



PRESS RELEASE

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 40th LEITZ PHOTOGRAPHICA AUCTION

Wetzlar, June 13th 2022 - Highlights at the **40th Edition** of **Leitz Photographica Auction** Delight Fans and Collectors. The world's most renowned auction for vintage cameras and accessories, took place on 11 June in Wetzlar, the hometown of Leica Camera AG. Among the highlights of the event, which was organised by Viennese subsidiary Leica Camera Classics, were two exhibits glistening in gold and patina black and selling for **record prices**: The **almost one hundred-year-old "Barnack camera"** set a new world record with a price of **14.4 million euros** while the **gold-plated charity lot** raised **72,000 euros** for a good cause.

433 lots were gathered by the team of Leica Camera Classics on the premises of Leica Welt in Wetzlar before the starting signal was given for the double anniversary edition of the auction on June 11. The event did not only celebrate the 40th anniversary of Leitz Photographica Auction but also the 20th anniversary of the auction house of the same name. On this occasion, the organisers chose a special highlight up for auction to bidders participating from more than 100 countries on site, online or via telephone: The Leica 0 series No. 105 produced in 1923, known to experts as the "Barnack camera".

"Number 105, which comes from the ownership of Oskar Barnack, represents one of around a dozen pre-production models of the first 35mm cameras ever made by Leica still in existence.", explains Alexander Sedlak, Managing Director of Leica Camera Classics.

"Barnack, who had worked as a precision mechanic for Leitz and constructed the prototype of the Leica 35mm camera, incorporated the experience gained with this camera into his further development work. All of these factors contributed to the 105 being one of the most historically valuable cameras ever to be auctioned," says Sedlak.

Another world record for 0 series model

The interest in the camera was also reflected in the heated bidding battle that developed when the name of number 105 was called shortly before noon on June 11, at the end of which the final bid of 14.4 million euros (including buyer's premium) for the almost one hundred-year-old camera was reached. No. 105 has thus broken the world record for the most expensive camera of all time.

“This auction result once again underlines the interest in historically significant objects from the world of photography, which has been continuously increasing for years, and we are very pleased that we were able to put one of the most remarkable 35mm prototypes up for auction”, comments Alexander Sedlak. "For us, the anniversary auction in Wetzlar was a successful and unique event: not least because of our most recent charity lot.”

Highly coveted gold-plated camera set

The gold-plated surface of this lot gave away its status as very unique item at the first glance. For the charity lot, its auction sum being devoted to a good cause, Leica Deutschland GmbH and Leitz Photographica Auction provided an analogue Leica MP and a Leica Elmar-M 1:2.8/50 lens. The unique camera set, coated with a real gold layer, proved to be highly coveted by bidders: After numerous bids, the hammer fell at a final bid of 72,000 euros including buyer's premium – a new record for a charity lot. The entire sum benefits charitable institutions in Austria and Germany.

As did the auctions of the previous years, Leitz Photographica Auction 40 revealed a consistent trend: The increasing desirability of black-painted vintage Leicas. This was demonstrated not least by the bidding competition for the 1957 Leica MP black paint no. 26, which was auctioned off at a final price of 960,000 euros including buyer's premium. "The MP series is significant not only because of its limited number of pieces - only 412 cameras were produced, of which only 141 were in black paint," says Alexander Sedlak. "Through its multiple uses by renowned photographers – including the famous Magnum photo agency – it has taken a place in the history of international press photography."

Photographs as the highlight of the next auction

"Our anniversary edition in the birthplace of Leica Camera brought together photography enthusiasts from all over the world and once again revealed the growing interest and continuous growth of the vintage camera market," comments Alexander concluding Leitz Photographica Auction 40. "But the next highlight of the scene is already on the horizon: the

41st auction, which will take place in Vienna in a few months, and this time will once again be complemented by an auction of important photographs. We are particularly pleased to be able to exhibit these in November in the new Leica Gallery Vienna."

The next auction awaits already. The team of Leica Camera Classics is now accepting cameras and photographs for the next auction, Leitz Photographica Auction 41, which will take place in Vienna on 25-26 November, 2022.

More information available under: leicashop.com and leitz-auction.com

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