

# NO CHASER

RETURN TO FAMILY VALUES



## MY JOURNEY

NERMIN TAN  
London, U.K.

## BEAUTIFUL STRUGGLE

PHOTOGRAPHY OF JOSEF BUERGI  
Berne, Switzerland

## LAST MAN STANDING

SIMONE TADDEI  
Florence, Italy

# BEAUTIFUL STRUGGLE

In the Beautiful Struggle series the team at No Chaser would like to make one thing clear: the “Beautiful” is not an attempt to romanticize the extreme labor depicted in these photo essays. The work is hard, backbreaking and desperate. It is what the people featured in these photos do to earn the bare necessities for living which they do far beyond the safety of any social net often in abject poverty. To romanticize that struggle would actually be condescending to the men and women in these photos.

So what is the “Beautiful” that we refer to? It is the people themselves. Each photographer has had the experience of talking with the folks as they go about their daily task and each one has been impressed by the kindness of community and the generosity of spirit from those who seemingly have nothing. These photo essays demonstrate that a picture is truly worth a thousand words.

We invite you to enjoy “Beyond The Bricks” written and photographed by Josef Beurgi.

— N.C.



# BEYOND THE BRICKS

Photography / Q&A with Josef Beurgi



## WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

I grew up in Switzerland and still live there near the capital of Switzerland, Berne.

## BANGLADESH - WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO DOCUMENT THESE IMAGES?

Bangladesh was also a long time on my bucket list. I heard a lot about the friendly people, read about the daily struggles living in one of the poorest countries. I went there right before the Corona virus came. I was really overwhelmed because of the lovely people, spent hours in the slums and dirt. And photographed the beauty of the Bangladeshi people.

## TELL US ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE IN BANGLADESH.

There is one thing that Bangladesh has that makes it unique and that's the Bangladeshi people themselves. It's difficult to put into words what exactly makes Bangladeshis stand out from other nationalities. I have shared great experiences with many people from all over the world but the Bangladeshi spirit, honesty and enthusiasm for life are stunning. Bangladesh has had a tough time over the past few decades with a major war, numerous natural disasters and ongoing political issues being the main causes, but the people are welcoming and happy and above all, they are genuine in their friendliness. You rarely get the impression that they want anything more than to say hello, ask a few questions or have their photo taken with you. ■







# AMONGST THE MUNDARI:

*A brief photo essay*

Photography by Josef Beurgi



#### **WHEN DID YOU START PHOTOGRAPHY?**

I first got in contact with photography during my engineering studies. That was around 1990. After the year 2000, I took it more seriously and tried to build my own style of photography. Studied the masters, bought a ton of photography books, and took thousands of images. My photographic work is a journey of self-discovery and self-expression. It is the way by which I choose to get in touch with the people, things, and world around me.

#### **MUNDARI - WITH THIS SERIES, WHAT WERE YOUR INTENTIONS?**

Besides photography, I like traveling a lot. To go to remote areas is something very special to me. I waited a long time to go to South Sudan. 2019 was the right time when the country was politically stable. I got inspired by David Yarrow's image "Mankind".

#### **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO SHARE IMAGES LIKE THESE?**

My photographs are meant to be a bridge between cultures and to express the universal human spirit. On a more personal level, they are my spiritual journey. A journey that opens the door to many diverse cultures. That's why I travel and photograph. And that's my approach to show the beauty in life, even if it's in a slum or in deepest Africa.

#### **THIS ISSUE FOCUSES ON FAMILY, HOW DO YOUR IMAGES AND EXPERIENCE IN SOUTH SUDAN WITH THE MUNDARI TRIBE TOUCH ON ELEMENTS OF FAMILY?**

I've spent three days in a Mundari cattle camp. They have such a strong bond with their cattle and treat them very well. The younger Mundari look after the cattle from dusk till dawn. The elder stays in the villages. They are a proud, kind of warrior people. The word of the elder is strong, the younger listen to them.

#### **THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE RELATIONS YOU CREATE, IS THERE AN ENLARGING OF FAMILY FOR YOU?**

I call myself a visual storyteller. I'm trying to connect people with my images. I photograph mostly older people, because of the faces, the wrinkles, the skin, and the way they connect with me. I understood that family means a lot in Asia and Africa. A family bond is forever. Very different from where I live.

#### **WHAT IS FAMILY?**

My family life is very little. My parents died 10 years ago, and my sisters live far away. I'm married but don't have children. What means family to me, as I have some ideas from Africa? Family is protection, care, love, spending time together, fighting and struggling every day, laughing, and sharing everything. Family is more than parents and children. Family is within a village or clan. Unfortunately, I think a European guy like me will never understand or feel that in the same way that they do. ■



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