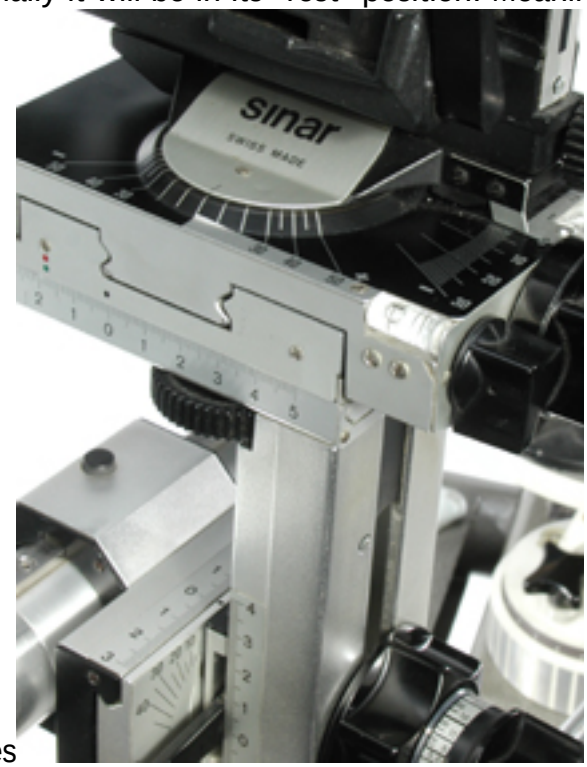
# A lens with a view  2

***These words are aimed at those readers who have not touched a view camera, or know how the “beast” works, but are inspired to take photographs with the large format camera in the near future. a view camera compared to those electronic factory preset chip makers that bleep flash and take their pictures but not when you put it in "manual" mode….if you can find manual mode …..***

***In this second intro to my fab fun view camera we will find out why it is so easy to work with….***

Since this camera is so manual that it does not need a manual but only a pair of hands, we will now start shifting and "bending" the front and the back of the camera and explain in a "simple way" what happens if you do. Some manufactures have produced books that illustrate with pictures and diagrams how the image was made using the camera with its different settings. Seeing believes and it is quite awkward to explain all this, a little like explaining how to drive a car!
Sinar has produced a few books in that direction, your library might have some titles that I will mention at the end of this article.
Right lets start it; I will tackle the movements the lens panel first.
Normally it will be in its "rest" position. Meaning all the bits sit right in the middle, the 0 position on the scales

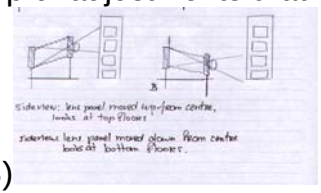



If the rest of the camera bits in the back (the image panel) are also in 0 position it is exactly like your 35 mm camera, it shoots straight, the lens sits perfectly in the middle of the negative (or imagepanel).

The adjustments we can make with the lens are as follows:

- We can move the lens up or down from the center
- We can move the lens to the right or left from the center
- We can tilt the lens leaning forward (“bending over”) or backwards
- We can swing the lens to the left (“look over your left shoulder") or the right

Right, lets go with the up and down movement (no not that one ☺...):
If you move the lens once it is focussed, up from the center the following things happen: the lens projects an image circle (round lens remember?) on the back (image panel). The lens projects the image upside down onto the image panel's groundglass as your transparency projector does too. That projected circle moves down, showing on the negative more of the top of the image in front of the lens, say like a building. First you could only see the bottom three floors of the building, now when you moved the lens up you can see floor no 4 or 5 coming into view, but of course you loose floor 1 or 2 in the process.
Do the opposite and you will see more ground and less floors when you move the lens down? Yep.
I have assumed that the camera is level, pointing straight ahead and only the lens panel is moved, the rest is in 0 position. This movement of the lens is very useful in architectural stuff, but sofar I have given you only half the story, there are a few more helpful adjustments that will make life very cool for an architectural photographer. (See diagram A and B)




The movement to the left and right of the lens is a bit harder to grasp - why would you do it?
Well imagine you have to photograph a photo or painting for a catalogue but it is nailed against the wall and there is this bloody pillar smack bang in the middle where your camera would have been to be right in front and in the centre of it to photograph it without distortion. To take a photo of it without distortion so the painting/photo stays oblong or square and not turns into a funny shape your camera position should be such that the lens is opposite the centre of the photo or painting. Ok, cool, no problem, stand as close as possible to the pillar, camera at the same height as the center of the painting, the imagepanel (in the back) is still in 0 position, the rail supporting the camera is horizontal. When you look now at your groundglass straight ahead you can only see half of the painting because you are not directly in front of the middle of it. Now move the lens to the right or left (depends where are you are next to the pillar!) and slowly you will see more of the painting coming into your viewfinder until it all fits. Remember not all other camera positions have moved from zero possie, only the lens

shifted sideways. The side movement is for me more a fine adjustment tool too to get the elements in

my photo I want and exclude the non-essential bits. (See photo

To explain the last two in a visually, the swing and the tilt: Lets get a slide projector out.
If you consider the wall on which you project the image as you're negative or image holder. The transparency (I do not use the word slides, that is not a professional expression but it means the same) is the scenery in front of your lens; the lens sits in the middle.
Aha, you guessed it, I am reversing the view camera as a slide projector (I do use that function too to create complicated set ups...) When you tilt the lens of the slide projector up the projected image distorts on the wall. You will see that the top of the transparency is projected at the bottom on your wall and the bottom of your transparency is projected higher and wider on the wall, distorting the image in an exaggerated perspective. The opposite happens when you tilt the projector towards the floor...
Now this is only half of the truth, because our scenery, the transparency, is still sitting parallel with the lens, more "distortion" would be visible if the lens would move on an angle away from the transparency but that would break the projector I think. But the view camera can.....

The swing works similar: Point your projector to the left or right instead of deadly square onto the wall, I hope you get my drift, see photo's of the image panel in the positions as mentioned that explain this

type of movement enclosed. (Select photo Sinarswing5 and

Sinartilt4)

The bellows is at present an item that needs no deep explanations. However, if you visualize yourself taking heaps of extreme shots with the lens in extreme far out positions a la “cirque du soleil” stuff, you might need a wide-angle bellows. That type of bellows is more like an oversize squarish bag and has no "harmonica" folds in it. This allows you to use all kinds of unimaginable positions with lens and imagepanel without breaking the standard bellows.

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