

...Ahmet Ertuğ reveals himself as a photographer who is capable of more than just capturing the moment: he directs our view of history. That he uses more than just light and colour for this shall be seen in the example of European opera and music house opulence

Perhaps a Japanese experience influenced the photographic work of Ahmet Ertuğ: temples may only appear correct if they are, materially speaking, new and fresh – Kyoto's restorers must possess the oldest workshops in the world, some more than eight hundred years old. The material tradition is less important here than the ideal, even if the quality must be the finest available at the time of execution. This certainly applies to Ahmet Ertuğ and his photographic books: The images represent the view of an age, the books are long-lasting products and therefore culturally sustainable, exhibitions of photography serve as a better awareness of the true world. Ahmet Ertuğ is a true exponent of history in stories; in his individual images just as in the context of his exhibitions, portfolios and books. His route from the Orient to the Modern Age was dictated by a view to preservation, initially leaving his own architectural and civil-planning modernity in doubt. That this view itself would become a historic moment; that the books and their images would themselves make history, could not have been anticipated by Ahmet Ertuğ at the outset. Now, after a quarter of a century and over twenty books on historic themes, he is finally able, in Palaces of Music, to capture the most up-to-date objects as he is able to predict their going down in history. He is now able to look back on each picture – and we with him – and find his own history reflected within. He furthermore represents the progression of photographic history and its social acceptance as art. Ahmet Ertuğ has become one of the greatest of his kind. One final aspect of the story seems worth mentioning: as long as Ahmet Ertuğ continues to work as architect and photographer, the United Nations World Cultural Heritage agreement will continue to exist. Unlike any other photographer, Ahmet Ertuğ has implemented the

intentions of this agreement. Whichever theme he chooses for his photography, whatever he turns into a series of stunning images – the objects of his curiosity inevitably become part of the world's cultural heritage. His vision, his images stand for the independence of the recognition of Eurocentric history; they guarantee a post-colonial glimpse of that which is worth preserving in the world. Ahmet Ertuğ is not just an active contemporary of the world cultural heritage – his work has become part of this cultural heritage itself.

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