

**Sebastiao Salgado, Africa
(Taschen, £39.99)**

FEW photographers can boast as wide a body of work and wealth of experience as the Brazilian Sebastiao Salgado. His black and white images, which elevate subjects to an almost poetic profundity, have recorded his native South America and countries around the globe. But it is Africa where he has focused much of his work, with more than 40 reportage works over a period of 30 years.

This lavish book contains his own selection of his best, providing a sweeping portrait the continent's people and landscapes. His images of the nomads of Mali during the famine of 1985 are studies in desolation. Salgado also offers a rare insight into the forgotten conflict of Angola and the horrifying toll of landmines on its people. His photographs of displaced children have a haunting quality which cannot fail to move the beholder.

Salgado has that knack of recording the very essence of a moment. One of his images captures a group boys fleeing southern Sudan. A shaft of light picks out a group huddled inside a darkened hut, while others are silhouetted, almost ghostlike, at the entrance.

Salgado also recorded Rwanda in good times and bad. The pictures of teapickers in times of peace contrast with the horrors of the genocide. Namibia's Skeleton Coast is documented in a series of images worthy of a landscape artist. Text is provided by the Mozambique novelist Mia Couto.

Superlatives fail to do this book justice.
Gavin Engelbrecht