

PHASEONE MOMENTUM

In search for the new iconic medium format camera.

Since the discovery of photography, it has served mankind in sharing memories, creating awareness or as a way for (self)expression. Cameras come in different types and sizes. Medium format cameras, as it refers to the size of the light sensitive element, are renowned for their cutting edge technology as they were several times the groundbreakers in history that enabled photographers to achieve better or new forms of photography.



ELECTRONIC VIEWFINDER

WAIST-LEVEL VIEWFINDER

Although its iconic image, medium format cameras are perceived as rather big and bulky. That is predominantly caused by a traditional optical system (single-lens reflex) and the larger light sensitive element (digital sensor or film negative). Due to advancing sensor technologies, it becomes possible to capture an image without the mirror reflex for larger sensors (with an acceptable latency).

Phase One is one of the keyplayers in the today's medium format market, a technology-driven company that strives for the best image quality possible. A mirrorless system would be the next evolution of their current camera system, without compromising image quality.

However there's a substantial threat from substitute products. The high pace of technological developments in smaller formats and even smartphones, puts the medium format in a difficult situation where in the near future it could lose its added value. A paradigm shift is close to happen where computational processes reconstruct an image, loosing the need for the optical recording.

In a Design-Driven Innovation (Verganti, 2014) approach, the goal was to innovate on the meaning of a medium format system in order to find a viable product solution. As a result the vision is to step away from the traditional mindset of considering the camera as a box that simply records an image, but as a smart tool that supports the photographer creating his envisioned photo.

In this proposal, the mirrorless system would be enriched by the emerging technology Machine Learning (Gartner, 2016) in which the product is aware of the use environment and uses data to correlate the user's preferences.

To address the niche needs of an elite group named 'World's Most Demanding Photographer', a product family of three specialised cameras has been introduced. For conceptualisation, the focus was on Momentum. A camera that focuses on photographers in extreme environments that are in need of freedom of use in an efficient manner, therefore without adding activities.

Speaking of the next icon can only be said over time after a product has provenance and made resonance. This concept will certainly start a discussion to what photography is all about. In a future context, will medium format just a romantic fairytale? Or will it be again the pioneer that depicts a deeper understanding of photography?

The ergonomic support for a two-fold postures and an adaptable user interface are the two hallmarks of the camera. As the first implementation of Machine Learning, the system senses and reallocates button functionality when the photographer switches hand position. Ultimately, the electronic platform is future-proof for an interpolating industry.

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May 4th, 2018
Integrated Product Design

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