



## The Rise of Photographic Illustration 1839-1880

Sunday, November 7, 2021, 2:00 P.M., (note time change), via Zoom

Zoom invitations will be emailed to members in timely manner



Anthony Hamber, speaker at the November PHSNE meeting, is an independent photographic historian focused on the period from 1839 to 1880. Specializing in the photographic reproduction of art and architecture, and the rise of photographically illustrated publications, he has published and lectured extensively on these themes.

His presentation will provide an overview of how, during first four decades of the medium, photographic originals were used to create a wide range of illustrated publications, exploiting a variety of photographic, permanent photographic and photomechanical processes.

Various processes will be discussed and illustrated including early heliogravure, the salted paper print, albumen print, photolithograph, carbon print, colotype, woodburytype, hybrid variants, and screened halftone. While the presentation will include illustrations from developments in Europe, there will be examples from US publications as well.

With a current focus on completing an online annotated bibliographic database of photographically illustrated publications 1839-1880, Hamber is researching the evolution of associated photographic and photomechanical printing processes. He is also writing an accompanying book with his co-author Steven Joseph.



Aspinall Villa, *Villas on the Hudson*, 1860  
photolithograph

With support from the Getty Grant Program, Hamber's PhD was published in 1996 as "*A Higher Branch of the Art*" *Photographing the Fine Arts in England 1839-1880*; it was a Kraszna Krausz Book Awards finalist.

Hamber supplied the British Library with his bibliographical research which resulted in the Library's online *Catalogue of Photographically Illustrated Books* (<https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/photographyinbooks/welcome.htm>). His study of

William Blackmore, an important collector of 19<sup>th</sup> century photographs of Native Americans, was published in 2010. In 2018, his extensive study of *Photography and the 1851 Great Exhibition* was published with the support of a Publications Grant from the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art (<https://www.oakknoll.com/pages/books/129325/anthony-hamber/photography-and-the-1851-great-exhibition>).



Picture of a Youth, salted paper, 1850-1860,  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Hamber's most recent book is a study of the origins of photography in his home city of Salisbury, England. Other recent activity includes a role as photographic historian for an episode of the BBC program *Fake of Fortune*. He was a member of the Advisory Board of the Bodleian Library online *Catalogue Raisonné of William Henry Fox Talbot*.

## Smithsonian Acquires Rare Portraits From Early Black Photographers

In 1975, Larry West merged his interests in visual arts and American history by purchasing a daguerreotype at an antique store that happened to be an image of an African American, and “That purchase embarked a 45-year hobby and passion, with West collecting antique photographs from some of the early African American photographers, including James P. Ball, Glenalvin Goodridge and Augustus Washington” (<https://tinyurl.com/w3hkhen8>).

“Now, his collection of 286 objects dating from the 1840s to about 1925, which includes daguerreotypes



Woman in Hat, undated, celluloid in metal setting. Smithsonian American Art Museum, L. J. West Collection of Early American Photography

and other early types of photographic works, has been sold to the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C. Stephanie Stebich, the museum's director, calls it "a transformative collection for us. The museum had to compete with other top institutions to acquire it.”

## Nostalgic Scout Cameras

Recently I came across a full page of photos of Scout cameras in *Camera Shopper* (issue 197) written by PHSNE members Marti Jones and Ruud Hoff. Unfortunately, the (defunct) trade publication can't be accessed online. As a former Girl Scout leader, married to an Eagle Scout and avid collector, I was motivated to do a bit of research. The limited information that I found (at [http://www.historiccamera.com/cgi-bin/librarium2/pm.cgi?action=app\\_display&app=datasheet&app\\_id=648](http://www.historiccamera.com/cgi-bin/librarium2/pm.cgi?action=app_display&app=datasheet&app_id=648)) indicated that the Eastman Kodak Company produced three versions from 1929 to 1934: for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls.



The cameras used 127 roll film and produced 1 5/8 x 2 1/2 inch negatives. “The Boy Scout is olive drab in color with green bellows and the official boy scout emblem engraved on the bed. The words BOY SCOUT, are located on the shutter face. The Girl Scout camera is a bright green vest pocket camera with green bellows. The Girl Scout emblem is engraved on the front door and the words GIRL SCOUT located on the shutter face. The Camp Fire Girls camera is a brown vest pocket camera with brown bellows. The Camp Fire Girls emblem is engraved on the front door and the words CAMP FIRE GIRLS KODAK located on the shutter face. This is a rare camera.”

~BDR

## PHSNE Membership

**New members are invited to join for half the rates for the first year.** Regular PHSNE membership (U.S. and Canada) is \$20 for students, \$40 for individuals and institutions, and \$45 for a family; foreign membership is \$50. Join or renew online at <https://phsne.org/join> or <https://phsne.org/renew>, or send a check in U.S. dollars, drawn on a U.S. bank or dollar denominated international money order. Please check the expiration date on the *snap shots* mailing label before sending in dues.

Send payments, changes of address, and other contact information, to Joe Walters Jr, PHSNE Membership Chair, 47 Calvary St., Waltham MA 02453. (Call: 617-826-9294; email: [membership-chair@phsne.org](mailto:membership-chair@phsne.org); or use the Web form at <https://phsne.org/application>).

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## Colorful, Waterproof, Fun: Minolta Weathermatic A



Bright yellow was a popular color for waterproof electronics in the 1980s; the Sony Walkman is a prime example. Minolta followed suit with its bright yellow waterproof cameras, one “for each of the popular film formats, 110, 35, and APS, for the 20 plus years the Weathermatic line was in production. The first entry in this all-weather camera line was the 110 film, 1980 Minolta Weathermatic A” (<https://www.aperturepreview.com/minolta-weathermatic-a>).

Looks aside, the vivid yellow body serves a purpose; the cameras are very visible both underwater and above. The black components, the only other color on the camera, are more easily read underwater. The controls are on top on large easily handled dials. The left dial can be set for full sun, cloudy conditions, or flash.



The dial on the right side is a focus scale from infinity to three feet. The shutter speed is fixed at 1/200<sup>th</sup> of a second.

“The overall look and presentation are very 1980s and the camera is incredibly solid.” It is fairly large for a camera of its type. A unique feature of the Weathermatic A is that it floats, very helpful if it falls from a boat or dock.

One AA battery powers the CdS light meter and the flash. Changing the battery requires lifting a tab on knobs at both ends of the camera and turning them to the open position. You can then remove the clear plastic backing of the camera which is otherwise held in place by a safety plastic piece.

“Inside you see the battery door and film door respectively. The camera is able to distinguish between an ASA of 100 to 400, according to correctly tabbed 110 films. Since the back of the camera is clear plastic, you are also able to see the film and what frame you are currently on.”

One user noted, “I think most of the photos I came away with were over or under exposed. Having such a limited range of apertures and a way too fast shutter of 1/200th of a second made for shots I was just winging without a true meter,” adding, “Surprisingly enough the ‘meter’ in the Weathermatic A is only a yes/no type. The only indication being a flashing red light when you’re in low light. The camera has mostly mechanical components, so you are able to completely use the camera without a battery.”

Optional accessories include a wrist strap, clip on sports finder, and matching yellow bags.

The user concludes, “This is not a point and shoot camera, you need to be familiar with Scale Focusing to get workable results. As a 110 waterproof and underwater camera it’s great but as a 110 camera on its own, it just barely passes for me.”

Another reviewer noted, “With a 26mm f/3.5 lens, the camera is set up for most photographic moments. Within the viewfinder, there is a focus scale, frame lines, and an indication light that lets you know when you’re in low light situations. Surprisingly bright and easy enough to use with glasses or underwater. To wind the camera there is a lever positioned on the underside of the camera, where your right thumb would rest while holding it. Push the lever forward to wind, until the 110 film notch catches and the winding stops (<https://tinyurl.com/4vubh2tf>).

Minolta also offered the Weathermatic 35DL, a 35 mm version. He adds, “Although Minolta markets the Weathermatic 35DL as having a ‘dual lens,’ it really has only one lens, but uses a ‘dual’ focus design, which varies the amount of space between lens groups to achieve two different focal lengths, 35mm and 50mm. Other features include DX coding, AF above water, close-up setting, two choices of batteries, and a surprisingly quick recycling flash.” He praised the camera as being “probably the most ergonomic 35mm camera I’ve ever held due to the contoured right hand grip and slightly raised ‘grab’ bar on the left hand side.”



While the camera is waterproof, if water gets inside the camera it will damage or destroy it. Avoid opening it while it is still wet.

~Photos can be seen in color in the online snap shots <https://snapshots.phsne.org>

## Left Behind: Afghan Studio Portraits

In the chaotic U.S. exit from Afghanistan, many studio portraits were left behind. Some were left by residents who had come for last-minute passport and ID photos; others were duplicates or photos never paid for but saved in case the client ever returned.

At one studio in west Kabul, in operation since 1978, “the owner held the honorable position as an Afghan box camera photographer. Now retired, his sons run the studio” (<https://tinyurl.com/nmnsyxyv>). A number of the unclaimed images can be viewed on the website.

“The Afghan box camera — also known as a *kamra-e-faoree*, meaning "instant camera" in Dari — has been used in Afghanistan for decades. The unique, handmade device is a manual camera and darkroom in one. The lenses are shutterless and the camera uses an internal focusing system” The process is analog, using only natural light; chemicals are stored in trays inside the camera.



Uncollected or duplicate photographs found in boxes and drawers in backrooms of Kabul's photo studios speak of generations

“With the aid of an eye hole on top, the photographer can follow the development process in real time. To develop a negative by hand, he inserts an arm through a sleeve of cloth to access the camera's interior.”

The studio owner and his box camera survived the 1979 Soviet invasion, the civil war that followed, Taliban rule, and the 20 year conflicts involving U.S. forces. “He described the golden years of the Afghan box camera, the Taliban's repression and the reemergence of the industry after they fell.” During the 1990s reign of the Taliban, photography was banned entirely. Equipment was hidden or destroyed. “Taliban leaders, however, decided to make an exception for themselves. Their desire for their own photo IDs allowed the trade to continue, and they permitted him and a few other Afghan photographers to keep their box cameras for this purpose.”

Over the years, studio owners stuffed unclaimed photographs into drawers under their desks. Perhaps

### PHSNE Meetings

Meetings are usually held on the first Sunday of each month, September to June. Meetings are being held online during the COVID restrictions.

#### Upcoming meetings:

**December 5**—Holiday Meeting, format TBD

**January 9**—TBD

**February 5**—Terri Cappucci, 19th century Massachusetts glass plate negatives

#### Connect to PHSNE Online and by email:

PHSNE's Web site is online at <https://phsne.org>. See <https://www.facebook.com/PHSNE/> for items of PHSNE interest. Comments are welcome, so join the discussion of photo history. Visit <https://snapshots.phsne.org> for *snap shots* issues since 2005.

Stay connected to PHSNE via our emails: a *snap shots* e-copy, and *Photographa* show announcements. Sign up at <https://phsne.org/emails>.

For information on all available PHSNE publications, see <https://www.magcloud.com/>.

their subjects would remember, and return someday to collect the photographs. Other pictures are duplicates that the studio owners just didn't have the heart to discard.”

The studios were once again active following the fall of the Taliban in 2001 and enjoyed renewed popularity. It's possible that photography will once again be banned under Taliban rule.

## Save the Date *Photographica* 92 April 23, 2022

**Newton North High School  
Newton, Massachusetts**

For information and table reservations, contact Show Manager John Dockery at 781-592-2553. Emails will be sent to current dealers in December.

PHSNE is monitoring the Covid situation and may need to make modifications including mandating masks and postponing the show.