HOW TO USE THE WOLLENSACK PORTRAIT VERITAR LENS
WHAT THE PORTRAIT VERITAR DOES FOR YOU

- delivers a quality of softness
- blends highlights, halftones, shadows
- suppresses unessential wiry detail
- holds definition, yet pleasantly subdues it
- gives broad tonal range

INTRODUCTION

Recognizing that an instrument was required to assist the camera artist to record on film the complete pictorial beauty of each portrait, Wollensak designed and developed the Portrait Veritar. Its unique lens design lends itself to such versatility.

A Veritar negative renders a delightful atmospheric quality of softness . . . beautifully blends the highlights, halftones, and shadows and suppresses unessential wiry detail. In most cases excessive amount of retouching is eliminated.

The Portrait Veritar was developed and produced to aid the Professional photographer . . . to help him further his camera technique . . . to create portraits that have a delightful quality of tonal gradation . . . to produce a more saleable set of photographs.
LENS CHARACTERISTIC

The Veritar Lens is of three element construction, free from distortion and corrected for color.

The blending of tones or soft focus effect in the Veritar is obtained by controlled spherical aberration. Some soft focus lenses accomplish this effect by chromatic aberration and therefore are not suitable for color. The ground glass image of these lenses is visually sharp but out of focus on the negatives. The soft focus effect also changes with the different types of films used. With the Veritar Lens there is no change in focus whether you shoot color or black and white film and the image appears on the negative as seen on the ground glass.

CONTROLLED DIFFUSION

Various degrees of softness or diffusion are controlled by moving the diaphragm. At wide aperture the soft effect is most pronounced and decreases gradually as the lens is stopped down. At the smaller apertures the lens approaches the performance of an anastigmat type lens. The desired amount of diffusion for which the lens was designed is found between f/6 and f/8. To facilitate duplicating a desired effect, five indicating marks are engraved between the two stops. Thus with one lens you can make your portraits soft or sharp.

FOCUSING THE PORTRAT VERITAR

With a conventional, anastigmat type lens it is customary to focus on the catch lights of the eyes, because there is a range of sharpness both in front and behind the plane focused on. This range of sharpness or depth is small at large apertures.

With the Portrait Veritar there is no usable depth of field in front of the plane focused on. However, because of the particular design of the lens there is considerable depth behind the plane focused on. Within this region there is a considerable amount of recognizable detail. Therefore, to acquire the full
benefit of the lens for the purpose it was designed, develop a new focusing point and technique.

With the Veritar Lens the focusing point is the point on the subject nearest to the camera. That is, the focus point on the head would be the tip of the nose, rather than the catch lights in the eyes.

The following method is offered as a guide in using this lens. This procedure is not rigid and is to be used only as a starting point until the operator becomes thoroughly familiar with the characteristics of the lens:

1. Set the lens at f/8.
2. Rack the lens out until the image of the subject is well out of focus. Then rack the lens back until the nearest point of the subject just comes into focus.
3. Open the diaphragm in steps as indicated between f/8 and f/6. If more softness is desired, open the lens an additional step.
4. Expose the negative at the stop that gives the right amount of softness to the image as viewed on the ground glass.

If focusing is done at full aperture, f/6, with the intention of stopping the lens down for the exposure, focus ahead of the plane that is to be in focus. Then as the lens is stopped down the desired plane will be in focus. Although group shots are not recommended, it is suggested if making such shots, the subjects be kept on a similar plane and focusing be done on the subject nearest the camera. It is recommended that no more than three heads be placed on an 8" x 10" negative or two heads on a 5" x 7" negative.

**READING THE GROUND GLASS**

This type of lens produces a veil of softness overlying the sharp image. At large aperture the effect is more evident and appears less contrasty. As the lens is stopped down the image appears to become more sharp but actually the degree of diffusion becomes less and the image takes on a more contrasty effect. Careful study of the ground glass will reveal that if the proper focusing point was not used an out of focus image would be apparent.
This is due to the increased depth of focus in the lens. (See paragraph on focusing for correct procedure.) Correct judgment of the image will be acquired with experience and practice.

**SHOOTING COLOR**

When using color film it is recommended that a 5" x 7" film be used with the 14" lens and a split 5" x 7" film with the 10" lens. A full 8" x 10" or 5" x 7" negative can be used for black and white with the 14" or 10" lens respectively.

**LIGHTING**

A typical lighting arrangement is shown as a guide until operator becomes more familiar with the versatility of the lens. The lens may readily be used with other types of lighting techniques. Controlled spots and kicker lights for dramatic and glamour effects produce camera studies of unusual quality. A conventional lens would produce a more dense negative of higher contrast with highlights more difficult to print. If the same lighting was to be used with the Veritar Lens, less contrasty highlights would result and the overall negative would possess a fine gradation of tones from black to white.

**STROBE LIGHTING**

The Veritar Lens is designed to be used most effectively as a soft focus lens at apertures between f/6 and f/8. Because of the extreme brightness of the strobe light it is suggested that either the light be gauzed or a neutral density filter be placed in front of the lens. This will allow a lens stop which will produce the desired effect.

**SUMMARY**

The versatility of the Veritar Lens is only limited to the ingenuity of its operator. A master of the Veritar will be classed as a true camera artist and studio photographer.
For Effective Use of Veritar

Background

100 watt light

Reflector

Path of Light stand in use for different effects

Subject

300 watt diffused light

Camera

Add overhead spots and floods for backlighting and highlighting subject, hair, etc.

Illustration reproduced from original, unretouched print. Portrait made with 10° Veritar at f/6. Note softness, yet fine definition.