digital images at all levels would seem to jeopardize the very existence of traditional chemically-developed images and the scanner would seem poised to definitively replace the enlarger, it is comforting to know that a number of die-hard photographers dedicated to the daguerreotype technique still exists. Daguerreotype is not only an old, almost obsolete technique (as few would deny), but it is also a technique that permits the creation of absolutely unique, one-of-a-kind images onto silver-coated metal plates. Non-reproducible, neither negative nor positive, both semi-reflective and opaque, generally small in size and

non-enlargeable, daguerreotype images are still created today as they were in the 1840s and 1850s by an exclusive breed of sophisticated photographers, members of the Club Daguerre that can be visited at the site www.daguerre.org where the fruits of their creative efforts are published on the Internet for all to see. The newdags.com site has a section dedicated to the images—although when viewed on the screen they lose much of their real-life magic—and an information section that includes a rich bibliography and detailed technical notes on the daguerreotype process and its chemical basis. Naturally, the text is in English.

www.scattineltempo.it

Among the most interesting independent, journalistic sites prepared in Italian and dedicated to photography in general and with sections on collecting, there is now the newly-launched www.scattineltempo.it site to keep the established www.nadir.it and www.photocorner.it sites company. This new site is not without precedent, however, because the masthead *Scatti Nel Tempo* has

accompanied the photographic show and fair at Castel San Giovanni for the last ten years. The site is administered by the tireless Dante Tassi and offers two types of information. On the one side it contains up-to-date information on exhibitions, shows, fairs, new books and publications, and on the other it publishes on the Internet a number of texts from back issues of *Scatti Nel Tempo*. The guiding spirit behind the site is the same as that of the hard-copy publication, the same outlook without limits, the same openness to all ideas and points of view, the same cultural involvement, the same freedom of expression and spirit of collaboration.

Also identical the method by which each author may send his/her own contribution—proof that the Mostra Mercato organized by Dante is not just an event in and of itself, but just the tip of the iceberg of months of work, contacts, working relationships, discussions, exchanges and continuous growth. All with a single element in common, a love of photography and its tools: yesterday's, today's and tomorrow's.



Darling Cinematographic Camera (1899/1900?)
Estimated price: £4000-6000
Auction price: £7637



Darling Biokam (1899)
Estimated price: £4000-6000
Auction price: £7637



Carpentier Cinématographe (ca. 1896), various accessories, a letter in Louis Lumiere's hand and a projector.
Estimated price: £30,000-40,000
Auction price: £49,350



Cinema cinema

In the Fifties and Sixties, when amateur movie-making began to exert a mass-based appeal, a number of photography magazines began to run tests of movie cameras alongside those of still cameras. Since the movie magazines of the day covered only films, directors, actors, screenwriters, reviews and the awards won by them, the modest amateur cameras and the prestigious professional equipment of the day was only tested by the technical staff of these magazines. It did not reap

much success, however, because only rarely were amateur movie-makers also cinema buffs and they, in turn, paid scarce attention to the equipment used by amateurs because they identified directly with Fellini or Pasolini, not the anonymous cameramen or photography directors. The result: a number of film magazines and books on movie history, but not one magazine dedicated to the cameras themselves or their history. A noteworthy exception is the French book by Auer and Ory, published in 1979, and Coe's 1981

book published in English. The growth in interest in camera collecting in general has also affected related fields and classic movie cameras have begun to hold interest even for those outside the limited circle of film enthusiasts.

Because of the lack of original documentation from the period and in order to provide some guidelines for modern-day movie camera collectors, McKeown inserted a short chapter on movie cameras as an appendix to his Guide, and the first monographs on the



Pathé Cinematographic Camera (ca. 1910)
Estimated price: £2500-3500
Auction price: £1880



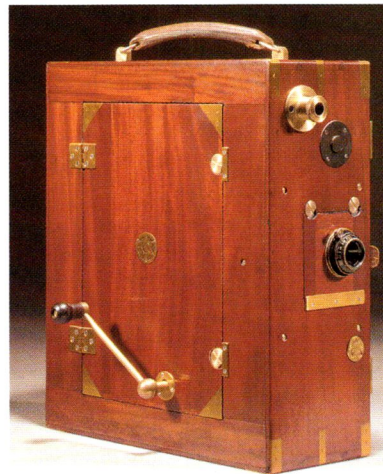
Pathé Kok (ca. 1913)
Estimated price: £2500-3500
Auction price: £2937



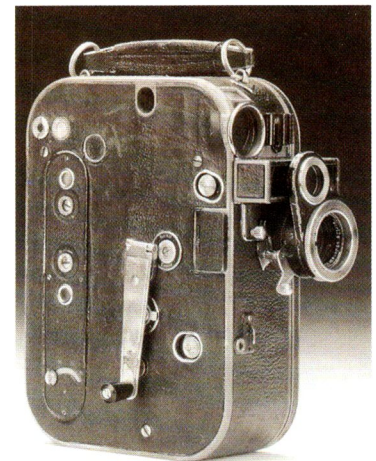
Prestwich (ca. 1898)
Estimated price: £8000-12,000
Auction price: £9400



Prevost Cinematographic Camera (ca. 1910)
Estimated price: £6000-9000
Auction price: £5875



Williamson Cinematographic Camera (ca. 1918)
Estimated price: £3000-4000
Auction price: £2937



Zeiss Ikon Movikon 16 (ca. 1936)
Estimated price: £600-800
Auction price: £1175

subject have made their appearance—for example Peter Ariel's Register and the books by Wade and Lossau, just to name the most well-known and recent ones. Despite the fact that the right kind of film is no longer available, the labs equipped to process it no longer exist and it is difficult to find the right projectors to show the films once made, the interest in movie cameras as a collector's item continues to grow in this age of compact digital video cameras. Even auction houses have begun to take an interest in cinematographic

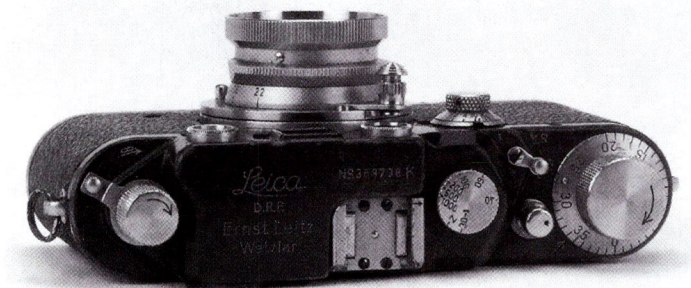
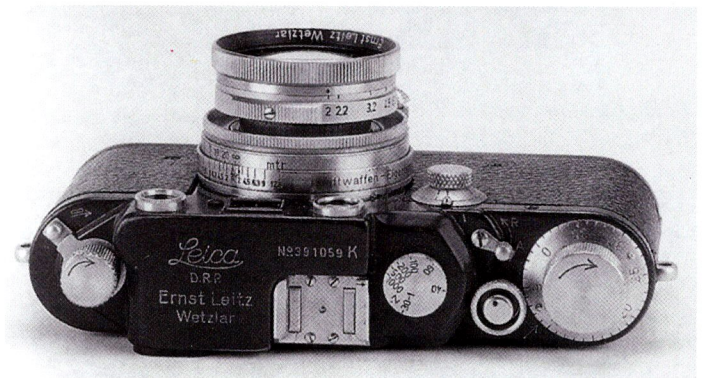
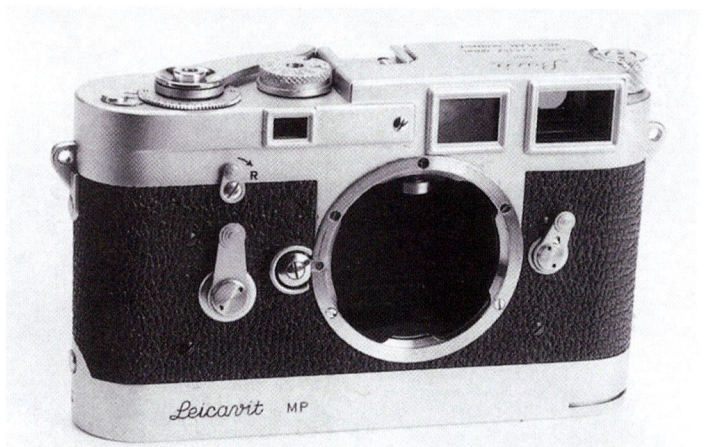
cameras—whether crank or spring, 8mm or 16mm and with names such as Arriflex, Bolex, Lumière and Kodak—and the prices of old movie cameras, virtually ignored on the collecting market until just a short time ago, have seen a marked rise. In recent auctions, a 35mm wood movie camera made by Carpentier for Lumière and part of the collection of the Lumière company, together with a number of lenses and accessories including a Carpentier projector, started from an estimated price of £40,000 to rise to £50,000. A 1912

Doyen 35mm cinematographic camera went for as high as £36,000. An English wooden 35mm with crank movement, from the dawn of the century, rose from an estimated value of £6000 to go for over £7,500. The same price was paid for a 17.5mm English Biokam, while a 35mm English Prestwich reached a price of £9400 and a 35mm French Prevost, dating from 1910, £5900. A 35mm Pathé (1910) went for £1900, while a second 28mm Pathé Kok was sold for over £2900, as was a 1918 35mm English Williamson. A



Leica IIIB
 Condition: 4 C
 Estimated price: £600-800
 Auction price: £1175

Leica M3, unnumbered
 Condition: 3
 Estimated price: £6000-8000
 Auction price: £7050



Leica IIIcK
 Condition: 5 D
 Estimated price: £1000-1500
 Auction price: £1175

Leica IIIcK Luftwaffen Eigentum
 Condition: 3 B
 Estimated price: £1800-2200
 Auction price: £3290

35mm French Cinex manufactured by Bourdureau in 1920 went for as high as £2350. Prices of the 35mm wooden crank cameras manufactured in the Teens and Twenties by the German Ernemann and Ertel, the US Genneret and the English Williamson and Moy, ranged from between £1000 and £1500.

Among more modern movie cameras, a French crank 35mm built in aluminum by Eclair around the year 1928 and equipped with a turret for 6 lenses went for as high as £5000, while a 1936 16mm crank Movikon by Zeiss Ikon, engraved Luftwaffen Eigentum, reached £1200. A 35mm metal Newmann and Sinclair manufactured in the Forties for the British Navy, sold for over £1100 and a 35mm crank Normandie with 3-lens turret manufactured by Vinten in the 1940s, for £1000. A 1938 35mm Arriflex with electric motor went for over £1600.

Movie cameras from the 1950s and '60s were generally quoted for less, between £500 and £700 for the German 35mm Arriflex and French 16mm Beaulieu, between £400 and £500 for the Swiss

16mm Bolex with three Kern lenses. Less-known cameras brought higher prices, such as the almost £1000 paid for an Italian 35mm Novado, dated 1950, with electric motor and rotating turret with three Astro Pan Tachar lenses; the same price was paid for a 1960 French 16mm Eclair with Angenieux Zoom.

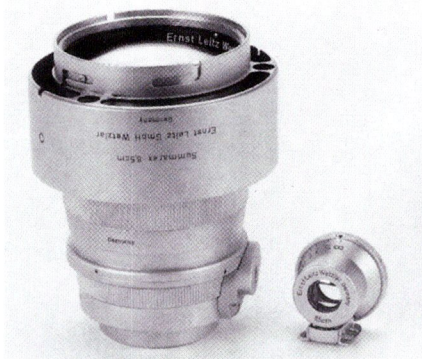
The 35mm KOHBAC (Konvas) professional movie cameras from the Sixties and Seventies, complete with electric motor and turret with three Lomo lenses, went for between £600 and £700 and a US 16mm Mitchell with electric motor and turret for four Bausch & Lomb lenses (1960) brought £900.

Leica Leica

The move from the 35mm movie camera to the 35mm still was not a short one, and the first cameras built for double-perforated movie film, the Leicas, were the first cameras to be collected and continue to hold a privileged position in photographic collecting. A Leica A without lens but with a serial number under 500, rose from an estimated value of £1000 to

bring over £2500, and a second Leica A complete with Hektor f/2.5 lens and original Leitz metal box, but with a serial number over 55,000 and with an estimated price of £1500-2500, just barely exceeded £2000. A Leica IIF in exquisite 1A condition, practically unused and complete with lens, lens cap and original box, rose from an estimated price of £1000 to go for over £2200.

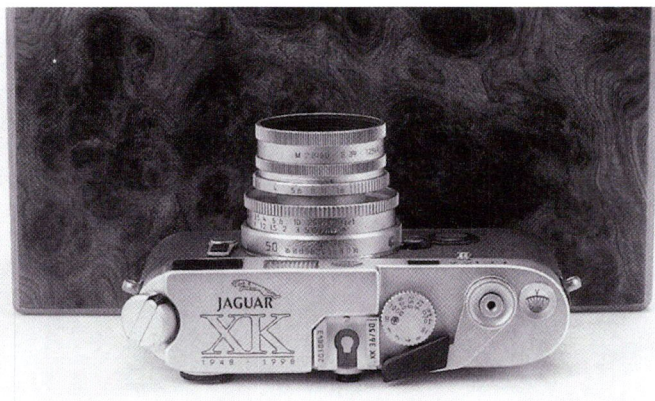
A lovely outfit consisting of a Leica III body plus five lenses with respective finders, all housed in the elegant and practical original case, rose from an estimated price of £1200 to over £2800. A second outfit in its case with Leica II body, three lenses (50, 35, 90mm) plus finders, caps and filters, went for practically twice its original estimate of £600. A third outfit in its case with Leica IIIb body with 28, 50, 90 and 150mm lenses plus finders and filters that started from an estimated value of £1200, finally brought over £1500. A fourth outfit, again with a Leica III body and five lenses, contained in its original case and estimated at up to £1200, only went for a little over



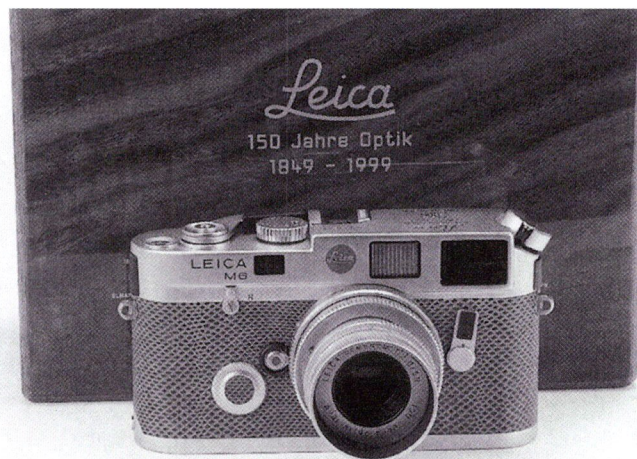
*Leitz screw 8.5cm f/1.5 screw
Summarex
Condition: 2
Estimated price: £600-900
Auction price: £1645*



*Leica M6 Columbus, in original box
Condition: 2 B
Estimated price: £1500-2000
Auction price: £1997*



*Leica M6 Jaguar XK
Condition: 2 B
Estimated price: £4000-6000
Auction price: £4700*



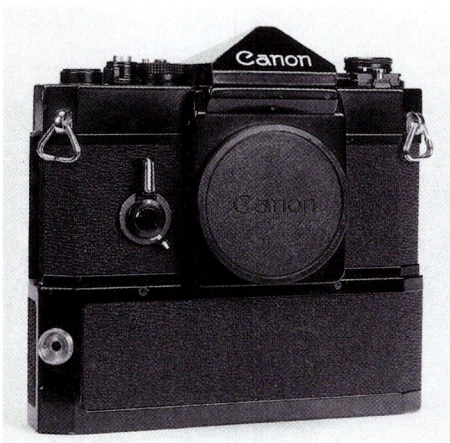
*Leica M6 150 Jahre Optik
Condition: 2 B
Estimated price: £2500-3500
Auction price: £3290*

£1000.

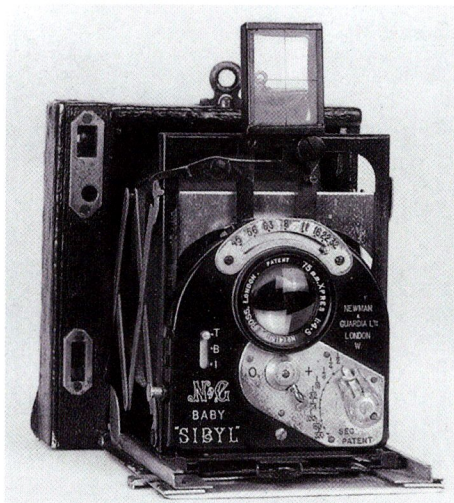
A military Leica IIIB body with the code FI. N.38079 engraved and estimated value of £800, brought close to £1200. A black, three crown Leica IIIG of which 125 were made for the Swedish air force in 1960, rose from an estimated value of £5000 to go for over £7000. A Leica IIcK with gray finish in very poor condition did not even reach £1200 and a second Leica IIcK in better condition and marked Luftwaffen Eigentum, was offered at an estimated price of £2200, but jumped to over £3300. A Leica IIIC body without lens but with Mooly motor on which bidding started at £1200, brought over £1500. A Leica IIIG body in 2B condition without lens but with Leicavit estimated at between £1200 and £1800, also brought just over £1500, while

a Leica IIIF in 3B condition with Elmar lens and Leicavit did not even reach £1000. A modified Leica I equipped with 300mm Tele Kilar Kilfitt complete with reflex box and rifle stock, rose from £600 to £1300. Among the screw mount lenses, a rare 35mm f/2 Summicron of which just over 500 were manufactured, brought over £1500 and an equally rare 90mm f/2 Summicron over £800. A screw 85mm f/1.5 Summarex was sold for over £1600 (estimated value £900) and a screw 21mm Super Angulon with finder went for £1000. Among the non-Leitz screw lenses, a 400mm tele Astro complete with reflex box and eyepiece jumped from an estimated value of £500 to almost £1800. Among the M bayonet mount Leicas, prices were high, both for the Fifties and

Sixties, as well as more recent—including very recent—pieces. Leica M3 cameras with standard lens fluctuated between £700-800 and even a reject, condition 6 M3 brought over £200. Rarer and more interesting pieces brought very high amounts. A black finish Leica M2 with 50mm f/2 Summicron (also black finish) and 90mm f/4 Elmar, started from an estimated value of £2000 to go for £4700. A Leica M3 without serial number with geometric speed scale, with Leicavit, Summicron and Leicameter MR estimated at between £6000 and £8000, went for £7000. An outfit consisting of an olive green Leica M3, engraved Bundeseigentum, with four lenses, went from an estimated value of £3500 to over £8000. A Leica M6 cutaway with its casing



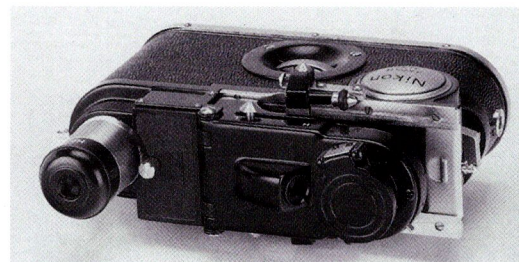
Canon F1 High Speed
 Condition: 4 B
 Estimated price: £2500-3500
 Auction price: £3525



Newman & Guardia Baby Sybil with rangefinder
 Condition: 4
 Estimated price: £1000-1500
 Auction price: £1880



Guerin Le Furet
 Condition: 3 B
 Estimated price: £1000-1500
 Auction price: £1997



Nikon S
 Condition: 3 B
 Estimated price: £900-1200
 Auction price: £1762

*Nikon H
 Microscope*
 Condition: 2 B
 Estimated price: £300-500
 Auction price: £1645

expertly perforated, went for close to £1000 and a 1992 Leica M6 Columbus for close to £2000. A Leica M6 150 Jahre Optik (1999) with coordinated 50mm f/2.8 Elmar brought nearly £3300, a commemorative Leica M6J with 50mm f/2.8 Elmar over £4000 and a 1998 Leica M6 Jaguar XK with coordinated 50mm f/2.8 Elmar went for as high as £4700. Among Leica reflex cameras, snubbed by collectors but offered as second-hand cameras for everyday use, were Leica R4, R5 and mechanical R6, R7 and even R8 cameras sold for prices that ranged from a minimum of £250 to a maximum of £1000. Although classified as cameras with little interest for collectors, there was a Leica R6.2 Hong Kong (1997) in 2B condition with estimated value between £3000-4000 that reached only £3300, and a second standard production Leica R6.2, also in 2B condition and estimated at between £1500-2000 that stopped short of £1300.

...And the others

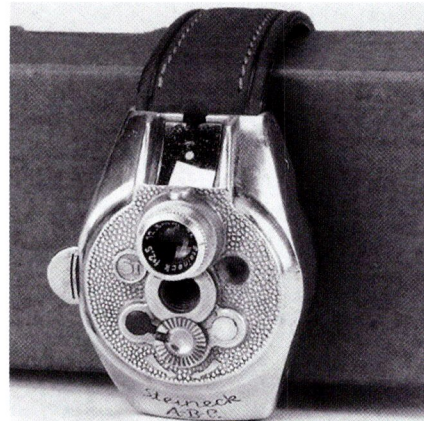
In the same situation as Leica cameras,

divided halfway between antique and modern, collectible and second-hand are other "big names" in camera history, still very much alive and present on the market in their double guise. While on the one hand a Nikon S sold for over £1700 and a microscope Nikon H for over £1600, the Nikon F cameras hovered around £250 and the modern Nikon F3, F4 and even the F5 models ranged between £500-600, up to almost £1000 for the last-mentioned. A rare Canon rangefinder from 1950 (practically a studio piece) and the first with a speed of 1/1000sec, brought £1800. A Canon F1 High Speed with battery holder of which perhaps as few as 200 were made for the Olympics, first in Sapporo and then in Los Angeles, and which had a dizzying shooting speed of nine frames a second, was sold for over £3500.

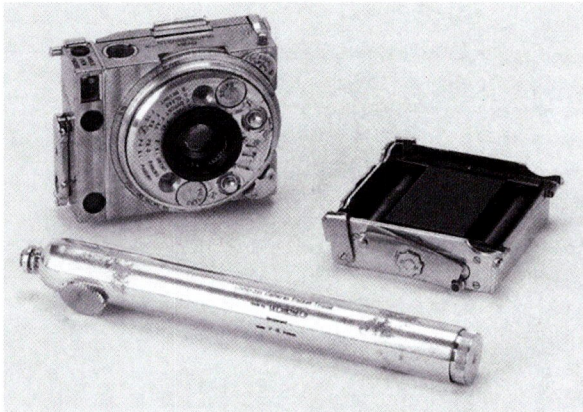
Among those marques which no longer exist today, and for this reason are less known to the general public while being very well-known to enthusiasts, were a number of unusual and often interesting cameras whose worth was sometimes

undervalued and at other times fully appreciated. An Ilford Witness made in the 1950s and equipped with a f/1.9 Super Six Dallmeyer lens brought over £2800 and a pre-war Baby Sibyl 6x4.5cm made by Newman and Guardia with 75mm Ross Xpres lens and equipped (not a common occurrence) with a rangefinder, went for almost £1900. A 35mm Le Furet from the Twenties sold for £2000 and a 35mm Eka from the same period for close to £1000. Among the more original cameras of the past, an Ergo of the Countess Nettel reached £2350 and a Bloch Photo Cravate hit £4500, while an anonymous photographic pistol from the end of the 19th century, perhaps hand-crafted, sold for over £1400. Among the more classic cameras of the 1930s were a Contax III outfit consisting of a camera body and four lenses with numerous accessories all in the original leather case which stopped at under £500. A twin lens 35mm Contaflex from the latter half of the '30s with two interchangeable 50 and 135mm Sonnar lenses went for £3300. A pre-war Prominent 6x9cm by Voigtlander brought

*Steineck ABC Watch
Camera
Condition: 2 B
Estimated price:
£1200-1800
Auction price: £5640*



*Steineck ABC Watch
Camera
Condition: 4 B
Estimated price: £600-
1000
Auction price: £2585*



*Le Coultre Compass with back and mini
tripod
Condition: 4
Estimated price: £1000-1500
Auction price: £2585*



*Voigtlander Ultragon
Condition: 2
Auction price: £1292*

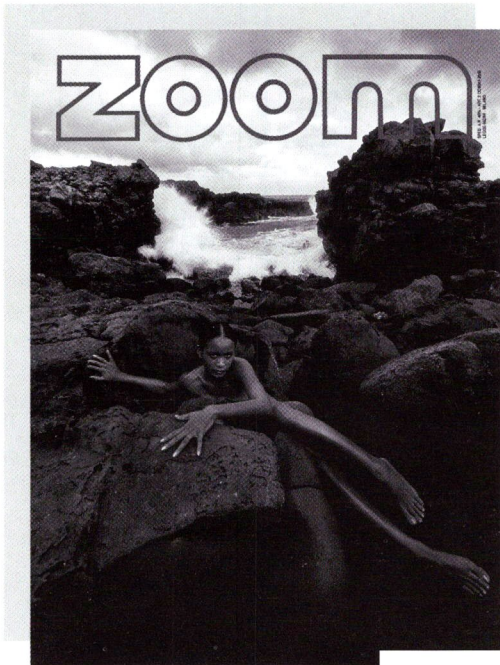


*Ernemann Ermanox 4.5x6cm with f/1.8
lens and 150mm Ernststar tele
Condition: 4 C
Estimated price: £1800-2500
Auction price: £2350*

£1200 and a wide-angle Voigtlander Ultragon for large format, complete with Compur shutter, reached £1300. The classic Ermanox 4.5x6cm with f/2 Ernststar lens brought £1900, while its sibling Ermanox Reflex of the same format with f/1.8 lens and 150mm Ernststar tele reached £2350. A less-prestigious Ernemann, the Klapp 6x9cm, despite its f/1.8 Ernststar lens, did not reach £1200. A pair of Alpa 9F cameras with consecutive serial numbers started from an estimated price of £3000 to finally go for over £4000. Among the cameras with miniature frame sizes was a Steineck ABC wristwatch camera in 4B condition that

went for £2600 and a second ABC wristwatch camera, identical but in 2B condition that brought over £5600. Such variations are not rare in the auction and collecting world. Of two Hasselblad wide angle SWC cameras dating from the early 1970s, the first in 5B condition was sold for a little over £1000, while the second in 3B condition for just over £1500. But the serial number and how a camera is equipped can also make a considerable difference. A Minox Riga with 5-digit serial number stopped at just under £500, while a second Minox Riga in the same condition but with a very low, 4-digit number, went for over £1400. A Swiss

Compass sold for £1200, a second Compass complete with back for flat and roll film for over £1500 and a third Compass with backs and tripods brought close to £2600. A Compass back alone for roll film sold for nearly £450 and just one original Compass tripod went for over £750. Color is also a determining factor sometimes. A Kodak purse outfit including mirror, compact, lipstick and folding camera, color-coordinated in beige, went for just over £400 in one case and £700 in another, while the same outfit in green went for £700 and the same in pink for over £2800. Rose Power?



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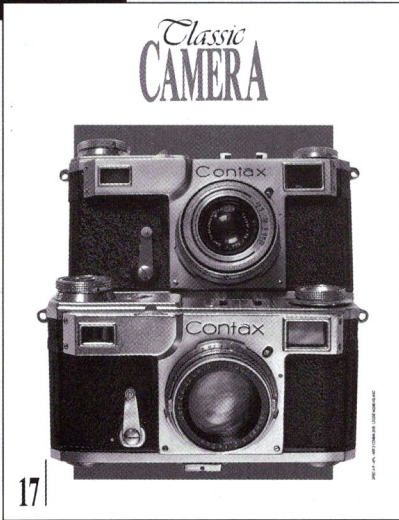
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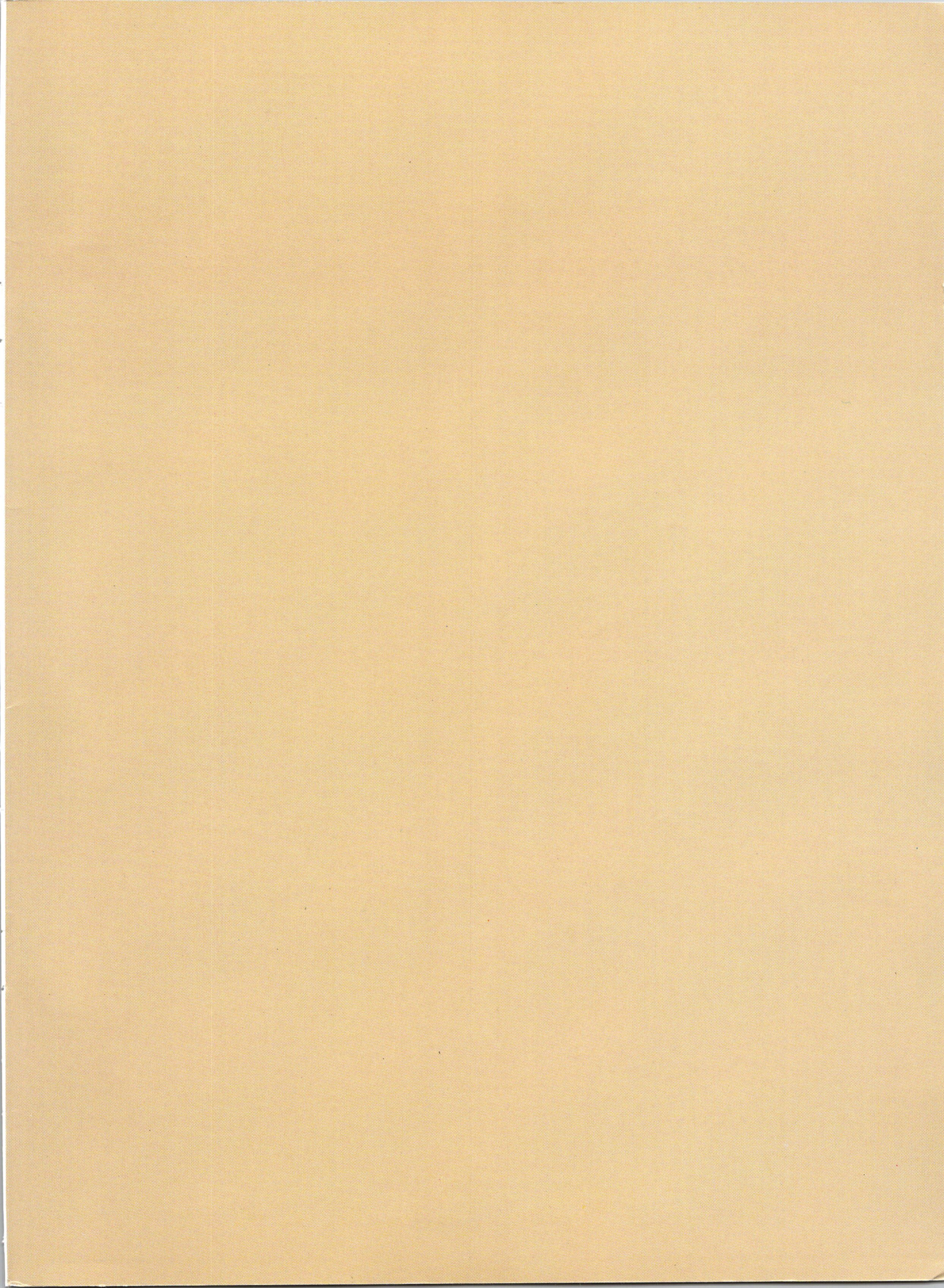
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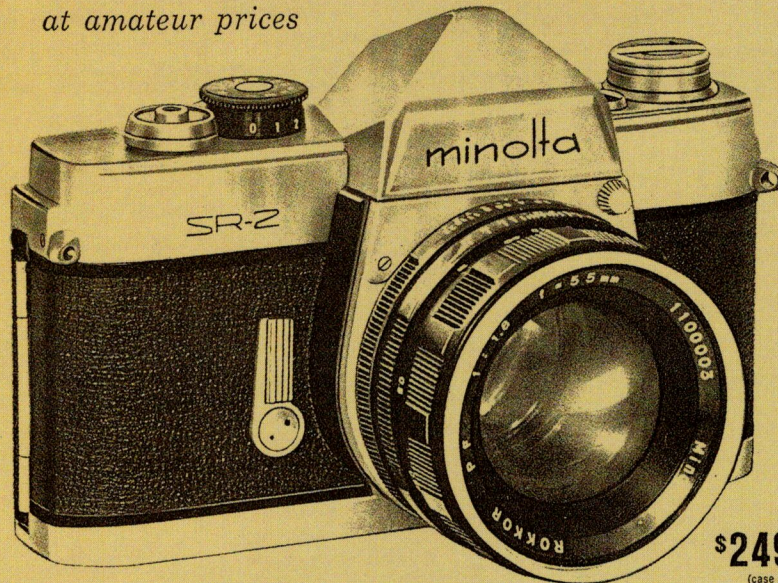
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