



SILENT WATERS

GEORGE DIGALAKIS

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The sole purpose of the arts is
neither description nor imitation,
but the creation of unknown beings
from elements which are always present
but not apparent.

Raymond Duchamp - Villon

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As you set out for Ithaca
hope the voyage is a long one,
full of adventures, full of discovery.
Laistrygonians and Cyclops,
angry Poseidon - don't be afraid of them:
you'll never find things like that on your way
as long as you keep your thoughts raised high,
as long as a rare excitement
stirs your spirit and your body.
Laistrygonians and Cyclops,
wild Poseidon—you won't encounter them
unless you bring them along inside your soul,
unless your soul sets them up in front of you.

Hope the voyage is a long one.
May there be many a summer morning when,
with what pleasure, what joy,
you come into harbors seen for the first time;
may you stop at Phoenician trading stations
to buy fine things,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
sensual perfume of every kind—
as many sensual perfumes as you can;
and may you visit many Egyptian cities
to gather stores of knowledge from their scholars.

Keep Ithaca always in your mind.
Arriving there is what you are destined for.
But do not hurry the journey at all.
Better if it lasts for years,
so you are old by the time you reach the island,
wealthy with all you have gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaca to make you rich.

Ithaca gave you the marvelous journey.
Without her you would not have set out.
She has nothing left to give you now.

And if you find her poor, Ithaca won't have fooled you.
Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,
you will have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.

C.P. Cavafy "Ithaca"
Translated by Edmund Keeley/Philip Sherrard







Anyone who has walked the beach almost knows ...
the ocean, by virtue of its size and apparent emptiness,
invites attention outward from our petty landscapes,
away from ourselves.

The sea is too vast to understand and too awesome to avoid;
it attracts us as it offers a final liberation from human scale.

Robert Adams







Marshes and bogs
stutter into the open
waters of the gulf.

Even the blackbirds fly
out of land, before dropping

onto what perches
they find in all that water,
glad for a thin branch.

One blackbird finds itself
alone, out near a tip,

ready if the branch
droops too close to the water,
ready to lift

away from the uncertain
edge between land and water,

fly back into the known.

Gary S. Rosin "Blackbird in the Delta"





Fare forward, travellers! Not escaping from the past
Into different lives, or into any future;
You are not the same people who left that station
Or who will arrive at any terminus,

While the narrowing rails slide together behind you;
And on the deck of the drumming liner
watching the furrow that widens behind you,
you shall not think "the past is finished"
Or "the future is before us".

At nightfall, in the rigging and the aerial,
Is a voice descanting (though not to ear,
The murmuring shell of time, and not in any language)

Fare forward, you who think that you are voyaging;
You are not those who saw the harbour
Receding, or those who will disembark.

T.S. Eliot, "The Dry Salvages" (The Four Quartets)

















And the ragged rock in the restless waters,
Waves wash over it, fogs conceal it;

On the halcyon day it is merely a monument,
In navigable weather it is always a seamark

To lay a course by: but in the sober season
Or the sudden fury, is what it always was.

T.S. Eliot, "The Dry Salvages" (The Four Quartets)





Bare branches may sway
when you look away.

But now stand still,
Now only reach

for cloudy sky,
their tips all curled in.

Perhaps, the tree hopes
to snag the passing,

hopes to catch
a ride on a cloud,

escape the tides.

Gary S. Rosin "Lonely tree ballad"





Dawn points, and another day
Prepares for heat and silence.

Out at sea the dawn wind
Wrinkles and slides. I am here
Or there, or elsewhere. In my beginning.

T.S. Eliot, "Burnt Norton" (The Four Quartets)















Photography is an enlightening and therapeutic process that forces me to connect with my surroundings. It is also a means of self-expression and communication that doesn't fail me, and that invites others to the world as I see it.

Minimalism, both as a philosophy of art and life, has deeply influenced my work. I draw inspiration from various objects, like the sea and the sky and from my emotional response to them. It is in the simple feelings that they evoke to me—vastness, quietness, tranquility, symmetry, and balance—that I find beauty.

Modern technology allows an extensive manipulation of the image and my work relies heavily on post-processing. Reality is perceptual and through its transformation I can interpret what surrounds me and express my emotions.

I often remove colour from my images, as I find it extraneous to the essence, and focus on the main building blocks of photography: shapes, lines, forms, and tones. Furthermore, to facilitate the illustration of my vision, I add or remove parts of the image.

I favour long exposures because they allow me to introduce the dimension of time in a two dimensional medium and to create a dreamy atmosphere. To achieve this I use Neutral Density filters, often stacked on top of each other. Photographing with slow shutter speed, over a period of time, you can capture the changing world: rivers flow, clouds pass, the waves sway to and fro. The film can accumulate time, light, and events in a way elusive to the eye. The real becomes surreal.

With long exposures I can also eliminate the details from the background and highlight my main subjects, which are the constant in the shifting landscape. The water, an element I am deeply drawn to, and the sky are usually the canvas on which I place my subjects. This enables me to balance the image and satisfy my need for order, serenity, and silence. My work turns away from representation, conceptualism, and the endless search for meaning, and focuses on the wonder of beauty and simplicity.

George Digalakis was born and raised in Athens where he still lives today. An amateur photographer since 2011, he discovers and explores alternative realities, allowing him to express his inner world.

The photographs in the book have been taken in the period 2014 - 2017, in the coastal areas and lakes of Greece.

Images

09. "Winter Birds" - Composite image, 2016
11. "Birds on Ruins" - Axios Delta National Park, 2016
12. "Silent Presence" - Axios Delta National Park, 2016
13. "Fully Booked" - Composite image, 2016
15. "Sixty Shades of Grey" - Pamvotida Lake, 2015
17. "Rain Bird" - Zurich Lake, 2015
18. "Crown of Rocks" - Corfu island, 2016
19. "Silent Waters" - Spetses island, 2015
21. "Blackbird" - Axios Delta National Park, 2016
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23. "Distant Mountains" - Composite image, 2016
25. "Storm Hunter" - Athens, 2015
27. "Shine on you Crazy Diamond" - Composite image 2014
29. "Time after Time" - Composite image, 2015
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32. "Shelter" - Toulida, Missolonghi Lagoon, 2015
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51. "Feel the Silence" - Composite Image, 2014
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55. "Illustration of Dreams" - Composite Image, 2016
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