

# FUNDERS WANTED: CAMERA LUCIDA FOR MODERN TIMES, CARDBOARD MEDIUM-FORMAT CAMERA, AND BINOCULAR ZOOM FOR SMARTPHONES

By Les Shu — Updated May 13, 2013 12:12 pm



Looking to support some awesome photography projects? Channel your inner venture capitalist and get in on these crowdfunding prototypes.

## NeoLucida

The camera lucida, an old 19th-century optical technique that artists employed to help draw what they see, has been updated for the modern age by two university art professors. Pablo Garcia, an assistant professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Golan Levin, an associate professor at Carnegie Mellon, devised an inexpensive, portable camera that allows the user to “draw from life,” as the creators put it.

What is a camera lucida? As Garcia and Levin put it, a camera lucida is “a prism on an adjustable stand. When an artist looks down through the prism, they see the world in front of them, plus their hand on the page, combined in perfect superimposition. In short, a camera lucida allows you to trace what you see.” Highly popular in the 1800s, it’s an effective method in portraiture. In Garcia and Levin’s modern version (shown above), the NeoLucida is highly portable, with a small prism attached to a flexible stand with a clamp. There’s no electricity required nor are there any computer components reproducing the image – low-tech meets high-tech, if you will.

For those who want one, you’re a bit out of luck. While there are still 28 days left in the Kickstarter campaign, the project has surpassed its \$15,000 goal – garnering more than \$378,000 from more than 9,000 backers – and sold out its initial production run. You can still get in on the second batch with a \$40 or pledge, but that’s also going fast. Delivery is expected in September and December. The good news is that the creators plan to release the product details as an open source project, allowing us to build our own NeoLucida.