

## P R E S S R E L E A S E

### Joachim Schmeisser: Elephants in Heaven

**Press Preview:** Thursday, 23 November 2017, 11 am – 1 pm

**Opening:** Thursday, 23 November 2017, 7 pm

**Exhibition:** 24 November 2017 – 27 January 2018

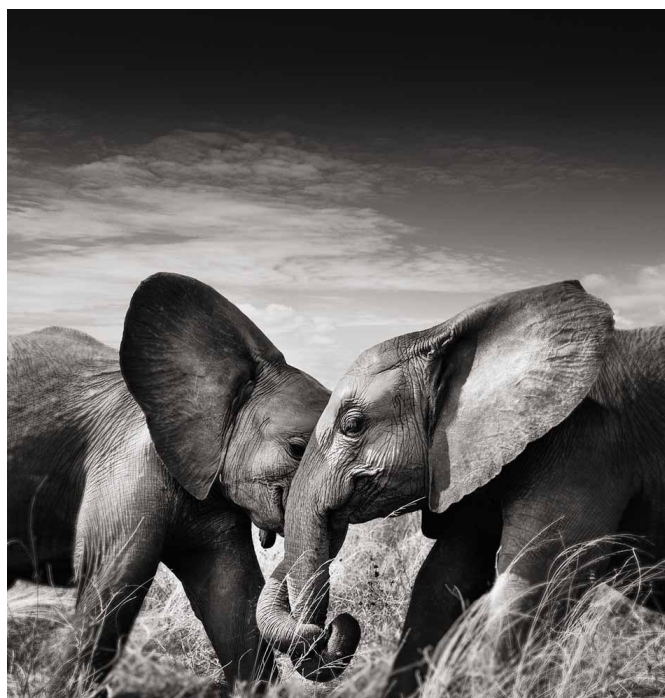
**Location:** IMMAGIS Fine Art Photography, Blütenstrasse 1, 80799 Munich



Earth I, Kenya, 2013, © + Courtesy Joachim Schmeisser

After the playful and erotically charged solo exhibition by German star photographer Ellen von Unwerth who cast a spell over all of Munich with her HEIMAT series, the gallery **IMMAGIS** invites viewers to an homage to wildlife and its inhabitants starting on **24 November**. In **Elephants in Heaven** the photographer **Joachim Schmeisser** takes us on a very personal journey to the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, where he documented orphaned elephant children, their guardians, and their daily fight against poachers. Approximately 25 works will be presented as highlights from the book of the same name, and will include some large format prints as well as elegant platinum palladium prints.

Because elephants are pachyderms, a combination of two Greek roots meaning “thick skin,” one might think that nothing bothers them and that they lead quiet, safe lives. Nothing could be further from the truth: elephants have been hunted and killed for their ivory tusks since antiquity. And people often ignore the calves left behind, who must now live out their lives as traumatized and fearful orphans. Wildlife photographer **Joachim Schmeisser** made it his mission to document the story of these abandoned baby elephants. Through his sponsorship of elephants, he came into contact with the **David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust**, the world’s largest and most successful rescue and rehabilitation operation for orphaned elephants, headquartered in Nairobi. Professional veterinary technicians bottle feed the elephant calves until they are old enough to locate their own food. By living together with older elephant calves, they also learn the social rules governing elephant herds. After this phase is complete, the elephants are taken to one of the Trust’s rehabilitation stockades before they are released back into the wild. Without the Trust, the elephant orphans would have no chance of survival. Joachim Schmeisser followed numerous elephants through the entire process and captured fascinating pictures from their arrival at the nursery all the way to their release back into the wild. **Elephants in Heaven** provides a visual record of how these traumatized elephants are raised in a place that is truly heavenly for them, offering a compelling behind-the-scenes look inside an elephant nursery.



Couple 1, Kenya, 2010 (left) and Keeper with Umbrella, Kenya, 2009 (right), © + Courtesy Joachim Schmeisser

**About the book: Elephants in Heaven. Joachim Schmeisser**, published in September 2017 by teNeues, foreword by Dr. Matthias Harder (curator of the Helmut Newton Foundation) and Dame Daphne Sheldrick (founder of the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust), 27.5 x 34 cm, 176 pages, hardcover, ca. 15 color and 93 black-and-white photographs, texts in German, English, and French, € 59.90; ISBN 978-3-96171-047-8

**About IMMAGIS Fine Art Photography:** The gallery IMMAGIS was founded in 2009 by Kathrin Köhler and specializes in contemporary photographic art. IMMAGIS stands for excellent, classic, and extravagant positions in the international photography scene; from the world’s leading photographers to promising young talents. IMMAGIS has been based in Munich’s museum district since 2016. More information at: [www.immagis.de](http://www.immagis.de)

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