ETHICAL PORTFOLIO: “THE MAASAI”.
Made by Massimo Briani.

This photographic portfolio entitled "THE MAASAI" is the result of a period of one month lived with them from Kenya to Tanzania. Earth, fire, sun, blood: red is the color of the Maasai. Red is the earth, “Osinyai”, of the rough path that, a two hour drive from Nairobi, plunges into the Kenyan highlands crossed by arid rivers, in this ignored corner of the bush. A dozen low and narrow huts made of branches covered with a mixture of earth and dung, which the women build and rebuild that do everything, housing, food and milking the cattle. Tattered children dressed in variegated fabrics, old cloths draped in colorful fabrics, sparkling pearl necklaces and bracelets. And then these very young girls dressed in black or blue. "Blue indicates that a woman is of marriageable age," explains the village chief. A spear launched by "Torosei", hidden in the bush, another "Remanyatta" larger than the previous one. Young people, those who are not in the village to take care of the animals, go to school and learn Maasai, Swahili, English, history, geography and mathematics. The Maasai community is changing: education takes the place of initiation. In the land of the Maasai, nothing is the same as before: the extension of the outskirts of the capital, first of all, has made these nomads withdraw, fleeing from civilization and refusing to mix with other ethnic groups. They bought their land which these shepherds, indifferent to land ownership and reluctant to agriculture, abandoned. The state created huge animal reserves, which further expropriated them of their territories. Gradually they withdrew to Tanzania, where today they emigrate in large numbers, there were also those years of terrible drought, which saw their herds wither. The government provided them with food aid, beans, cornmeal, oil, which they learned to appreciate but now have to pay by selling cattle, then the tourists and their foreign currency arrived. At first, the women and children ran at full speed. Now, more intrigued than frightened, the Maasai are simply wondering "what are you, who have everything, come looking for us?". The question is truly worth asking. The culture of the Maasai seems to have resisted the shock of globalization until now. Christianization does not prevent the "Marabout" from always sacrificing themselves to their god, "Engai", to make the rain fall. But what will happen tomorrow, when the cohorts of "authentic" encounter hunters arrive?