



Press Release

The Good Picture

A Brief History of Proofs of Performance from the Leica Archive

Wetzlar, 06 February 2025 The first exhibition in the Leica Galerie Wetzlar of Leica's jubilee year 2025 appears under the motto: "100 Years of Leica: Witness to a Century," and will be on display from February 07 until June 01, 2025. The exhibition presents an exciting selection of photographs and items offering, for the first time, a glimpse into the rich Leica Archive collection. It represents not only the company's memory but is also a treasure trove of stories to be discovered.

Leica has shaped the history of photography for over 100 years. With the invention of the first models, Leica made a decisive contribution to new forms of imagery, and with 35mm photography to the development of its own visual language. The company has been committed to image culture ever since, and the camera systems that came along during the 20th century also influenced the development and perception of the medium. The close collaboration with leading photographers from different fields of photography, as well as the cooperation of countless amateurs and Leica enthusiasts, scientists and technophiles, has given rise to a comprehensive Leica Archive, which includes not only technical camera items, but also many collections of pictures. Frequently acquired as photographers' so-called proof of performance, and archived as exemplary pieces, their inclusion was often a tribute to these achievements. Consequently, the archive encompasses the complex palette of Leica photography in all its manifestations: from architecture to reportage; from portrait to still-life; and from street to documentary.

The exhibition presents more than 50 works, including by great classics of Leica photography, such as Thomas Hoepker, Frank Horvat, Toni Schneiders and Erich Angenendt and, for connoisseurs of Leica photography, exemplary Leica representatives such as Horst H. Baumann, Peter Cornelius and Hans Silvester, as well as pictures by unknown Leica photographers, and others worth rediscovering, such as Julius Behnke, Lothar Klimek, Siegfried Hartig and Hans Cordes. In addition to classically-framed works, some of the 'proofs of performance' are presented in their original form on index cards, in order to provide additional insight into the diversity of the Leica Archive. Furthermore, the display is enriched by several archival finds that were once exhibited as Leica advertising material in camera shops or at trade fairs, and which now reveal much about the visual aesthetics of the time and their significance for the amateur sector.



For further information about the Leica Galerie Wetzlar:

<https://leica-camera.com/en-int/Leica-Galleries/Leica-Gallery-Wetzlar>

100 years of Leica: Witness to a century

In 2025, Leica Camera AG is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Leica I. First presented to the public at the Leipzig Spring Fair in 1925, it was the first 35mm camera to be mass-produced and exceeded all expectations. Thanks to its compact and handy format, it opened up completely new photographic applications. Under the motto '100 Years of Leica: Witness to a Century', Leica Camera AG is celebrating this camera that revolutionised the world of photography around the globe. At international events organised by the Leica country organisations in the major cities of Dubai, Milan, New York, Shanghai and Tokyo, cultural projects and extraordinary special product editions will be presented throughout the year. The highlight of the celebrations is the anniversary week at the company's headquarters in Wetzlar in June. In addition, there will be high-calibre exhibitions in the worldwide network of Leica Galleries with works by outstanding photographers.

About Leica Camera

Leica Camera AG is an international premium manufacturer of cameras, lenses and sports optics products with over 150 years of company history. As part of its growth strategy, the company has expanded its business to include mobile imaging (smartphones) and the manufacture of high-quality eyeglass lenses and watches and is represented in the home cinema segment with its own projectors. Headquartered in Wetzlar (Germany) and with a second production site in Vila Nova de Famalicão (Portugal), Leica Camera AG has a global network of its own sales companies with over 120 Leica Stores. The company employs 2,400 people and achieved a turnover of 554 million euros in the 2023/24 financial year.

The Leica brand stands for excellent quality, German craftsmanship and industrial design combined with innovative technologies. An integral part of the brand culture is the promotion of the culture of photography with around 30 Leica Galleries worldwide, Leica Academies and international awards such as the Leica Hall of Fame Award and the Leica Oskar Barnack Award (LOBA).

Please find further information at:

Leica Camera AG

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