

TIME *e*MOTION

the photography of TOMMASO VECCHI

EDITED BY
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IL-ĦAĠAR GEMS SERIES No. 9



FONDAZZJONI
BELT VICTORIA

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TIME *e*MOTION: The photography of Tommaso Vecchi

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Il-Ħaġar | Heart of Gozo Museum and Cultural Centre is located at the heart of Victoria (Rabat), the main town of the island of Gozo. It strives to present the visitor with an authentic experience of the Gozitan heritage and Christian culture that form this island community. Il-Ħaġar recounts the history of this island through its people: their beliefs, their abilities and their products.

This Museum and Cultural Centre was created, and is run by Fondazzjoni Belt Victoria, an enrolled voluntary organisation created for this aim, among others, in 1998.

Il-Ħaġar is the result of a major crowdfunding effort by the people of Victoria and numerous persons and corporate entities that contributed towards its realisation. It was also the recipient of significant financing through the European Regional Development Fund; Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 (Operational Programme 1: Investing in Competitiveness for a Better Quality of Life. The Museum and Cultural Centre was opened officially in 2013. It houses the significant artistic and historic patrimony of St George's Parish Basilica, with which it is very closely associated, and donations and bequests it has received since the constitution of the Foundation. Among these, one finds various liturgical objects, historical items and documents, and the unique donation by Prof. Joseph Vella (1942-2018) consisting of his entire *oeuvre* spanning over 60 years: original classified works (156 compositions). The Joseph Vella Music Archive also includes the relevant sketches, CDs, memorabilia and critical historical material.

Apart from the permanent collection, the Centre also includes a temporary exhibition space, a number of Audio-visual rooms, a Rooftop terrace bar providing

spectacular views of St George's Basilica, the Castello with the skyline of Victoria, and the rural landscape of Gozo.

Run and operated entirely by volunteers, the Centre is open seven days a week from 0900h to 1700h and is very active in the cultural and artistic scene of the island. The management of the centre is run by a wide spectrum of volunteers ranging from students to retirees, hailing from different backgrounds, including the business community, academia, the financial sector, education, science, technology, and others.

The Centre is very active, organising events of its own, such as landmark exhibitions, public lectures, educational (particularly children's) activities. It also launched the series 'The Joseph Vella Memorial Lecture' after the benefactor's passing. This is a yearly lecture given in his honour every February. The Centre hosts temporary exhibitions by third parties, private events and community initiatives. Il-Ħaġar also boasts a good number of publications, among which a recently-launched series named 'Il-Ħaġar Gems', of which this publication is the ninth one.

Il-Ħaġar is fully accessible for persons with limited mobility, and is looking forward to expanding its experience to persons with different special needs. All contributions - including expertise - in this regard are most welcome.

Il-Ħaġar also strives to bear witness to the Christian heritage of the people of Gozo and to propose the Catholic way of life as a viable proposition in today's world.

Fondazzjoni Belt Victoria
VO/0762



1200 CE
The stone structure is a large, multi-tiered arrangement of stone blocks, some of which are carved with religious figures and scenes. The carvings are set against a background of plain stone blocks.



FOREWORD

We are passing through poignant times. The pandemic that has stricken our world has cast us into an ecosphere of emotions that both for their combination and complexity will feature deeply in the history of human emotions.

The title that Tommaso Vecchi has given to his collection of photographs would seem gratuitously abstruse. It is actually profound. It seems to suggest that time and emotion are co-existent and co-nomadic, intrinsically transitory but also relentless. Of course this is so because the human being is not only the measure of time but also the seat of the emotions that, time and again, the human stage displays.

The use that Tommaso Vecchi makes of his lens to capture moments in time with their corresponding human emotions is extraordinary. He not only transmits these moments to the viewer but also elicits his response, inviting a sharing in Vecchi's own connectiveness but also a more impartial intellectual evaluation.

There is beauty in these photographs. There is the exhilarating beauty of the Trentino, the earnest beauty of prayer, the spiritual beauty of monastic solitude, the innocent beauty of childhood at play, and the simultaneously solemn and humble beauty of life.

Beauty is the most welcome source of all kinds of emotions and Tommaso Vecchi's photographs evidence it in the instances of beauty captured, wherein their emotive past is often revealed and exciting future foreseen.

Il-Ħaġar Museum is delighted to host this photographic exhibition, a challenge for the artist, coordinators and volunteers at a time so weighed down by worry and fear. The exhibition **TIME eMOTION** is hereby contributing to the contemporary cultural history of Gozo by giving spiritual colour to its poignancy.

JOSEPH FARRUGIA

VALERIO BALLOTTA - GBK Malta Ltd

Valerio Ballotta is an art expert specialising in modern and contemporary art since 1997. Up to 2010, he was involved in the commercial and administrative sections of the most important art galleries in Italy, including *Galleria Orlor* and *Galleria MOdenArte*. He has collaborated with some of the major artists of the twentieth century, for whom he organized a number of important exhibitions and events. Among them, one finds: Dali, Mirò, Picasso, Chagall, Ernst, Tanguy, Lam, the CoBrA movement, Masson, Kostabi, Combas, Steve McCurry, Christo, Arnaldo Pomodoro, De Chirico, Annigoni, Gilardi, Vincenzo Balsamo, Vaccai, Marsiglia, Maitan, Pozzati, Alfredo Rapetti Mogol, Ghelli, Burri, and many others. He has also participated in art fairs such as Art DC (Washington, USA), Art Miami (USA), KIAF (Seoul, South Korea), ArtVerona, and Arte Genova in Italy. Moreover, he organised events at the Moscow Contemporary Art Museum and at Palazzo Strozzi, Florence.

Between 2010 and 2014, he was CEO and founder of AMF Art Consulting and Managing Director of *Museo Magi '900*. As CEO of AMF Art Consulting, he collaborated with in the organisation and setting up of *Immagine Arte Fiera* in Reggio Emilia and the *Arezzo ArtExpo*. Successively, he organised the exhibition *Vincenzo Balsamo. Il Codice dei Segni*, at the Villafranca, Verona, and *Isotopie e Trasformazioni*, at the *Galleria d'Arte Moderna Aroldo Bonzagni*, Cento, Ferrara. Then, in conjunction with the 54th Biennale of Venice, he participated in events at the *Sala Espositiva*

Complesso Molino Stucky, including exhibitions by artists Gianfranco Meggiato, Roberto Miniati and Pier Toffoletti. He also collaborated in the organisation of the exhibition *Enzo Naso: Colori in movimento* which was backed by the *Ferrari Foundation*.

In 2012, Valerio Ballotta became the Managing Director at *Museo Magi '900* of Pieve di Cento, in the vicinity of Bologna, Italy. During this period he organised a number of important exhibitions and projects in Italy and abroad. These include three exhibitions by the artist Mauro Vaccai at *Palazzo Pretorio* in Pistoia, Trierenberg in Traun, Austria, and *Museo Magi '900*.

Successively, he was in charge of a cultural exchange between Italy and China, entitled *L'Arte, la Cina e il Mondo*, supported by the Ministry for the Italian Cultural Heritage. For the cultural exchange, together with *Museo Magi '900*, he organised and participated in a number of important events, exhibitions and conferences in China.

In 2014, Ballotta was also active in the organisation of other exhibitions, namely, *Dennis Oppenheim - Large Drawings*, *Bruno Raspanti - Le Voci Pagane* and *Narumi Harashina - Interno Giapponese*. That same year, precisely in December 2014, Valerio Ballotta moved to Malta where he started offering art consultative services through his company GBK Malta Ltd. Since then, he has organised a number of important artistic events in Gozo. Among these one finds the exhibitions of Austin Camilleri and Alfredo Rapetti, as well as the exhibition of the Italian photographer Anna Marceddu. On the occasion



Valerio Ballotta (right) with photographer Tommaso Vecchi

of Valletta18, European Capital of Culture, for the first time on the islands, he organised a number of exhibitions that celebrated the great international masters of the twentieth century, including the event *Picasso e i suoi amici* featuring etchings and lithographs by Picasso, Matisse, and Miro` as well as a painting by Kees Van Dongen and the exhibition of the graphic works by Dürer, Rembrandt, Canaletto, and Goya. This exhibition was mounted in Gozo, Malta, contemporaneously with an astounding exhibition held at the Ministry for Gozo, entitled *Manet - Etchings - the Alfred Strölin Edition of 1905*. For this important event, Vittorio Sgarbi also presented his then latest book. In December 2018 and January 2019 Ballotta organized, the exhibition of the Gozitan artist, Mark Sagona, in Valletta.

In May 2019, Valerio Ballotta organised the exhibition of the artists Gianfranco Ferroni and Walter Coccetta, at Il-Ħaġar | Heart of Gozo Museum and Cultural Centre in Victoria, Gozo. Later that year, Valerio

Ballotta was invited for the first time to the Sultanate of Brunei to organize an exhibition of European art. This important event was held under the aegis of the Ministry for Culture and Tourism of the Sultanate, on the occasion of the Brunei December Art Festival. The exhibition, entitled *The School of Paris Between Montmartre and Montparnasse and the Current European Artists*, was organized in collaboration with the *Atelier Huifong Ng* and the *Archivio Balsamo*.

Two important events which were to take place in the spring of 2020 in Qatar and Malta, were postponed to 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

This exhibition, **TIME eMOTION**, in collaboration with Il-Ħaġar | Heart of Gozo Museum and Cultural Centre of Victoria, displays an important collection of images which take us on the artist's travels through Europe, India, Tibet, and exclusively, his latest trip to Ethiopia.

TIME *e*MOTION

A brain teaser of a title if ever there was one!

The 'e' wedged between the two nouns could be the conjunction 'and' in Italian. That would be: Time and Motion.

If so, what exactly is it supposed to mean? Would it not be a tautology? Is not motion the essence of time? Is not time the measurement of motion? On the other hand, is not the staying of time, the stillness of motion the essence of photography? How is photography supposed to be an appropriate vehicle to portray the motion, the flow, the becoming, which is time, when it does precisely the opposite?

The answer lies in front of your eyes. Truth be told, it is not so much an answer as an open-ended question. Vecchi's photography could be described as an immersive aesthetic experience of the first order. There is an unbounded energy in the stillness of each photo. To experience energy one has to stay still. To stay still in front of a work of art is fundamental. It is the essential prerequisite to savour the delicacies of art. Also, strangely enough, to close one's eyes to open the eyes of the soul is another approach road to encounter beauty. The magnetism which emanates from the images of the soul which are more than anything else Vecchi's *oeuvre* does not loosen but intensifies its grip with distance. Distance is no obstacle to the allure of beauty. If anything, beauty effectively dissolves any distance as it does with time. As one's inner sensibilities are given free rein to function, one becomes increasingly aware that paradoxically enough stillness lies at the heart of

energy and constancy at the heart of change. Vecchi's photography is a potent statement that true art strikes at the very heart of time to offer a foretaste of eternity. Is not unchangeableness the essence of eternity? And who in his right mind would want to change a blessed state for a tormented one?

Indeed, Vecchi's photos set the viewer on a journey. It is a journey of sorts, however. It is the journey of the soul. The starting point is at the same time the point of arrival. Contemplation is the name of this particular journey. Vecchi's photos are not for decoration but for contemplation. And at the very heart of contemplation lies the unlimited openness of receptivity of the human soul. Contemplation defines the human person inasmuch as it taps the innermost constitutive element of his being. Indeed, it is not without pain that one tears oneself away from one photo to experience the next. It is the pain of the soul which speaks volumes about the uniqueness of each image. As with all works of art, the appropriate depository of each photo is the heart. The heart becomes the hallowed shrine where beauty is at home. Could there be a more ennobling experience and a more uplifting one?

Indeed, as with grace, true art ennobles, uplifts and empowers the human person. This is perhaps more needed today than ever before. The ever-present threat of uglification of the environment with the consequent devastation wrought on the human spirit calls for potent corrective measures which only true art can supply. In this wider context, Vecchi's *oeuvre*, as with all true art, takes



on a deeper dimension: the balm of restoration of the lacerated human soul. His photos are an impassioned appeal to recapture the mysterious equilibrium between man and nature. This automatically leads to the restoration of proper relationship with the Creator. The restoration of the human person is thus complete. The grandeur of creation can be experienced from the breath-taking, spectacular dimensions of the Himalayas as from the intimacy of the piercing, questioning look of the bottle vendor.

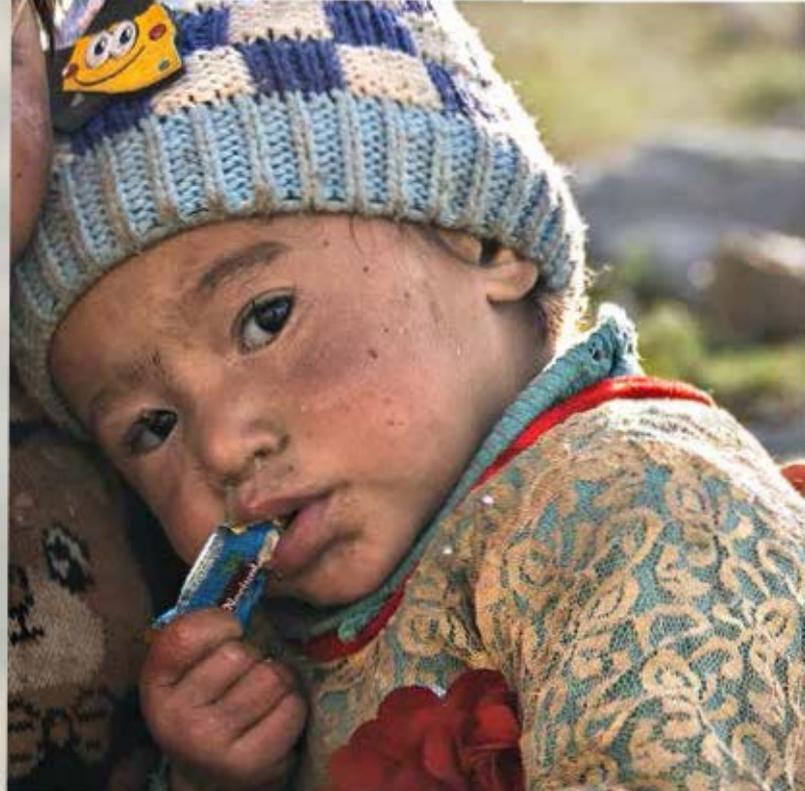
Indeed, the twin facets of grandeur and intimacy of creation characterize Vecchi's arresting photos. His photography is a call to a return to basics: the fundamental openness constitutive of human personality. This can be achieved primarily through

prayer and encounter. It is in a way 'paradise regained'. And paradise is a state of being: a state of being in harmony. The physical environment coalesces with the spiritual. How else would you describe the sense of calm and wellbeing which flows outwards of his absolutely enchanting 'Il canto di Kargil' (detail, above left)? You can almost hear the flow of the chant free from the stringent demands of the gilded concert hall.

Is it by chance or by design that the girl in the London underground 'La ragazza del treno' (detail, above right) is facing East?

Forget the title: grab the photos!

GEORGE FRENDI



EDITORS' NOTE

It all started when Valerio Ballotta (of GBK Malta) came over excited to the Museum and handed over to us a pen drive full of photographs by a young, rather unknown, Italian photographer. We saw it together on the computer and there and then decided to invite him to hold an exhibition at our Cultural Centre. This is how the TIME eMOTION project started and how we first met Tommaso Vecchi who, in the meantime, had been busy making a name for himself in Italy and beyond.

That same evening, Valerio asked Joe to suggest a title for the exhibition. The conversation was held in Italian, over the phone. We had gone through the photos again and one common concept that sprang to mind was the relativity of time as influenced by motion. Joe replied to Valerio, "Mi sento che i concetti di 'time' e 'motion' devono apparire nel titolo" (I believe that the concepts of 'time' and 'motion' should feature in the title). Valerio immediately contacted Tommaso who was instantly attracted to the name. Joe realized the misunderstanding as soon as Valerio wrote on WhatsApp that Tommaso was very happy with the title 'Time Emotion'.

In the end, perhaps, it was no misunderstanding at all: time is relative, both if affected by motion, or by emotion. What better way to depict this than in the contrasting bullet-moving tube train in the London Underground (photo 2) and the moving tenderness of the fraternal embrace of the children of Jumma and Kashmir (photo 7)? Both move, each in a different way, but all point to the relativity of time. In the end it is

a collection of photos that moves the heart, the heart that "has its reasons of which reason knows nothing", as Blaise Pascal in his *Les pensées*, aptly puts it.

It is an honour and a privilege for Il-Ħaġar | Heart of Gozo Museum and Cultural Centre to house the work of a budding artist on his first exhibition outside his native Italy. In reality, having already been published on the *National Geographic* and *Digital Camera* magazines it is not the first time that these photos featured internationally, yet it is truly the first time that these works of art are being exhibited together abroad. Following this exhibition, some of Vecchi's work will make it to Paris in May next year.

This exhibition fits perfectly with the ethos of our Museum, that of being the catalyst of a cultural milieu that encompasses local and foreign talent alike, encouraging it, promoting it and serving as its window to the world. The ability for Art and Culture to build bridges and foster friendships knows no bounds!

We wish Tommaso Vecchi all the best at the start of a journey that knows no end.

JOSEPH BORG
MARIA FRENDO
ANTHONY ZAMMIT

THE PHOTOGRAPHER: TOMMASO VECCHI

Photography very often reflects the visual and psychological perspective of whoever is conceiving it. Tommaso Vecchi, since the very beginning betrayed an intellectual curiosity, someone who had great interest in communicating with his travel companions, and with the people whom we met during our journey, in order to understand their history, their traditions, their customs and their mentality.

Tommaso gave proof of his altruism by dedicating the majority of his time to these people in order to be a good guest, and only after that initial rapport was established would he concentrate on his photography. I regard this as something of utmost importance, because this is what really gives meaning to the images.

As with most artists, despite the fact that before our journey his talent and passion for his art were already clear, he was still tentative in the way he expressed his art. He allowed himself to explore his interests, and these varied substantially while experimenting with diverse subjects. I believe that as our journey went along, he finally found his own personal artistic identity. His photographs improved on a daily basis, becoming more and more targeted and precise, until they finally reached the quality which we can all admire today. His personal journey as a photographer, quick and intense, made him become an extremely interesting and natural photographer, completely spontaneous and lacking any form of pretence in the same way his persona is. His photographs are delicate, and, while they all contain a great aesthetic element, they are



Jammu and Kashmir, India, July 2019

always truthful in their depiction of the moment which is being portrayed.

I am utterly proud of having gained a new colleague and travel companion. I am certain that Tommaso is only at the start of a panoply of further achievement and fulfilment.

ALESSANDRO BERGAMINI

Tommaso Vecchi's note: Apart from being a friend, Alessandro is a great master who has helped me bring together my passion for photography and travelling. It is an honour for me having his presentation in this book and I am counting the days when we will travel together again. The photo above shows Alessandro and myself at Penzila Pass at an altitude of 14,000 feet, as we were crossing the valley of Zaskar on our way to Ladakh, surrounded by the Himalayas.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Photo Printing



Eurotipografia di Riccardo Melzi
Via Giuseppe Mazzini 5 20090 Segrate (MI)



Paper

Hahnemühle Photo Rag Bright White 310 gsm

Printer

EPSON Stylus Pro 9900

Camera

Sony A9
Sony A7III

Lenses

Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA
Sony FE 85mm f/1.4 GM
Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM
Samyang 14mm f/2.8

Photo Run

From 1 to 8 framed with zeroglass Pro.Tech.t

PHOTO 1

COME IN UN DIPINTO (PICTURE-PERFECT)

The Dolomites, Val Gardena, Alpe di Siusi, Italy, 2018

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM

Trentino offers stunning landscapes, where time stands still, and humanity is once more in its pristine state. I decided to spend a week exploring these mountains after a key moment of change in my life.

Il Trentino offre degli stralci di natura incredibili, in cui il tempo sembra essersi fermato e l'uomo tornato alle proprie origini. Decisi di passare una settimana esplorando questi monti in seguito a un momento chiave di cambiamento della mia vita.



PHOTO 2

LA RAGAZZA DEL TRENO (THE TRAIN GIRL)

London Tube, London, United Kingdom, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM

There are moments when it feels as if time has stopped; at other moments it feels as if time is whizzing past so quickly you cannot stop to savour the moment. Wherever you happen to be, time is not susceptible to mutability; it goes on, pursuing a well-defined law of physics. The only thing that changes is your perception of it, all depending on the location and culture you are inhabiting at a given moment in time.

A volte il tempo sembra fermarsi, altre trascorrere troppo veloce per poterne apprezzare il momento. Ovunque ci troviamo esso non muta, procede secondo una legge fisica ben precisa e definitiva. Ciò che cambia è il modo come, a seconda del luogo e delle culture, lo si possa percepire.



PHOTO 3

EL BARBER

(THE BARBER)

Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM

Located in the Indian state of Kashmir and Jammu, nestling on the border between Pakistan and India, Srinagar has been torn apart by conflict in an attempt to secure its own economy. Just a week after I left this beautiful city, armed conflicts spread throughout the area. Armed guards were lined up every 20 meters until I crossed the Tibetan border between the Valley of the Zaskar and Ladakh. In this photograph, a father teaches his son the art of the barber.

Srinagar è collocata nello stato indiano del Jammu and Kashmir, confinante tra Pakistan e India, in costante conflitto per garantirsi l'economia. Appena lasciata questa meravigliosa città infatti, la settimana successiva ci furono scontri con armi da fuoco in tutto il paese. La situazione sembrava quasi surreale, c'erano guardie armate ogni 20 metri, fino a varcare il territorio tibetano tra la valle dello Zaskar e il Ladakh. In questa foto un padre che tramanda l'arte del barbiere al proprio figlio.



PHOTO 4

FIEREZZA (PRIDE)

Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM

This photo captures the quietly proud and intelligent gaze of a bottle vendor whom I encountered in the city of Srinagar. Asking him whether I could take his photo he remained impassive: he spoke with his eyes, and that sincere look was one of assent.

L'incredibile sguardo fiero e penetrante di un venditore di bottiglie incontrato nella città di Srinagar. Quando ho domandato lui di potergli scattare una foto è rimasto impassibile, ma è stato sufficiente guardarlo negli occhi per trovare un'intesa reciproca.



PHOTO 5

IL CANTO DI KARGIL (THE SONG OF KARGIL)

Kargil school, Kargil district, Ladakh, India, 2019

60 x 40 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 85mm f/1.8

Sound captured in a photo: the religious chants of young female students from Kargil are heard every morning. An ancient rite, chanting precedes morning lessons, with the older students using a megaphone to overcome the surrounding urban noises. Younger students form single lines and repeat by rote, holding each other's hands in prayer.

I canti religiosi delle giovani studentesse di Kargil, che ogni mattina si sovrappongono al caos cittadino. Questo importante rito precede le lezioni: le più grandi intonano la preghiera avvalendosi di un megafono, mentre i più piccoli, disposti in file indiane, ripetono in coro con le mani giunte.



PHOTO 6

LUCE DI SPERANZA (LIGHT OF HOPE)

Girls school, Kargil district, Ladakh, India, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM

Muslim in nature, Kargil's schools embrace the typical Muslim traditions in prayers, social customs, clothing, and gender division. Inside a school, I had the opportunity to observe these girls during school hours. Regrettably, due to religious custom, it is very difficult for men to gain access to girls' schools – in fact I was turned away by the Head of the school. Nevertheless, once I was inside, natural curiosity to get to know each other overcame man-made restrictions. That curiosity was mutual!

Le scuole di Kargil sono di carattere strettamente musulmano: preghiere, costumi, abiti tipici e divisione dei sessi fin dai primi anni di vita. Al loro interno ho avuto la fortuna di osservare questa ragazza mentre faceva lezione. Purtroppo, a causa della loro religione non è semplice accedere a queste scuole in quanto non sono previsti maschi al loro interno (tant'è vero che sono stato allontanato dal preside); tuttavia, una volta entrato, la curiosità di conoscersi era tanta da entrambe le parti!



PHOTO 7

AMORE FRATERO (BROTHERLY LOVE)

Rangdum Village, Jammu and Kashmir, India, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM

A touching scene of two children from the village of Rangdum, in which the older child is taking care of the younger one. Although the children could not have been older than 4 years old, they are taught to look after one another from a tender age.

La dolce scena di due bambini del villaggio di Rangdum, in cui il più grande si prende cura del più piccolo. Avranno avuto al massimo 4 anni di età, e già da bambini viene loro insegnato a badare a sé stessi in maniera autonoma.



PHOTO 8

L'ANTICO MONACO SUPERIORE (THE OLD HEAD MONK)

Kursha Gompa, Ladakh, India, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM

A monastery disengaged from preconceived notions bred by prejudice, stands on the remote mountain crests of the Himalayan mountains. In this photograph, one of the more important elder monks is seen while he is observing the mountains outside his monastery window.

Un monastero lontano dai luoghi comuni, sulle remote creste della catena montuosa dell'Himalaya. In foto uno degli storici monaci più importanti di questo monastero mentre osserva le sue montagne fuori dalla finestra.



PHOTO 9

L'ANZIANA DEL VILLAGGIO (THE VILLAGE ELDER)

Kursha Village, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, India, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 85mm f/1.8

On my journey to the monastery of Kursha, located in the Indian part of Tibet, specifically in the Jammu and Kashmir region, I encountered an old lady who was returning home carrying a basket brimming with herbs. With one hand she was negotiating a shovel, with the other a Buddhist rosary. Mumbling her unintelligible prayers she moved on regardless of me, looking at the mountains from where a seemingly divine light shone on her in this magical moment.

Durante il mio viaggio al monastero di Kursha, situato nel Tibet indiano del Jammu e Kashmir, ho incontrato una signora anziana mentre rincasava con un cesto pieno di erbe. In una mano reggeva una pala, nell'altra un rosario buddista. A malapena riuscivo a udire le preghiere che sussurrava con lo sguardo rivolto verso le montagne, mentre una luce divina la illuminava durante questo magico momento.



PHOTO 10

A LUME DI CANDELA (IN THE CANDLELIGHT)

Kursha Gompa, Ladakh, India, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM

Tibetan monks start praying every day at the same time. The daily rites commence with a generous breakfast based mostly on bread and tea. This is usually prepared by the younger monks. The older monks spend most of their time in prayer, chanting their mantras accompanied by drums and other typical instruments. The younger ones spend their time studying in dedicated rooms under the supervision of a monk instructor.

Le preghiere dei monaci tibetani iniziano ogni mattina alla stessa ora. Il loro rito si apre con un'abbondante colazione preparata dai più piccini, prevalentemente a base di pane e thé. I monaci più anziani passano la maggior parte del loro tempo a pregare, intonando i mantra avvalendosi di tamburi e oggetti tipici della loro religione. I più piccoli invece studiano in apposite sale sotto la supervisione di un monaco maestro.



PHOTO II

SAGGEZZA (WISDOM)

Lamayuru Gompa, Ladakh, India, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM

This photograph portrays the stark contrast that exists between man and nature. One observes the tortuous trail which is symbolical of the constant wandering of man in a hostile and unyielding universe, with the back of a monk bent from fatigue. Yet, the human figure stands out starkly against the backdrop of the imposing mountains.

In questa immagine si può notare il forte contrasto tra la natura e l'uomo: il sentiero tortuoso che simboleggia l'insistente errare del genere umano in un universo aspro e ostile, e la schiena del monaco, piegata dalla stanchezza, che ciononostante spicca così violentemente al cospetto di quei possenti monti.



PHOTO 12

FOUR LITTLE MONKS

Phuktal Gompa, Ladakh, India, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 85mm f/1.8

This photo captures that moment when young monks decided to play football. At this precise moment they are waiting for their friend who was sent to retrieve the ball. Since they could not resume playing before the ball was brought back, they stood on the crest of a cliff observing their friend and inciting him not to tarry.

Quel giorno i monaci avevano deciso di giocare a calcio, e in questo preciso istante stavano attendendo il loro giovane compagno che era andato a recuperare il pallone. Non vedendo l'ora di poter tornare a giocare tutti assieme, si posizionavano sulla cresta del promontorio ad osservare e incitare il loro compagno a tornare il prima possibile.



PHOTO 13

STOP AL TEMPO (TIME STOPS)

Phuktal Gompa, Ladakh, India, 2019

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 24-70 f/2.8 GM

After a weary and endless trek to reach Phuktal, one of the most ancient temples in the whole of Indian Tibet, and after listening to the religious morning prayers by Buddhist monks, I was on my way back when I met a wonderful group of children monks. They love spending their free time playing football. When the ball goes off the cliff it is astonishing how quickly they are capable of retrieving it. Whoever lets the ball drop has to get it while the others watch him. At this moment, I felt that time had stopped.

Dopo un faticoso trekking per raggiungere il Phuktal, uno dei monasteri più antichi dell'India tibetana, e dopo aver assistito ai mantra religiosi mattutini dei monaci, sulla via del ritorno ho incontrato questo splendido gruppo di monaci bambini, i quali amano trascorrere il loro tempo libero giocando a calcio. Incredibile come, quando la palla finisce giù dalla montagna, riescano a recuperarla in un attimo: chi lascia cadere la palla va a raccoglierla, mentre tutti gli altri si affacciano a guardare. Sembrava che il tempo si fosse fermato.



PHOTO 14

RANGDUM MILKY WAY

Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, India, 2019

60 x 40 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Samyang 14mm f/2.8

The night was bitter and cold. To reach the toilet – a man-made hole in the earth – I had to walk out of my hosts' house. At above 4,000 metres the only source of artificial light was the torch on my mobile phone. However, as soon as I left the house huddled in my quilt, I was struck dumb by the beauty of the skies. Looking up I gazed in wonder and awe: the Milky Way and the stars were so visible. I sat on the grass, and without the help of binoculars I looked up and admired the beauty of the heavens punctuated by the silence of the Himalayan mountains.

Quella sera faceva freddo e per raggiungere la toilette - una buca scavata nella terra - doveti uscire dall'abitazione dei locali che mi avevano ospitato. A 4000 e passa metri non esisteva alcuna fonte luminosa se non la torcia del mio cellulare, ma nel momento in cui uscii con la mia coperta rimasi sbalordito dal bagliore che emanava il cielo. Guardai all'insù e non potevo credere a quello che stavo vedendo: la via lattea e le stelle erano così evidenti anche senza strumenti particolari che decisi di sedermi sull'erba per contemplarle nel silenzio della montagna Himalayana.

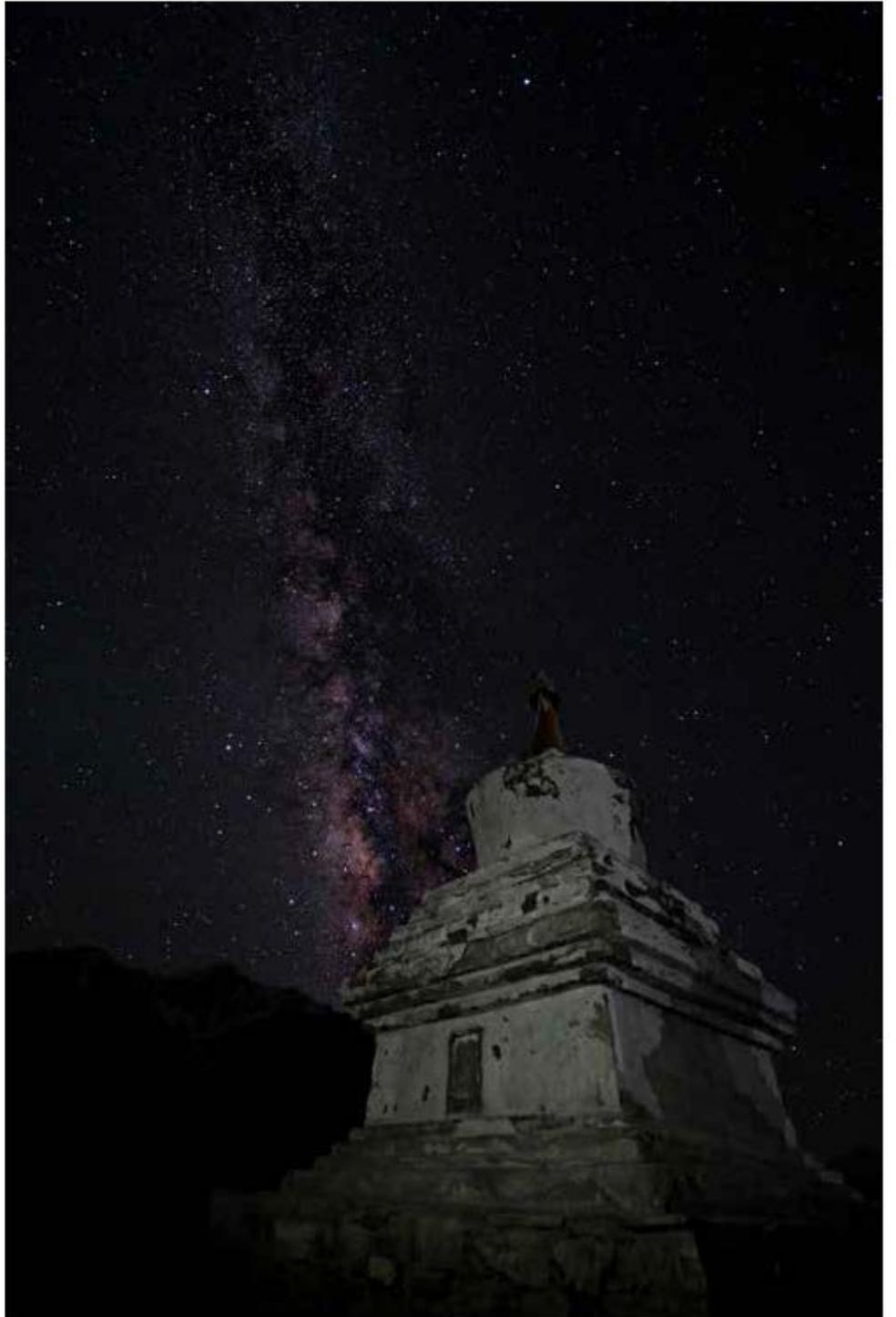


PHOTO 15

MESTIERI DI STRADA (STREET JOBS)

Museum d'Orsay, Paris, France, 2020

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA

A photo that authenticates the great disparity that exists between the luxury of a European capital and the misfortune of those who possess nothing but a few books which they attempt to sell in order to survive the day.

Il grande contrasto tra il lusso della capitale dell'arte europea e la sfortuna di chi non ha niente se non qualche libro da vendere per tentare di arrivare a fine giornata.



PHOTO 16

SURI WILDLIFE (THIRMA)

Surma Village, Upper Omo Valley, Ethiopia, 2020

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA

This photograph captures a magical moment of the Blue Hour in the village of the Surma tribe. The Surma is an ethnic group which is further fragmented into three discrete groups: the Chai, the Balici, and the Thirma. The major source of food for these groups, apart from the breeding of livestock, is the farming of sorghum and corn. Tradition sees them burning the fields, usually when the harvest is over. This is regarded as a good omen for the following harvest.

Il magico momento della blue hour nel villaggio della tribù dei Surma durante uno dei momenti chiave della loro giornata. I Surma sono un'etnia di pastori nomadi a loro volta suddivisi in tre sottogruppi: Chai, Balici e Thirma. La loro principale fonte di sostentamento, oltre all'allevamento, è la coltivazione di sorgo e mais. Come tradizione, periodicamente bruciano i campi – solitamente alla fine del raccolto - in segno di buon auspicio per il prossimo.



PHOTO 17

TRIPLE SURMA

Kibish, Upper Omo Valley, Ethiopia, 2020

60 x 40 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA

It rained ceaselessly on this day. My guide led me to a Surma village, specifically the one that belonged to the Thirma tribe. This is located on the highest part of the Omo Valley. Visibility was bad, and since the storm would not abate I had no choice but to seek shelter inside a sort of shack built with the most random objects, namely, metal plates and crammed woodpiles. It was pitch dark inside and we were so many people huddled together: it felt as if children were multiplying themselves, a sort of optical illusion due to the darkness and large numbers sheltering there. It was at that moment that I saw three wonderful faces. Unfortunately, there was no light so I just used the torch on my Iphone to take this photo. I feel personally attached to this photo, not for the picture itself but for the captured moment in time and the memory it triggers.

Quel giorno pioveva un sacco, incessantemente. La guida mi portò al villaggio dei Surma, situati nella zona più alta della Valle dell'Omo, in particolare in questa tribù appartenente al sottogruppo etnico dei Thirma. La luce non era delle migliori, e con la tempesta che continuava a riversare pioggia ovunque, mi sono dovuto rifugiare dentro a una specie di capanno arrangiato con materiali alla buona, quali lamiere e cataste di legno ammassate. Era buio totale lì dentro ed eravamo incredibilmente fitti, i bambini sembravano moltiplicarsi! Poi ho visto questi tre visi incredibili, peccato non ci fosse un filo di luce.. così ho pensato di tirare fuori l'iPhone, accendere la torcia e utilizzarla un attimo per scattargli questa foto, a cui sono particolarmente legato non tanto per lo scatto in sé, ma per il momento e il ricordo.



PHOTO 18

YELLOW SURMA

Surma Village (Thirma ethnic group),
Omo Valley, Ethiopia, 2020
60 x 40 cm
Camera: Sony A7III
Lens: Sony FE 85mm f/1.4 GM

This photo depicts a young child from the Surma tribe. The moment he found I was on my way he got busy painting his face and body in vivid yellow flowers in preparation for my arrival. Exhibiting elegance and showing hospitality to guests is part of the Surma tradition.

Un giovane bambino della tribù dei Surma che, quando ha saputo del mio arrivo, non ha esitato un momento per dipingersi il volto e decorarsi il proprio corpo con coloratissimi fiori gialli. È una loro tradizione per mostrare ospitalità ed eleganza agli ospiti.



PHOTO 19

TRA CENERE E BESTIAME (BETWEEN ASHES AND LIVESTOCK)

Kangtin, Omo Valley, Ethiopia, 2020
40 x 60 cm
Camera: Sony A7III
Lens: Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA

After rising at daybreak every morning, the males of the Surma tribe congregate in the field where the cattle are kept. Sharing their breakfast among each other is a ritual. Children, before they reach adulthood, are only allowed to feed themselves on cow meat and by drinking cow's blood. The ceremony commences with the children covering themselves in ashes. Then, using a bow and arrow they aim for the cow's artery from where blood flows, enabling the children to drink it. The photo depicts the moment when the young Surma children cover themselves in ashes.

All'alba di ogni giorno, i maschi della tribù Surma si svegliano e si recano al campo di bestiame per condividere la colazione assieme come un vero rituale. I bambini più piccoli, fino a quando non raggiungono la maggiore età, sono costretti a nutrirsi solo di prodotti derivati dalla mucca, ecco perché bevono il loro sangue e mangiano la loro carne. La cerimonia inizia con il cospargersi il corpo con le ceneri, dopodiché, attraverso un arco e una freccia, viene praticato un foro sul collo della mucca a livello dell'arteria, dalla quale poi uscirà il sangue che verrà poi bevuto dai ragazzi. Nella foto i giovani Surma in mezzo al bestiame durante il momento delle ceneri.



PHOTO 20

RAINBOW OF HOPE

Nyangatom Village, Omo National Park,
Omo Valley, Ethiopia, 2020

60 x 40 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA

On the previous day when photo no. 19 was taken, I travelled through the savannah in a 4x4. We travelled over steep and dangerous terrain, testing both my nerves and my wits. I had also spent the night in a very small motel in the middle of nowhere, battling mosquitos and humidity. Added to my woes were the hygiene conditions of the motel. These were all but non-existing. Notwithstanding my miseries and the fatigue I had accumulated throughout the week, I was resolved to make the trip to the village of Nyangatom. To my surprise, a wonderful spectacle of nature welcomed me. Combined with the originality and colourful tones of the inhabitants, I was left literally speechless.

Il giorno precedente avevo percorso tutta la savana sopra a un 4x4 che mi aveva messo a dura prova, spesso con discese ripide e pericolose. La notte passata a combattere le zanzare e l'umidità di un piccolo motel nel bel mezzo del nulla con condizioni igienico-sanitarie quasi inesistenti, del resto non potevo pretendere altro. Poi quella mattina, nonostante la stanchezza di tutta la settimana passata sulle spalle, feci visita al villaggio Nyangatom che con grande sorpresa mi accolse con questo spettacolo della natura, che combinato all'originalità e ai colori di questo popolo, mi lasciò letteralmente a bocca aperta.



PHOTO 21

I'M A SOLDIER

Karo Village, Omo Valley, Ethiopia, 2020

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 85mm f/1.4 GM

This photograph depicts one of the Karo warriors whom I met in the village that is located on the plateau overlooking the river Omo. Considered one of the most fearsome warriors of all the tribes who live in the Omo Valley, the men of the Karo tribe have a tradition of painting their faces and bodies with a white paint, which is extracted from a particular kind of rock.

Questo ritratto appartiene a uno dei guerrieri Karo che ho incontrato nel villaggio in cima all'altura che si affaccia sul grande fiume Omo. I maschi della tribù Karo sono considerati tra i guerrieri più temibili tra tutte le tribù dell'Omo Valley ed è loro tradizione dipingersi volto e corpo con tinture bianche derivate da alcune particolari rocce.



PHOTO 22

KARO LADIES

Karo Village, Omo Valley, Ethiopia, 2020

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA

This photo was taken on a day I am not likely to ever forget: there had been a locust invasion. I had been particularly apprehensive about locusts prior to my setting out for Ethiopia. Once they attack, there is no way one can stem the devastation they create, destroying the land and crops that the local tribes had so lovingly tended. I clearly recall the young village children chasing these gigantic swarms of locusts while shouting and waving their arms frantically in a quasi-futile attempt at stopping them from landing on their fields. This photograph captures three ladies who belong to the Karo tribe just before night-time and just before the locusts hegemonised the vegetation.

Quel giorno c'era stata un'invasione di cavallette. Me lo ricordo perché fu una delle mie principali preoccupazioni prima di partire, non perché sia schizzinoso, ma perché stavano letteralmente disintegrando le coltivazioni delle tribù locali e non c'era modo di fermarle. Ricordo ancora i bambini del villaggio che rincorrevano questi enormi sciami urlando e agitando le braccia affinché non atterrasero sulla loro terra. Questa un'immagine scattata a tre donne di etnia Karo sopra all'altura che conduce al fiume Omo, poco prima che calasse la notte e che le cavallette prendessero il sopravvento sulla vegetazione.



PHOTO 23

HAMARIC SCHOOL

Turmi, Gamo Gofa, Ethiopia, 2020
40 x 60 cm
Camera: Sony A7III
Lens: Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA

Prior to flying out to Ethiopia I decided to buy coloured pencils and notebooks which I intended to distribute among schoolchildren I met on my travels. Indeed, I was completely overwhelmed by the unadulterated joy and delight that shimmered in the eyes of these children when I gave them these gifts. There is something about Ethiopian children that marks them out as unique: bright eyes that tell you a story. I spent a lot of my time there playing with children, almost in an attempt to recapture my own childhood. I felt I belonged.

Quando prima di partire per l'Etiopia decisi di acquistare matite colorate e quaderni per i bambini delle scuole, mai mi sarei mai aspettato così tanta gioia e felicità nei loro occhi. I bambini etiopi sono incredibili, i loro occhi super luminosi e il loro sguardo è come se raccontassero la loro storia. In Etiopia ho passato molto tempo con i bambini, giocando, ridendo e divertendomi proprio come se fossi uno di loro. Mi hanno fatto sentire parte della loro tribù!



PHOTO 24

LE LUCI DEL TRAMONTO (THE LIGHTS OF SUNSET)

Turmi, Omo Valley, Ethiopia, 2020

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony FE 85mm f/1.4 GM

This photograph captures the warm African sun which embraces three warriors from the village of the Hamar tribe. A stationary warrior is better than one in action!

In questa foto il sole caldo e arancione dell'Africa avvolge tre guerrieri del villaggio degli Hamar. Un guerriero a riposo è meglio che un guerriero in azione.



PHOTO 25

CATTLE LIFE

Daassanech, Omorate, Ethiopia, 2020
40 x 60 cm
Camera: Sony A7III
Lens: Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA

This photograph portrays a young child from the Daassanech ethnic group. He is in the middle of his village's cattle plateau on the extreme edge of the Omo Valley which lies close to the border between Ethiopia and Kenya. To reach this village I had to have my passport controlled and checked at the Omorate Immigration Centre, and after a short inspection I was allowed to wander freely around the country.

Un giovane bambino di etnia Daassanech in mezzo a un campo di bestiame del proprio villaggio, all'estremità della Valle dell'Omo sul confine tra Etiopia e Kenya. Per arrivare a questo villaggio ho dovuto fare un check-in dei passaporti al centro di immigrazione di Omorate e dopo un breve controllo mi hanno permesso di girare per il paese.



PHOTO 26

WADERS

Highway to Jinka, Omo Valley, Ethiopia, 2020

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA

Visiting Turmi I got acquainted with and deepened my knowledge on the traditions of the Hamar population. Leaving Turmi, precisely on the highway to Jinka, I encountered these young waders who belong to the Benna ethnic group. To make some money they attract the attention of tourists by painting their bodies as if they were small skeletons. They also go around the streets walking on stilts.

Provenendo da Turmi, e dopo aver conosciuto e approfondito le tradizioni del popolo Hamar, sulla highway che conduce a Jinka, ho incontrato questi giovani trampolieri appartenenti al gruppo etnico dei Benna. Per guadagnare qualche soldo attirano l'attenzione dei turisti in questo modo, dipingendosi come se fossero piccoli scheletri e vagando per le strade su dei trampoli.



PHOTO 27

BLUE AFRICA

Jinka, Abushe's home, Southern Omo Valley,
Ethiopia, 2020
60 x 40 cm
Camera: Sony A7III
Lens: Sony FE 85mm f/1.4 GM

Abushe is a young boy from Jinka, Ethiopia, whom I had the pleasure of meeting and spending time with. I call him the Ethiopian miracle. Afflicted by the Waardenburg Syndrome, Abushe is only 12 years of age. I befriended him while in town and he enquired whether I wanted to meet his mother. Agreeing, he took me on a tuk-tuk drive through the periphery of Jinka. Subsequently, after a long walk we reached his home. My only hope is that Abushe will go back to school and leave street life behind him for good.

Abushe, il miracolo etiopico. Affetto dalla sindrome di Waardenburg, Abushe è un ragazzo di Jinka che ho avuto il piacere di incontrare e trascorrerci del tempo durante il mio viaggio in Etiopia. Abushe ha soli 12 anni e una volta in città mi ha domandato se ero interessato a conoscere anche sua madre. Così mi ha portato in tuk-tuk lungo tutta la periferia di Jinka, poi con una lunga passeggiata sono arrivato fino a casa sua. La speranza è che Abushe possa tornare a studiare e abbandonare definitivamente le strade.





PHOTO 28

BULL JUMP CEREMONY

Turmi, Omo Valley, Ethiopia, 2020

40 x 60 cm

Camera: Sony A7III

Lens: Sony Distagon T*FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA

The Bull Jump is a ritual which represents the rite of passage in the life of a young boy (Ukuli), who, from a child develops into a man (Maza). One has to go through this process in order to get married. If he is successful, it means that the boy is responsible enough and ready to start his own family. The ceremony commences with a very long dance which lasts through a whole afternoon. This is executed by the women of the village who are in some way or another related to the young Ukuli. The dance is a veritable feast, with trumpets, rattles and chants. Once the dance is over it is then the turn of the village men who would have already successfully gone through this ritual. At this point, the tradition becomes visceral, for the women ask the men to whip them. The men consent, tearing flesh after every strike. The women are proud of these scars for these are symbolical of the strong bond between the women and their relatives. In fact, it is the women who ask to be whipped and it is also they who decide when to stop this brutal act. Subsequent to this, the young Ukuli is covered in sand and dung which is believed to give him strength.

Before the actual jump, there is another rite, one that features the village men who put their bracelets inside a long stick. With their hands joined, they need to get them out in one solitary effort. Unless they manage this, the ceremony is stalled.

Cows and bulls are then lined up and kept in position by the village men. The jumper needs to leap over them for four successive times without falling in order to be successful. After this endless ritual, the young Hamar is free to marry. The Ukuli, which means the young initiated man, after having jumped over the bulls successfully, becomes a Cherkari (a social phrase that is a sort of a brand name which he carries for just eight days). After this period he will move on to the Maza stage and remains at that phase until he gets married when he becomes a Danza, which is the official status of the married Hamer men.





Bull Jump è un evento che rappresenta il cambiamento della vita per il giovane (Ukuli) che passa dall'infanzia all'età adulta (Maza). Esso deve eseguire questo rituale per poter sposarsi: se passa significa che è pronto e abbastanza responsabile da poter fondare una famiglia. Tutto inizia con una lunghissima danza che impegna tutto il pomeriggio, con protagoniste le donne della tribù che in un qualche modo sono imparentate con il giovane Ukuli. Queste danze sono una vera e propria festa con trombette, sonagli e canti. Una volta terminate queste danze (che vanno avanti per ore) arrivano gli uomini della tribù che già hanno superato questa prova in precedenza. A questo punto la tradizione diventa brutale, dal momento che le donne chiedono di essere frustate sulla schiena e gli uomini obbediscono, sfregiando la pelle a ogni colpo. Esse provano una sorta di orgoglio per le cicatrici (sia fresche che vecchie). Si presume che le cicatrici siano la prova del profondo legame che esiste tra le donne e i loro parenti, tanto è vero che è la donna a chiedere all'uomo di frustarla, e sarà solamente lei a decidere quando cessare questa carneficina.



Successivamente il giovane Ukuli viene strofinato con la sabbia e imbrattato di sterco per dargli forza, e vengono creati per lui alcuni copricapi come protezione spirituale.

Prima del salto vero e proprio, un altro rituale "portafortuna" vede gli uomini della tribù infilare ognuno il proprio braccialetto all'interno di lunghi bastoni e con le mani unite successivamente tentare di farli uscire tutti in un unico colpo. Finché non riescono a farcela non si potrà procedere con lo step successivo.



Le vacche e i tori vengono allineati e tenuti in posizione dagli uomini del villaggio. Il saltatore deve saltarli per quattro volte di seguito senza cadere prima di essere considerato vincente. Se cade, può riprovare.



Dopo tutta questa cerimonia, il giovane Hamar potrà avere la libertà di contrarre matrimonio. L'Ukuli, il giovane uomo iniziato, una volta saltato i tori con successo, diventa Cherkari (una fase sociale in cui rimane solo per otto giorni). Dopo otto giorni si trasferisce sul palco di Maza e rimane in questo stato fino a quando non si sposa e diventa Danza, il nome degli uomini sposati di Hamar.

TOMMASO VECCHI: BIOGRAPHY



Born in Cento, in the province of Ferrara, on 4 January 1995, Tommaso Vecchi's passion for photography was triggered in 2013 when his parents gifted him his first action camera. At first, he dedicated his efforts to videography and only later he got hooked on photography. He was soon in demand in the wedding photography and videography industry. In 2017, together with a group of like-minded friends, he developed *Sensation High*, a project aimed at sharing highly emotional photographic content with the younger generation of his area. Interestingly, he also graduated in Nursing that same year.

In the summer of 2018 he embarked on a solitary journey through the Dolomites. This was an exercise which he hoped would help him collect his thoughts in the serenity afforded him by the peaceful environment. A year later he travelled to London, drawn by the culture and vibrancy of that great city. This trip was a return of sorts, since his very first trip on his own took place in the UK, more specifically, in Nottingham, where he spent a month hosted by a local family when he was just 16 years of age. In fact, he kept contact with his hosts and visited them again a few years later. His attachment for the country got nurtured from that very first trip there.

A signal moment in his artistic development occurred when he travelled to the exotic country of India last year. He was specially drawn to the regions of Jammu and Kashmir, right up to the Tibetan border. This trip was life-changing for it was there that he finally not only discovered his passion for photography



Srinagar Mosque, Jammu and Kashmir, India, July 2019

but also found his language, the style that really was idiosyncratic of his talent. This trip emerged from a desire to discover cultural diversity, one that could not be more stark to that of his native Italy, and also to make the acquaintance of distant peoples. He was also extremely excited about discovering how the same art form, photography, is perceived and practiced by different people in different cultures.

This important trip resulted in the setting up of his first exhibition, rightly entitled *Cara India*, which he hoped would help disseminate the beauty and colour

of this great country. Only last December he got his first publication in the *Digital Camera* magazine, which was followed only a few days later by his second publication in the prestigious *National Geographic*. Last February he travelled to Paris, attracted by the culture and architectural style of arguably one of the most ravishingly beautiful cities in Europe. He concluded his travels a month later, this time with a trip to Ethiopia. Here, he dedicated his time and attention to the discovery of the indigenous tribes who live in the Omo Valley.



Kursha Monastery, Ladakh, India, July 2019



Lamayuru Monastery, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, India, July 2019



Phuktal Monastery, Jammu and Kashmir, India, July 2019



Zanskar River, Way to Phuktal Monastery, Jammu and Kashmir, India, July 2019



Rangdum village, Jammu and Kashmir, India, July 2019

The major impetus that propelled him to Ethiopia was precisely the tribal concept: he found he had an avid interest in discovering how tribes live, what their traditions and culture are. He was also palpably curious to find out why, in an age dominated by technology and digitalism, these tribes still choose to maintain their traditional way of life. They do so completely uninhibited and uninfluenced by our contemporary Western style, with all its comfort and luxury.

More of his travel photos found their way again in the *National Geographic* and on *Digital Camera*. The COVID-19 pandemic put an abrupt end to his travels, and he had to reluctantly cancel his May trip to Mongolia where he was scheduled to explore the culture

of the Tsaatan, the so-called reindeer people.

This exhibition TIME eMOTION organised at Il-Ħaġar | Heart of Gozo Museum and Cultural Centre in collaboration with GBK Malta Ltd is his first international exhibition.

Plans for the future include a trip to Maramures during the 'Luminatia' this month. Here, Tommaso hopes to discover the people who preserve their traditions by honouring their ancestors. The last trip planned for this year is precisely in December, when he hopes to travel to the remote and hostile terrain of Arctic Siberia, in an attempt to discover one of the most unique cultures extant in our planet, that of the reindeer herders known as 'Nenets'.



Nyangatom Village, Omo Valley, Ethiopia, March 2020



Kibish, Omo Valley, Ethiopia, March 2020



Nyangatom Village, Omo Valley, Ethiopia, March 2020

AWARDS, EVENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY



- Published on **National Geographic Magazine Italia**, May 2020
- Selected as Editor's Pic on JuzaPhoto, one of the most important Italian photography site
<https://www.juzaphoto.com/galleria.php?l=it&t=3402592>
- Selected for Atlas of Humanity in Paris, May 2021,
<https://www.atlasofhumanity.com>



- Published on National Geographic @NatGeoYourShot Instagram Gallery with more than 4,6 million followers,
<https://www.instagram.com/natgeoyourshot/>



- Published on **National Geographic Magazine Italia**, December 2019
- Published on **Digital Camera Magazine**, June 2020



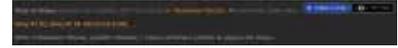
- Selected for an initiative together with other Italian travel reportage photographers for a nonprofit fundraising against Covid-19. All the profit has been entirely donated to the Policlinic of Milan, in order to help frontline nurses and doctors.



- Published on **Digital Camera Magazine**, February 2020



- Published on **Digital Camera Magazine**, December 2019



- Selected for Atlas of Humanity in Paris, May 2021
<https://www.atlasofhumanity.com>

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