

UNIQUE PORTRAITS FROM AFRICA WINFRIED BULLINGER – AT THE EDGES OF POWER

Winfried Bullinger photographed his conceptual series of portraits, *At the Edges of Power*, during his many trips through Africa. He shows people stopping in their paths and interrupting their work for the moment that it takes to shoot a photograph. The place where a photograph is taken is a place where encounters occur. In their portraits the people wear the clothes and carry the equipment of the moment. In previously unseen ways Bullinger succeeds in visually summarizing the complex connection between individuals and the histories of their peoples.

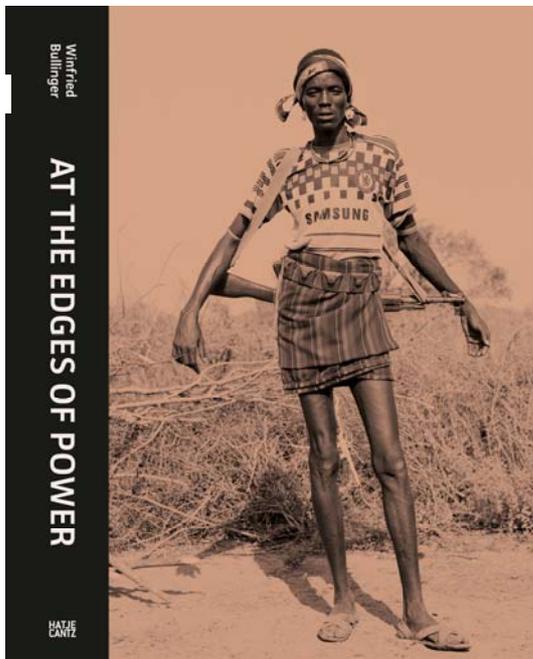
Berlin, October 24, 2017 – Winfried Bullinger's (*1965 in Munich) series of portraits, *At the Edges of Power*, was photographed in the countries of Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and the Central African Republic. His works, taken with a large-format camera, show people from remote rural regions neglected by their governments. His protagonists are cattle herders and a few hunters. Many speak unusual dialects. Their lifestyles are nomadic or semi-nomadic. They take their herds to fertile lands, depending on the seasons, and live in villages or temporary settlements. Part of this life involves fostering the ability to survive through adaptation and mobility. People protect each other and solve their conflicts with each other according to their own rules.

Western society tends to ignore much about how these people live, as well as the consequences of globalization—especially climate change—for them. Dry regions are abandoned and become deserts. The competition for water leads to serious tensions. Armed conflicts, with fatalities, occur regularly.

Over a period of ten years Bullinger has visited various regions in East Africa several times and has also repeatedly met the same people. This creates relationships between the individual portraits and the portrait series, while the situational changes can also be read in them. A topography is created.

Bullinger's portrait photos are the result of direct contact with individuals. The analogue, large-format camera has its own significance here: the slower technology concentrates the process of making portraits. In the moment the picture is taken the artist has eye contact with the person in the portrait—nothing blocks the contact between them. "For my portrait pictures I use daylight, no flash. The longer exposure time needed for daylight corresponds to my notion of making an image. It influences the picture's impact. Shadows, even in the faces that are turned toward me, give people their own idiosyncrasies and a sense of mystery. I avoid showing them in any way that is not in accordance with their everyday lives. Especially the dark sections, such as the shaded gazes, have a contextual meaning for me in the portraits. They say something about the daylight, the time of year, and the place where we met. Natural light on the face of a person in a portrait is never the same."

Now, Bullinger's elaborately designed artist's book, *At the Edges of Power*, is the first to present a selection of his oeuvre, which has grown over the past decade. The book contains 180 illustrations on more than 300 pages, as well as an accompanying essay by Hubertus von Amelunxen.



**WINFRIED BULLINGER
AT THE EDGES OF POWER**

Texts by Hubertus von Amelnunxen, graphic design by
Carsten Eisfeld

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Especially in the digital age, Hatje Cantz regards itself an element linking museums, artists, galleries, collectors, and art lovers. Conveying knowledge - in terms of both content and visuals - as well as an enthusiasm for art is always at the heart of our engagement.

In keeping with our ambition to make it possible to experience art beyond the medium of the book, Hatje Cantz has launched the EDITION GERD HATJE as we continue to expand our portfolio of strictly limited, signed editions featuring works on paper, photographic works of art, and art objects.

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