

No. 22 / mde / September 2016, Cologne

photokina 2016: departure to new picture worlds

photokina in Cologne will once again become the meeting point of the imaging world from 20 to 25 September 2016. However, rarely has the summit meeting of the industry been anticipated with as much excitement as in this year. The world of imaging is undergoing a profound transformation. This means that the cards are being dealt again for all players of the industry.

The decision will be reached in the course of this reorientation as to who will be among the big players of the future and who will dominate the segments of the imaging market and their billions. It will also become clear who will in future specialise in the increasingly lucrative, new and old niche markets. Never have the markets for imaging products been so diverse, so fragmented and so promising. The photokina claim of "Imaging Unlimited" comprehensively and accurately describes the state of development in the world of imaging. There is no longer any realm of life in which images play no role. Never before has communication been powered by images to this extent. More than a trillion images were recorded last year. Millions are shared daily with the intention of reporting one's own experiences. The attention people receive and that everyone is looking for is increasingly linked with images.

The stars of the photo scene are followed by more fans than the elite athletes of the world. According to the "Web Popularity Index" (WPI), determined twice annually by the Berlin company PIXXL, the photography stars in the Internet have fan communities encompassing millions. Of the hundred most popular photographers in the world, thirteen are already fan millionaires. The leading photographer by far of the Internet scene, Brandon Stanton, can be proud to claim a community of 23 million followers, which he has reached to date with his photo project 'Humans of New York'. He is thus a good step ahead of the sports superstar Usain Bolt, who "only" has 17 million followers on facebook. It's thus clear that the star photographers who will reveal the secrets to the success of their images will also be among the crowd pullers at photokina 2016. As the official photography partner of photokina, the traditional manufacturer Leica will present excellent works of contemporary and classic photographers in hall 1 with the exhibition "Masters of Photography", and as one of the leading camera manufacturers in the world, Canon is designing this years photokina presence in accordance with the motto "Images are the new words".

After decades of a market powered by camera innovations, this year it is the results that once again provide the focus of interest. However, also against the background of the technical revolution in visual communication: the new images made possible by technical progress make unprecedented visual experiences possible. They enable submersion into the completely new dimensions of virtual, augmented or mixed reality. What still appears to be pie in the sky to some can already be experienced



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20.09.-25.09.2016
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by visitors to photokina 2016 as market-ready products. A completely new category of imaging products is celebrating its start on the market here. This includes, not least, the accessories required to produce, edit, experience and share new visual experiences: VR glasses and tablets, phablets, monitors and of course the corresponding software.

Today almost everyone has a computer in the jacket of trouser pocket, or in their handbag, and thus at the same time a photo album. Modern imaging technologies, as a consequence of the digital revolution, have changed the world of images at an astonishing speed, and thus how society deals with these. Cameras have become indispensable means of communication that not only automatically create photographs and films in excellent quality at the push of a button, but can also process, modify and transmit these worldwide. Around 74 percent of the German population uses a smartphone to create images and thus always has their camera with them. More and more, smartphones are also becoming the most important control centre for visual communication and the indispensable accessory for professional and private film and photo equipment. All cameras presented by the imaging innovators at photokina use the interfaces of these jacks of all trades to expand their functionalities or to be able to use new applications optimally. Conversely, the accessories industry is presenting devices like, for example, gimbals for smartphones, which, in combination with the jacks of all trades, enable professional recordings from the hand in transmission quality.

From the autonomous photo apparatus to the completely networked 'Camera of Things'

The trend toward the networking of devices and machines, the Internet of Things (IoT), has also initiated dramatic convulsions in the camera industry, which will become manifest across all manufacturers at photokina 2016. Although cameras are becoming increasingly intelligent and their communications possibilities are expanding all the time, the interfaces with the smartphone remain decisive. That applies not only to the usage of functional expansions, but also to the remote control of increasingly higher performance recording systems. Even professional accessories, such as mobile studio flash devices, like those exhibited in the pro section of the trade fair, use smartphones and the corresponding apps to comfortably set and synchronise the activation of devices. The larger displays of mobile devices like smartphones and tablets simplify the selection of an excerpt, and thus also the remote control of the camera systems, becoming external second displays of the cameras. The cameras incorporated into the smartphones were the first completely networked representatives of the 'Cameras of Things' and the strongest impulse for the 'Internet of Things', which would hardly have been conceivable without cameras and image sensors.

Without the wired or wireless networking of the recording system with the 'post production' workstation, a smooth workflow in the professional photo studio is hardly still conceivable today. However, professional photojournalists also send their images direct and live from the camera to the picture desk of their agency or magazine during major events like the World Cup or the Olympic Games. These

solutions are also present at photokina 2016 with the leading camera and accessories manufacturers.

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While cameras per household were still registered years ago in the market analyses, around three quarters of the population already owns a smartphone with an integrated, completely networked camera. Numerous devices from daily life are equipped with cameras, which enable them to significantly expand their range of functions. The "Cameras of Things" are found in washing machines, professional printing systems, automobiles, door openers, refrigerators, medical diagnostics and monitoring systems, security and locking systems, or in sports equipment. They recognise and analyse practically everything that enters their field of vision. They use facial and iris recognition for identification, and, in combination with other sensors and technologies, like, for example, location, height and depth metres, identify not only persons but also, networked with the Internet and utilising a similarity search function, structures, tourist attractions and other objects. Cameras long since no longer merely record what we see, but instead serve to make that which we don't see visible. The wealth of ideas with which the innovators of the industry propel the industry forward at amazing speed with imaging and image processing technologies is documented by the "Future Zone" of photokina, taking place for the first time this year, where startups show the ideas they have for expanding the imaging world.

The recording systems have reached a level that makes it practically impossible for users to receive a technically deficient photo as a result. This has inspired many camera manufacturers to focus on new expansions of photography that were previously hardly considered possible.

Virtual worlds expand the vision of the world

Two of the most conspicuous expansions of photography enable new image experiences as "virtual reality" (VR) or "augmented reality" (AR). For the first time it is possible to interactively navigate in recordings and add additional content to them in the case of "augmented reality" or "mixed reality". Since the fulminant hype surrounding the computer game 'Pokemon Go!' at the latest, anyone can imagine the level of attractiveness "augmented reality" can obtain. Even the insurance industry has already discovered a new market here and closes policies for Pokemon players. At photokina 2016, many manufacturers will be showing products for the new image applications. These extend from recording systems for creating content through solutions for the processing workflow to solutions for presenting and experiencing the world vision-expanding VR, AR and MR content.

Photographing and filming on land, in the water and from the air

If the continuing development of photography to date mostly revolved around the perfecting of image results and the simplification of the recording process, in the meantime the focus is on filming and photographing that which previously seemed impossible. The high art of discerning the "decisive moment", as the great magician of the camera Henri Cartier-Bresson once propagated, is now possible for everyone with a modern photo/film camera. With the help of a combination of film and photo

techniques, even a moment in the past can be recorded in the photo. Photo functions with which ultra high resolution videos also record the events before and after the actual pressing of the shutter release are just as self-explanatorily state of the art as retroactive focusing. Professional quality is accessible and affordable for private users. Photographing and filming is no longer merely camera-driven, but is instead impelled by the wish for attention-getting, unprecedented images. The tools and technologies required to do so are no longer in any sense primarily the cameras for recording, but instead the accessories for recording and subsequent processing required for the task. The workflow of the imaging chain is once again the central theme: the path of images from recording through processing to saving, archiving and distribution.

Where small aircraft with the doors removed, hot air balloons or helicopters used to be needed to realise impressive aerial recordings, this can be done much better today with unmanned and comparatively very much more affordable flying devices. Impressive because the small photo drones allow entirely new perspectives, as they can navigate closer to the sheer rock wall, the mountain peak or the church tower than all other manned alternatives. They are in the meantime equipped with high resolution cameras that provide professional photo and film quality. However, most innovative are also the control systems, which allow safe navigation inside and outside, and include both automatic collision protection and take-off blocks for no-fly zones. While some still considered photo drones to be threatening until recently, new technologies have largely done away with this threat. New solutions that make the flying of photo copters even safer and easier, but also flying devices that are affordable for even more people are all the rage at this year's trade fair. While the manufacturers of the unmanned flying devices for photographers and filmers initially entered into cooperative ventures with camera, software and chip manufacturers, and profited from the experience of the camera industry, the first synergies are now becoming apparent. The gimbal mountings that ensured stable camera positioning on the drones are now also being used increasingly< for recordings with the hand camera on the ground, in some cases even in combination with smartphones, together with which they make films of professional quality possible.

Another aspect of progress is the improvement of the navigation capabilities of the flight devices. Thus, for example, the first selfie drones with control software for self-portraits and group photos will be presented. Even more perfect systems enable precise, collision-free navigation indoors, and thus open up not only possibilities for spectacular tracking shots as are already familiar on the web from cruise ships or from the Elbphilharmonie, but also completely new work areas for architecture photographers.

The endless possibilities of digitalisation through ever newer software applications, whether the updating of older products to the possibilities of their successors, the hardware is receding more and more into the background. Whether correcting lens errors, effects for follow-up processing or the realisation of innovative recording functions, nothing happens in photo technology anymore without high-performance programmes. They ensure colour-proof recordings and prints. They determine not

only the final appearance of the photos, but can also carry out editing of sound and images with film recordings.

Digitalisation is prompting a revival of analogue products

The endless reproducibility of digital images has awoken a longing in many people for uniqueness, for images beyond any virtuality. A new trend toward analogue photography, the instant image and toward tactile photography will be evident with many exhibitors at photokina. The instant image is experiencing a boom that has even led to manufacturer supply bottlenecks. New cameras with unusual, fashionable designs will further strengthen this trend at photokina. The instant image will be further impelled by special image printers that can also issue digital recordings as an instant image. The ephemeral digital image is not only still in demand as special wall decoration. It can be applied to nearly any material and has recently also decorated not only apartments as a photo wall with the favourite images of the inhabitants, but also, among other things, smartphone shells, beer tables, tiles or garage doors. The surface feel of the materials experiences a new diversity in the process. This is anything but nostalgia. On the contrary, it represents an expansion of possibilities for choice. New surfaces for photo paper or acrylic carrier materials with a metallic impression, as well as special carrier structures offer the individual image taste an endless variety of options.

Even lab devices for film and paper development are experiencing a rebirth at photokina 2016.

The interest in analogue photo media and individualised photo products like photo books and similar items find their counterparts among the cameras and lenses. On the lookout for a certain surprising image atmosphere, lens manufacturers are increasingly developing modern reconstructions of classic lens rarities in order to be able to also use their effects in digital photography.

The pixel race of the camera manufacturers will heat up again this year. However, the number of pixels alone will be a necessary but no longer sufficient quality criterion in creative and artistic photography. Sensitivity and dynamic scope will define the quality of the pixels and thus of the images. More effective systems for noise suppression, auto focus control systems that can record and follow even the quickest movements, electronic high speed shutters with global shutter function, new lenses for higher resolution sensors and numerous functions with which the previously applicable boundaries of photography are gone beyond will manifest themselves in an unprecedented variety of systems for the recording, development, processing, storage and forwarding of images. What at first glance might give some the impression of having lost the overview and no longer being able to keep up with developments will become clear to the visitor of photokina 2016 as the logical progression of digitalisation. The incredible diversity is the consequence of the unlimited possibilities for specialisation that provide the perfect product for every application. Following periods of multifunctional mass-produced products, the individual possibilities for the optimisation of tailored products for nearly every

imaging application are proving to be one of the most important trends of photokina 2016.

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For your safety

Koelnmesse has followed the events of the past several months with deep sympathy. We take the concerns of our guests, exhibitors and visitors very seriously and are implementing corresponding measures to make the events as safe and secure as possible.

In doing so, we are working together with the security forces at all times. We have also discussed and coordinated the security concept for the events at the exhibition centre with the authorities.

Extensive security measures are being planned for our events, including photokina. Because these measures include visual inspections and spot checks of baggage, waiting times can get longer in the entrance areas. The control measures are adjustable and can be adapted at short notice after consultations with the security forces.

To prevent unnecessary waiting times, we ask you to leave any baggage that isn't required for your trade fair visit at home.

To ensure the work of the security forces isn't impaired, we ask that you please understand that we cannot provide any detailed information about the specific security measures.

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