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## Press Release

### **A Balkan Tale**

5 Photographers, 50 Monuments, 1 Balkan Tale

**Opening: Thursday, 9 February 2012, 19.00**

Bath House of the Winds, Museum of Greek Folk Art  
Kyrristou 8, Plaka, Athens, Greece

**Exhibition duration:** 10/2 – 8/4/2012

#### **Parallel Event**

Presentation of 'A BALKAN TALE' and screening of the documentary "Silent Balkans"  
Goethe Institut Athen, Omirou 14-16, Friday 10/02, at 20.30

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#### **THE PROJECT**

Recent data indicates that the cultural heritage of the Ottoman Era in the Balkans is greatly threatened, as over 98% of existing Ottoman period buildings have been destroyed. Furthermore, historians have established a link between the use of history and the potential of interethnic violence in the region.

A Balkan Tale aims to stimulate public discourse about the history of the region and to contribute to public access to and the preservation of its cultural heritage.

It consists of a traveling photography exhibition, accompanied by parallel events (educational programmes, documentary screenings, catalogue, the recreation of Ottoman period sounds and smells). A Balkan Tale is a Goethe-Institut project, produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. It is produced by Anemon, in partnership with the Museum of Greek Folk Art and over ten Balkan NGOs. Prof. Christina Koulouri is the senior historical advisor, while a series of established historians are also participating, including Mark Mazower.

#### **THE EXHIBITION**

The traveling photography exhibition "A Balkan Tale" opens in Athens, on 9 February. Leading contemporary photographers from the West Balkans (Athens, Tirana, Skopje, Prizren and Belgrade) have created images of Ottoman period monuments with a contemporary perspective. The photographs include the most important mosques, churches, public baths, aqueducts, houses, bridges and poor houses in each country, capturing each building's unique historical features as well as its current state.

Guided by the region's finest historians, the exhibition re-examines the significance that this common history has for us today. At the same time, the exhibition challenges us to look beyond our national boundaries and to explore our common Balkan history.

#### **VENUES**

The exhibition will be shown in Athens, Belgrade, Pristina, Skopje, Tirana, Brussels and Germany.

#### **PUBLICATION**

A publication in English will accompany the exhibition. It includes the exhibition photographs, which are accompanied by historical texts about the Ottoman Empire and the monuments.

#### **INTERNET SITE** [www.balkantale.com](http://www.balkantale.com)

An interactive map will allow visitors, teachers and schoolchildren to look at each monument and

explore its history and current status. This virtual map will encourage tourism and the protection of these buildings as well as becoming an indispensable knowledge base for further research. The site will be in English, German, Serbian, Albanian, Slavo-Macedonian and Greek.

### DOCUMENTARY FILM

A 30 min documentary will be included in the exhibition. The film will look at life in the Ottoman Empire and will be downloadable free of charge from the internet site. The Film will also be broadcast by SKAI TV, on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of the Balkan Wars (2012).

### EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The exhibition includes educational programmes in six languages for children. The programmes aim are to encourage schoolchildren to learn more about the lives of the peoples of the Balkans from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and to encourage interest in protecting the cultural heritage of their region.

### PERFUMES OF THE OTTOMAN PERIOD

The exhibition will also guide visitors through the perfumes of the Ottoman era. Visitors will travel across time through the smells of jasmine, rose, laurel and mastic - perfumes rooted in the centuries, which remain popular and relevant to us today (perfume advisor: Orestis Davias, biologist and author / with the support of *mastihashop*).

### PARALLEL EVENT

Goethe-Institut Athen, Omirou 14-16, Friday 10/02, at 20.30

Presentation of 'A BALKAN TALE' and screening of the documentary "Silent Balkans", in the presence of the organizers of the project, historian Christina Koulouri and photographer Kamillo Nollas. Coordinated by journalist Sofia Papaioannou.

**Photos at your disposal here:** <http://gallery.me.com/leonidas76/100219>

Username: **press**, Password: **balkan**



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