



## Zenit camera

**KMZ – Krasnogoskiy Mekhanicheskii Zavod – manufacturer**  
**1954, Krasnogorsk, USSR**  
**Museum of Photography in Kraków**

Contrary to the opinions circulating among collectors, the first model of the Soviet Single Lens Reflex Zenit was developed independently by Krasnogoskiy Mekhanicheskii Zavod in 1950. Although it used some of the elements found in the Zorkij camera, the mirror mechanism was the Soviet engineers' own construction. The Zorkij camera body had been rebuilt to accommodate an additional chamber housing a mirror, over which a rounded housing with a prism was placed. The use of a prism to mirror the image on the mat was a pioneering solution, used by a few manufacturers around the world at that time. The main drawback of the solution introduced was a relatively dark image and a significantly cut field of view in the viewfinder.

The Zenit camera is a Single Lens Reflex camera, with a 24 x 36 mm film format and an interchangeable M 39 lens mount. An INDUSTAR-22, 1: 3.5 lens with a focal F = 50 mm was mounted in the camera as standard.

Over 39,000 copies of the camera were mass-produced in the years 1953–1956s, after which it was replaced by mass-produced (232 thousand copies) Zenit S model, which had a built-in sync socket with a flash.

Credits:

Marek Maszczak (Museum of Photography in Kraków)

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### Creator

manufacturer: KMZ – Krasnogoskiy Mekhanicheskii Zavod

### Time and place

Time of creation: 1954

Place of creation: Krasnogorsk, USSR

### Techniques data

Size: height 9 cm, width 13,5 cm, length 8,1 cm

Material: glass, scrim, metal

Technique: casting, pressing

### Rights

Museum: Museum of Photography in Kraków

Object copyright: Museum of Photography in Kraków

Digital images copyright: public domain

### Circumstances of obtaining

2004

### Additional information

Digitalisation: Regional Digitalisation Lab, MIK, Virtual Małopolska project

Localisation: Museum of Photography in Kraków / On permanent display – Portrait

Inventory number: MHF 1237/I

### Topics and tags

Topics: technique, daily life

Tags: photographic camera, Polish People's Republic, passion, industry