



*Did You know that  
the world's most famous mini camera,  
Minox, was invented in Estonia?*

Tiesitkö, että maailman kuuluisin minikamera  
Minox on keksitty Virossa!

Знаете ли вы, что самый знаменитый  
портативный фотоаппарат в мире Minox  
изобретен в Эстонии?

Kas teadsid, et maailma kuulsaim minikaamera  
Minox on leiutatud Eestis!



The story of the invention of the mini camera dates to the World War II Estonia where the inventor of the camera, a Baltic German by the name of Walter Zapp, lived as a young man.



#### BEI AUFNAHMEN IM QUERFORMAT

wird die Kamera mit beiden  
Daumen von unten gehalten.  
Der linke Zeigefinger liegt auf  
der Verschlusseinstellung, der  
rechte Mittelfinger dient zum  
Auslösen. Mit den übrigen drei  
Fingern der rechten Hand wird  
der Apparat von oben gehalten.

Um eine sichere Haltung zu erreichen, werden die Hände fest an  
das Gesicht gestützt und die Ellenbogen an den Körper gehalten.

#### BEI AUFNAHMEN IM HOCHFORMAT

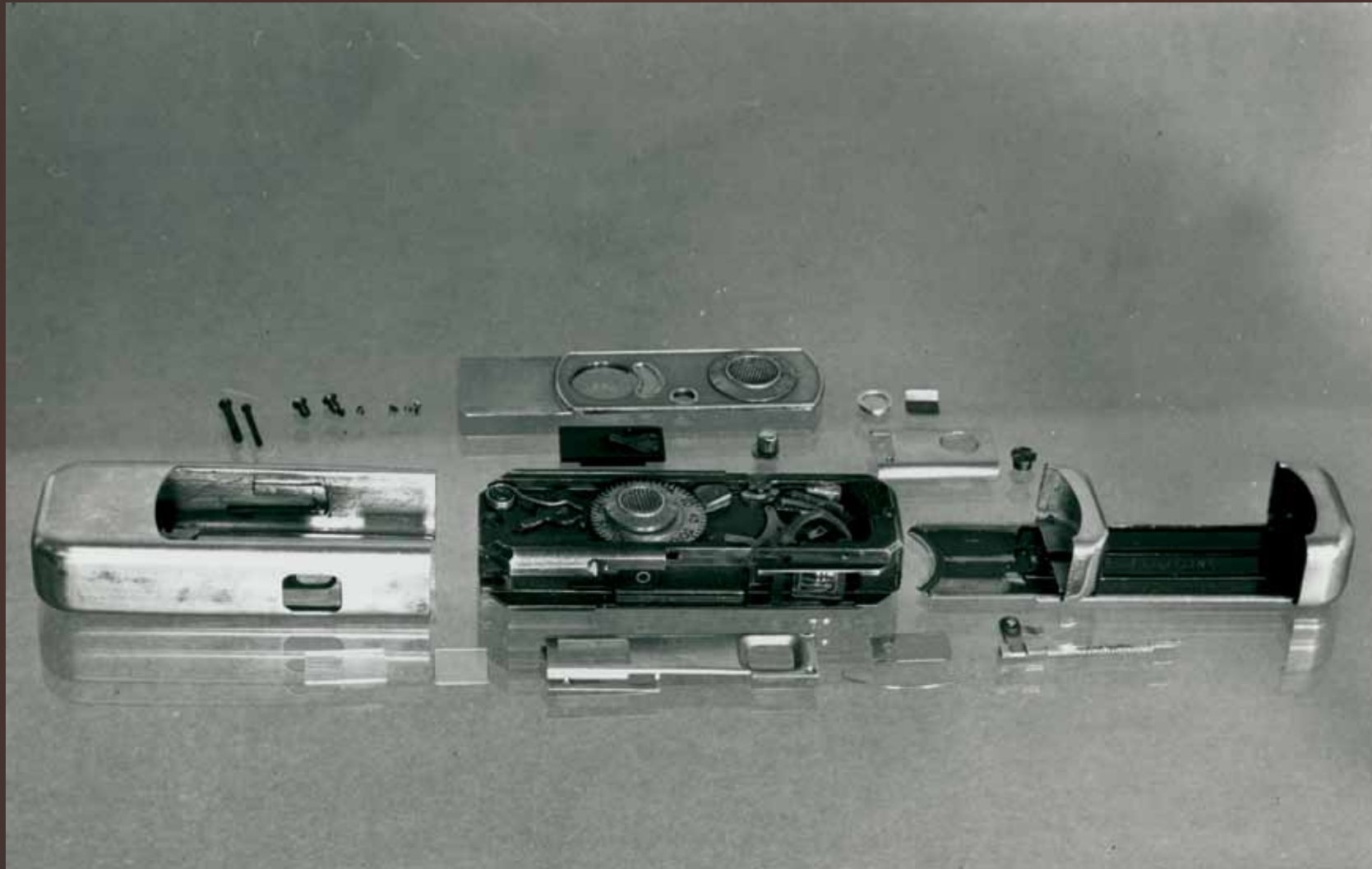
werden der vierte und fünfte  
Finger der rechten Hand ein-  
geknickt. Im übrigen bleibt die  
Fingerstellung dieselbe wie  
beim Querformat.

Die linke Hand wird an die  
Stirn gestützt, die rechte Hand  
an die Wange.



In dieser Stellung sieht man mit dem rechten Auge in den Sucher.

The camera is easy to use; the size of its frame is 8 x 11 millimetres. Enabling pictures to be taken quickly and inconspicuously secured fame for Minox; however, the image of a spy camera stuck as well.



At first, nobody believed in the mini image idea of Zapp, who was a photography and invention enthusiast. Nonetheless, he managed to assemble a team of his countrymen who in 1936 completed the first mini camera using literally their bare hands.



The name “Minox” was conceived by Nikolai Nyländer, a friend of Zapp’s and a famous Estonian photographer. His other helpers included H. Eppner, K. Indus and the provider of funding Richard Jürgens.



Estonia did not have the technical facilities to manufacture the miracle gadget, and Zapp moved to Riga, where the invention began to multiply. So it is that Estonia claimed the honour of being the country where the mini camera was invented, while Latvia claimed the title of the country where Minox was made.



When World War II broke out, Zapp moved to Switzerland, where he lived until his death in 2003. In post-war Europe, however, the tiny photographic eye was enlisted for reconnaissance functions, and Minox began to be used intensively on German spy planes.



In terms of their price and quality, Minox models, made in both Europe and America, were a luxury product that those better off could afford to own. The title of a spy camera upset Zapp, since his idea had been to create a small camera that was convenient to carry around.





Minox also made it into the James Bond feature film “On Her Majesty’s Secret Service” (1969). Amongst Bond’s impressive technical gadgets is a finger-sized spy camera – not fictitious, but rather a real Minox.



The British government commissioned gold-plated Minox models from the company. In 1965, a gold-plated mini camera was given to Queen Elizabeth II.



In 1989, the Estonian photographer Peeter Tooming met with Zapp and shot the video “The Minox story or what Stirlitz photographed with”. In 2000, Walter Zapp himself made it to Estonia for the first time since the war. The inventor was thoroughly satisfied with the exhibition about his life’s work at the Photo Museum.



Indeed, in Estonia a Minox may only be seen at the Photo Museum of the Tallinn City Museum.