

Stereoscopy History Series

Designers & Manufacturers

Planox

ANDRÉ RUITER

Planox

The manufacturer who entered the stereoscope market in the 1920s with new innovative viewers.



The *Stereoscopy History Series* explores the history of stereoscopy in Europe between 1850 and 1930, unveiling the stories of the people, companies and their remarkable instruments and images that captured the imagination of an era.

Établissements A. Plocq

According to one of its own catalogues, the company was founded in 1895 by Alexandre Plocq. Interestingly, another catalogue gives 1897 as the year of establishment. At that time, Plocq's business was officially registered as a cabinet maker¹.

In 1903, Plocq and Arthur Salonne patented a camera plate magazine for glass negatives. Their collaboration led to the formation of the company Plocq & Salonne². In 1906, an interesting notice appeared in *Le Matin*:

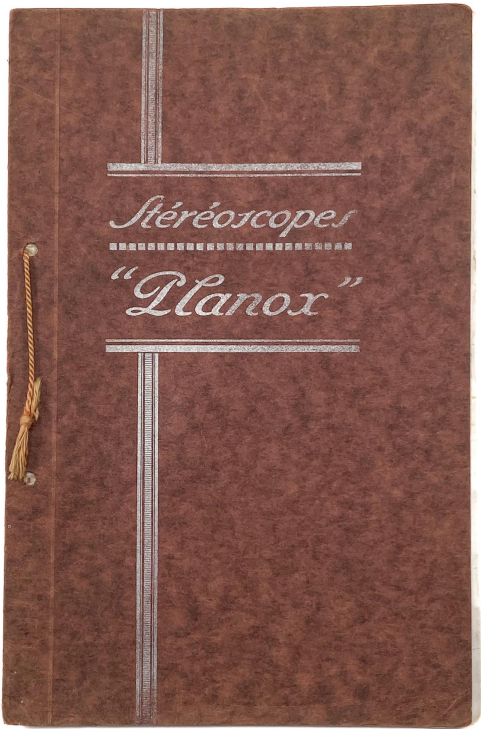
Mr. Plocq, a photographer, has his studio on Rue Caulaincourt, almost at the corner of Rue Damrémont, and he himself lives a few houses down. This fact had not escaped the notice of some burglars operating in the neighbourhood. Mr. Plocq departed around midnight. The burglars carried out a general raid, smashing and disabling everything they didn't take. About twenty cameras, valued at 3,000 francs, were stolen. Other valuable household items disappeared or were smashed to pieces. The damage suffered by Mr. Plocq is therefore considerable, although the amount cannot be immediately determined.

Plocq & Salonne remained active until 1907, after which Plocq resumed business independently.

Alexandre Plocq's son, Albéric, joined the company and became closely involved in its technical developments. In 1912, father and son patented a chain-based stereoscope design. This design was incorporated into the Stéréo-Classeur Capsa, which was manufactured and distributed by Demaria-Lapierre.

In 1921, the Plocq firm began producing stereoscopes under its own Planox brand. Entering a market already dominated by established manufacturers such as Richard, Gaumont, and Matthey, the company was a relatively late participant in the stereoscopic industry. Nevertheless, Plocq succeeded in securing a share of the market through a series of innovative designs. From c. 1924, the company was based in Les Lilas, a commune located in the northeastern suburbs of Paris.

Following Alexandre's death, the company was continued by Albéric. Over time, its activities shifted increasingly towards projection equipment. However, Planox stereoscopes continued to be manufactured and advertised well beyond the end of the Second World War³.



Fabrique de Stéréoscopes

PLANOX

Marque déposée

Stéréoscopes auto - classeurs

Breveté France et Etranger

Stéréoscopes à mains classeurs

Breveté France et Etranger

Stéréoscopes à mains

- Accessoires divers -

Pieds photographiques A. P.

Etablissements A. PLOCQ

Constructeurs brevetés

Maison fondée en 1897

26 et 28, rue du Centre, LES LILAS (Seine)

Téléphone : LILAS 69

Adr. tél. : PLANOX-LILAS

Métro : Porte des Lilas

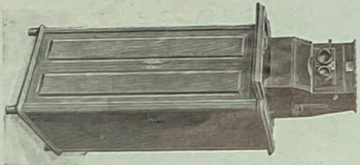
Tramw. : N° 95 et 100

Autobus : N et Q

LE MONOBLOC

Stéréoscopes "PLANOX" Auto-Classeurs Magnétiques

Page N° 5



Appareil (sans socle) monté sur pied en colonne.

Mise au point et écartement variable des oculaires à infinity
Lentilles extraordinaires de 40 m/m. Un point avec 6 optiques
N° 8 Veril scapion cret. 1020 *
N° 10 Veril cret. 580 *

APPAREILS (sans socle)

FOYER MOYEN

Les oculaires sont réglés pour recevoir les appareils 8 et 10 ;
6 pour le format 45 x 107
et 8 pour le format 6 x 13
N° 12 Veril scapion veni. 45 x 107 et 6 x 13
N° 14 Veril scapion cret. 235 *
N° 16 Veril cret. 180 *

SOCCLES (sans peintures)

"PLANOX" ROTATIF
Veril scapion veni. — Mise au point et écartement variable
des oculaires à infinity. — Lentilles subventionnées de 40 m/m.
4 peintures avec barreaux 45 x 107 et 6 x 13
N° 1. Appareil avec 4 peintures 1750 *
N° 2. Appareil avec 4 peintures (barreaux
recommandés pour les oculaires 30 *

ENVOI DE NOTICES SUR DEMANDE

ANS, LE HANDEL, LITEL

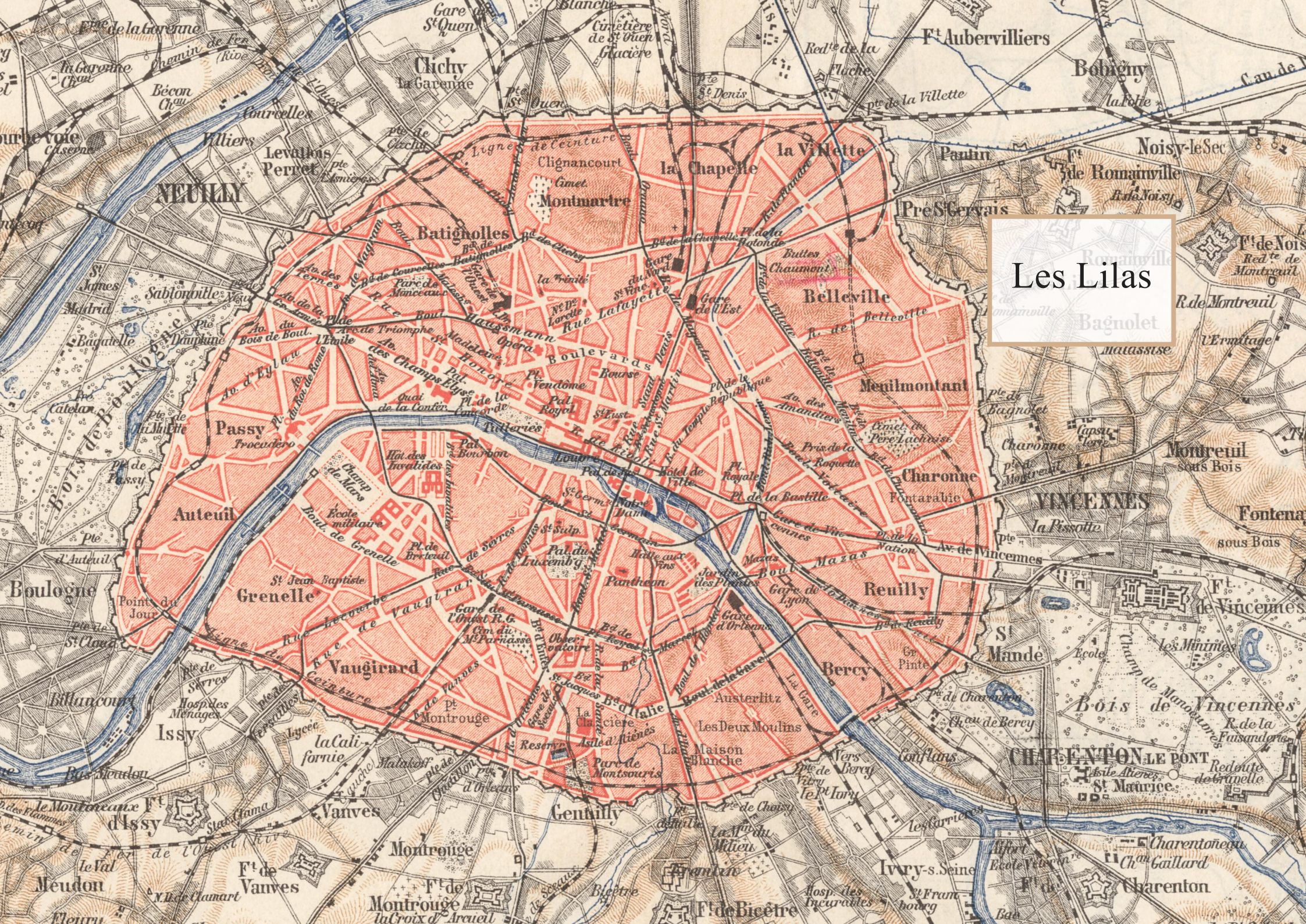
"PLANOX" SIMPLIFIÉ
N° 18. Appareil. 45 x 107 et 6 x 13
N° 20. Appareil cret. 570 *
N° 22. Appareil cret. 115 *
N° 24. Appareil cret. 96 *
N° 26. Appareil cret. 715 *
N° 28. Appareil cret. 46 *
N° 30. Appareil cret. 14 50
N° 32. Appareil cret. 17 40
N° 34. Appareil cret. 20 *
N° 36. Appareil cret. 132 *

MEUBLES COLONNES

1.200 vana fermature à rideau (sans peintures)
N° 26. Veril scapion veni, noyer veni. 980 *
N° 28. Veril scapion cret, noyer veni. 780 *
N° 30. Veril scapion veni, noyer veni. 690 *
N° 32. Veril scapion cret, noyer veni. 690 *

Companies and people

	Alexandre Plocq	Plocq & Salonne	Plocq père et fils / Albéric Plocq
Duration	1895–1903	1903–c. 1907	c. 1907–c.1956
Addresses in Paris	4, Rue Fontaine-du-But	94, Rue Caulaincourt	94, Rue Caulaincourt (1907–c.1914) 6, Rue Orfilla (c.1914-c.1919) 57, Avenue Gambetta (c.1919-1924) 26-28, Rue du Centre, Les Lilas (c.1924-c.1956)
People	Alexandre Plocq * 12-12-1871, Paris † ?	Alexandre Plocq Arthur Edmond Salonne * 08-07-1869, Bousseraucourt † 01-11-1929, Paris	Alexandre Plocq Albéric Alfred Plocq * 22-05-1895, Paris † 18-10-1974, Garches



Les Lilas

Planox Stéréoscope Magnétique

The foundation of Plocq's stereoscope range was the Planox Stéréoscope Magnétique. This tray-based stereoscope is based on a distinctive mechanism derived from a patent granted to Modeste Noel in 1913.

Whereas most tray-based stereoscopes use metal fingers from the bottom of the device to lift a glass slide from the slide tray, the Stéréoscope Magnétique relies on a magnet to draw the slide out of the tray. To make this possible, each slide is fitted with a metal strip along its upper edge, allowing it to be engaged magnetically. In 1923, Noel and Plocq further developed the original design, resulting in the Rotatif. This model accommodates up to 100 stereoviews stored in four slide trays shaped as quadrants of a circle.

Other models are the Simplifié, a more basic model without slide index and the Universel which supports three different stereoview formats in a single device.

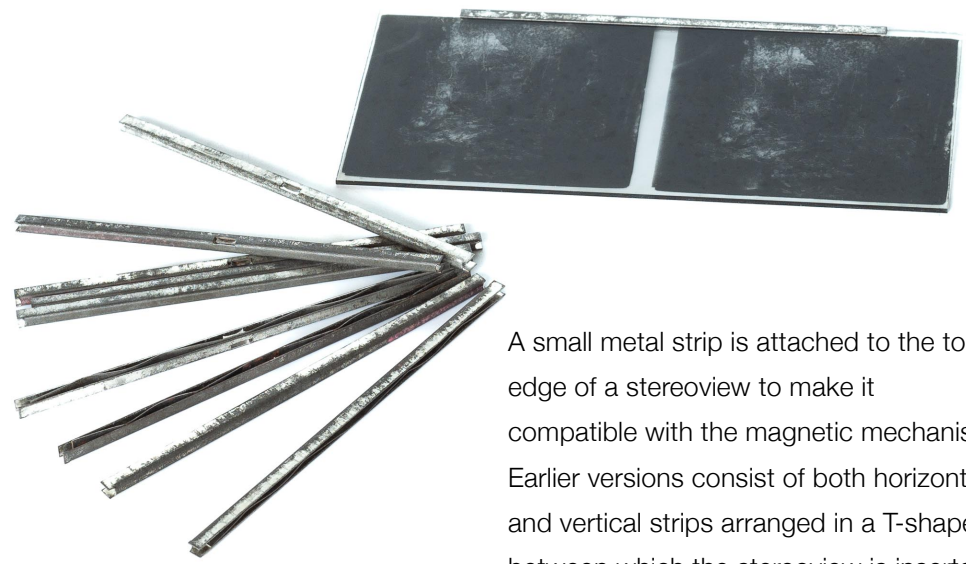
The Planox Stéréoscope Magnétique formed the centrepiece of a broader ecosystem of products distributed by Plocq. The range included furniture for storing slide trays and projection devices, creating a comprehensive system for the viewing, organisation, and presentation of stereoviews.



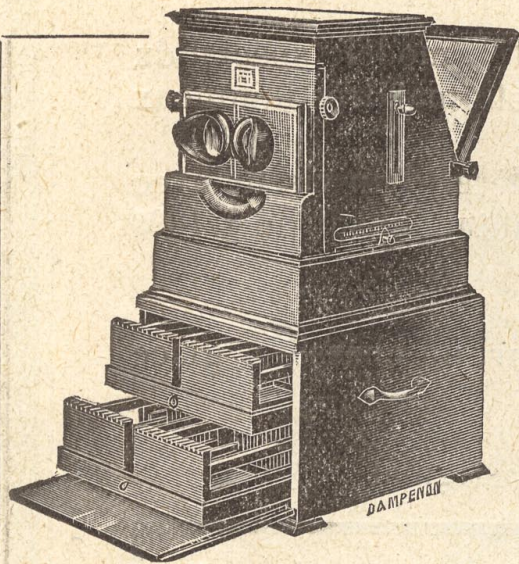
Planox Stéréoscope Magnétique 6 x 13



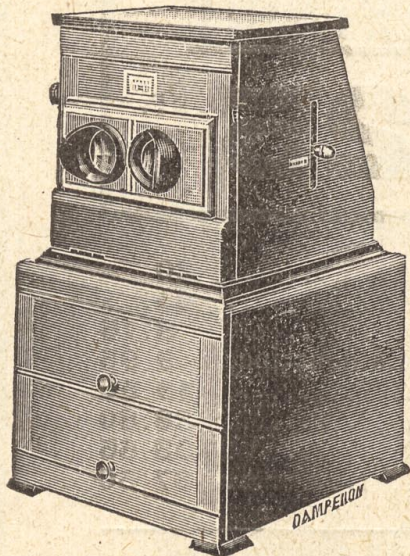
The first generation of trays for the Planox Stéréoscope Magnétique were made of wood (left) and were later replaced by Bakelite trays (right). The two tray types are not interchangeable.



A small metal strip is attached to the top edge of a stereoview to make it compatible with the magnetic mechanism. Earlier versions consist of both horizontal and vertical strips arranged in a T-shape, between which the stereoview is inserted.



Le Planox



Le Planox simplifié

Les Stéréoscopes Auto - Classeurs Magnétiques

Btés France et Etranger

“ **PLANOX** ”

Btés France et Etranger

sont toujours les plus appréciés.

PLANOX “ ROTATIF ”

La plus belle Création

Super-Classeur à paniers interchangeables. —
100 clichés 6×13 ou 45×107 SANS INTER-
MÉDIAIRES, en noir ou couleurs, prêts à exa-
miner ou projeter, contenus dans des paniers en
prise dans l'appareil.

LE PLUS PERFECTIONNÉ

Lanternes de projection, simple ou relief, se montant sur tous les PLANOX

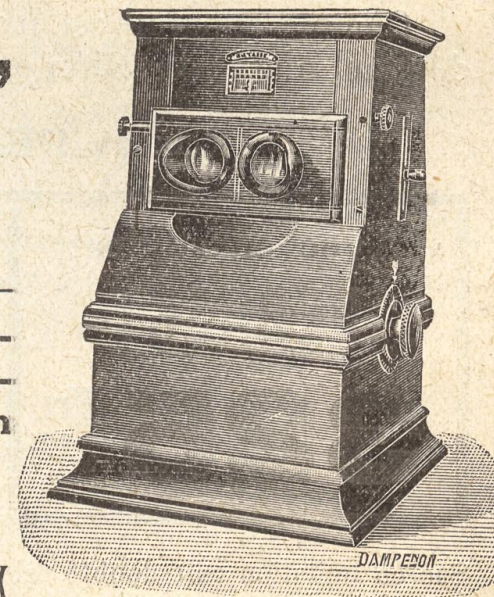
Malgré tous leurs avantages, les PLANOX sont toujours d'un prix très inférieur aux modèles similaires.

PLANOX simplifié : *Le plus simple et le moins cher*

Etablissements **A. PLOCQ**, Constructeurs, 26-28, Rue du Centre, LES LILAS (Seine)

Téléphone : LILAS 69.

Notice sur demande.



Le “ Rotatif ”



Planox Stéréoscope Magnétique on a desk with drawers for storing slide trays.
© Collection Martiné



Planox Stéréoscope Magnétique on a storage cabinet.
The stereoscope has a illumination device attached.

© Collection Martiné



Planox Rotatif for 100 stereoviews

© Collection Martiné

Planox Apéscope

The Apéscope is one of the few hand-held multi-view stereoscopes and a late Planox development. A magazine containing 12 glass stereoviews can be inserted into the viewer from below. By pushing a draw upwards, a slide is brought in front of the lenses. A subsequent movement presents the next image while the previous slide is pushed to the rear.

A model of the Apéscope was available with a stand, allowing the device to function as a tabletop viewer.



Planox Apéscope with
stand and storage cabinet.

© Collection Martiné



“Apéscope”

Les Stéréoscopes “PLANOX”

Dernière création!! Le merveilleux petit stéréo-classeur à mains

“Apéscope” Breveté S.G.D.G.

Volume exact du stéréo à mains ordinaire — 12 clichés 45×107 ou 6×13 noirs, ou 6 autochromes doublées dans le même appareil prêts à examiner automatiquement.

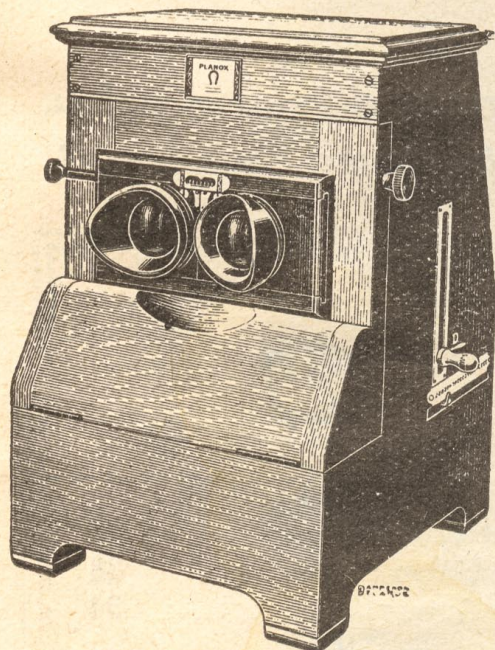
Le “Planox Universel” Breveté S.G.D.G.

Stéréoscope auto-classeur magnétique ultra-moderne de haute précision. — Le plus perfectionné. — (45×107, 6×13, 7×13 dans le même appareil). Foyer court, moyen ou long par oculaires interchangeables.

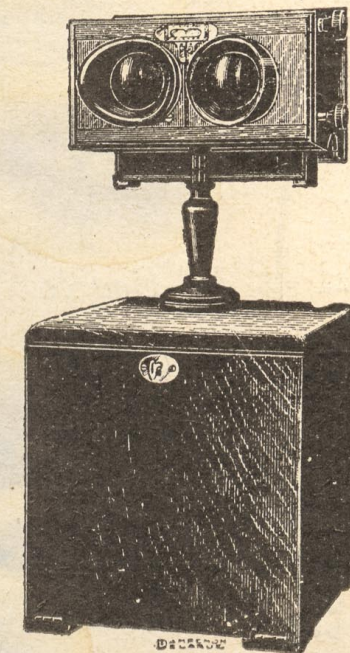
Le Planox “Simplifié”

Prix : 475 fr. (sans socle)

Le meilleur marché des Stéréos classeurs



Le Planox Universel



“Apéscope”
sur socle

Stéréos à main “Planox”

Finition impeccable. Tous les perfectionnements. Foyer court, moyen ou long par oculaires interchangeables.

CATALOGUE
sur demande

Etabl^{ts} A. PLOCOQ, Constr^{rs}, 26-28, rue du Centre, LES LILAS (Seine) - Tél. LILAS 69

Plocq and Matthey

There appears to have been a collaborative relationship between Plocq and stereoscope manufacturer Matthey. Matthey is known to have worked with a variety of designers, publishers, and manufacturers, and it is likely that Plocq was among these partners.

In 1927, Matthey introduced the Stéréoscope Standard, a versatile hand-held stereoscope. Notably, an almost identical version of this viewer was also distributed by Plocq under the Planox brand. Further evidence of a connection emerged in 1929, when Matthey introduced the Polnor. This stereoscope was based on the same magnetic mechanism as the Planox Stéréoscope Magnétique and shared several of its external design characteristics.

While the exact nature of the relationship between the two firms remains unclear, the similarities between these products suggests either a licensing agreement, a manufacturing partnership, or some other form of commercial cooperation between the two companies.



Polnor 6 x 13, Matthey

The front panel and lever looks very similar to the Planox Stéréoscope Magnétique

Heidoplast

A number of Planox stereoscopes were marketed in Germany under the name Heidoplast. Heidoplast was a brand of Franke & Heidecke, the company that would later achieve international fame with the Rolleiflex twin-lens reflex camera.

The Heidoplast stereoscopes were intended to complement the Heidoscop, a 45 x 107 stereo camera introduced by Franke & Heidecke around 1921. Rather than developing an entirely separate range of viewers, the company appears to have adopted and rebranded selected Planox models for the German market. This arrangement provided Heidoscop owners with a dedicated viewing system while allowing Plocq's designs to reach a wider audience outside France.

The association between Plocq and Franke & Heidecke illustrates the international reach achieved by Plocq's stereoscopes.



Heidoplast hand-held stereoscope

© Collection Martiné

Multi-view stereoscopes

Name	Mechanism	Stereoview support	Format	Number of views	Lens focus	Ocular adjustment	Introduction
Planox (Foyer moyen)	Tray-based	Glass	Models for 45 x 107 mm and 6 x 13 cm	20	Yes	Yes	1921
Planox Simplifié	Tray-based	Glass	Models for 45 x 107 mm and 6 x 13 cm	20	Yes	Yes	1921
Planox Rotatif	Tray-based	Glass	Models for 45 x 107 mm and 6 x 13 cm	100	Yes	Yes	1923
Planox Universel	Tray-based	Glass	45 x 107 mm, 6 x 13 cm and 7 x 13 cm	20	Yes	Yes	1929
Planox Apéscope	-	Glass	Models for 45 x 107 mm and 6 x 13 cm	12	Yes	Yes	1929

Planox stereoscope patents

Number	Title	Filing	Publication	Applicants	Application
FR453451	<i>Stéréoscope classeur magnétique</i>	22-01-1913	09-06-1913	Modeste Noel	Stéréoscope Magnétique
FR18733E	<i>Stéréoscope classeur magnétique</i>	06-01-1914	18-06-1914	Modeste Noel	Stéréoscope Magnétique
FR23679E	<i>Stéréoscope classeur magnétique</i>	02-10-1920	15-12-1921	Modeste Noel	Stéréoscope Magnétique
FR565336	<i>Stéréoscope perfectionné</i>	21-04-1923	24-01-1924	Modeste Noel Albéric Alfred Plocq	Stéréoscope Rotatif
FR667104	<i>Stéréoscope à main à magasin d'escamotage par tiroirs amovibles interchangeables</i>	09-01-1929	12-10-1929	Albéric Alfred Plocq	Apéscope
FR668116	<i>Stéréoscope</i>	21-06-1928	28-10-1929	Albéric Alfred Plocq	Stéréoscope Magnétique
FR704889	<i>Perfectionnement aux stéréoscopes</i>	04-11-1930	28-05-1931	Albéric Alfred Plocq	

Notes and references

1. *Annuaire-almanach du commerce* (1899), p. 739
2. *Archives commerciales de la France* (01-04-1903), p. 566
3. *Le Photographe* (20-03-1949), p. 112



A basic 6 x 13 Planox hand-held stereoscope

Revisions

1.1	18-06-2026	Page with tray types and metal strips added
1.0	13-06-2026	First edition

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Website: stereoscopyhistory.net