

# iStar CCD series

## Intensified CCDs for Nanosecond Time-resolved Imaging

### Key Specifications

- ✓ < 2 ns true optical gate
- ✓ Integrated triple output DDG
- ✓ Photocathode peak QE up to 50%
- ✓ Integrate-On-Chip gating up to 500 kHz
- ✓ -40°C TE cooling
- ✓ USB2 interface
- ✓ 2 year warranty

### Key Applications

- ✓ Plasma studies
- ✓ Time-resolved Fluorescence (LIF, PLIF)
- ✓ Quantum Optics
- ✓ Hyperspectral Imaging
- ✓ Transient Absorption
- ✓ Photon Counting
- ✓ Non-linear Optics

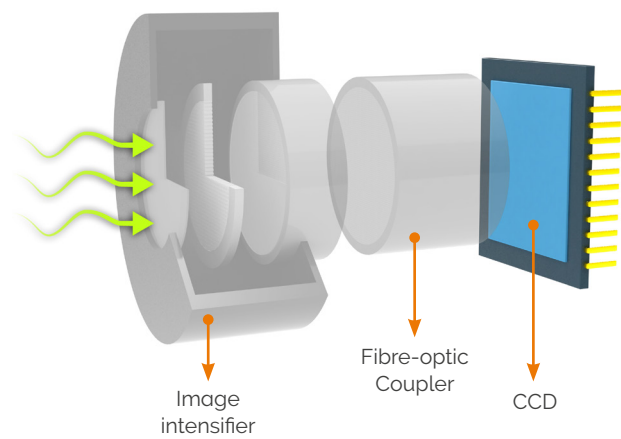


# Introducing iStar for Imaging

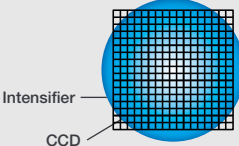
Andor's iStar extracts the very best from CCD sensor and image intensifier technologies

Exceptional detection performances are accessed through high quantum-efficiency image intensifiers, thermo-electric cooling to -40°C, 500 kHz photocathode gating rates and enhanced intensifier EBI noise reduction.

Low jitter, low insertion delay gating electronics and nanosecond-scale optical gating provide excellent timing accuracy down to a few 10's of picoseconds, allowing ultra-precise synchronization of complex experiments through iStar's comprehensive range of input/output triggering options.



## Key Specifications<sup>•1</sup>

	iStar 334T
Array format	1024 x 1024 13 µm
Effective active area (vs image intensifier Ø)	
Frame rate (max, at 16-bit digitization)	4.2 fps 333 fps (crop mode) 29,850 fps (fast kinetic)
Pixel well depth	100,000 e <sup>-</sup>
Min read noise (e <sup>-</sup> , typical) <sup>•2</sup>	5
Minimum cooling temperature	-40°C
Image Intensifier options	Gen 2 – Broadband, moderate VUV-NIR QE Gen 3 – VIS-NIR, high QE Gating down to < 2 ns (Fast Gen 2 or Gen 3) or <100 ns (High QE Gen 2) Phosphor P43 (fast decay) or P46 (ultrafast decay) options
Recommended Applications	High resolution imaging Extended fast kinetic series



**NEW** The iStar sCMOS is Andor's new ultrafast platform for ns time-resolved imaging & spectroscopy.

It features high frame rates up to 40 fps (4,000 with ROI) through a USB3 interface, with the high accuracy gating performance that you would expect from an iStar.

It is the ideal platform for ultrafast, ns time-resolved imaging.

# Features & Benefits

Feature	Benefit
High-resolution sensors and image intensifiers	Sharpest images and spectrum definition, 100% fill factor for maximum signal collection efficiency.
True optical gating < 2 ns	Billionth of a second time-resolution for accurate transient phenomena study.
5 MHz readout platform	Rapid frame and spectral rates for superior characterization of dynamic phenomena. Single readout amplifier for best image digitization uniformity.
Superfast readout options Crop & Fast Kinetic mode	Fully customizable binning sequences for highest spectral and image rates. Greater than 3,450 spectra/s continuous rates, up to 48,780 spectra/s in burst mode.
High QE Gen 2 & 3 image intensifiers	Superior photon capture, with peak QE up to 50% and spectral coverage from 120 to 1,100 nm.
Low jitter, on-board Digital Delay Generator (DDG™)	Highest gating timing accuracy with lowest propagation delay. Software controlled 3x triggering outputs with 10 ps setup accuracy for complex experiment integration.
500 kHz sustained photocathode gating	Maximizes signal-to-noise ratio in high repetition rate laser-based applications.
TE-cooling to -40°C	Efficient minimization of CCD dark current and pixel blemishes.
Photocathode EBI minimization	Dry gas purge interface for further efficient EBI reduction.
Intelligate™	Intelligent and accurate MCP gating for better than 1:10 <sup>8</sup> shuttering efficiency in the UV.
Insertion delay as low as 19 ns	Minimum delay between experiment signal generation and actual image intensifier triggering.
USB 2.0 interface	Industry-standard plug-and-play, seamless multi-camera control from single PC or laptop.
Real-time control interface	On-the-fly software control of intensifier gain, gating and 3x outputs trigger parameters for real-time detection optimization.
2 year warranty	Reliability and guaranteed performance over time.

## Deep TE-cooling to -40°C – lowest sensor dark current

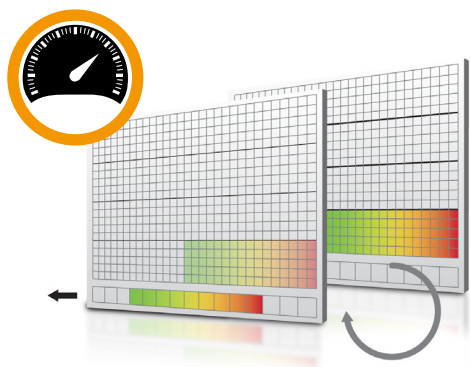


- ✓ Experiments involving multi-kHz lasers and extremely weak sample emission, where multiple photocathode gatings can be set within a single CCD exposure. This exposure is typically set to a few seconds to allow for hundreds of thousands of accumulations to occur. During these extended CCD exposures, sensor deep cooling is of the greatest importance.
- ✓ Photon counting, where any noise contribution from any element of the ICCD has to be minimized to allow access to the lowest detection threshold. As Image Intensifiers are fibre coupled to the CCD, the photocathode will see some degree of conductive cooling, which will contribute to minimize the EBI. Further thermal noise reduction can be achieved through the iStar's dry gas purge interface.

# Focus on frame rates

	DH334T
Sensor array size	1024 x 1024
Pixel size	13 x 13 $\mu\text{m}$
Max. readout speed	5 MHz
Frame rates 1x1 full frame 2x2 binning	4.2 fps 7.3 fps
Spectral rates (FVB)	145 sps
Crop mode rates (spectral, binned) [number of rows equivalent to a 130 $\mu\text{m}$ high channel]	3,450 sps [10 rows]
Fast Kinetics rates vs. channel heights	
26 $\mu\text{m}$	48,780 Hz [2 rows]
50 $\mu\text{m}$	29,850 Hz [4 rows]
100 $\mu\text{m}$	16,805 Hz [8 rows]
200 $\mu\text{m}$	9,525 Hz [15 rows]

## Crop mode: Pushing frame and spectral rates further...



The active imaging area of the sensor is defined in a way that only a small section of the entire chip is used for imaging or spectral acquisition.

The remaining area has to be optically masked to prevent light leakage and charge spill-over that would compromise the signal from the imaging area.

By cropping the sensor, one achieves faster frame and spectral rates because the temporal resolution will be dictated only by the time it requires to read out the small section of the sensor.

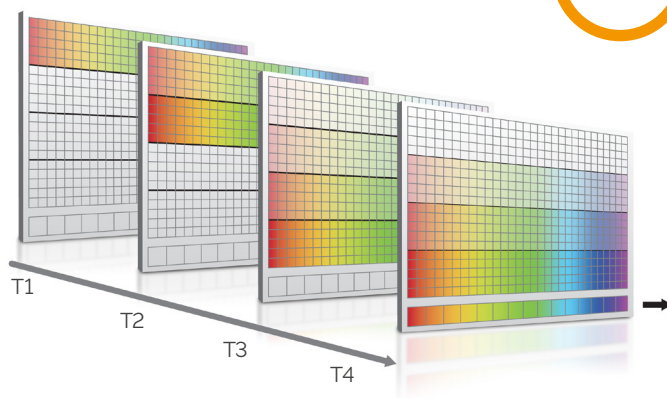
## ... and beyond with fast kinetic mode

**T1** - CCD "Keep Clean" sequence is interrupted, and useful signal builds-up on the user-defined top portion of a sensor

**T2** - At the end of the exposure time, signal is rapidly shifted down by a pre-defined number of rows, and a second exposure takes place

**T3** - This process is repeated until the number of acquisitions equals the series length set by user

**T4** - The sequence moves into the readout phase by shifting in turn the individual acquisitions to the readout register, which is then read out



# Advanced camera specifications •<sup>1</sup>

	DH334T
Array format	1024 x 1024 13 $\mu\text{m}$ pixels
Read noise / $e^-$ , typ. (max.)	
50 kHz	5 (7)
1 MHz	8 (12)
3 MHz	14 (18)
5 MHz	20 (50)
Effective active area	13.3 x 13.3 mm
Register well depth	150,000 $e^-$
Minimum cooling temperature [dark current, $e^-/\text{pix}/\text{s}$ ]	-30°C [0.15]
Air cooled	-40°C [0.04]
Coolant chiller @ 10°C, 0.75 l/min	
Vertical shift speeds	6.5 to 12.9 $\mu\text{s}$
Sensitivity	1 to 5 $e^-/\text{count}$
Sensor linearity • <sup>3</sup>	Better than 99%
Digitization	16-bit

## Camera and Internal Digital Delay Generator (DDG) Inputs/Outputs

Gate pulse delay & width	Adjustable from 0 ns to 10 s in 10 ps steps
Trigger Outputs	
Output A, B and C	+5V CMOS level with 50 $\Omega$ source impedance; can drive 5V into a non-terminating load or 2.5V into 50 $\Omega$ load; output synchronized triggers for auxiliary equipment, e.g. lasers, flash lamps, National Instrument™ hardware Individual delays control from 0 ns to 10 s in 10 ps steps Configurable Polarity
Fire	5V CMOS level reference signal for beginning and end of individual sensor exposure
Arm monitor	5V CMOS level reference signal to indicate when system is ready to accept external triggers. Signal goes high when system is ready to accept external triggers (after a readout has finished or sooner if in overlap mode) and goes low when the exposure is finished
Gate & output A, B and C jitter	35 ps rms (relative to external trigger or to each other)
Trigger Inputs	
External trigger	Trigger input for sensor and Digital Delay Generator Up to 500 kHz for Integrate-On-Chip mode
Direct gate	TTL input for exact external control of photocathode width and timing with smallest insertion delay.
Additional Controls	
Gate monitoring	AC coupling from photocathode to monitor exact photocathode on/off switching and timings
Insertion delay	< 19 ns in direct gate operation

# Specifications: Gen 2 Image Intensifiers<sup>\*1</sup>

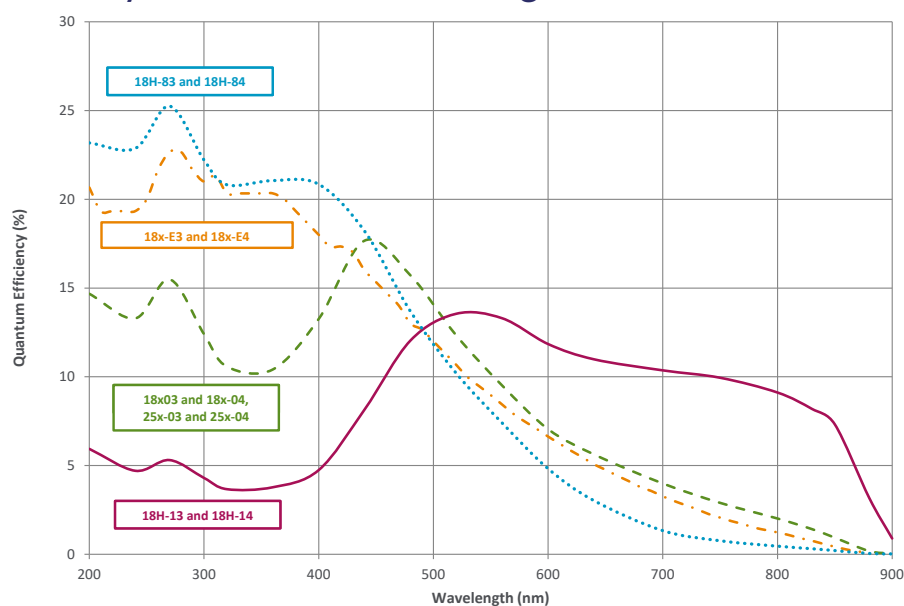
Photocathode model	18 <sup>+</sup> -03 (P43) 18 <sup>+</sup> -04 (P46)	18 <sup>+</sup> -05 †	18H-13 (P43) 18H-14 (P46)	18H-83 (P43) 18H-84 (P46)	18 <sup>+</sup> -E3 (P43) <sup>*4</sup> 18 <sup>+</sup> -E4 (P46) <sup>*4</sup>
Useful aperture	Ø18 mm				
Input window	Quartz	MgF <sub>2</sub>	Quartz	Quartz	Quartz
Photocathode type	W-AGT	W-AGT	WR	UW	WE-AGT
Minimum guaranteed QE at room temperature <sup>*5</sup>	13.5%	11%	7%	20%	15%
Typical peak QE at room temperature <sup>*5</sup>	18%	15%	13.5%	25%	22%
Wavelength range	180 - 850 nm	120 - 850 nm	180 - 920 nm	180 - 850 nm	180 - 850 nm
Image intensifier resolution limit <sup>*6</sup>	25 µm	25 µm	25 µm	25 µm	25 µm
Phosphor type [decay time to 10%] Standard Optional**	P43 [2 ms] P46 [200 ns]				
Image intensifier resolution limit <sup>*6</sup> P43 (Standard) P46 (Optional)	25 µm 30 µm [I-04 model]	25 µm 30 µm	25 µm 30 µm [I-14 model]	25 µm 30 µm [I-84 model]	25 µm 30 µm [I-E4 model]
Minimum optical gate width (ns) <sup>*7,8</sup> U (Ultrafast) F (Fast) H (High QE)	< 2 < 5 -	< 5 < 10 -	- - < 50	- - < 100	< 2 < 5 -
Maximum relative gain <sup>*9</sup>	> 1000 [P43] > 500 [P46]	> 1000	> 850	> 500	> 300
Maximum photocathode repetition rate (with Intelligate™ OFF)	500 kHz (continuous)				
Maximum photocathode repetition rate (with Intelligate™ ON)	5 kHz (continuous)				
Equivalent Background Illuminance (EBI)	< 0.2 photoe <sup>-</sup> /pix/sec		< 0.4 photoe <sup>-</sup> /pix/sec	< 0.2 photoe <sup>-</sup> /pix/sec	

<sup>\*</sup> Substitute with appropriate gate width option, e.g. 18F-03 (please refer to page 9 for detailed ordering information)

<sup>\*\*</sup> All photocathode types can be combined with a fast-decay P46 phosphor – please contact your local Andor representative for further information.

<sup>†</sup> Available with VUV-compatible spectrograph interface

## Quantum Efficiency Curves for Gen 2 Image Intensifiers<sup>\*5</sup>



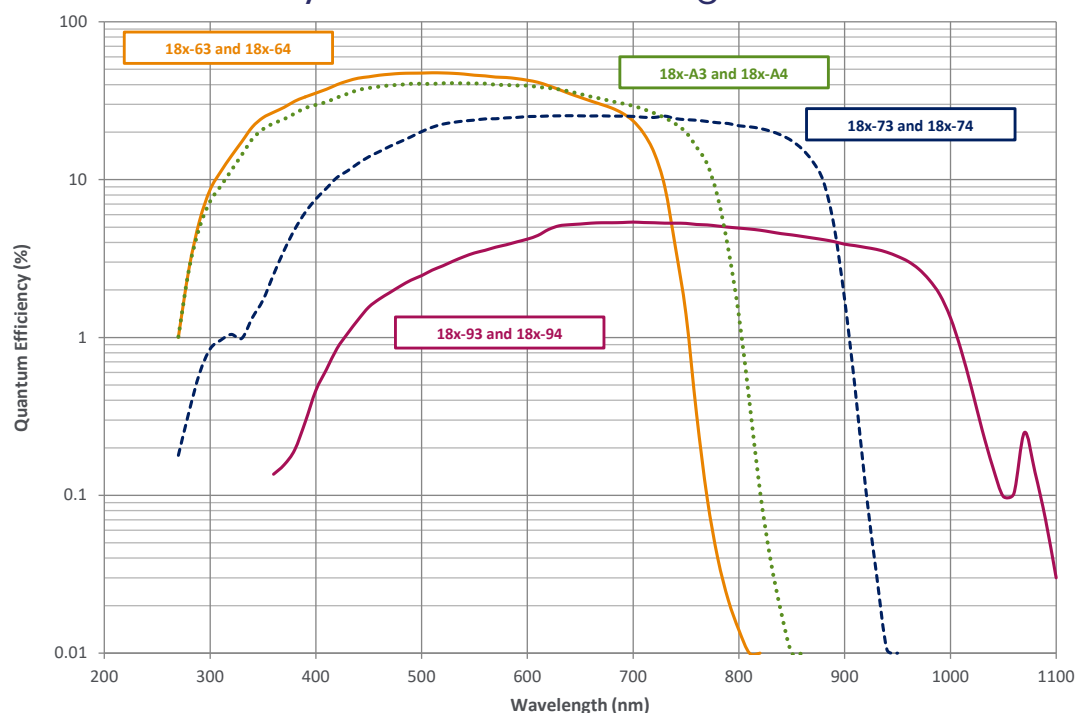
# Specifications: Gen 3 Image Intensifiers<sup>\*1</sup>

Photocathode model	18 <sup>+</sup> -63	18 <sup>+</sup> -73	18 <sup>+</sup> -93	18 <sup>+</sup> -A3
Useful aperture	Ø 18 mm			
Input window	Glass	Glass	Glass	Glass
Photocathode type	HVS	VIH	NIR	EVS
Minimum guaranteed QE at room temperature <sup>*5</sup>	38%	23%	0.10%	35%
Typical peak QE at room temperature <sup>*5</sup>	50%	30%	5%	40%
Wavelength range	280 - 760 nm	280 - 910 nm	380 - 1090 nm	280 - 810 nm
Phosphor type [decay time to 10%] Standard Optional**	P43 [2 ms] P46 [200 ns]			
Image intensifier resolution limit <sup>*6</sup> P43 (Standard) P46 (Optional)	30 µm 35 µm [-64 model]	30 µm 35 µm [-74 model]	30 µm 35 µm [-94 model]	30 µm 35 µm [-A4 model]
Minimum optical gate width (ns) <sup>*8</sup> U (Ultrafast) F (Fast)	< 2 < 5	< 2 < 5	< 3 < 5	< 2 < 5
Maximum relative gain <sup>*9</sup>	> 200			
Maximum photocathode repetition rate (with Intelligate™ OFF)	500 kHz (continuous)			
Maximum photocathode repetition rate (with Intelligate™ ON)	5 kHz (continuous)			
Equivalent Background Illuminance (EBI)	< 0.1 photoe <sup>-</sup> /pix/sec	< 0.3 photoe <sup>-</sup> /pix/sec	< 2 photoe <sup>-</sup> /pix/sec	< 0.2 photoe <sup>-</sup> /pix/sec

\* Substitute with appropriate gate width option, e.g. 18U-63 (please refer to page 9 for detailed ordering information)

\*\* All photocathode types can be combined with a fast-decay P46 phosphor – please contact your local Andor representative for further information.

## Quantum Efficiency Curves for Gen 3 Image Intensifiers<sup>\*5,10</sup>



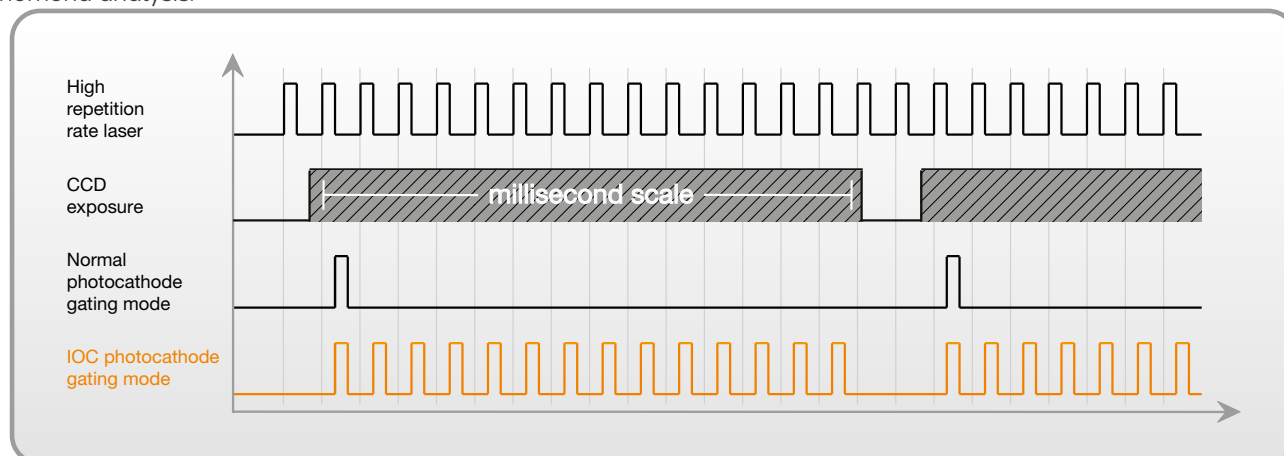


# Intelligent gating modes

## Integrate-On-Chip: 500,000 times more signal per 1 sec CCD exposure

The iStar's Integrate-On-Chip (IOC) mode enables accumulation of useful signal from laser-induced phenomena at frequencies up to 500 kHz, providing greatly improved signal-to-noise, and minimising experiment time. The latter greatly benefits setups where photobleaching-sensitive biological samples are probed. This translates into the possibility to accumulate 500,000 times more signal per 1 second CCD exposure time.

Integrate-On-Chip is fully software-configurable and can be used through extensive kinetic series involving up to 1,000 pre-programmed incremental delays from laser trigger for unrivalled combination of sensitivity and ultra-precise transient phenomena analysis.



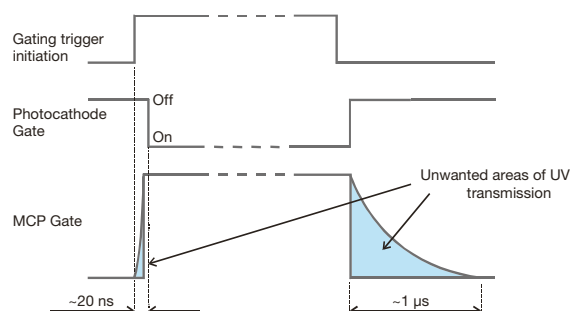
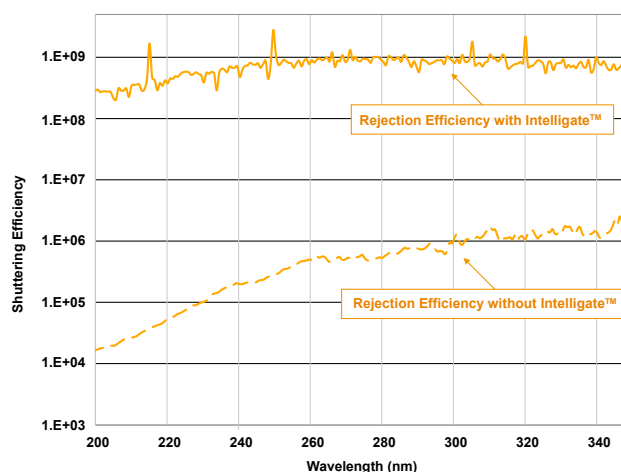
## Intelligent™: Superior gating in the UV-VUV region

One of the key functions of an image intensifier is to provide high optical shuttering (ON/OFF) ratio.

By switching photocathode voltage to a higher or lower level relative to the MCP voltage, photoelectrons can be either directed towards or repelled from the MCP to avoid detection. ON/OFF values of  $1:10^8$  are typically measured for Visible/NIR incident light on the photocathode.

However photocathode "leakage" becomes more pronounced in the UV-VUV region ( $< 300$  nm), where more energetic photons have a greater probability to go through the photocathode turned "OFF", reach the MCP to generate an electron that can be detected. This can lead to shuttering efficiency as low as  $1:10^4$ .

Andor's exclusive Intelligent™ simultaneously gates the photocathode and the MCP. The ultra fast rising edge of the MCP gate pulse switches on the correct potential in a nanosecond timeframe, coinciding precisely with the photocathode gating pulse. This enables ON/OFF ratios as high as  $10^8$  in the UV-VUV region.





# Creating the optimum product for you



DH 334 T-18 - **F** - **03**

example shown

## Step 1. Choose the intensifier diameter



Intensifier  
Diameter

There is one intensifier option available for the iStar 334.

### Intensifier diameter

Ø 18 mm intensifier (**18**)

## Step 2. Choose a minimum gating speed



GATING  
SPEED

Gating  
Speed

Gating Speed	Code
High QE, slow gating	<b>H</b>
Fast Gating	<b>F</b>
Ultra Fast Gating	<b>U</b>

## Step 3. Select an image intensifier option

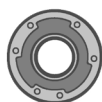


Intensifier

Gen 2 Intensifier option	P43 phosphor	P46 phosphor
W-AGT photocathode	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>
W-AGT photocathode, MgF <sub>2</sub>	<b>05</b>	-
WR photocathode	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
UW photocathode	<b>83</b>	<b>84</b>
WE-AGT photocathode	<b>E3</b>	<b>E4</b>

Gen 3 Intensifier option	P43 phosphor	P46 phosphor
HVS photocathode	<b>63</b>	<b>64</b>
VIH photocathode	<b>73</b>	<b>74</b>
NIR photocathode	<b>93</b>	<b>94</b>
EVS photocathode	<b>A3</b>	<b>A4</b>
WE-AGT	<b>E3</b>	<b>E4</b>

## Step 4. Select the required accessories and adapters



Accessories  
& Adapters

Description	Order Code
C-mount lens adaptor	<b>ACC-LM-C</b>
F-mount lens adaptor	<b>ACC-LM-NIKON-F</b>
UV-VIS 105 mm SLR lens, 250 - 650 nm transmission, F-mount	<b>OL-AF10-F45-#UV2</b>
Oasis 160 Ultra compact chiller unit (tubing to be ordered separately)	<b>ACC-XW-CHIL-160</b>
6 mm tubing options for ACC-XW-CHIL-160 (2x2.5 m or 2x5 m lengths)	<b>ACC-6MM-TUBING-2X2.5/ ACC-6MM-TUBING-2X5M</b>
i <sup>2</sup> c to BNC cable for Kymera and Shamrock shutter control	<b>ELC-05323</b>
Metric Bracket, converts ¼-20 mounting points to M6	<b>ACC-ISTAR-METRIC ADP</b>

## Step 5. Select the required software



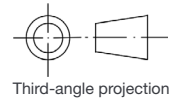
Software

The iStar ICCD requires at least one of the following software options:

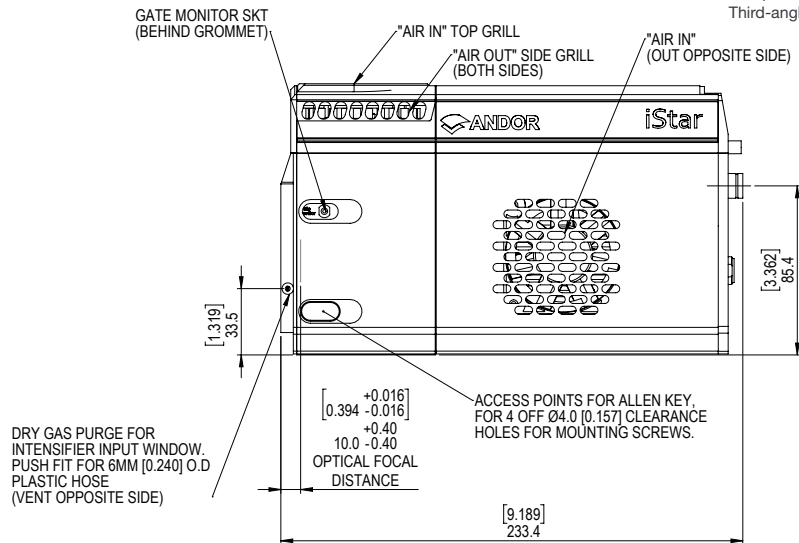
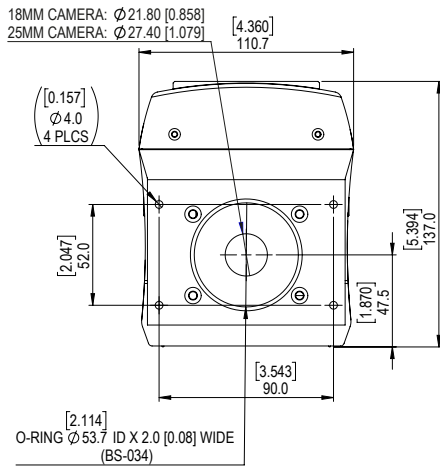
Solis for Time-Resolved A 32-bit and fully 64-bit enabled application for Windows (8.1 and 10) offering rich functionality for data acquisition and processing. AndorBasic provides macro language control of data acquisition, processing, display and export.

Andor SDK2 A software development kit that allows you to control the Andor range of cameras from your own application. Available as 32/64-bit libraries for Windows (8.1 and 10) and Linux. Compatible with C/C++, LabView and Matlab.

# Product drawings



Dimensions in mm [inches]  
Weight: 4.2 kg [9 lb 4 oz]



## Connecting to the iStar

### Camera Control

Connector type: USB 2.0

### Logic Input / Output

Connector type: SMA, provided with SMA - BNC cable  
5x outputs: FIRE pulse, Output A, B, C from DDG™ and ARM  
2x inputs: Camera trigger from 3<sup>rd</sup> party source & direct gate for complete, direct external control of intensifier gating

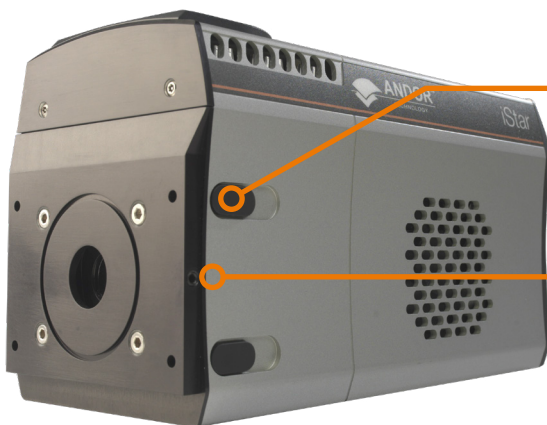
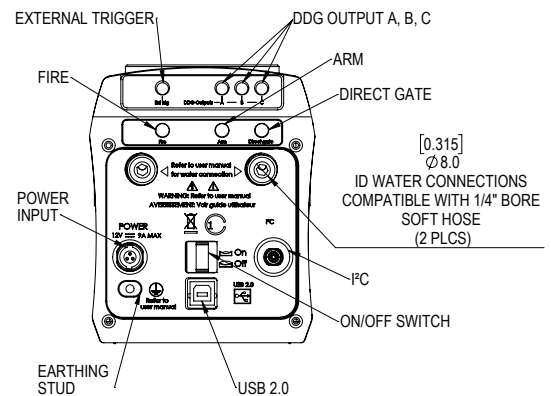
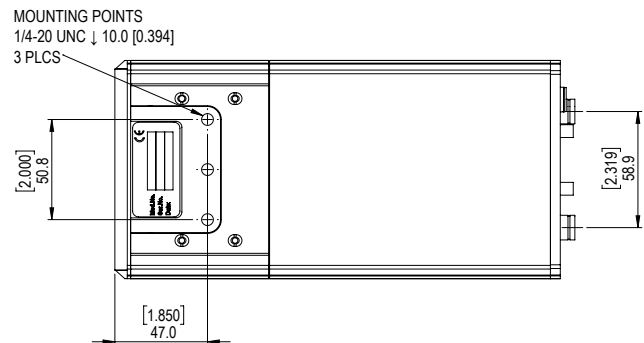
I<sup>2</sup>C connector

Compatible with Fischer SC102A054-130, pin-outs as follow:

1 = Shutter (5V CMOS level with 50  $\Omega$  impedance), 2 = I<sup>2</sup>C Clock (5V), 3 = I<sup>2</sup>C Data (5V), 4 = +5 Vdc, 5 = Ground

### Gate Monitor

1x output: AC coupling to photocathode



### Gate monitor

AC coupling to photocathode provides the most reliable timing information on actual gating occurrence

### Dry gas purge

Minimizes Electron Background Illumination (EBI) thermally generated at the photocathode to improve detection threshold

# Our Cameras for Spectroscopy

Spectroscopy-based diagnostics in the fields of Material Science, Chemistry, Life Science or Fundamental Physics & Optics rely on the capture and analysis of optical and chemical signatures with a high degree of precision.

Andor's range of detectors offer a wide range of sensitivity, time-resolution and sensor formats to best suit specific experimental conditions from UV to SWIR, nanosecond to hours time resolution, high photon flux to single photon with super dynamic range and resolution.

## High Sensitivity & Dynamic Range



- ✓ Long exposure
- ✓ High sensitivity UV-SWIR
- ✓ Large pixel well depths
- ✓ High resolution matrix

iDus CCD & InGaAs | Newton CCD & EM

## Spectrographs & Accessories



- ✓ High modularity
- ✓ High resolution
- ✓ Intelligent motorisation
- ✓ Broadband & high resolution Echelle

Shamrock | Kymera | Mechelle

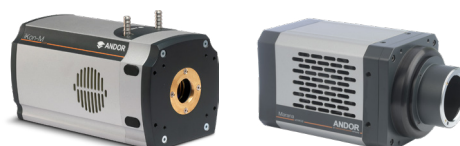
## kHz Spectral Rates



- ✓  $\mu$ s to ms time-resolution
- ✓ High sensitivity down to single photon
- ✓ High resolution matrix

Newton CCD & EMCCD | iXon EMCCD |  
Zyla sCMOS | Marana sCMOS

## Extended Multi-fibre Spectroscopy



- ✓ Large area sensors
- ✓ Ultrafast sCMOS and EMCCD options
- ✓ High sensitivity down to single photon

iKon-M CCD | iXon EMCCD | Zyla sCMOS |  
Marana sCMOS | iStar CCD & sCMOS

Learn more about our detector range [here](#).