



## PHSNE Program About Kine Exakta Sunday, June 5th, 7:30 P.M.

Vladimir Khazan, PHSNE member and previous speaker, will present a program about the IHAGEE and its Exakta camera at the June 5th meeting.

Johan Steenbergen, a Dutchman, founded Industrie-und-Handelsgesellschaft, a camera company, in Dresden in 1912. The name was shortened to Ihagee (based on the German pronunciation of the acronym



Kine Exakta 1, 1936, Wikimedia Commons

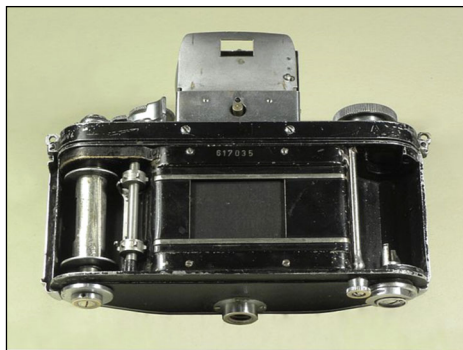
IHG, ee-hah-geh), and later known as, Ihagee Kamerawerk Steenbergen & Co. The name appeared as “Jhagee” on the camera.

Produced from 1933 to 1976, the Exakta was Ihagee’s biggest success. In a

glowing review in *shutterbug* (2019), Jason Schneider listed “5 Reasons Every Photographer Should Shoot with a Kine Exakta, the World’s First True 35mm SLR” (<http://tinyurl.com/2p8s3mek>). The first actual SLR was probably an unwieldy model manufactured in the Soviet Union and only sold there. In contrast, the Kine Exakta was an immediate worldwide success story.

“Ever so slowly they developed it into the first true 35mm SLR system replete with scores of lenses, finders, and a host of specialized accessories. Prior to the introduction of the Nikon F in 1959, the Exakta was the darling

of scientists, doctors, researchers, and a broad spectrum of pro and enthusiast photographers.” Sales slumped in the 1970s faced with stiff Japanese competition and the fact that the camera was produced in East Germany.



Kine Exakta, Wikimedia Commons

## Photographica a Huge Success

More than 400 people attended the return of *Photographica* on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Congratulations to show manager John Dockery and many thanks to the dedicated PHSNE volunteers who worked all year to make this event happen.



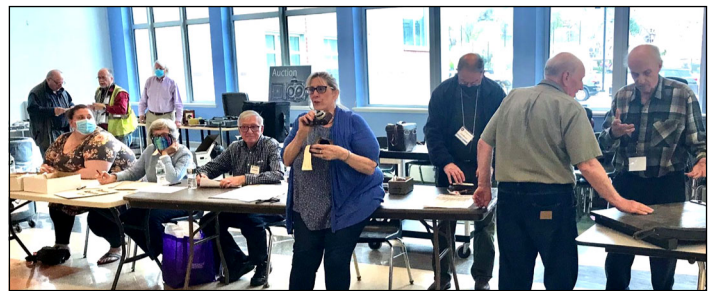
Dealer tables numbered 120, and 102 lots were sold at the auction following the show; 46 Early Birds showed up to examine the wares before the event. Sales were brisk throughout the day. Smiling faces indicated that attendees were delighted with their purchases.

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~Photos by Chris Hubert

Additional commentary and photographs on p.4

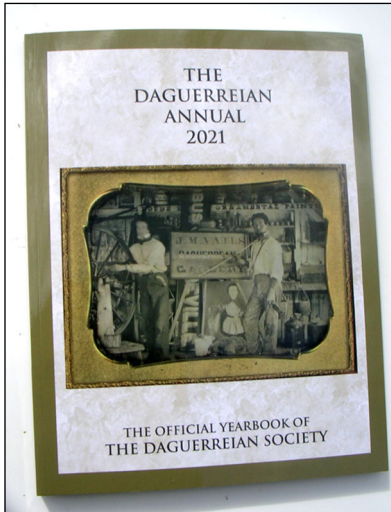


## See You In September

PHSNE does not meet during the summer months, and *snap shots* doesn’t publish issues in July and August. The first meeting in the fall is scheduled to take place on September 11th, 2022. A preview of the meeting will appear in the September issue of *snap shots* which will be mailed to members in mid-August along with the renewal reminder for the 2022-2023 membership year.

**Have a wonderful summer!**

## Daguerreian Society Publishes Annual



Members of the Daguerreian Society recently received a copy of *The Daguerreian Annual 2021*, the Society's official yearbook. Included in the richly illustrated 223 page publication are scholarly articles on a wide range of topics. Titles include *Unwilling Portraits: A Glimpse into the St. Louis Rogues Gallery*, *Zoar: Ohio's Place of Religious Refuge (and Communism)*, and *Horology in Photography: Timekeeping and Timekeepers in Photographs*.

“In publication since 1990, these volumes have become a prime resource for daguerreian and other 19th-century photography study and appreciation. They are indexed/abstracted by the J. Paul Getty's *Bibliography of the History of Art* and *ARTbibliographies Modern*” (<https://www.daguerreiansociety.org/about-us/daguerrian-society-annual/>).

The Society also publishes a quarterly newsletter.

## 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 PHSNE Membership Chair, 47 Calvary St., Waltham MA 02453, email [membership-chair@phsne.org](mailto:membership-chair@phsne.org), or use the Web form at <https://phsne.org/application>.

*snap shots*, edited by Beverly Regelman, is published monthly, September through June, by the Photographic Historical Society of New England, Inc., 47 Calvary St., Waltham MA 02453. It is available at <https://snapshots.phsne.org> within a few days of mailing. Articles and exhibition/book reviews are always welcome. Send to [snapshots@phsne.org](mailto:snapshots@phsne.org). Authors retain copyright to their original articles; however upon written application to the *snap shots* editor, PHSNE may grant non-profit societies with similar aims and interests a one-time right to reproduce a *snap shots* article as long as the author and source are credited and a complimentary copy of the publication is sent to PHSNE.

## Two Photo Exhibits at Currier Museum

The Currier Museum, Manchester NH, is currently hosting two photography exhibits. *Screen Tests* features 20 Andy Warhol portraits from an extended series taken from 1964 to 1966 of which 472 survive. Most, but not all, are of famous subjects. They are still closeups of people staring at the camera, taken from short films that were shot “on 100-foot rolls of black-and-white film, without sound.” The films were unscripted and designed to play in slow motion. Subjects were asked to remain perfectly still during the three minutes of filming.



Still from a screen test Of Edie Sedgwick, 1964

Museum visitors are invited to take their own “screen tests” on Thursday evenings from 5:30 to 7:30pm and Saturdays from 11:00am to 1:00pm. They will only be posted with signed permission and will be deleted weekly.

The exhibit runs through July 3rd. Visit <https://currier.org/exhibition/warhol-screen-tests/> for additional information.

For most of the nineteenth century, the average tourist had no way to photograph the sites—and sights—visited; that remained the province of professional photographers with the proper equipment.



The rationale behind *Appeal of the Real: 19th-century Photographs of the Ancient World*, the Currier's other photography exhibit, is to display the photos that would have been

available to the populace of the times. “Photographers traveled throughout the Mediterranean to record the ruins of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome – not only to document these wonders but also to evoke their atmosphere and mystery. Like painters, they were concerned with composition and the play of light and shadow. The primary consumers of these photographs were wealthy European and American tourists, who could visit studios and have albums made of their favorite sites” (<https://currier.org/exhibition/appeal-of-the-real/>).

*Appeal of the Real* will be on display through June 12<sup>th</sup>.

## The Universal Vitar – The Spare Parts Camera

To appreciate the Universal Vitar, one must first know how it came to be. Universal Camera Corp., with headquarters in New York City, was founded in 1932 by Otto Githens and Jacob Shapiro. The company produced several cameras during the 1930's and 1940's starting out with less expensive plastic cameras and moving on to better quality, more expensive cameras.

The first camera produced was the Model A, a subminiature roll film camera that sold for the amazing sum of \$.39 (39 cents!). It became a huge success, selling over two million in the first year alone.

Fast forward to the late 1940's. With increased competition and the arrival of both the Stereo Realist and the Polaroid Land Camera, together with unwise business decisions, sales of Universal cameras began to decline rapidly (*The Univex Story*, Cynthia Repinski, p. 207). By 1950, Universal's employment rolls diminished considerably, from a high of 1200 to less than 200, and it was evident that the company would not survive.



By 1951, Universal had an abundance of leftover parts for cameras that had not sold, so they decided to assemble new models by combining parts of different cameras. They designed three “new” models using the spare parts, one of which was a 35mm camera named Vitar (shown here).

The body, viewfinder/extinction meter combination and hot shoe came from the Corsair; the retractable lens barrel and shutter housing from the Buccaneer; lens and shutter from the Uniflex; and various parts of other cameras. Only the name plates were new.

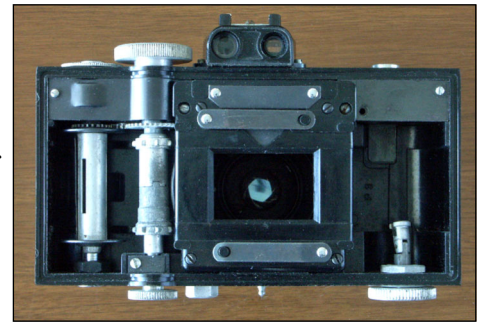
The Vitar was equipped with a coated 50mm f/3.5 Universal Tricolor lens set in an auto retractable



mount with minimum focusing distance of three feet. Other features included double exposure prevention and built-in photo-flash synchronization. Shut-

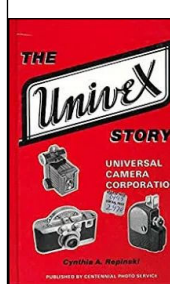
ter speeds range from 1/25 - 1/200 second plus B, and the aperture range is from f/3.5 – f/16. Original list price was \$41.00 and it was produced in limited supply, so the Vitar would be a rare find indeed.

In 1952, Universal filed a voluntary petition for reorganization under Chapter XI of the Bankruptcy Act. Universal's only remaining operations during the late



1950's and early 1960's consisted of film processing and camera repair. The company ultimately filed for bankruptcy, and in 1964 the final years of the Universal Camera Corp. came to an end.

~Story and photos by PHSNE member Richard Berbiar

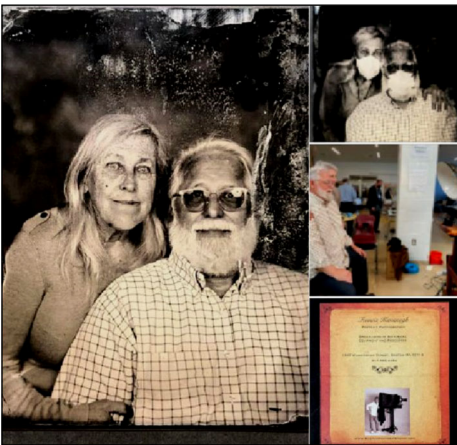


*The Univex Story* is widely available and very favorably reviewed by Goodreads (Cynthia Repinski, Centennial Photo Services, 1991). “This is a superbly researched and richly illustrated history of the legendary company which flourished in the 1930s through 1950s. Many of the mysteries and rumors surrounding the company are finally brought to light. The narrative is fascinating as it traces the company history from beginning to end.

Every camera model is illustrated and its history and development detailed. In addition to the in-depth information on cameras, other Universal products, such as binoculars and military instruments, are included to give a well-rounded view of the company” (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/3859166-the-univex-story>).

### Special Attraction at *Photographica* Attendees Treated to Tintypes

This posting appeared on the Daguerreian Society Facebook page.



Tintypes, Janice and Dale Rossi

“I don’t think I have every had as much fun at a camera show as we did at the PHSNE show in Newton MA on Saturday. Of course old friends are what makes the event, but this show had an interesting attraction.

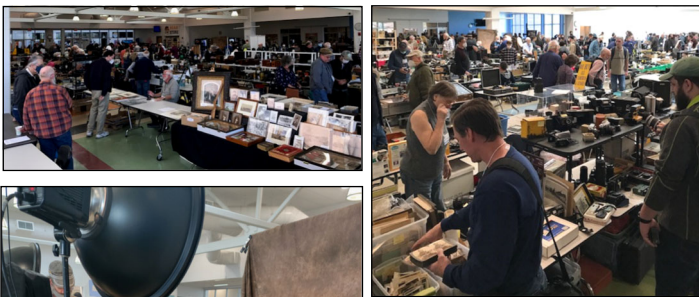
A tintypist was making images on demand. Many of the folks I knew at the show had them made. The images were great. Watching everyone get theirs done and seeing the results was lots of fun.”

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### More Photos From *Photographica*



Above—photos by Dick Koolish; Below—photos by John Felix



Bowlerhatman, Melinda

Photo by Joel Moses

### PHSNE Meetings

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

### Upcoming meetings:

The first PHSNE meeting of the 2022-2023 season will take place on Sunday, September 11th. Details to be announced in the September newsletter which will be mailed to members in mid August.

### 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>.

### Conversation Corner

The May issue of *snap shots* included an article about a large camera that serves as a coffee table. As a follow-up, we offer this photo of a Kodak EK6 instant camera that



has been turned into a working lamp. If you have found a novel use for an old camera, we invite photographs and descriptions.

This will also serve as a reminder that *snap shots* welcomes articles from members about a favorite piece of equipment, image, or collectable that has not previously (or recently) been written about. Photo is required. Also, consider sharing interesting stories about treasures that were acquired in highly unusual ways. Send your submissions to [snapshots@phsne.org](mailto:snapshots@phsne.org).