



## Press Release

The auction house of Leica Camera AG, Leitz Photographica Auction, sells a unique M-camera for the good cause

The charity lot, an analogue Leica M-A camera and a Noctilux lens, both bearing the serial number 5,000,000, was presented to Pope Francis (1936–2025) in 2024.

**Wetzlar, 9 September 2025.** This autumn, auction house Leitz Photographica Auction will sell the most extraordinary charity lot in its history to date - a unique Leica M-A camera with a Leica Noctilux-M 1:1.2/50mm ASPH. lens, which were personally presented to Pope Francis by Leica Camera AG in 2024. Both camera and lens of the set bear the serial number 5,000,000. All proceeds from its sale will be directed to the personal charity institution of His Holiness. The charity lot is one of many highlights – including for instance a Leica I Mod. A Luxus from 1929 and the Leica MP-114 black paint from 1958 - of Leitz Photographica Auction 47, which will take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> November at the Hotel Imperial in Vienna.

Leica products with a distinctive serial or fabrication number are very popular with collectors and deeply rooted in the company's history. Over the past 100 years, Leica Camera AG has awarded these exceptional products to distinguished personalities in recognition of their achievements. In keeping with his commitment to charity and social causes, Pope Francis chose to auction the Leica set, with all proceeds directed toward helping those in need.

The unique camera is finished in silver chrome, with a special white covering, a white-painted base plate, back doors, and some of the controls. The engravings on camera and lens are yet another highlight. The flash cover is adorned with the Keys of Peter, while the back of the top plate bears His Holiness Pope Francis' motto, 'Miserando atque eligendo', meaning 'lowly but chosen.' The special engravings are filled with white, gold, and black paint. The Noctilux lens is finished in chrome, with engravings filled with gold and white paint. The body cap and the lens cap are engraved with the Coat of Arms of the State of Vatican City. Both the camera and the lens are additionally engraved with the year His Holiness Pope Francis received this gift, inscribed in Roman numerals: A.D. MMXXIV.

Complementing this unique camera is an exquisite presentation box with a matching key exclusively made for this outfit. The charity lot also includes a photograph of Pope Francis receiving the camera. Bidding for the set starts at 30,000 Euros, with an estimate of 60,000 to 70,000 Euros.



### **Black paint and gold**

Leica<sup>1</sup> was the first manufacturer to serially produce 35mm cameras as early as 1925. Eventually, these cameras would turn photography into a mass phenomenon. They revolutionised photojournalism first. As more and more reporters used these compact devices, Leica adapted some of its new products to meet their needs. Photojournalists Alfred Eisenstaedt and David Douglas Duncan, for example, expressed the wish to use their M3 cameras with a Leicavit – a rapidwinder that had previously been available for the Leica IIIf only. In response, Leica presented a corresponding variation of the M3, the Leica MP, in 1956. Just about 400 of these were produced, and only 141 of them in black paint. The Leica MP-114 is one of these 141 cameras and estimated to fetch 700,000 to 800,000 Euros.

Luxury variations of well-known camera models have been a Leica tradition for almost a hundred years. In 1929, the company began producing the Leica I Mod. A Luxus, an extravagant variation of its first series camera. Due to its rarity and its conspicuous gold-plated body, the Leica I Mod. A Luxus proves particularly appealing to collectors of historical cameras today. The camera auctioned on 22 November is one of the first Luxus-Leica cameras ever produced. Its estimate ranges from 300,000 to 360,000 Euros.

### **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 a company history stretching back over 150 years. As part of its growth strategy, the company has expanded its portfolio to include mobile imaging (smartphones) and the manufacture of high-quality spectacle lenses and watches, and is also represented in the home cinema segment with its own projectors.

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<sup>1</sup> Under its original name 'Ernst Leitz Werke'.



Leica Camera AG, with its headquarters in Wetzlar, Germany, and a second production site in Vila Nova de Famalicão, Portugal, has a worldwide network of its own distribution companies with over 120 Leica Stores. The Leica brand stands for excellence in quality, German craftsmanship and industrial design, combined with innovative technologies. An integral aspect of the brand culture is the promotion of the culture of photography, with around 30 Leica Galleries worldwide, the Leica Akademie and international awards such as the Leica Hall of Fame Award and the Leica Oskar Barnack Award (LOBA).

**Please find further information at:**

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