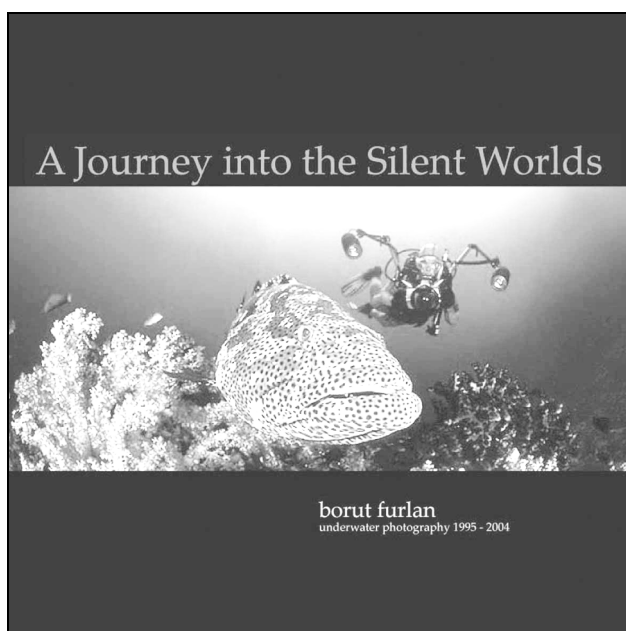


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REVIEWS

Borut Furlan: A JOURNEY INTO THE SILENT WORLDS
Didakta d.o.o., Radovljica, 2006

The words written in the book *A Journey into the Silent Worlds* probably tells us more about its author, the underwater photographer Borut Furlan, than I can possibly utter in this short review. Namely, Borut says the following: "The underwater casing. Every single time I get hold of it, I am seized by irrepresible love towards it, by a very special respectful relationship, almost is if touching a relic, the Holy Grail."

It is only a man with this kind of attitude towards the equipment and everything that he does with it that can reach perfection in this technique. In underwater photography this of course holds true incomparably more than in land photography, considering that under water you cannot rectify any mistakes, change films, batteries, lenses and other trifling things that are, on the land, something completely obvious and the matter of plain routine. Apart from this, it can be a single inadvertence, a small foreign particle on the O-ring that seals the housing, which can not only spoil your dive but also destroy the camera and flash at the same time. The weight of the equipment and restricted air as well as all other technical details of diving are additional factors that often spoil the underwater photographer's joy.



Underwater photography thus demands a strict planning of everything that the photographer intends to shoot in a short, limited time. To make a top-notch photograph, to freeze an unrepeatable moment into eternity, to be in the right place at the right time, all this is difficult for any photographer, but even more so for the underwater photographer. Without professional attitude and extreme devotion to what you do, a top achievement is only a wish that will evade you on and on and at all times.

Borut is no doubt one of the very few non-professionals, but lives and works precisely in the way he would if he was a professional photographer. The supreme underwater photography, presented in his monograph – the first of this kind in Slovenia – is therefore not the fruit of fortuitousness, luck or merely numerous hours spent under the surface of the sea, but the result of a complete mastery of diving, the equipment in which he has been investing for not only years but decades, and of perfecting his own photography technique at the same time. It is the fruit of experience and knowledge, which through years gradually transformed into top-class photographs. All this would of course not have been possible without a trifle of luck and interlacement of circumstances, which enabled him to make many a perfect shot, although we could say that there are photographs in this book that have been made owing to the very lack of this same luck and interlacement of favourable circumstances. It is only work, self-sacrifice and Borut's devotion to the sea and its inhabitants that enable us to delight in leafing through the author's "Silent Worlds". In them, he takes us from the well known underwater landscapes of the Adriatic and the Mediterranean, through tropical Caribbean and Indo-Pacific corral reefs, to the cold and dark waters of the Norwegian fjords. But wherever we are, we witness some incredible and almost panoramic pictures of underwater landscapes, wrapped in the deep blueness of the sea, their inhabitants and incredible forms and patterns of various living beings, which the author conjures up with a considered composition and an exceptional feeling for the underwater setting.

The book is indubitably also a great achievement as far as its design is concerned. It may be interesting that the presented photographs were chosen, from a true multitude of them, by the book's designer and not its author. Although I believe that the selection by the author himself would have been probably different and possibly even better, it has to be admitted that with the selection of photographs, which are highly concordant in terms of colour and composition, a more than suitable objective has been achieved by her, the designer. The number of published photographs themselves, size, paper and the quality of print are also such as becoming for the book of this type. The only minor deficiency perhaps lies in the selection of colour and size of the letters, which could be larger, more contrasting and thus

easier readable for all of us who can no longer boast hawk eyes.

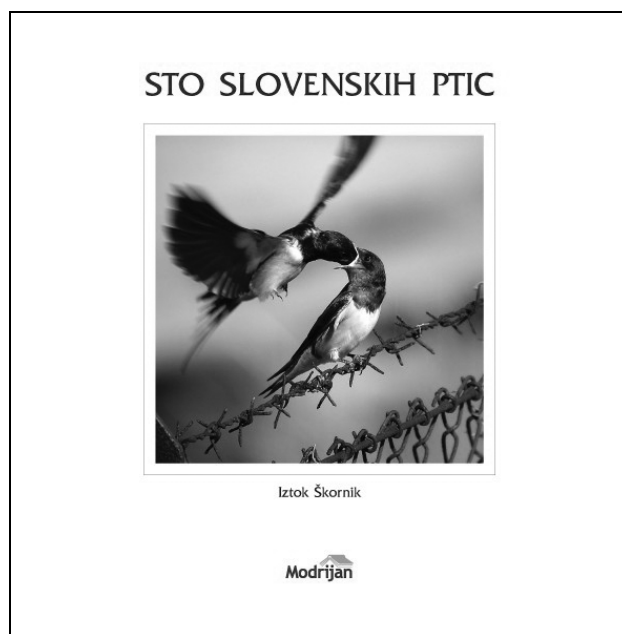
Borut Furlan's monograph *The Silent Worlds* was published by Didakta Publishing House, which deserves all the praise for its decision to tackle this undoubtedly highly demanding and, for the Slovene circumstances, unique project.

Plunge into *The Silent Worlds* and enjoy yourselves in them.

Tom Turk

Iztok Škornik: *STO SLOVENSKIH PTIC*
Založba Modrijan, Ljubljana, 2006, 263 str.

V začetku oktobra 2006 je v okviru založbe Modrijan izšla knjiga koprskega ornitologa Iztoka Škornika. Gre za lično oblikovano monografijo, ki nam predstavlja stotero portretov ptic, posnetih pretežno s tako imenovano digiskopsko tehniko. Pri tej tehniki fotografiramo ptice skozi teleskop za opazovanje ptic z digitalnim fotoaparatom. Prednosti tovrstne tehnike so velike, saj lahko pridemo hitro do velikega števila posnetkov, ne da bi pri tem motili ptice. Ni naključje, da je ravno Iztok Škornik prvi izdal takšno knjigo. V Sloveniji je bil namreč med prvimi ornitologi, ki so začeli fotografirati z digiskopsko tehniko, svoje izkušnje pa je redno opisoval na spletnih straneh v Sloveniji in Evropi ter veliko obetajočim fotografskim navdušencem v obliki tečajev. Po drugi strani pa je bil že čas, da svoje vedenje in izkušnje preoblikuje v pisano besedo. V knjigi tako opisuje sto slovenskih ptic iz 18 redov, med katerimi je velika večina močvirskih oz. vodnih ptic. Med njimi so tudi nekatere, ki se v Sloveniji pojavljajo zelo poredkoma (npr. plamenec in klavžar). Vsakega od teh redov opiše, temu sledi opis izbranih vrst iz posameznega reda. Besedilo je dovolj strokovno in tekoče berljivo. Ponuja splošni opis vrste in osnovne podatke o njeni biologiji. Avtor sam priznava, da ni želel narediti priročnika za ptice, ampak knjigo fotografij. Zasnovo knji-



ge je torej zgradil na fotografskem gradivu, ki mu je dodal besedilo, in ne obratno, kakor običajno poteka nastajanje knjige. Treba je priznati, da so v knjigi res izjemne fotografije. Več kot polovico izvrstnih fotografij je avtor prispeval sam, druge pa 15 domačih in tujih ornitologov.

Knjiga je posebna z več vidikov. Gre za prvo tovrstno knjigo fotografij ptic, fotografije v njej so večinoma nastale z digiskopsko tehniko, nenazadnje pa je nenavaden tudi format.

V knjigi je avtor združil svoje ornitološko vedenje, fotografske veščine in oblikovni posluš. Delo je Škornikov knjižni prvenec, sicer pa ima avtor v svojem strokovnem opusu kar nekaj strokovnih del s področja ornitologije. Smiselno bi bilo pričakovati, da bo knjižni prvenec kmalu dobil bratce in sestre.

Lovrenc Lipej