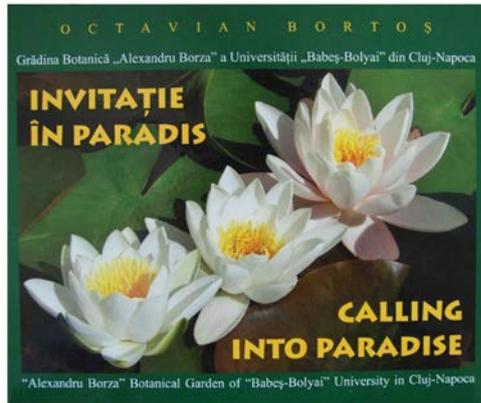


Contribuții Botanice – 2011, XLVI: 132
Grădina Botanică “Alexandru Borza”
Cluj-Napoca

BOOK REVIEW



BORTOȘ Octavian, 2011 – *Calling into Paradise* – “Alexandru Borza” Botanical Garden of “Babeș-Bolyai” University in Cluj-Napoca, Ed. PROART 21, Cluj-Napoca, 320 pp.

In actual fact, the author invites us into a paradise of plant diversity, colours and shapes, skillfully caught by the artistic photographer’s eye and conveyed to us by a quality of printing worthy of the beginning of this century. Because no one knows what the real Paradise looks like, we accept the tempting formulation, hoping that all those who will step into the alleys of the “garden of the five continents” will behave as if in the long-expected Paradise and not so much as if in a public park!

Dedicated to the memory of the late academician Alexandru Borza (1887–1971), and also to the celebration of 90 years from the laying of the foundation stone of this facet of the well-known “Babeș-Bolyai” University, this book is, as the editor states, *an album and not a guide* to our botanical garden. An album in which the images speak for themselves and make the reader wish to see and see again what the artistic photographer has immortalized.

Through the words of the daughter of the founder of this botanical garden, Prof. Dr Viorica Lascu, and of its *éminence grise*, Dr. Felician Micle, the reader receives essential information on both the history and the organization of this pearl of Cluj. The entire text is presented in both Romanian and English, being reduced to what is strictly necessary in order to be understood by the public.

The 307 photographs are grouped according to the season, starting with “*Summer harmonies*”, which seems to emphasize the present maturity of the Botanical Garden, continuing with “*Autumn palette*”, “*Winter pastel*”, and ending with “*Invitation of spring*”.

What can possibly be more tempting than such an invitation?!

A series of images bears the scientific and popular names of the respective species, but many of them have evocative titles, given by the author: “*miracle of life*”, “*fascination of botanical discoveries*”, “*ephemeral sadness*”, “*lacustrian architecture*”, “*symphony of winter mornings*”, “*friendship bridge*”, etc.

Recommending the book to all lovers of beauty, we hope that this will be a real “friendship bridge”, a bridge between generations, between the citizens of the planet, a bridge between us and the nature that gave us birth and supports our life.

We express our thanks to the author, who had the idea and the patience to gather these images into an exceptional book that deserves a place in any beauty lover’s library; our thanks also go to the “Babeș-Bolyai” University Rectorate for the financial support given to this publication, as well as for all the constant and unconditional assistance they have provided us.

Vasile CRISTEA