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On Safari

with African Wildlife Photographer
Bobbie Goodrich

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THE FINE ART IMAGERY OF

Bobbie Goodrich



by Lynn Eodice

Bobbie Goodrich's previous career as a painter is very evident in her beautiful photographic renditions of horses, dancers, and African wildlife. Before she became a professional photographer, she explains, taking pictures was simply a way to record the subject that she would eventually paint. She began going to rodeos and various equine events, and used those photos as references for her oil paintings. "Then I would include those photographs when I was exhibiting the oil paintings, and the people who bought this artwork would also want to buy the photo references."

This opened the door for the marketability of her photographic images. "The greater the audience I had, it was clear that photography was taking over," Bobbie says. Soon, she didn't have much time left for painting, as canvasses were quite large and— as compared to photography— oil paintings took a long time to produce. Thus, she decided to switch her focus entirely. Today she often uses Adobe Photoshop to create her signature look, but her images were quite artistic from the start. "Photoshop (www.adobe.com) and Nik Filters (www.niksoftware.com) enable me to create even more painterly types of images," she notes. "But those software programs weren't available when I started shooting around 1990."

“African wildlife, wild horses, and dance. They all involve movement and energy, and that’s where my interest lies.”



Conveying Motion & Emotion

When asked about her favorite subjects, she is very specific: “African wildlife, wild horses, and dance. They all involve movement and energy, and that’s where my interest lies.” She enjoys conveying the personality of her subjects, and says, “To me, movement really depicts the emotion within.”

Bobbie tends to work with darker backgrounds in most of her imagery, as she likes the focus to be on the highlights. “But with dance, it’s important that the background is distorted so that it looks obscure,” she points out. She works with a variety of shutter speeds to depict the motion and movement of her dance subjects onstage, and most of these images are straight out of the camera. “But sometimes I’ll create Motion Blur using filters



in Photoshop,” she says. Then she brings the image into Nik Filters and takes it through the various filters to find what she wants to emphasize.

She has recently returned from her most recent trip to Africa. “This time, I went specifically to photograph the wildlife river crossings— the end of the migration,” Bobbie says. This migration usually begins during the summer and runs through the end of October, depending on the rainy season. It marks the time when the animals return to the Serengeti. “I’m pleased that I was able to capture a lot of beautiful new imagery,” she remarks. Bobbie and her traveling companions had the opportunity to spend a lot of time near a small pride of lions, which she describes as “so inquisitive and playful, that it was almost like being in a nursery school.” She’d love to illustrate a children’s book with these images. Bobbie organized this excursion, hiring an expert guide who knew where and how to spot wildlife. The group included her son, Scott, and several students she is mentoring, all first-time visitors to Africa who were interested in working with her. Bobbie is planning more African safaris, including a trip to Botswana next year.

“Photoshop and Nik Filters enable me to create even more painterly types of images,”





Exciting New Pursuits

She sells her fine art photographs at several venues. Currently, there are two galleries in Arizona (her home state) that represent Bobbie's work: Zuva Gallery in Scottsdale, which represents contemporary African art; and Goldenstein's Gallery in Sedona, which represents her wild horse images.

She is also teaching a workshop program. "It's a new venue for me and I'm really excited about it," Bobbie enthuses. "I once went to a workshop with a photo tour company, and it happened to be at the Hideout at Flitner Ranch. I was so impressed with the ranch, located in the Bighorn Mountains of Wyoming, and with the family who owned the property." She says that the director, Peter, is also very innovative and loves art and photography. Thus, she approached him about conducting small photography workshops at the ranch twice a year, with part of the workshop being a photo shoot using the wranglers and horses as subjects. The other part would deal with post-production, teaching people how to produce fine art imagery from their initial capture.

"Peter went to my website, looked at my work, and said, 'absolutely, you can teach a workshop here!' He really liked what I was doing," she says. Bobbie's first workshop took place in February 2008, and was a great success. "I love sharing this knowledge, and seeing people grasp what I'm doing," she says. "I try to teach it in a very uncomplicated manner." Bobbie recalls that it was once very difficult for her to learn Photoshop and post-production, as she had attended some very expensive workshops where she "came out more confused than ever." She vowed to find a method of teaching that works for people. "So that's what I'm doing, as well as some private tutoring."





Going Forward

What does the future hold for this talented artist? First of all, Bobbie is exhibiting her work at the Arizona Fine Art Expo this winter in Scottsdale. "This is a three-month tented show— January, February, and March 2009." In February, she'll hold another workshop at Flitner Ranch, and is working towards a museum show in Europe of her African images. Bobbie says that the facilities at the Flitner Ranch are 5-Star, with a Cordon Bleu chef. She also wants to inform spouses who accompany workshop attendants— but aren't interested in photography— that there are cooking classes, horseback riding, and many other activities.

"I'm [also] planning on creating a program here in Arizona to teach small groups who want to learn Photoshop skills," she adds. Bobbie Goodrich not only possesses an artistic gift, but the gift of teaching her skills to others.

To see more of Bobbie Goodrich's work, visit www.bobbiegoodrich.com, and for information regarding the African Safari trips, email bobbiegoodrich@mac.com