

PRIDE OF AFRICA

Klaus Tiedge





3rd Showcase - Cape Town 2015

A Selection of Stylized Wildlife Photography



Forward by Martin Osner

I recall a windy Saturday morning in August 2010, awaiting a meeting with a certain photographer, Klaus Tiedge. A mutual friend, Tina, had asked if I could make time to view his portfolio. I normally don't accept one-on-one viewings with a potential artist, but was persuaded by Tina that this photographer was worth considering.

The door opened and in walked Klaus, wearing a large grin and carrying an Apple laptop under his arm. After explaining his desire to move over from commercial to fine art photography, he placed his laptop down in front of me and asked for my complete honesty. His wildlife images sped by with monotonous regularity. Well exposed, well lit, well cropped animal portrait after animal portrait filled the screen. Quietly, I was rehearsing my "predictable" speech – impatiently waiting for the slide show to come to an end. When it was finally over, I explained in the nicest way possible way that I was not interested.

"Ja," he said, "but..."

"Well, Klaus," I explained, "this work is better suited for stock libraries and calendars, but it's not exhibition material." His face dropped as he got up from the table.

He picked up his computer, thanked me for my time and was about to go when he asked, "can I show you one more picture?"

I said, "OK, as long as it is very different from what we have just seen." He showed me a magnificent photograph of a male lion shot with dramatic backlight – simple, but captivating.

"Is this your picture?" I asked surprisingly.

"Ja," he replied.

I exclaimed, "why on earth did we waste so much time when you have work like this?!" He laughed, and explained that he had just bought an expensive telephoto lens and was impressed with the quality, and this is why he took so many closely cropped pictures. I said, "Klaus, in this photograph I see the animal, I experience the environment, I feel Africa! If you bring me more images like this, I will offer you a solo exhibition."

"Oh my God!" he said, stood up and shook my hand, thanked me for my time, and left.

Over the next six months, Klaus embarked on a number of expeditions – each time returning with exciting imagery. After a while, I noticed a defined style appearing in his work, demonstrating an amazing ability to portray the animals in an adept, vogue-like manner. One almost got the feeling that the compositions had been pre-determined, posed and stylised – as if they were for the front cover of a glossy magazine. I firmly believe that this ability is a subconscious influence from his days as a commercial photographer. Image after image turned up on my desk with regular flurry, portraying the wild in all its grandeur – Klaus Tiedge style.

In January 2011, we sat down to put together selections for his first solo exhibition. It was at this meeting that I realised just how serious this artist was about his work. Although he had sufficient images for the show, he still felt that he needed to go on one more trip.

A few weeks later he left for the Masai Mara in Kenya, armed with a personal guide and intense enthusiasm. After three weeks I received an sms which read, "Lots of good pictures on my hard drive... heading for home, see you soon – Klaus". Once again his work was brilliant! His photography had matured even further, and his more recent images were some of his best.

Since a very successful launch, Tiedge has progressed from the springboard of Cape Town to international acclaim, showing in the Far East, Europe and America. Many curators, art collectors and wildlife enthusiasts have seen what I saw on that first day.

Now, five years down the line his work has matured even more. Introducing a new square format has allowed him to strengthen his compositions making even more use of the environment. He has improved his uncanny ability to portray the scene at it's best.

With immense patience he has produced wonderful imagery, making us proud of Africa. His compositions are not unlike window dressing a shopfront that sells African heritage. You add in the props and spotlights, and then with everything in perfect order – voila! you have Klaus Tiedge photography, perfect in every way.

Take a bow, Klaus Tiedge, your passion is electric and your photography has moved far beyond the predictable to the unforgettable. Well done, I wish you all the very best for the future!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Osner".



Statement Artist

I have always been driven by curiosity and the desire to travel the world.

My fascination is underpinned with questions such as: “What is life like for others and how do other people live on our planet, how diverse is nature and what else is out there and beyond?” Pursuing answers to these questions has led me on numerous photo trips to India, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Japan, Mexico, Australia, USA, Brazil and Ecuador. The lens becomes my eyes and I literally devour my experiences and document them forever. Finally, in 2001, a photo trip brought me to South Africa. I liked it so much that I moved here with my wife, Sandra. We decided to make Cape Town the center of our lives. We now share the beauty of this city with our two children. My curiosity for Africa hasn’t abated as I find myself traveling more than ever. Whether portraying her people, animals or landscapes, I find that Africa is good for my soul. It is rich, genuine and satisfying.



PRIDE OF AFRICA
Etosha Namibia



TRILOGY

South West of Emarti Hill

We are crossing the “Serena Pomp” valley. My eyes feel weary from being on the lookout all day. We enter my favourite area of the park, the hills on the left is inhabited by a leopard with one cub and on the right of the valley is territory to a lioness with three cubs who are often spotted near some rock formations. In the valley itself nests a family of vultures high up on a tree. Funny, although it is such a good spot to take photos, I had not been successful here at all.

As we enter into the shade of the valley, the air gets colder and I roll down my sleeves. It is early evening but the light is dim due to the cloud cover. Before we head further, I discover a group of giraffes strutting through the valley. The giraffes come close together making a beautiful sight and I do not want to disturb them. I tell my guide to slow down the car and approach carefully as I take a couple of shots. Just then the sun comes out from under the clouds on the horizon and the giraffes patterns gleam and stand out beautifully, I feel this is the moment. I press the shutter a few more times just knowing I have captured a truly majestic moment.



MARA HARMONY
Maasai Mara



MARA HARMONY # 2
South of Musiara Marsh





As we could not cross the Talek River due to a heavy down pour so we had to consider an alternative route. Luckily we could arrange last minute accommodation at a Safari Lodge along the river who offered us a room in their staff quarters as they were fully booked for the night. At least it was a clean dry bed and thankfully we could start out bright and early the following day. That night I sat for hours with the chefs and rangers of the lodge, huddled around a cozy fire and talked about all the experiences we connect with in the Mara. What a special memory! I woke up early to the smell of burned wood and the rattling of dishes, as the lodge's staff prepared breakfast. I felt energetic, motivated and expectant. After a quick cup of tea and some rusks we set off for the day. It had been a blissful week thus and the memory of Malaika, the mother cheetah, and her cubs is still fresh in my mind.

Thanks to the brilliant tracking skills of my Masai guide, we eventually caught up with the cheetah family in the early hours of the morning. You can see Malaika is still restless and on the move. She moves up and down a little elevation looking for a gazelle. We know they are very hungry because she has not had a successful hunt for at least three days. Her six cubs, about three weeks old, are also unsettled as they feel their mothers tension. This goes on for hours. Later, on the horizon we see a handful of hot air balloons taking flight. The sound of the burners unsettle the family even more. Once the balloons move on Malaika starts to relax. Finally there is silence and our patience is rewarded as the family seem to gather around to have their portrait taken. It was just enthralling to shoot this magnificent scene capturing their grace but also vulnerability.

Just after I took the photo the clouds move closer and it started getting dark on the horizon. I hear thunder and as a gust of wind stirs the air and the clouds continue to build we head back to camp. What a brilliant day!





Today the sky is covered with clouds. The hot air passes through my hair and it feels like it will begin to rain any minute. Dramatic cloud formations change hourly and every now and then I see a crack of lightning in the distance. The atmosphere feels electric.

We stopped the vehicle in the central Mara Plains to simply admire nature. Breathe deeply, draw in the smell and let your eyes gaze into the distance. Feel part of the moment. As I look through my binoculars scanning the open plain for an interesting sighting, I get a glimpse of something moving a few hundred meters away. I look again, there seems to be young cubs playing around a dead tree stump. They might be cheetahs but I am not sure.

We approach carefully as I do not want to disturb their play. As we get closer, I realise it is Malaika, an extraordinary cheetah with her cubs. I am able to get one or two really good exposures but then we realise there are only five babies, we suspect that something must have happened to the sixth cub which we saw a few days back.

Over radio we make contact with the rangers. They tell us that lions attacked the night before and that one cub was missing. One can see that while the young, innocent and energetic bundles are playing, their mother is focused intently on something else. From time to time she lets out a despairing cry for her missing baby. It is touching. Some time later Malaika walks off as her cubs stay close to her side, following her instinctively. We decide to observe from a distance. Later when we catch up with them, we find Malaika sitting next to her missing cub lying dead in the grass in front of her. Looking at her face I am sure that I can see tears running down the black lines under her eyes. It is heart wrenching.

The other cubs are not to be seen. She probably hid them somewhere along the way. It is extraordinary for a cheetah to give birth to so such a large litter, then having to bring them up on her own is without doubt a difficult task. Malaika is trying hard to give her best but we know that only two cubs stand a realistic chance of surviving. Sadly, this is nature. We leave her in peace and drive off. I truly hope that the other cubs will be safe for now and I wish that when I return next time I could see them as young strong adult cheetahs gracing the Mara plains, but I know this is only a dream.

SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY

South of Musiara Marsh

Every so often, due to a predicable routine, I am able to spend several days with a specific group of animals. This pride of lion started to return to a favourite spot every day, plus the location is just beautiful from a photography point of view.

The pride hunt at night, feed early in the morning and then move onto the forest where they can play and rest during the heat of the day. Although observing their routine and starting to foresee some behavioural elements it still requires a lot of patience and good fortune to get the perfect shot. We are early today, the pride just arrived back from feeding and while the older lions are already looking for a comfortable spot under the trees, the youngsters are full of energy. The cubs are about six months old. There is a hustle and bustle as they climb trees and chase each other around. Although I take great pleasure in just watching, I need to be alert all the times. I lie on the floor of the vehicle squeezed between seats, with both cameras resting on beanbags in front of me. The Grey Crowned Crane is calling in the high trees and the helmed guinea fowls chatter around us as if commentating on the performance unfolding.

Suddenly it all comes together, I squeeze the shutter just knowing that I have got a great shot. It is such a harmonic atmosphere, what a privilege!





SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY# 2
The Forest Around Governors Camp





CROSSING AT AMBOSELI



INNOCENT PRIDE # 1



BROTHERHOOD # 3



PRIDE AND JOY
Maasai Mara

I find myself adrift in a huge tract of untouched nature along the Sand River territory close to the Tanzanian border. We drive over a ridge which over looks the small valley when I see a gathering of about thirty-thousand animals who must have just crossed the river a short while back. I was stunned!

After watching silently for a moment, we carried on down the hill making our way through the enormous herds of wildebeests and zebras. It is priceless, a moment I will never forget. We meet an old friend along the way and after a quick chat we drive on. The rock formations ahead of us are just incredibly beautiful. My guide suddenly bumps me with his elbow. He points to a lioness hiding in the long grass.

A single lioness is a strange sighting as they usually hunt in groups. We stop the car in a good position between her and the herds ... I get my camera ready. The lioness looks strong and healthy. She stalks up to the gnus and then runs into the herd breaking them apart. Sprinting in between them, it seems like she cannot decide which one to choose ... it feels like she is playing a game and not actually hunting.

As she strolls back, we unobtrusively follow her to the other side of the rocks where a small herd of buffaloes are grazing peacefully. She approaches them carefully, instinctively looking for the weakest among the group. In a split second she sprints towards them trying to separate the young buffalo. But, to her surprise, five big buffalo take action and start chasing her. We intently watch this spectacle finding it enthralling and amusing at the same time.

Ruthlessly the buffaloes pursue her as she jumps up onto the rocks to avoid their horns. That was a risky game, I thought to myself. Exhausted she looks into the distance, while plotting her next move, offering me the opportunity to portray her from an exciting vantage point.





FIDELITY
Maasai Mara





MATRIARCH # 4
Amboseli Kenya





MONARCH OF LEWA #1
Lewa Kenya



BROTHERHOOD # 4
Maasai Mara



I sit under the awning gazing down at the river where the hippos usually gather. Today there is no sight of them. All I hear is the continuous patter of rain on the thick canvas of my tent.

It is the last day of my photo trip in the Mara and I feel like I must to get out into the bush one more time. Yes, just one more time to draw in the smells and sounds of the wilderness before returning home to the “ordinary”. It is already late afternoon, and even though it is still raining, I am intent on going out for a game drive, as my experience has taught me not to predict an outcome in wildlife photography, even if the weather and light appears unsuitable.

The Velcro on the removable side covers of the Land Rover are worn out and fails to close properly. Slowly water finds its way through the little openings and I can hardly see anything through the fogged plastic windows. It doesn't take long and we are soaking wet and cold. The plains are deserted with no animals in sight, perhaps they are feeling the same way as us.

We stop the vehicle to warm up with a hot cup of tea poured from an old flask. Quickly our cold fingers turn red wrapped around the warm cups. My Masai guide and I sit, sipping tea while talking about our different lives and traditions. Time seems to stand still. The flask is empty and we already feel the cold creeping back into our bones, disappointed, we agree it's probably wise to return to camp and cancel the excursion.

Suddenly while crossing the plains on our way back to camp, the sky opens, just enough for the sun to send some majestic rays through the dark clouds. Like a miracle a mother and baby elephant appear from the left moving at a swift pace through the wet grass.

What a farewell gift! It proved to me yet again that one should never stop trying. What only matters is that you are out there giving yourself the chance to experience the wild and witness the unpredictable.





REVERENCE # 1
Etosha Namibia





LAST LIGHT
Maasai Mara





THE CROSSING
Masai Mara, Kenya



HARMONY # 2
Etosha Pan Namibia







MATRIARCH # 2
Opens Plains - Lewa







1965 - 2019

A tribute to an iconic wildlife photographer and close friend

It is with great sadness that I bring you the news that one of our artists whom we represent and a close friend, Klaus Tiedge, has passed away after a two-year struggle with cancer. Klaus left us in the early hours on the 1st July 2019 at his family home in Cape Town. In 2010 I met this extraordinary person when he strolled into my gallery seeking representation in wildlife photography. From that meeting, I was honoured to mentor him in his newfound passion for wildlife photography and tribal portraiture.

In our early meetings, we both agreed that that landscape of the bush was as important as the animals, and so he set out to shoot captivating images showcasing the animals in their environment which he achieved very successfully. A few years later, leading up to his first exhibition I got to see just how passionate and determined he was. He knew what he wanted and was prepared to travel to the ends of the earth to find it. I still recall the delight on his face when returning from an adventure. His relentless pursuit for capturing iconic wildlife photographs was inspirational and a joy to behold.

What many people don't know is that Klaus was a very successful fashion and lifestyle photographer before turning to the African bush. This, I believe ingrained the "stylized" approach to his highly successful PRIDE OF AFRICA collection for which he became known for. I have always commented that in his photography it seemed as if he directed the animals, as one would a model, on exactly where to stand and how to pose. His photographs feel like classic portraits photographed under controlled lighting by a master photographer, under the direction of a stylist.

When diagnosed with cancer, Klaus and his family's world was turned upside down. It was in the last two years that I got to see the unbelievable determination and positive attitude of the man. What was amazing is that over the last year, working with Dean Paarman he still filmed an incredible documentary called "Safari of my Life". A moving film where he shows behind the scenes footage of how he went about his wildlife photography and his passion for the African bush even during the height of his struggles. Furthermore, last month, he had a solo exhibition in Munich, Germany, which has been a great success and an achievement he was very proud of.

During his last few months, those who did not know Klaus would not have even known his circumstance. His positive attitude and love for his family were at the forefront of his life right until till the end and this is what makes his death so sudden and difficult to deal with. I have lost a great friend who will be loved and remembered for his humorous spirit, being a caring husband and loving father plus a photographic artist with immense talent.

On behalf of the gallery, staff and clients I would like to extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Sandra and his children during this difficult time. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. With many of our clients who have admired Klaus's work and invested in his prints, I have had to delay sending out this news, as we needed to get clarity on how we would continue representing his work and being part of his legacy going forward. The only good news is that the original limited edition prints are still available and will now carry an estate emboss, authorised and signed by Sandra, his wife.

Klaus, you will never be forgotten and your wonderful family and work will be your legacy!

Rest in peace, my friend!

Martin Osner

PRIDE OF AFRICA. African Wildlife

LIMITED EDITION FINE ART PRINTS

HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL

25 x 14 inch	64 x 36cm	Edition 50	R 7 900
37 x 21 inch	96 x 54cm	Edition 20	R 17 900
50 x 28 inch	128 x 73cm	Edition 15	R 31 900
58 x 33 inch	149 x 85cm	Edition 10	R 37 900
84 x 42 inch	214 x 108cm	Edition 6	R 58 900

SQUARE

20 x 21 inch	51 x 55cm	Edition 50	R 7 900
28 x 31 inch	73 x 79cm	Edition 20	R 17 100
36 x 38 inch	93x 99cm	Edition 15	R 30 400
43 x 45 inch	110 x 116cm	Edition 10	R 36 480
59 x 62 inch	152 x 158cm	Edition 6	R 57 000

Prices remain valid while exiting stocks and editions last. Prices are subject to change without prior

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