



Jhagee

Exakta

**The Rise and Fall
Of a Legendary Camera**



A film by Günter Eiselt

90 min Color 16/35 mm · © eiselt film dresden 2001
Fetscherstr. 23 · 01307 Dresden · Tel/Fax: 0049 (0) 3 51-3 10 51 04

Ihagee EXAKTA

„The Rise and Fall of a Legendary Camera“

A Documentary Film by Günter Eiselt

2001

90 Minutes

Color

16/35 mm

Up until the beginning of the Second World War, Dresden was the capital of the European photographic industry heavily involved in the world market. One of its most important developments was introduced to that market in 1936: the first miniature reflex camera in the world, the „**Kine EXAKTA**“ made by **Ihagee Kamerawerk Steenbergen & Co.**

Because of its excellent construction and dependable design, this camera set the standard of decades to come.

In 1950 the „**EXAKTA Varex**“ model became a worldwide first as the only system camera with a wide selection of accessories.

The film does not only concern itself with technological history and facts. The story is also told by the eyewitnesses of the time: former employees in widely varying positions, relatives of the founders, photographers, domestic and international dealers, salesmen, scientists and collectors. Documents which became available in 1990 tell the tragic tale of the Ihagee organization:

- founded in 1912 by the Dutchman Johan Steenbergen who along with five partners in Dresden made the company a world wide name,
- declared as „enemy property“ and taken over by the Nazis in 1941,
- destroyed by bombs in 1945,
- 1947 put under Soviet military control then the state of Saxony which formally returned it to it's owners,
- 1950 declared a foreign owned company and put under trusteeship,
- used as an major source of foreign currency but not given the needed financial support and finally in 1970 illegally sold to the cooperative VEB Pentacon.

Many unusual stories are connected with the Ihagee EXAKTA and take us back in time as the eye witnesses lead us on a journey through the years 1936 to 1970. It is a view inside the history of the era.

The film was supported by the state of Saxony (Sächsische Filmförderung), the Steenbergen Foundation Den Haag, the Netherlands, the state capital of Dresden (Kulturamt) and the Stadtparkasse Dresden's Art and Culture Foundation.

Target audiences: a wide range of historically interested publics, those interested in the history of technology, experts in the Dresden camera industry, users, collectors and friends of the EXAKTA around the world, photography historians.

Additional information

from the author and producer of the Film:

Dr. Günter Eiselt/eiselt film dresden, Fetscherstraße 23,
01307 Dresden, Tel/Fax: 0049 (0) 3 51-3 10 51 04