



The essence of a place – Beniamino Pisati, 2017 #SWPA

By Matthew Oxley | 1 year ago



© Beniamino Pisati, Italy, Shortlist, Open, Culture, 2017 Sony World Photography Awards

“Photography to me is the need to tell a story about a place. I want to convey the essence of a place, so to bring the viewer right there,

to make him smell it's fragrances, hear the noises and experience sensations."

Beniamino Pisati, a professional freelance photographer born in Milan, is shortlisted in the Open Travel category of the 2017 Sony World Photography Awards.

Hi Ben. Tell us about you and your photography

My themes are usually places that I decide to visit by chance. I am driven to visit them by the desire of my heart. There is no logic. My aim is to witness the connection between man and nature, the ancient synergy where the earth provides us with sustenance. Unfortunately nowadays people tend to forget this intimate relation. That is why some of my workshops deal with Cashmere, Tobacco production in Cuba; Norwegian dry cod; some of the most iconic European types of wine and cheese production from my own valley (in the Northern Italian Alps).



Portrait at Mongol herder with his cashmere goats. Mongolia - © Beniamino Pisati



The beach of St. Finian's Bay. County Kerry, Ireland - © Beniamino Pisati

Tell us more about your successful image 'Georgian baptism'

This picture was taken in Tbilisi, Georgia, while I was waiting for a group of students who were due to arrive the next day. I decided to take a tour of the city and as I walked in this Orthodox Church I came across a baptism. I immediately noticed the light and the "cine graphic" background. It was a very intimate moment in one of the corners of the church. Although the Priest didn't want me to take any pictures, the family smiled at me, so I felt entitled to take a few shots.

After few days I have developed the picture in Lightroom. I decided to go back to the church and find the priest to give him the picture for that family. He smiled at me when I showed him the photo from my phone, and thanks to an interpreter, I forwarded the image to his Facebook account. Still today I don't know if this photo ever arrived to the orthodox family.

In photography luck plays an important role, so I think I was very lucky to catch the right moment, when the baby expresses his fear and the family members their trepidation. This is what makes the picture meaningful.



Fisherman over Galata Bridge, on the background Süleymaniye Mosque. Istanbul, Turkey - © Beniamino Pisati

What is your approach to travel photography? How do stand out from the rest?

Photography to me is the need to tell a story about a place. I want to convey the essence of a place, so to bring the viewer right there, to make him smell it's fragrances, hear the noises and experience sensations. To do so I need several elements, some of them are accidental some of them are planned. Sometimes I am driven by the idea of a place that I have never seen before. This is my starting point. And then it becomes the criteria through which I choose my subjects. Sometimes I need to free myself from prejudice in order not to miss the concept of the whole. The perfection is in between.

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