
Photographer Saucier creates beautiful sleeping-baby portraits

By Nancy Snipper

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Tanis Saucier started taking photographs as a professional **stock** photographer seven years ago. She took photos of food, landscapes, everyday household objects and self-portraits. This is how she **honed** her craft. However, after she became a mom, she turned her eye exclusively to baby **land**. "I have two children aged four and seven. As soon as I saw my first baby, he stole my heart and inspired a new passion in me – to photograph babies who have just entered the world."

All the photographs she takes happen within a baby's first ten days. She explains the significance of this time frame. "During this period, the baby appears flawless, astonishingly beautiful in so many ways. The baby is still curled in a semi **womb**-like position, looking pure and at peace. I use my magic baby-whispering techniques to get them to sleep." "Sleeping babies are so calm and each has a unique innocence that I capture for eternity."

However, Tanis's childhood was not without photo turmoil. The last of seven girls, she noticed from a very young age there were no photos of her – except for one, taken at the age of three. Clearly, she felt **left out**. "By the time I came along, mom was too busy to take pictures of me. Having six other daughters **to tend to**, time slipped away, and with it, my baby face turned into a toddler's **sulk**." She became passionate about the fact that few parents have time to take professional pictures of their newborns. They are so busy showing the baby off, buying stuff and trying to get some sleep themselves, that the camera often takes a back seat. **Founding** her own company, called Tanis Saucier Photography, she says that like a baby, it's been growing non-stop.



Starting out as a **shoot-and-burn** photographer, she's really pleased to offer a full-service studio. "I go to the family's house to show the results, and help them select frames and even offer interior design advice as to where to hang the photos." What makes this talented and dedicated brilliant baby photographer rather exceptional herself is a simple yet powerful belief that speed and instant product result are not the way to go. "The **digital** age has replaced the hands-on **tactile** experience of enjoying portraits [that] you can hang or **gaze** endlessly at in a real album." No need to go to your computer or shove in a CD. "For me, technology is a tool to assist you in some details in the final creation, but it shouldn't be utilized as the mode to show it. I don't want anyone to rely on the digital way of the world to admire their beloved baby." Simply put, the irresistible softness of a baby is totally contrary to hardware.

Admitting there's self-interest in **specializing** in new-born portraiture, Tanis reveals her motive. "I'm done having my babies. I am 44, so this is a lovely way for me to continue to connect in a joyful way with babies and those who have brought them into the world." There are smiles all round. Even those sleeping babies look like they're holding happy secrets.

Vocabulary

to hone (verb)

to perfect

womb (noun)

organ where babies develop before birth

left-out (adj)

forgotten

to tend to (verb)

to take care of

sulk (noun)

sad or angry face; grimace

to found (verb)

to create; to establish

shoot and burn (adj)

direct photography with no editing

to gaze (verb)

to look at

to specialize (verb)

to focus on; to concentrate on

Questions

Question 1

Name the four kinds of photos that Tanis Saucier used to improve her skills.

Question 2

When did Tanis Saucier decide to photograph babies who have just entered the world?

Question 3

What two qualities does Tanis Saucier seek to capture in sleeping babies?

Question 4

How many photos does Tanis have of herself as a child?

Question 5

What are three reasons new parents rarely have professional pictures taken of their baby?

Question 6

What does Saucier believe technology can do for portraits?

Question 7

What motivates Tanis to specialize in new-born portraiture?

Answers

Answer 1

1. food
2. landscapes
3. everyday household objects
4. self-portraits

Answer 2

As soon as she saw her own first baby.

Answer 3

The qualities are calmness and unique innocence.

Answer 4

She has one photo of herself.

Answer 5

1. so busy showing off the baby
2. buying stuff
3. getting some sleep

Answer 6

It's a tool that assists in some details of the final creation.

Answer 7

It is a lovely way for her to continue to connect in a joyful way with babies and those who have brought them into the world.