

## STATEMENT

As a child, I used to spend my summers in Crete, an island that, at the time, was completely unaffected by mass tourism. It is in such settings that I find inspiration — in my emotional response to the landscape, and especially the sea, the sky, and the myriad of ways in which they change under different lighting or weather conditions. I find beauty in their vastness, quietness, tranquility, and balance. And I try to express this beauty through photography and, in the process, invite others to see the world through my eyes.

I am inspired by an idealized nature, which suits my melancholic and introverted character; a nature without any distracting elements, serene, and beautiful, born from my love of silence and solitude. This sense of order, in whatever form it takes, acts as a shield against the unpredictability and chaos of the real world. An object, like a tree or a rock, encountered in my daily life, a piece of literature I have read, or even a dream can trigger the initial concept of a work. And while I photograph ordinary subjects, it is often things that we don't notice as we go about our busy lives. I hope that my images, by attracting people's attention, can push them to really look at the inconspicuous and discover beauty.

Minimalism, both as a philosophy of art and life, has deeply influenced my work. The point of my art has never been to represent reality, but to reduce its complexity and clarify it. To do this, I utilize a lot of negative space to leave the eye no choice but to experience the main theme along with all the unused space — and this can often create a meditative experience. My work turns away from representation, conceptualism, and the endless search for meaning, and focuses on the wonder of beauty and simplicity.

Water, an element I deeply love, can be found in most of my works, although never as their central theme. Rather, the water and the sky are used as a canvas on which the subjects are placed, while fog and clouds infuse the presence of some of nature's elements into that negative space.

Further, I favor long exposure because it allows me to introduce the dimension of time in a two dimensional medium and to create a dreamy atmosphere in the sky and the water, but, at the same time, a surreal feeling. 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. Long Exposure also allows me to remove details from the image and achieve the minimalistic appearance I am after. But to do any of this, I must slow down and deeply observe the world around me.

I also remove color 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. The black and white establishes a dream-like and classical quality — and while it already is a step away from reality, I often go even further, adding or removing parts of the image. My work relies heavily on post-processing. Reality is perceptual and through its transformation I can interpret what surrounds me, express my emotions, and create a new world.

When people look at my images, I want them to forget their problems and experience feelings alike those borne from reading a poem. And while I am often asked for a statement on my photographs, meaning is subjective, and each person should be unconstrained by explanations and allowed to experience something different from the same picture. On the other hand, if I can convey my feelings of immensity, peacefulness, and wonder about life and nature, then I have successfully communicated my inner world to someone else.