

The Daily Photo

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Daily images of Gutenberg's city on the internet by New Zealander John Burland

Anyone who has lived in Klein-Winternheim for 33 years qualifies as a Klein-Winternheimer, right? He's a Mainzer, too. And a New Zealander. When he's in his Pacific homeland, people pick up on an accent - "You must be from away," they'll say. Wherever the 63-year-old goes, the camera he packs helps him to see things from a new perspective and to focus on the neglected and obscure. Also in his adopted hometown of Mainz. Ergo, joining an internet community that documents the life of cities day by day was an obvious move. There, you'll find impressions from Jakarta and Phoenix, from Auckland and London, photos from Vancouver and Bucharest, Tokyo and Miami. John Burland provides the Mainz image.

The Mainz Daily Photo.

Every day.

This doesn't mean that the man who for years travelled the globe for Lufthansa is no longer infected with the travel bug and doesn't venture far from Rheinhessen. He still travels regularly to New Zealand and has a deal with local photographers, posting daily images from there. His Mainz fans just have to be patient and tolerate a brief artistic break.

"Initially, it was the discipline" he replies when asked why he decided to start photographing an image a day and posting it on the internet for the whole world to see. Capturing an instant in time that reflects life in Gutenberg's city. Not just snapshots, though - he aspires to take good pictures. "I don't think I'm entirely untalented," says the former Key Account Manager. Even a cheap camera will take good images if the person behind the camera has an eye for them, says Burland, who always has his iPhone, a Panasonic point-and-shoot or a Nikon with him.

He's inquisitive by nature. About the city where he's lived for over three decades, about the people he's met there, about buildings with history. John Burland wants to hear the stories that the "Mainzer" have to tell. That's why he looks for details, using his camera's lens to get in close.

Researching history

What are the origins of the massive bronze panels at the Gutenberg Museum? How were they made and why did they for a time end up stored among concrete slabs in a building material depot? John Burland doesn't just take a picture, posts it on the internet and immediately starts looking for an idea for tomorrow's picture. He wants to uncover the story behind the picture - he enjoys researching. He contacted Karl-Heinz Krause, the artist commissioned by the city with creating the bronze panels for the entrance of the Gutenberg Museum. "No one knew anything about the panels," says Burland, who took something that appeared to have been forgotten and gave it new exposure. He doesn't just want to learn more about Mainz, but also to give his blog readers more than just a pretty picture. His images and text form a unit - sometimes a photo speaks for itself, so he'll post it without comment. But sometimes he has a text in his head, a play on words or a line from a Beatles song, for example, and finds a matching image.

John Burland won't get bored with Mainz. He enjoys returning to his favourite spots and discovering new details, strolling across the market or walking down the Augustinerstrasse. He wants to show "the other Mainz" - a city that's more than just a cathedral, Gutenberg and "Weck, Worscht und Woi". The "Daily Photo" is addictive and he can't quit. "There are still many stories to tell" says John Burland.

He unveils a new one every day.