

Index

# Image Fulgurator

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Julius von Bismarck



## Documentation:

1. - Features and use of the *Image Fulgurator*
- 2.-3. - How the *I.F.* works technically
- 4.-5. - First tests and ideas

## Outlook:

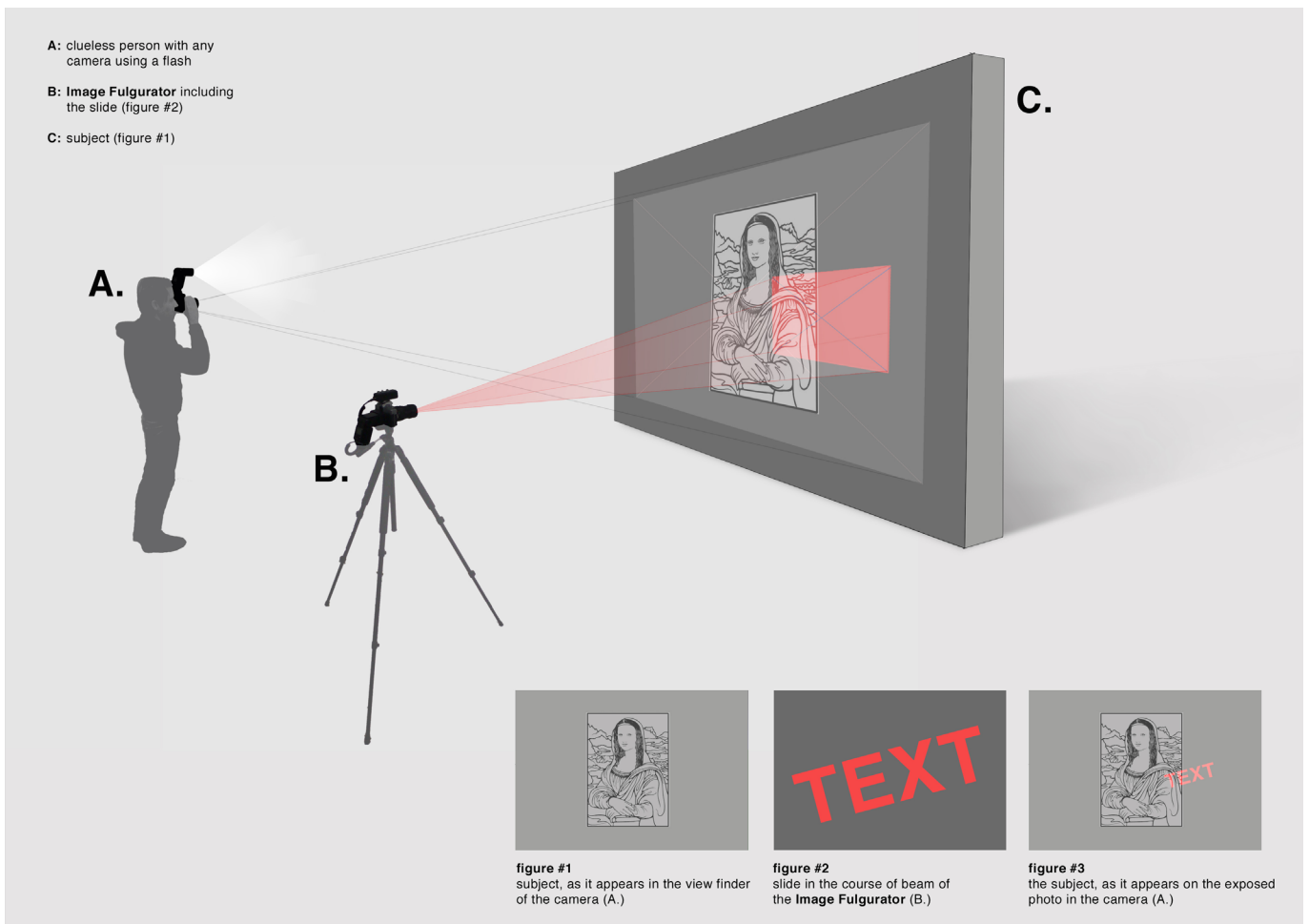
6. - Upcoming
6. - Schedule of action & documentation
7. - Corporate sponsorship
8. - The holy image

# Features

## Features and use of the *Image Fulgurator*

The Image Fulgurator allows one to impregnate messages into the photographs that are taken by others. The manipulation happens when the photo gets exposed. It functions with any kinds of camera that use a flash, and in many different environments. The synchronized projection technique allows the user to place chosen information, unbeknownst to

them, into the photos that they are taking near the I.F. device. This process takes place without attracting anyone's attention, because the projection of the I.F. appears only on the photos and is nearly invisible for the human eye.



*exemplification of a I.F setup*

# Tech. Details

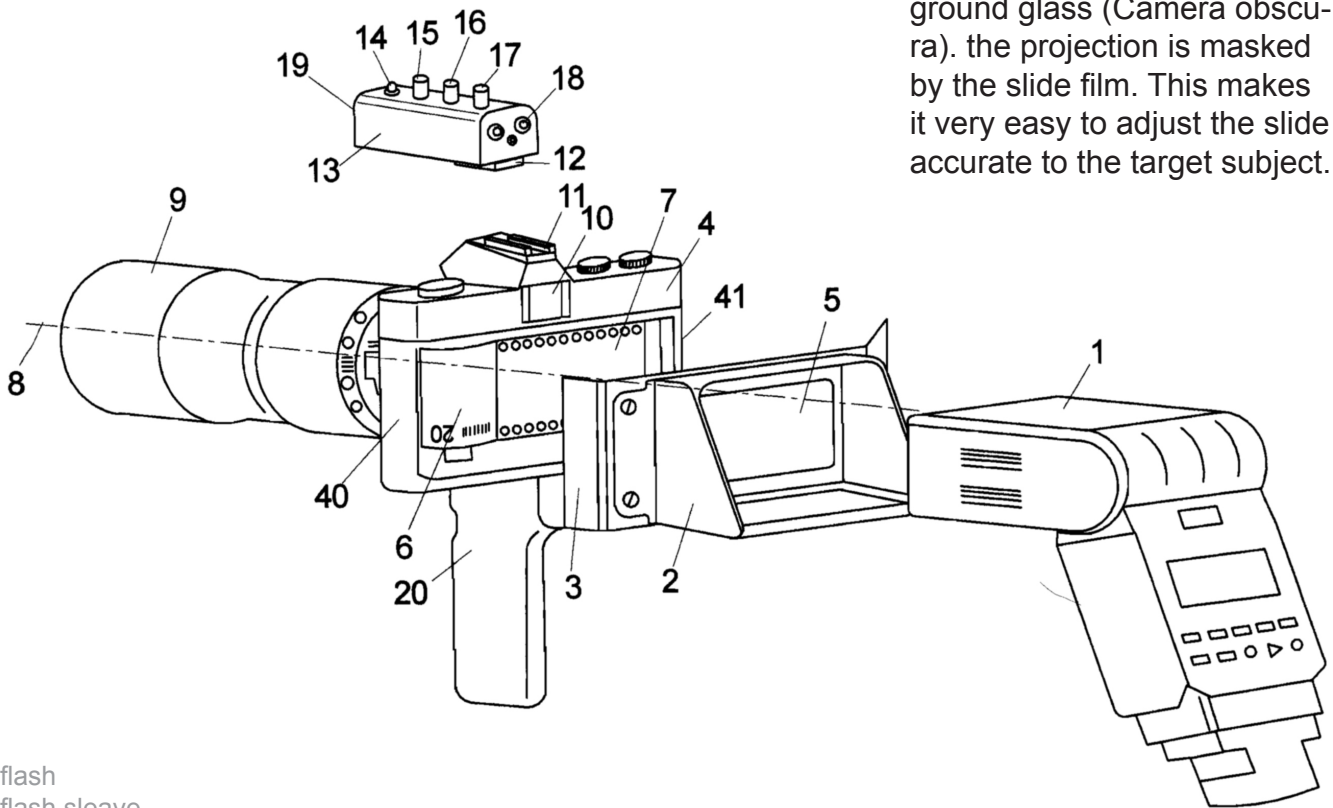
## How the I.Fulgurator works technically

Technically, the Image Fulgurator works like a normal camera but backwards. During a normal photo, the light is reflected from the subject into the lens of the camera, and the lens projects an image of the subject onto the film. In the Image Fulgurator the light comes from behind the film within the camera, and the image on the film is projected onto the subject.

Flash > Subject > Lens > Film  
Subject < Lens < Film < Flash

The I.Fulgurator is triggered by every flash from cameras within the sight of the device. So, the I.F. film's image is projected onto the subject during the same moment that the subject is being shot by the camera which triggered the device with it's flash.

Simplified, the I.Fulgurator consists of a photo camera with a flash attached to the back side, which is triggered by a servo or slave flash trigger, used by studio photography. Instead of an unexposed film, it is loaded with a film positive or developed slide film. The slide film and the flash is divided by a ground glass. The flash is removable from the I.Fulgurator body. The operator is able to see a projection of the target-subject on the ground glass (Camera obscura). the projection is masked by the slide film. This makes it very easy to adjust the slide accurate to the target subject.



- 1 flash
- 2 flash sleeve
- 3 camera back
- 4 Camera body
- 5 ground glass
- 6 film positive
- 7 picture that gets projected
- 8 figure is stretched on this axis

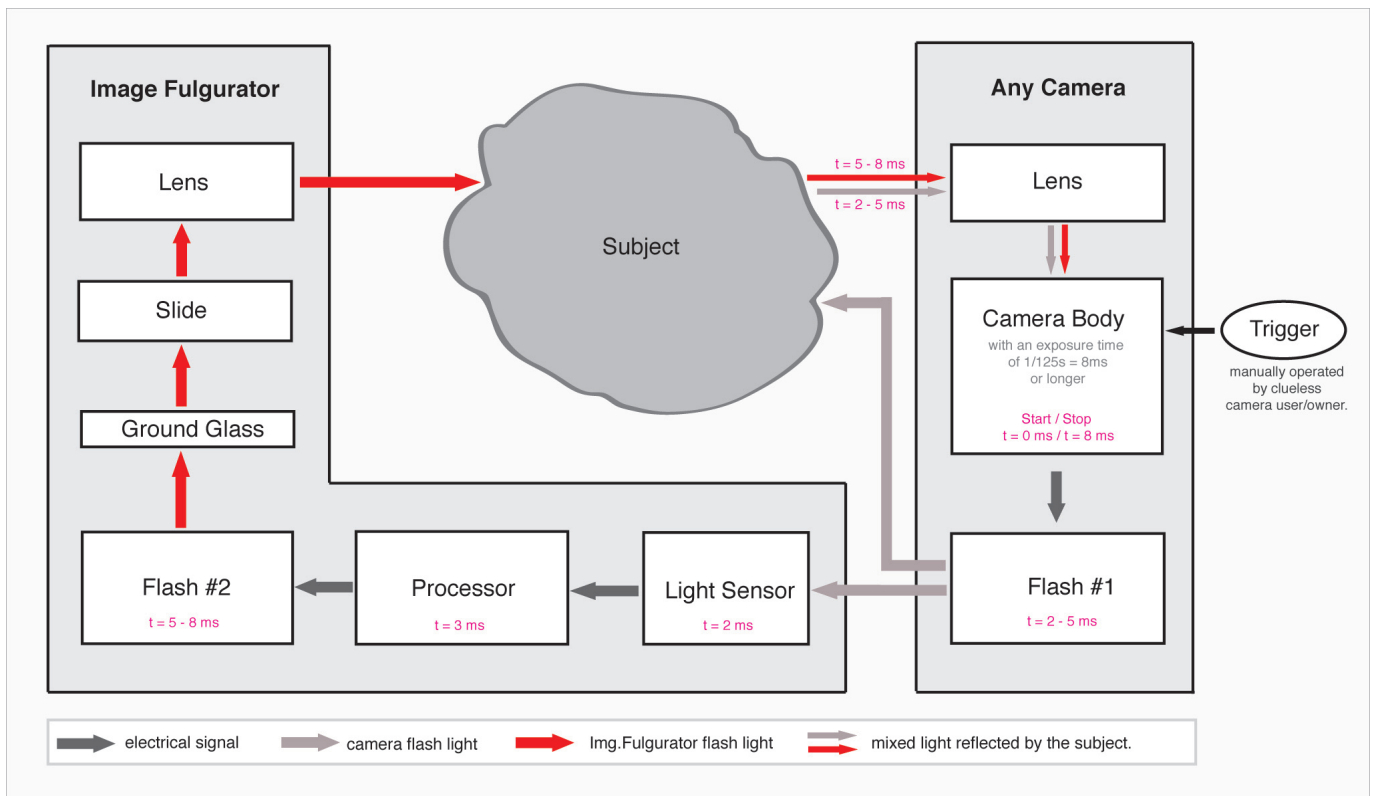
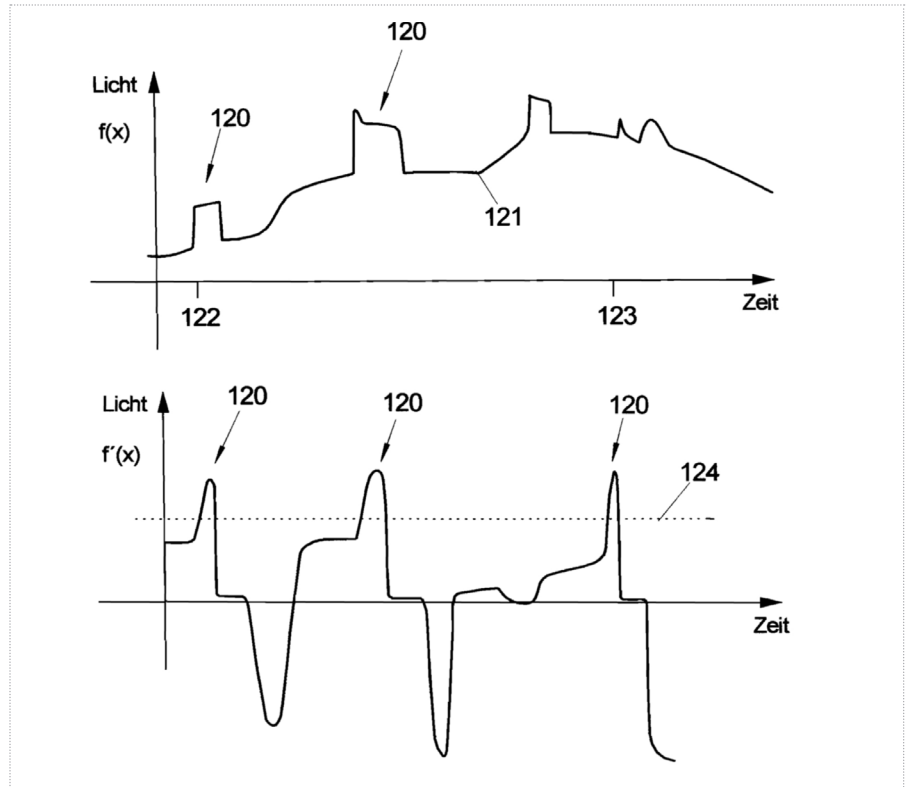
- 9 lens
- 10 view finder
- 13 control unit
- 14 test LED
- 15-17 buttons for adjusting the sensitivity

- 18 test button
- 19 light sensor

# Tech. Details

## How the I.Fulgurator works technically

Approximate graph of light intensity over time. 120. flashes  
 124. trigger level  
 If the value of  $f'(x)$  is higher than the trigger level, the flash within the I.F. gets triggered



# Inspiring Tests

## First tests and ideas

Since Photography beginnings photos have been manipulated. This is especially true now that so many people have access to Photoshop and to a unlimited image banks on the web.

The power of the I.Fulgurator is not to manipulate photos, it is to manipulate the photo that is shot by an unsuspecting photographer while he takes it. The moment when he reviews his photo the first time, he will realize the manipulation. He will wonder, if his memory is wrong or the photo. And, if he is still on location he can compare the original subject with his photo, but it will be difficult for him to figure out how the manipulation happened.

After constructing the first prototype, I experimented with it in public.

I choose the Reichstag in Berlin as an historical location that is often photographed by tourists. The manipulation was used as an *wormhole* in time. People who took a picture of the Reichstag that night, saw a phantom person leaning out of



*original unretouched picture, shot during the test*

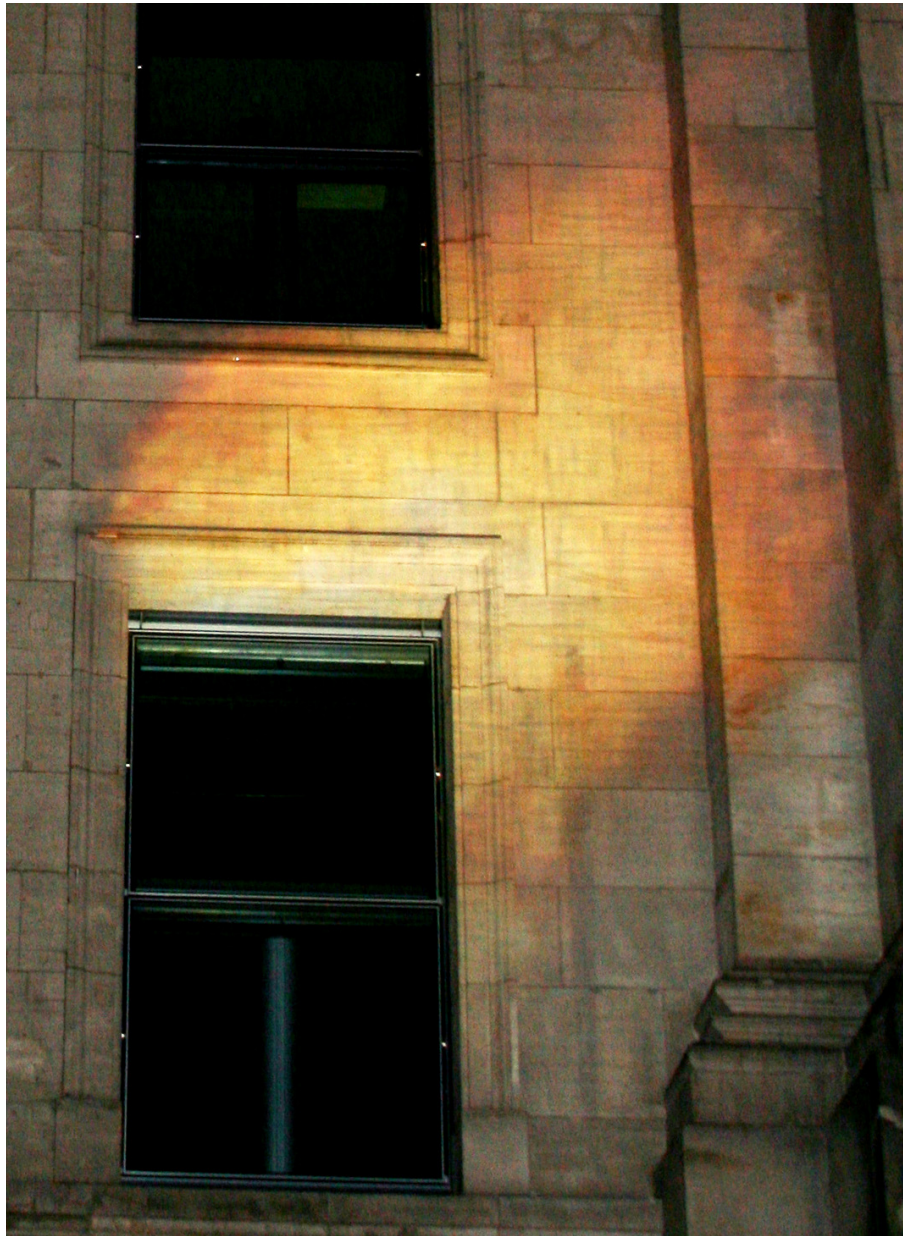
# Inspiring Tests

## First tests and ideas

a window on their photos. It was Philipp Heinrich Scheidemann proclaiming the Republic on 9 November 1918. The Image Fulgurator “reprojected” a photo that was taken 1918, back onto the Reichstag.

I used this time/location concept of the *wormhole* also to re-imagine the Reichstag’s Fire of February 27, 1933, by setting a window virtually on fire. The flames also illustrate how powerful the manipulation can appear on the photos taken by the tourists.

(The sample pictures are shot with a normal consumer camera in automatic mode)



*original unretouched picture, shot during the test*

# Upcoming

## Current developments and upcoming actions

The ability to add information to pictures that are taken by others, in a covert way, makes it worthwhile to publicize forbidden, or unwanted content at a specific location or country. With this in mind, I am redesigning the prototype, to look inconspicuous. The appearance of the first proto-

type was designed to illustrate its function. The second prototype, to be completed soon, looks more like a normal photo camera. I am using a contemporary popular camera model as basic element in order to not attract any attention.



form illustrates function

v.s.



form hides function

## Schedule of Action & Documentation

A film documenting the whole process is currently in production that begins with the early prototype of the Image Fulgurator through, hopefully, the astonished tourists at the Tiananmen Square.

The realization of two mentioned interventions is planned for May and June. If everything goes as scheduled, the documentary is slated to be completed in early July.

# Corporate Sponsorship

Politicians often have sponsors but unlike sportsman they do not like to show them. The public expects that politicians act independently. But how can somebody act independent, who receives a bulk of his income from a private company?

It would be easier to understand the decisions and goals of a politician, who shows a logo of his sponsor on his chest.

This particular intervention is planned to be made during a press conference, election campaign speech, or in the Bundestag. The Image Fulgurator would manipulate the photos taken by the press photographers on location during this intervention. I am

interested in how the photographers and their agencies will deal with the pictures, and if or how the photos get published. This will debut of the I.F. in relation to the news media system.



*Friedrich Maertz, (German politician)  
photoshop-catch of a manipulation*



# The Holy Image

## Manipulating images in China

In China images are controlled much more than in other countries. What would happen if someone uses the I.Fulgurator to manipulate an important event in China? The Mao portrait at the Tiananmen square is probably the most important symbol of the regime. How would a chinese tourist react after he discovers a manipulated version of the Mao portrait on the screen of

his digital camera that he just taken of his wife posing in front of the portrait?

I am working together with a Chinese artist to answer this questions.



Magritte  
*L'homme au chapeau melon*



*photoshop-sketches of a manipulation of the Mao portrait at the Tianamen Gate*