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ATHENS VOICE GR COVID-19 LIVE ΕΙΔΗΣΕΙΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΣ ΓΕΥΣΗ LOOK LIFE SPORT ΖΩΔΙΑ

PODCAST GUIDE 102.5 fm ΑΚΟΥΣΤΕ ΕΔΩ LIVE

ΣΙΝΕΜΑ ΘΕΑΤΡΟ ΜΟΥΣΙΚΗ ΒΙΒΛΙΟ BOOKS ΤΕΧΝΕΣ ΦΩΤΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ ΤΗΛΕΟΡΑΣΗ COVER ART ATHENS VOICE BOOKS



ΦΩΤΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ
18.07.2021 | 22:12

Wolfgang Bernauer: Φωτογραφίζοντας τα ελληνικά χωριά

Ένας Ελβετός οφθαλμίατρος για περισσότερα από 25 χρόνια φωτογραφίζει τα ελληνικά χωριά, τα καφενεία και συνομιλεί με τους κατοίκους του Αιγαίου.

Δμοργός © Wolfgang Bernauer

Μάνος Νομικός

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Ο Wolfgang Bernauer μιλά στην ATHENS VOICE για τη σχέση του με την Ελλάδα και για το βιβλίο «My Greek Village».

«Στη Λέσβο βρήκα πολλά αυθεντικά χωριά. Τα βουνά της Πίνδου, η Αμοργός και η Κάρπαθος είναι επίσης συναρπαστικά μέρη... Οι ομοιότητες ανάμεσα στα χωριά της Πίνδου και στους οικισμούς στις ιταλόφωνες Άλπεις, στο καντόνι Τικίνο, είναι εντυπωσιακές...».

Έχουν περάσει περισσότερα από 38 χρόνια από τη στιγμή που ο Ελβετός καθηγητής οφθαλμολογίας, συγγραφέας και φωτογράφος Wolfgang Bernauer επισκέφτηκε για πρώτη φορά την Ελλάδα. Λίγα χρόνια αργότερα, η παραμονή του -κατά τα διάρκειά του Πάσχα- στο χωριό Όλυμπος της Καρπάθου θα ήταν η αρχή γέννησης ενός φωτογραφικού project που συνεχίζεται μέχρι σήμερα και πιο πρόσφατα η κυκλοφορία ενός πολυτελούς λευκώματος (2019, εκδόσεις Bildperlen), και τα δύο υπό τον τίτλο «My Greek Village» («Το Ελληνικό Μου Χωριό»). Ήταν η στιγμή που με μία κάμερα άρχισε να απαθανατίζει στιγμές και συναντήσεις με ανθρώπους της υπαίθρου, μέσα από ταξίδια σε όλη την ελληνική επικράτεια και κυρίως σε πιο απόμακρα σημεία της χώρας. Μία σχέση ζωής, πραγματικά.

Ο Wolfgang Bernauer συνομιλεί σε καφενεία και χώρους εργασίας με τους κατοίκους της υπαίθρου, των ελληνικών χωριών και των νησιών του Αιγαίου, τους τελευταίους θεματοφύλακες της ελληνικής παράδοσης, σε έναν κόσμο που διαρκώς αλλάζει.

Ο Wolfgang Bernauer, από τη Ζυρίχη της Ελβετίας, μίλησε στην ATHENS VOICE για τη σχέση του με την Ελλάδα και για το βιβλίο «My Greek Village».



Ο Wolfgang Bernauer

How did you cope with the COVID-19 pandemic? Did this pause your travels?

The COVID-19 pandemic is a serious threat to our civilisation, but it is encouraging to see that most people behave respectfully and look after people affected. There has been rapid progress in research and a fast start to the vaccination programmes. Along with my immediate family and relatives, I strictly followed the recommendations of our health authorities to protect other people and ourselves. Travelling was postponed, and a major journey to Macedonia in spring 2020 was cancelled. A new opportunity arose - the pandemic allowed me to spend time concentrating on my local photographic projects. I could make significant progress on my second big project, the portfolio "Alpine life".



Πλατεία, Αμοργός © Wolfgang Bernauer

When was the last time you visited Greece - where was that and when - and when do you plan to go back?

It was at Easter 2019 when we visited friends in Amorgos and in summer 2019 when we went sailing in the Northern Sporades.

We very much hope that safe travel is possible in September. We plan to visit our friends in Lamia and then spend some time in the Pelion and Epirus region.



Pepsi / Χίος © Wolfgang Bernauer

When was the first time you visited Greece? What did you experience on this first trip?

My very first trip to Greece was in 1983. As young students we were very much impressed with the hospitality, the authentic atmosphere in many places, the cultural heritage and – of course – the Aegean Sea. It was a four-week tour of island hopping among the most popular Cyclades.



Ρακί / Κρήτη © Wolfgang Bernauer

Why did you decide to keep coming back to Greece?

The overlap of western and eastern cultural regions is an ongoing fascination. The signs of the early Christian culture are unique. I like Greece with its traditional country life, music, literature, food, and people and these in combination with the Aegean Sea. Maybe, I am seeking Alexis Zorba's soul...



Koupeas στην Κρήτη © Wolfgang Bernauer

How was the “My Greek village” project born? Is this an ongoing project?

I had always been interested in the cultural and social life of people living in remote or rural areas. These people preserve the customs and traditions of their ancestors. I experience(d) this repeatedly in Greece and in some regions of the Alps. In these places, my photographic eye and creativity gain inspiration.

As I am interested in Christian rites and traditions, I spent several weeks at Easter time in Olymbos on Karpathos. There I was deeply moved by the overwhelming hospitality and the meditative resurrection service, but, above all, by the authentic village atmosphere. This was about 25 years ago, and there I recorded my first, rather random, encounters in a Greek village. From then on, the photographic portfolio began to grow. Systematic research and travelling followed for many years.



Κάρπαθος © Wolfgang Bernauer

The beginning of «My Greek village» was a collection of encounters with a vanishing world. Then the idea evolved to build a portfolio out of these pictures and stories. The aim was to create a remembrance of the daily life in a rural village of our parents' generation. It is this generation that experienced the biggest changes ever - mechanisation, rural exodus, the transformation from agricultural to urban society, tourism, and globalisation.

A stock of more than 5000 pictures had to undergo a careful selection process. We used the following criteria: Does the photograph tell a story? Is the atmosphere transported into the picture? Does the environment carry enough meaningful information? Is the portrait respectful? The final selection was then made in close collaboration with Christian Beck, a photo designer, who acted as art director. His expertise allowed me to develop a certain distance to my own pictures, and this helped greatly in the selection process.

Finally, in 2019, I was invited by the publisher to produce an art book entitled "My Greek village – The village as metaphor". The reception this book received was fantastic - Bronze International Creative Media Award (ICMA) London 2019, and Silver German Photo Book Prize 2020/21.

The project is continuing - new pictures, another exhibition, the sale of prints and an extended English-Greek edition of the book are planned.



Καφενείο Αλέκος στη Λέσβο © Wolfgang Bernauer

Do you see these places and people through the eyes of a photographer or is this going beyond that? What do you want to capture and show in your images?

The photographic eye is part of my personality. Every photographer is searching for ***the*** iconic picture....

A single picture that encapsulates the whole atmosphere of an encounter and meets aesthetic criteria is great. When you succeed in creating a series of such pictures, a portfolio or even a book, it is even better and you are on the brink of becoming an artist... (smile)

In my portraits I aim to capture the cultural environment and its interactions with the protagonists. In the book each image is paired with a short description of the subject, their job in the village, and their hopes and fears. As I mentioned, I wish to create a remembrance of daily life in a rural village. For centuries this traditional way of living was the only way and this contrasts greatly with life in an anonymous megacity of today. In the light of such considerations “My Greek village” may even serve as a metaphor.



Παντοπωλείο στην Αρκαδία - Πρωινός καφές, Αρκαδία © Wolfgang Bernauer

My Greek village...

... is a metaphor for an idealised place that embodies much of what we aspire to in life: interpersonal relationships, closeness, clarity, reliability, family, and identity.

.... represents the loss of many values, as we have seen and lamented in our globalised world.

... is an expression of the sorrow we feel when familiar and cherished objects, structures and rituals disappear from our lives.

... sharpens our view of the transience of established structures and gives us hope that we will succeed in handling our cultural heritage in a respectful, protective manner.

... makes us reflect on the most important, authentic values in life, because this Greek village is not just in Greece; it is a place that exists everywhere in our globalised world, a place of longing that needs to be seen and preserved, protected and defended, and a place that exists, above all, in our hearts.



Παίζοντας χαρτιά / Φωκίδα - © Wolfgang Bernauer

«Πηγή: https://www.athensvoice.gr/culture/photography/722388_wolfgang-bernauer-fotografizontas-ta-ellinika-horia»