

CLASSIC DRIVER

High-value snapping: Leica sale promises new records

Lead

They are among the best photographic equipment in the world - cameras from Leica. Later this month, Bonhams in Hong Kong will be auctioning several extremely valuable models that might well set new records...

In 1925, Oskar Barnack created the first small-format 35mm camera, the foundation stone of Leica - and one which revolutionised photography in the process. Many famous reporters and photographers such as Robert Capa and Henri Cartier-Bresson worked with the handy but high-quality Leica cameras and, today, you find not only the latest digital models in demand, but also the classics. In the Bonhams 'Leica and Classic Camera Sale' on 22 November, the cameras and lenses on offer include such special items as a rare Leica Luxus 1 from 1930, estimated at €480,000-670,000. In 2012, a similar model was sold for €712,000. The only known Leica Luxus II from 1932 still in existence might beat even this result and, judging by the catalogue's estimate, achieve up to €860,000. The current owner bought the camera along with a crocodile leather case after the Second World War for use in his amateur photography.



Less glamorous, but nevertheless exciting is one of just 100 frost-resistant IIIFs made, in 1956, for Arctic operations by the Swedish army. It carries an estimate of €38,000-56,000. Or, a style statement of a more recent past is available, in the form of a calf leather-cased Leica MP Hermès Edition from 2003, which is estimated at €8,000-12,000. Alternatively, anyone not looking for a collector's item but merely wanting to bid on a high-quality camera will find numerous opportunities listed at reasonable prices.

Gallery

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