



Photographica Digest

Western Photographic Historical Society

Volume XXIV No. 6

www.wphsociety.org

October/November 2017

PETZVAL LENS DESIGN

Mark Sawyer

At the October 5 meeting of the WPHS, we were honored to hear from Professor Jose Sasian of the University of Arizona's College of Optical Sciences. Dr. Sasian gave the evening's main talk on "Joseph Petzval's Lens Design Approach", a talk he first gave at the International Optical Design Conference in 2017.

The Petzval Portrait Lens was the first mathematically-designed (rather than trial-and-error) lens, and one of the very first lenses designed for photography, which had only been announced the year prior. The Petzval Portrait Lens was perhaps the most important lens in photographic history, dominating all other lens designs in the early decades of photography, and having been in continuous production for a hundred years. Interest in the Petzval Portrait Lens has recently resurged, with several modern manufacturers making recreations of the lens.

Dr. Sasian regaled us with insights to Petzval's history and his approach to designing the lens. One myth he dispelled was the long-standing story that Petzval relied on Austrian artillery officers to do his mathematical design work. Rather, Petzval did all the calculations for the original design, and used the officers afterwards to calculate variations of the lens!

WPHS PLAYS A ROLE IN "PORTRAITS OF CCP"

Matt Cook

The John P. Schaefer Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona announced it will celebrate the inaugural of "Portraits of CCP," on Saturday, November 4th, an event honoring those whose distinguished contributions to the Center over the years have earned them special distinction.

Dr. John P. Schaefer was the Founder of the Center. In 1973 he invited Ansel Adams to bring an exhibit of his photography to the U of A Museum of Art. The 1974 show, "Little Known Images," led to discussions between Dr. Schaefer and Mr. Adams which established the founding principles of the Center

for Creative Photography, which now holds the archives of 239 distinguished photographers, and is considered a premier photographic research archive. Since the Center opened in 1975, it has evolved into an art and research institution whose reputation is world wide.

Anthony "Tony" Celantano has been a volunteer at the Center for Creative Photographer for many years. Over the years Tony has been an important resource and technician in many areas. From showing portfolios in the Laura Volkerding Study Center's portfolio viewing room to work on digitizing photographs in the Center's collection, Tony has been the other right hand to many staff over his years at the center.

At this inaugural event WPHS members will be providing cameras and other photographica for table decorations.

The event will take place at the Center for Creative Photography, Saturday November 4th 2017 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Tickets are \$40 for members and \$50 for non-members. Contact Gina Compitello at the Center: 520-626-7978.

Check the WPHS website for latest information:

www.wphsociety.org/events

Meeting Notice

We are meeting at the Ward 6 Tucson City Council offices at:

3202 E. First Street, Tucson.

The meetings, for the foreseeable future, will be normally on the first Thursday of the month.

The next meeting will be on
Thursday, November 2nd.



CIRO 35

Ron Kuykendall

Candid Camera Corp existed before WWII. The legend is that a salesman wanted Leonard Gecki to design a 35mm camera that had attached every accessory advanced amateur photographer would desire, for the pre-WWII market. The result was a heavy plastic bodied monstrosity sold as the Speed Candid. Basically, a large rectangular box with a long base rangefinder box on the top deck and an extinction meter in a long box attached to the bottom with a Wollensak lens between. The back was flat and removable, hiding America's first 35mm focal plane 35mm shutter- usually the first part of the camera to fail. Controls were not natural and the big body did not balance well – yet it sold moderately well.



Ciro 35

After WWII Gacki expanded the CCC line of Prefex cameras with a much better designed rectangular cast metal box and several models-still prone to shutter problems as the metal curtain shafts had no bearings- just a hole in the casting. Economics of the late 1940's required a shift to stamped metal bodies and Wollensak lens/shutter units. As CCC was dying in 1949, Gecki designed something uncharacteristically beautiful.

A cast metal, small for the time, round ended, beautifully balanced, well designed, 35mm rangefinder camera known as the Cee-Ay. With a choice of two Wollensak lenses, but no accessories the camera was equal to any in its market. Rangefinder

was split image, separate window, flash shutter with possible the first hotshoe on the top deck, helical focusing lens mount with a lever for the left fingertips. Shutter was Wollensak single stroke, film advance was by knob- but inside, the knob pulled the film across the film plane and a sprocket shaft that spaced the film and set the counter. There was a release button next to the wind knob but no double exposure prevention. Controls are natural and logical to use, but I found my right forefinger naturally blocked the right rangefinder window.

An attractive camera it could reverse CCC's misfortunes. It appeared on the market in the spring of 1949 and CCC filed for bankruptcy at the end of the year. In a unique deal, Ciro Camera, a new company that had just moved from Chicago to Delaware, Ohio, obtained the camera, parts, assembly line, tools, and the executive director to set up the new production

facility in Ohio. In a few months the Cee-Ay re-appeared as the Ciro 35. The only change was the name and the letters R, S, T, - designating the level of Wollensak optics- a f4.5, 3.5 or 2.8 lens. Camera design and materials reflected those of the Ciroflex. Both were almost indestructible and above average performers.

When the twin lens (and 120 rollfilm) market began to fail, Ciro sold to Graflex in 1954. The Ciroflex became the Graflex with only cosmetic changes. The Cee Ay/Ciro 35 sold unchanged for a few years, then morphed into the maddening Graflex 35 with its push-pull focusing buttons that few could master- especially as the mechanism became stiffer with use. The Cee-Ay design was able to compete with the

American made Kodak Signet 35, Bolsey B, Argus C of the 1940's but as the better designed, better lensed, cheaper Japanese rangefinder cameras began to become available, the Graflex/Ciro cameras disappeared - about 1973, after a series of uncoordinated changes of lenses, rangefinder, manufacturers, and nameplates. For those interested, they all are available on eBay and are still solid picture takers but of course film and chemicals are only available from a few sources.

Leonard Gacki went on to design processing equipment for film and x-ray applications. Candid Camera Corp. Prefex, Cee-Ay, Ciro, and eventually Graflex joined that long list of names only old-timers know of.

HO, HO, HO, SANTA IS COMING TO TOWN!

Camera Club Meeting

December 7th, 2017

Time: 7:00pm

Place: Ward 6, Tucson City Council Offices



Is he going to find out that you've been naughty or nice??

Yes, the jolly fellow, along with his helper, will host a Camera Club Gift Exchange. Please be sure to bring a wrapped gift valued of about \$20 — bring something you would like to receive for yourself!

Numbers will be drawn during the program; when your number is called you will be able to choose a new gift from Santa's bag or take one already opened — Santa's helper will explain the rules in detail before the program begins! Let's make this fun!! Refreshments (light snacks) will be provided.

RSVP before or during the November meeting to Gary Sivertsen (253-278-2776 or by email to cameracol@seanet.com)



Gary's huge camera garage sale will be held on Nov. 29th, Nov 30th and Dec 1st.

9166 N. Sunrise Mountain Dr., 85742

Gary's Camera Garage Sale

WPHS members are invited to sell camera items at the garage sale. Contact Gary Sivertsen at:

253-278-2776 or cameracol@seanet.com



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Western Photographic Historical Society

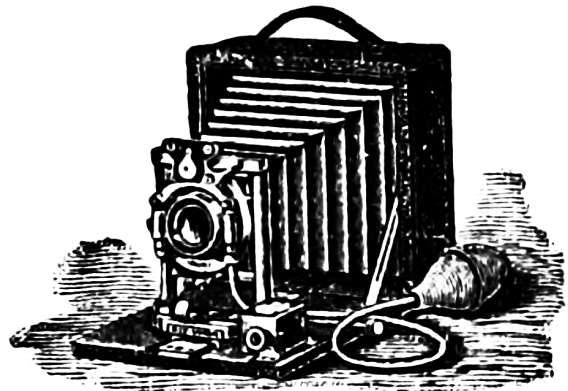
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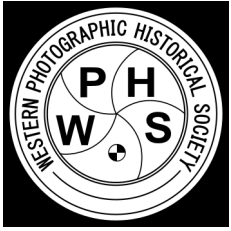
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HAPPY
THANKSGIVING



Western Photographic Historical Society

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UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXHIBITS

Nov 2nd Monthly Meeting

Nov 29th Gary's Camera Garage Sale: Nov 29th, Nov 30th
and Dec 1st.

Dec 7th Monthly Meeting: Camera Club Gift Exchange

We'd like your help in developing new programs especially product presentations. Please contact Matt Cook, Program Chair, at mattcook24@gmail.com

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Next WPHS Meeting November 2nd

Join us at a new meeting place, the Ward 6 Tucson City Council offices at:

3202 E. First Street, Tucson.

Consignment and member camera sales, show and tell and a brief program are featured every month (except the last two summer months). The meetings run from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM with show programs beginning at 7:00 PM.

All are welcome!

ATTENTION WPHS MEMBERS

The club is interested in purchasing your camera collection. Please contact me at:

Imre dePozsgay

520-544-7784

**WPHS is a non-profit
501(c)3 organization**