

Jon Fauer, ASC

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Issue 52

# FILM AND DIGITAL TIMES

Art, Technique and Technology in Motion Picture Production Worldwide



Daniel Pearl, ASC with 65 mm T1 Vantage One

New Vantage One T1  
Aaton Penelope Delta  
French Cinematheque  
Transvideo Rainbow HD  
Darius Khondji on *Marilyn*  
Reflections on Reflections  
Master Anamorphic in Paris  
Angenieux 19.5-94 & 28-340  
Comparison of 135 mm Primes  
The Decisive Moment – Leica M  
InEMITable Review of New Gear  
Preston Systems on Fujinon Cabrio  
Full-Frame Canon 6D and Nikon D600  
**New ARRI Alexa XR and XT**

# FILM AND DIGITAL TIMES

## Art, Technique and Technology

*Film and Digital Times* is the guide to technique and technology, tools and how-tos for Cinematographers, Photographers, Directors, Producers, Studio Chieftains, Camera Assistants, Camera Operators, Grips, Gaffers, Crews, Rental Houses, and Manufacturers.

It's written, edited, and published by Jon Fauer, ASC, an award-winning Cinematographer and Director. He is the author of 14 bestselling books—over 120,000 in print—famous for their user-friendly way of explaining things. With inside-the-industry “secrets-of-the-pros” information, *Film and Digital Times* is delivered to you by subscription or invitation, online or on paper. We don't take ads and are supported by readers and sponsors.

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by Jon Fauer, ASC

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# The French Cinematheque



What's a camera designer to do?

Everyone is calling for "lighter, faster, simpler, cheaper." Producers want cheaper. Directors want faster. Editors want simpler. Cinematographers want lighter.

In school we learned that those who failed to learn the lessons of history were forced to see history repeated.

Every contemporary camera designer should be required to revisit the more than one hundred years of camera history that are preserved in a magical place in Paris, the Cinémathèque Française. The lessons are all here: Edison patents 101, Comparative Portable Cinématographe versus Immobile Black Maria, Shoulder-Resting or Handheld Fatigue, Big Box or Cat-on-Shoulder, Camera Ergonomics 1894-Present.



At the Micro Salon last year, Willy Kurant, ASC, AFC came up to me and said, “There is someone you have to meet: Laurent Mannoni, Scientific Director of the French Cinémathèque. He supervises the most important preservation project of motion picture camera history in the world, a place that every cinematographer should see and every camera manufacturer in the world must visit.” It’s not open to the public.

A few months later, Larry Barton, Howard Preston, and I made the pilgrimage. The Cinémathèque is in a marvelous Frank Gehry building, with a museum, theaters, research center, archives, library, and café. It’s in the Bercy section of Paris—where wine was once off-loaded from barges on the Seine and stored in stone warehouses.

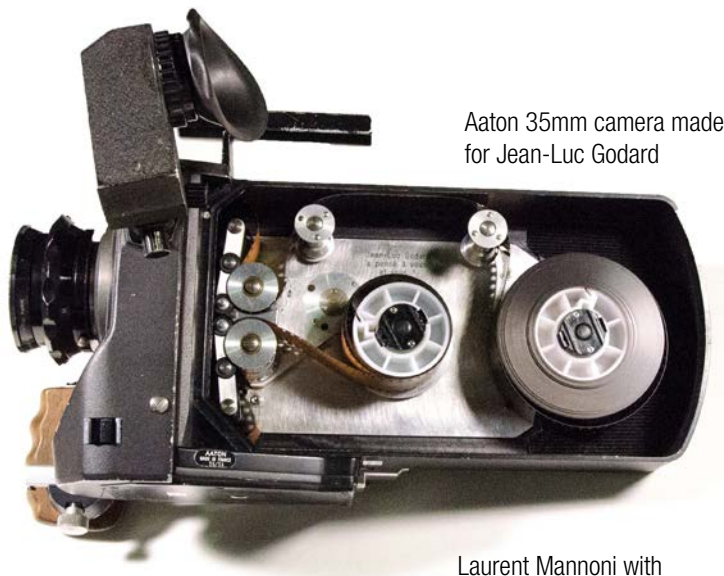
But, like most museums, there’s not enough room for the entire collection. The camera collection is maintained in an undisclosed warehouse location nearby, accessible by invitation only, presided over by Laurent Mannoni, and assisted by Laure Parchemenko.

I don’t think saying that it is the most complete and well-documented collection in the world is an over-statement. The provenance of almost every item is labeled, catalogued and supported by literature, instruction manuals, and original patents in acid-free boxes.

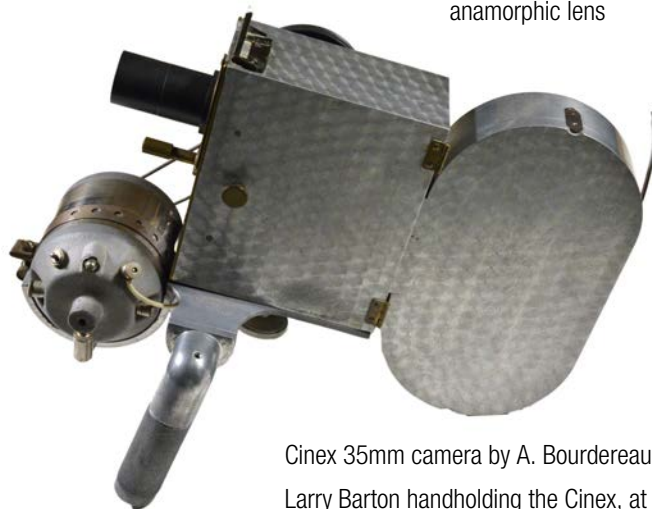
The cameras are arranged by manufacturer and chronology—impeccably restored, beautifully maintained, and most of them still working.

The historic cycles of wide-screen fascination following the rise and fall of 3D is amply documented within these halls. Laurent opened the door of a metal cabinet and took out a box. He removed the lid, revealing the original Chrétien 1927 Hypergonar lenses. Henri Jacques Chrétien was born in Paris in 1879. He was an astronomer, professor and inventor. Chrétien developed the Hypergonar lens for photography and cinematography. The format didn’t take off until 1952, when Twentieth Century-Fox bought the rights from Chrétien for their CinemaScope process.

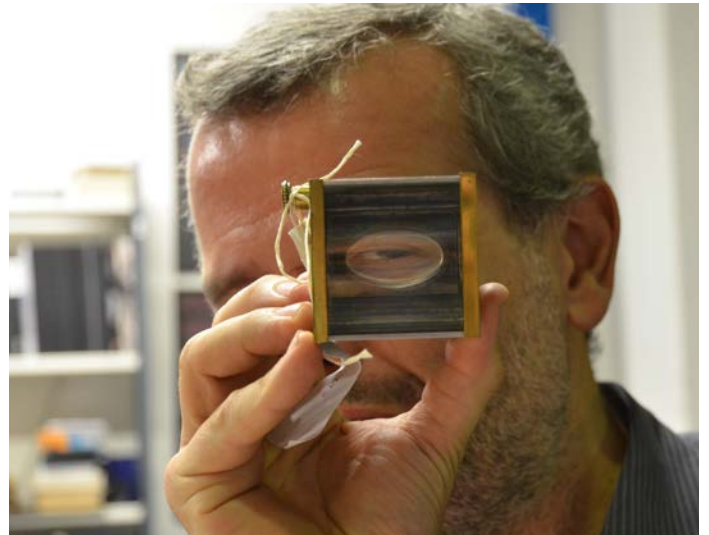
As we gather at La fémis for the 13th annual gathering of the AFC Micro Salon, remember Mr. McGuire who might have said something like this to Benjamin in *The Graduate*: “I just want to say one word to you. Just one word. Lenses.” □



Aaton 35mm camera made for Jean-Luc Godard



Cinex 35mm camera by A. Bourdureau, Paris  
Larry Barton handholding the Cinex, at right



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