Brownie Cameras Encyclopedia Article

Brownie Cameras

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Brownie Cameras

The Brownie Camera revolutionized popular photography worldwide by bringing it within the reach of all amateurs, including children. Commissioned by George Eastman and manufactured by the Eastman Kodak Company, it was launched in February, 1900. A small box camera that utilized removable roll-film and a simple rotary shutter, the new Brownie sold for just one dollar, plus fifteen cents extra for film. Its name was derived from Palmer Cox's familiar and beloved pixies, whose image Kodak incorporated into its brilliant and concentrated advertising campaign; even the box in which the cameras were packaged featured Cox's colorful characters. The Brownie was an immediate success: 100,000 sold within a single year. Various features were added over the next few decades, including color on the Beau Brownie of the early 1930s, and flash contacts on the Brownie Reflex introduced in 1946. Many special Brownies were also made, such as the Boy Scout Brownie (1932, 1933-34) and the New York World's Fair Baby Brownie (1939). The last Brownie model, the Brownie Fiesta, was discontinued in 1970.

Further Reading:

Coe, Brian. *Cameras: From Daguerreotypes to Instant Pictures*.N.p.: Crown Publishers, 1978.

Kodak Homepage. http:\www.kodak.com.

Lothrop, Eaton S., Jr. *A Century of Cameras: From The Collection of the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House*. Dobbs Ferry, Morgan & Morgan, 1973.