

Retiring My Camera

In August 2023, my wife Liz and I attended the National Stereo Association's annual convention. The convention was held in Buffalo NY and co-hosted by Karen Sieg, the daughter of a recently departed very well-known photographer, former VP of Kodak and the most awarded person in the PSA 3D division, Al Sieg.

One excursion at the convention was a trip to Rochester NY, to the George Eastman estate and a special tour of the Technology Vault located 3 levels below ground. The George Eastman Museum holds the world's leading collection of photographic and cinematographic technology. Consisting of more than 17,000 objects from the earliest days of photography to today's integrated, handheld digital devices, the collection contains all of the equipment necessary for recording or projecting still or moving images.

I was very impressed with the collection and preservation of camera history. As we were from a stereo photograph convention, they had a display of many 3D cameras, some dating back to over 100 years. They had several David White Realist cameras from 1947 and beyond.

While the collection was impressive, I noticed I had a camera that they didn't have! I had one of the pre-production special 2.8 Realist versions with Kodak lenses.

The David White Realist 3D camera f3.5 was the most popular 3D camera in the 1950s. After 5 years of successful sales, the company decided to make an advanced Realist model. The ST-42 Stereo Realist had increased shutter speeds and a f2.8 lens. A limited pre-production model had Kodak Ektar 2.8 lenses. The company decided that the Kodak lenses were too expensive, so the David White 2.8 lenses were used in the production.

I decided to donate my special camera to the George Eastman Technology Vault's collection, and they were very appreciative in getting this rare camera. They arranged special transportation of the camera by Fine Art Display Services. They sent a truck from Texas to Arizona to pick up my camera and then on to two other states for other deliveries and then on to New York to deliver the camera to the George Eastman Museum.

The camera arrived at the museum and was first acclimated to the vault's temperature before it was opened.

I was very impressed with the museum's professionalism. I am glad that this special camera will be professionally well preserved and taken care of for history.

Gene Mitofsky

