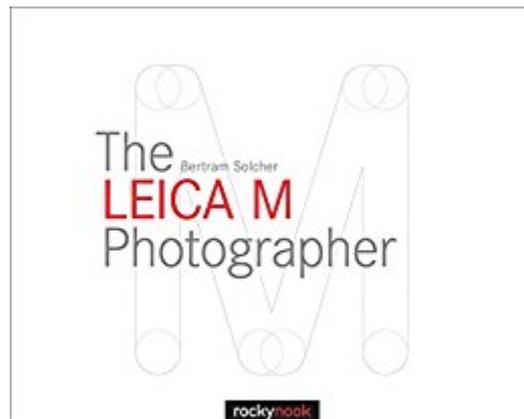


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# The Leica M Photographer: Photographing With Leica's Legendary Rangefinder Cameras



## Synopsis

What it is and what it isn't. This not a camera manual for the Leica M, nor is it a book that will teach you photography. Nevertheless, in Bertram Solcher's book you will learn a whole lot about your camera and how to use it, and about the art and craft of photography. This book contains a collection of illustrated essays that are meant to reveal the secrets of working with a rangefinder camera. To be more precise, with the best camera ever made. The book's ultimate goal is to ignite your passion for the kind of spontaneous, minimalist, and creative photography we admire in the works of Henri Cartier-Bresson, Joel Meyerowitz, and other great Leica photographers. All Leica M model cameras, both analog and digital, use rangefinder technology. Because of its design, working with a Leica M requires a more methodical style of photography where the photographer must slow down and exercise attention and purpose. Using these cameras is both challenging and rewarding. With a Leica M, you can mingle discretely within your environment to capture candid, exciting, insightful images. Bertram Solcher, a professional Leica M photographer for over 35 years, demonstrates how to use this unique camera in a practical and effective way. Solcher's enthusiasm, substantial experience, and technical expertise will help you learn the skills necessary for creating masterful photographs with any Leica M camera.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

For the first time I get to write a review for a book a publisher sent me. And great news: I loved it. So much so, I read it twice, back to back. Now, understand â | I donâ™t have a Leica. But you donâ™t need a Leica to fall in love with this book. Because the book is less about the Leica camera as it is about what it is to live the life of a photographer in love with his craft. Itâ™s important to note up front that the author is more of an everyday photographer, more of a journalistic photographer, more of a street photographer . . . This is not a guy staging elaborate model shoots in Bangladesh, and he is not roaming the Serengeti looking to photograph lions. Throughout the book we see him in there with everyday people, in the thick of it, up close ... We see him shooting fans watching World Cup soccer. We see him on a magazine assignment, shooting at a polo club. We see him shooting the a Harley Davidson bike rally in Hamburg, Germany. And again and again, the images he creates are exceptional. Most of his work is shot at 35mm or 50mm, befitting a photo-journalist and street photographer, and almost all of it is in black and white (sort of a cyanotype, really), though whether black and white or color, what I love most about his photography is that it is never routine. This is a photographer who challenges himself, who experiments and takes chances, and who ultimately creates photographs that are as technically masterful as they are just plain exciting to see. As you read this book you are in the company of an artist. You are seeing what it is to think like a true craftsman. Indeed, much of the training the book delivers on has to do with how he thought through these photographs and created them.

Years ago, I used a Leica M for my photography and I delighted in the precision of this fine little instrument. However, I ultimately found that my single lens reflex was better suited to my type of photography. I still hold a warm spot in my heart for that little camera. Bertram Solcher's book is dedicated to the same fine camera. The book is a combination of memoir, instruction manual and portfolio. He offers chapters on selecting gear, planning images, composition and other basic skills, and yet there is little that actually tells you about the Leica M. Each chapter involves a bit of narrative, a photo exercise and a discussion of a particular assignment the author had, either self-created or assigned, and the photographs he made for the assignment. Although he often describes himself as a photo-journalist, from the images in this book, I think of him as a street photographer. This book practically cried out to be liked; it's about the affection a photographer has for his camera. Unfortunately, that wasn't enough to generate a similar affection for me in the book.

Perhaps I would have liked the book more if it had detailed the ways that the Leica M could be used differently than other cameras and how those uses could be used to create more effective images than other cameras but the book didn't. Consider the chapter on rules. The author briefly mentions a few composition rules, like the rule of thirds or those relating to the use of depth of field. His discussion is at best cursory, and then he tells us we don't have to follow the rules. There is no detail to hone the reader's skills or understanding of the rules. There is no attempt to relate the rules to the characteristics of the Leica M.

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