

# BEHIND THE CAMERA



PHOTO: CHRISTIAN REGER

**Stefan Nimmesgern** (b. 1956) is a photographer who has worked for National Geographic Magazine, GEO and ZEIT Magazin, among others. He is also a keen mountaineer. He began his career as a professional in 1983 as a still-life and food photographer. Later, around 2000, he tried fashion photography: "but that was too artificial

for me," he recalls. "I was too interested in the personalities in front of my lens and not just treating people like dolls. I now specialise in people photography and I like to be particularly honest in my work." Stefan Nimmesgern is represented professionally by the renowned Cologne-based photography agency Laif. In 2009, Stefan became

very ill and was put on the high-urgency list at Eurotransplant. He received a heart transplant soon afterwards. On these pages, we see a selection from his impressive portfolio. Stefan was also commissioned by Eurotransplant to take several photographs specifically for this book (see pages 22, 32, 66, 130, 144). "That was a

very emotional job for me," he admits. "It was very close to me." He mainly likes to talk about his work, and is not particularly keen to talk about his heart transplant. "I'm not as fit as I was before the transplant, and taking the medicine can be tough. But I think this handicap is very small compared with such a serious operation." 🏆

► **Elmar Sprink** (b.1971) is known as the world's fittest transplant patient. An account manager in the IT sector, Sprink is also a heart transplant patient. He has competed in nine Ironman triathlons, and is a keen trail runner and mountainbiker. In 2010 he had a heart attack and he received a new heart in 2012. Most recently, Sprink competed in the 691-kilometre-long mountain bike event Cape Epic in March 2017



PHOTO: STEFAN NIMMESGERN



▲ Up jungle during a climbing expedition in Uganda. On the Kilembe Trail, Ruwenzori



◀◀ Refugees from the Middle East now living in Germany, with their former lives projected onto the wall of their new dwelling



◀ A resting rickshaw driver in Kathmandu, Nepal

▶ *Les Intouchables* in real life: Philippe Pozzo di Borgo (in wheelchair) and his French-Algerian caregiver Abdel Sellou, whose true story inspired the hit movie

