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Antique Contessa-nettel Tropen Plate Camera, Germany C. 1919-1922.



575 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Length : 18,5 cm largeur (7,28 pouces).

Height : 14,3 cm hauteur (5,63 pouces).

Description

Antique professional Contessa-Nettel Tropen plate camera, made in Germany between 1919 and 1922. This model, belonging to the "Tropen" or "Tropical" line, was specifically designed for use in hot and humid climates. It is characterized by its varnished tropical wood body (probably teak or mahogany), chosen for its resistance to humidity, dimensional stability, and remarkable durability, qualities that set it apart from standard models with metal or leather-covered bodies. The format corresponds to 10 × 15 cm plates, typical of high-grade German field cameras of the period. The extendable bellows, made of natural leather, remains flexible, without cracks or light leaks, demonstrating excellent structural integrity. The camera is equipped with a Carl Zeiss Jena Tessar 1:4.5 f = 13.5 cm lens, mounted in a

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central Compur shutter, with speeds from 1 s to 1/250 s, in addition to B and T positions. This shutter, of micromechanical precision, functions correctly, although it has not been timed, and represents one of the most reliable systems of its era. The absence of a rollable focal-plane curtain confirms that this example belongs to the Tropen family with central shutter, not to the "Deckrullo" focal plane model, which places its production likely between the late 1910s and the early 1920s. The nickel-plated steel hardware, extendable bellows system, and focusing mechanisms via front guide are in excellent condition. The fittings are clean, with no appreciable corrosion, and the folding and locking movements operate smoothly and precisely. The whole set shows a high level of structural integrity. The bellows is original and retains its flexibility. The opening and closing mechanisms work precisely, the screws are complete and undistorted, and the leather side strap maintains its original appearance. The camera has not been tested with photographic plates, but its mechanics are functioning and it retains all operational focusing and release elements. Due to its level of preservation, this equipment is especially attractive for collectors of German cameras from before the Zeiss Ikon merger, as well as for studies of interwar photographic engineering. An ideal piece for museum exhibition or a collection of professional plate cameras. A piece of great historical presence that will bring authenticity and technical value to any collection of classic cameras, representing German precision from the era prior to Zeiss Ikon. At the same time, a camera that will stand out in any collection or studio, a living testimony of early twentieth century photographic ingenuity and an extraordinary gift for anyone who loves history and photography. Its preservation and aesthetic balance make it a reference piece for the discerning collector, capable of conveying the pioneering spirit of early mechanical photography. More than a camera, it is a tangible fragment of European

technical history, destined for those who appreciate precision, rarity and the timeless charm of classical engineering. An object that invites one to pause and remember the era when each shot was an act of patience, art and precision, when light was tamed by hand. Dimensions: 18.5 cm width × 14.3 cm height (7.28 × 5.63). History of the Contessa-Nettel Tropen The Tropen series was produced by Contessa-Nettel A.G., a German company formed from the 1919 merger of Contessa Camerawerke and Nettel Camerawerk. Directed by the engineer August Nagel, later founder of Nagel Kamera Werk and designer of models for Kodak AG, this firm stood out for its ability to combine precision engineering and mechanical craftsmanship. The Tropen cameras, also called "Tropical", were made in several formats (6.5×9, 9×12 and 10×15 cm) and were intended mainly for export markets and traveling photographers. Their distinctive feature was the tropical wood body and corrosion-resistant fittings, which made them suitable for scientific expeditions, military use or colonial environments. The example presented here belongs to the early versions, equipped with a central Compur shutter and Zeiss Tessar lens, an optical formula by Paul Rudolph patented in 1902, celebrated for its sharpness and contrast. These cameras represent one of the last phases of independent Contessa-Nettel production before its incorporation into the Zeiss Ikon AG consortium in 1926. The Tropen combines robustness, precision, and technical elegance, and constitutes a direct testimony to the transitional stage between the traditional field camera and the first portable precision cameras. Its exceptional material quality and perfect preservation make it today a reference piece within historical photographic collecting.We are professional antique dealers. To see more photos of this item, Please click on this link: http://antiguedades.es/en/antique-cameras/5329-antique-contessa-nettel-tropen-plate-camera-germany-19191922.html