

Ways of Seeing (and Finding): Picture Collections, Photo Archives, & Art Archivist Annie Sollinger Discusses the Paul Rheingold Collection Sunday, March 2, 7:30 P.M. via Zoom



In the fall of 2019, longtime PHSNE member Paul Rheingold donated his extensive collection of historic photographs to the Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) at UMass Amherst. Nearly simultaneously, librarian Annie Sollinger joined the depart-

ment as its first Visual Archivist. Sollinger will share her experiences working with the collection of over 55,000 photographs.

The unifying principle of Paul Rheingold's collecting practice was his interest in the physical format of the photographs: they are all mounted on board. Otherwise they represent a broad range of formats and processes used between about 1860 and 1920. SCUA has retained the donor's complex organizational scheme; the photographs are sorted into roughly 3,600 categories, organized into 22 series.

As unique as the Paul D. Rheingold Historic Photograph Collection may be, there are fascinating analogs to be found in the world of libraries and archives. Sollinger's research into picture collections, with their own baroque taxonomies, will also tell a story about the history of photographic archives.

Annie Sollinger works at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in the Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center with the title Visual Archivist. She is also the library liaison to Art and the Department of the History of Art and Architecture with a special interest in visual literacy. She has a Master's degree in Information Studies, and Master's in Art History, focusing on medieval manuscripts. She is also a practicing photographer and visual artist.

See <http://scua.library.umass.edu/overview/photos/> to view images in the Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center at UMass Amherst. The digital repository for SCUA is Credo (<https://credo.library.umass.edu/about>). A digitization project is underway for the Rheingold collection, but thousands of other photographs can be perused online at the site.



Undated photograph, early twentieth century
From Paul Rheingold's "best" category

Journal Update

The 2024 *Journal* was recently mailed to members. Your feedback is greatly appreciated. Email comments to_journal@phsne.org.

Photographica Reminder

We hope to see you at *Photographica 92* at Newton North High School on Saturday, April 26th. Please make plans to attend. A few dealer tables are still available for sale—contact show manager John Dockery at photographica@phsne.org.

Davis Exhibits Historic Photographs

The Davis Museum at Wellesley College is hosting *Sovereign Memory: Photography, Remembrance, and Displaced Histories*, an exhibit of about 40 works that “share a concern with how images profoundly shape the stories of where we come from—and who we are” (<https://tinyurl.com/2b7p4rdr>).

Photography plays a vital role in our understanding of history, but there is also “a darker history as a colonial machine producing images in support of empires” that presents a colonial view of history.

“Featuring a transnational selection of photographic works from the Davis’s collections, this exhibition expands that single, false story into many sovereign memories.”

The exhibition will run through June 1, 2025.



Mildred Howard,
I've been a Witness to this Game XII, 2016

PHSNE Membership

New members are invited to join for half the rates for the first year. Regular PHSNE membership (U.S. and Canada) is \$30 for students, \$50 for individuals and institutions, and \$55 for a family; foreign membership is \$60. 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.

Send payments, changes of address, and other contact information, to PHSNE Membership Chair, 47 Calvary St., Waltham MA 02453, email 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, 47 Calvary St., Waltham MA 02453. Volumes 11-29 are available at <https://snapshots.phsne.org>. The current volume is only available to members.

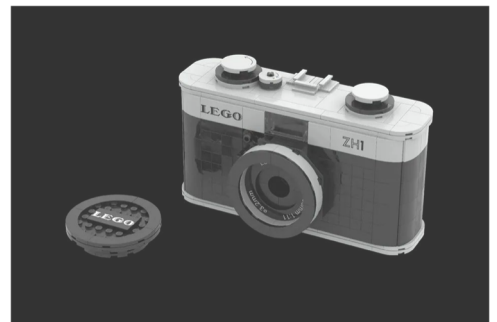
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This Lego Camera Takes Pictures!

“I was planning to treat myself and my son to one of those cool high-end Polaroids for Christmas but, after seeing the ZH1, I can’t think of buying anything else. This retro-looking glory is not made by Leica, Nikon, Minolta or Ricoh. It’s a camera exclusively made out of pieces of Lego. It’s built from the blocks of the most famous toy maker in the world, all the way down to its lens: A Lego magnifying glass” writes Jesus Diaz in a blog about a fully functional 35mm camera designed and built by Lego designer Zung Hoang (<https://tinyurl.com/yc2bnahv>).

In fact it was the plastic loupe that inspired Hoang to build the camera. The challenges were many, and the process tedious and slow. Hoang aimed for complete functionality, avoiding the use of features that would only affect appearance. Making the camera light tight was particularly difficult.

Another challenge was limiting the number of pieces required in order to keep the eventual price of the Lego kit as reasonable as possible; the final total was 595. Hoang was unable to keep the dimensions comparable to the Leica M6 Leica due to the size of the Lego pieces. His was much larger; however the weight was about the same since plastic is so much lighter than metal.



Hoang began with the focal distance and

<https://www.fastcompany.com/91172607/this-amazing-lego-camera-shoots-real-film>

claimed that each feature he added required weeks of experimentation. The shutter release button was the most difficult function to create.

“The ZH1’s cool factor comes from the fact that it is made out of Lego *and* works, not that it takes amazing images, like the \$3,000 Leica. Thanks to the imperfect, tiny plastic lens and its mechanical design, the Lego ZH1 takes photos that are quite charming and interesting, in a Lomography kind of way. The captured scenes have a soft look, with a vignette effect around them and different, seemingly random optical effects that add a touch of surreal. And given the camera’s slow shutter speed, will get lots of blur in moving objects.”

According to Diaz, the Lego kit is in the complex Lego approval pipeline and not available in stores, but you can vote for it at <https://tinyurl.com/w7a6ums4>.

Leica MDa Repurposed from Scientific to Street Photography

Ernst Leitz GmbH based in Wetzlar, Germany (henceforth Leica) was established in 1869 as a microscope manufacturing company with related optical accessories. Microscopes were produced for bio-medical, industrial and government applications. These customers bought a fair number of standard Leica cameras during the 1930s and 40s. Leica and other manufacturers made adapters for Leica cameras to fit microscopes for microscopic photography.



*ErikFive" on I-camera-forum
<https://tinyurl.com/2yxwayy2>*

For those customers, viewfinders and rangefinders were unnecessary frills and expenses for the Leica camera. So, in 1949, Leica released the Leica Ic. The new model "stripped" the original Leica IIIc of its viewfinder, rangefinder and the slow shutter speeds. For

the user's convenience, Leica added a second accessory shoe on the top plate and placed the speed selector dial on a large circular dais.

Leica went on to add to its thread mount (LTM) camera the Visoflex I reflex housing and Bellows I for the screw mount lenses. Leica began offering these significant accessories for close-up macro photography and to complement its established microscope offerings. The finderless Ic and the later models If and Ig gained added users with the Leica Visoflex Mirror Reflex Housings since it made possible the use of telephoto lenses and bellows with the Leica body. Who needs a second expensive outfit for these specialized uses when you can adapt the Leica camera into a pseudo SLR?

With the introduction of the Leica M bayonet mount in 1954, a new series of rangefinder-less cameras came from Leica. First came M1, in 1959 after the release of the M2, which was followed by MD, MDa and MD-2 in 1977. Over about a 30 year period, Leica Finderless camera bodies remained relatively rare. Compared to the rangefinder Leicas, rangefinder-less cameras accounted for a small percentage of the sales. They came in an amazing array of models and despite how uncommon they are, they have not yet captured the attention of collectors.



Macro photography with MDa and 65mm Elmar lens, magnification to 1.4X; photo by Sid Chatterjee

Leica MDa was the most popular of the M-mount rangefinder-less body. It is an excellent example of a rangefinder-less M4. From 1966 to 1976, a little over 60,000 M4's were made. During that same period, about 15,000 MDa cameras were made and used with microscopes and Leica Visoflex II/III for scientific and macro photography. Leica MDa retained the M4's film Rapid Load system and the convenient slanted film rewind lever. The MDa could be fitted with a special baseplate used to insert image reference onto the exposed negative (think of it as a non-electronic databack). To the delight of the street photographer and other wide angle lens enthusiasts, even though the MDa is cool and a Leica and is uncommon, it is not in very high demand. So, when someone says, "I want to be a Street Photographer with a Leica but I don't think I can afford the Leica Prices," tell them to get a used rangefinder-less Leica body, like the Leica MDa.

That Camera is robust, reliable, very discreet and can be used with a large assortment of wide angle lenses made by Leica and other companies. The MDa has moved out of the labs and industry to become a street photographer's premier film camera. Wide angle view photography becomes affordable with the MDa or the earlier Leica LTM rangefinder-less. These premier cameras



Model If with 35mm Summaron – 64 deg. Angle of view; at F8 focus depth 7ft to infinity; photo by Mark Kronquist



MDa with 24mm Elmarit – 76 deg. Angle of view; at F8 focus depth 4ft to infinity; photo by Sid Chatterjee

are available at reasonable prices from eBay and other on-line sales. So grab the rangefinder-less Leica, add the wide angle lens you love, load your favorite film, set the shutter speed and F-stop for your hyperfocal distance (Sunny 16 rule is fine) and start creating masterful images.

*~Article by Mark Kronquist, PHSNE Member
Edited by Sid Chatterjee,
PHSNE Board Member-at-large*

Review: Neewer Q200 Outdoor Flash

Britain-based photographer Ivor Rackham has high praise for the Neewer Q200 Outdoor Studio Flash. He writes that it's "small enough to slip in my coat pocket, yet more powerful than my Speedlight. With its array of special features, it's exactly what I have been looking for." (<https://fstoppers.com/reviews/new-q200-outdoor-studio-flash-neewer-just-what-i-needed-687558>).

Besides its compact size, special features include a battery good for 750 flashes that recharges in under three hours, and the ability to control it from the Neewer app, and to fire it using the Neewer Q-Pro Triggers (which is purchased separately). Rackham



<https://tinyurl.com/bsxkxbmc>

likes the High-Speed Sync and commented that "the stroboscopic effect is superb for creative work, allowing one to capture multiple images on a single frame."

There are three mode options: TTL, M, and MULTI. Continuous shooting is automatically activated when the flash is set at or below 1/16 power. The unit includes a fan and heat protection that kick-in automatically as needed. "Its fastest flash duration is 1/13,510 seconds, which stops the motion blur of anything you would feasibly want to photograph."

Using an umbrella hole in the handle, the device can be mounted on a light stand where it can swivel and tilt.

Rackham concludes with a summary of features he appreciates:

"easy to use, lots of functionality, can be used down to 1/256 power, fast recycling, more powerful than an on-camera flash, portable, well-made, [and] relatively affordable compared to some other brands."



<https://tinyurl.com/bsxkxbmc>

PHSNE Meetings

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

Upcoming meetings:

Saturday, April 26—*Photographica 92*

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 Volume 11 (Sept 2005) to Volume 29 (June 2024).

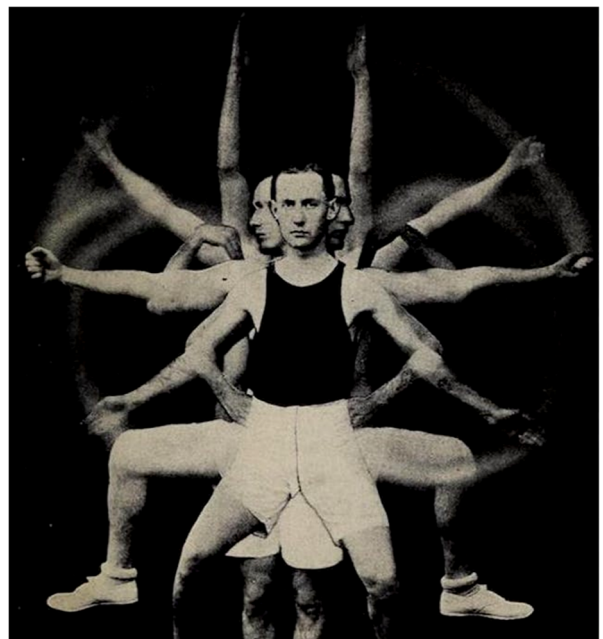
Stay connected to PHSNE via our emails and show announcements. Sign up at <https://phsne.org/emails>.

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

Best of the Public Doman Review

You can view the best of photography, recent and long past, at the *Public Doman Review* website (<https://publicdomainreview.org/best-of-the-pdr/photography/>). Here's a sampling of albums not previously noted in *snap shots*; there are many others.

- [*Posed Portraits of 19th-Century Baseball Stars*](#)
- [*Physical Training for Business Men \(1917\)*](#)
- [*Lewis Hine's Composite Photographs of Child Labourers \(1913\)*](#)
- [*Dr Julius Neubronner's Miniature Pigeon Camera*](#)
- [*Photograph Collection of a 19th-Century Sexologist*](#)



Physical Training for Business Men (1917)