

An Artist in the Arctic - 1



One photograph changed Hoshino Michio's life. One day when he was a university student, he was looking at a book about Alaska. A photograph of a small village surrounded by wilderness caught his attention.

Michio wanted to visit that place for himself. So, he wrote a letter to the mayor of the village. It took six months for Michio's dream to come true. The mayor invited Michio to Alaska.

For one summer, Michio lived with the Inuit people in that Alaskan village. He learned about Inuit food, family life, and culture. As well as skills for living outside of cities.

The Inuit have to hunt for meat, and gather berries for food. The humans and animals shared the land. Michio also became a part of the Alaskan wilderness.

Questions & Answers

- 1: What did Michio see in a book?
- 2: What did Michio do one summer?
- 3: How do the Inuit get food?

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After he finished university in Japan, Michio travelled around Alaska as a photographer. He often camped in severe weather to photograph wild animals. Michio used the skills the Inuit taught him. Once he wrote about flying to the tundra to photograph caribou. He was there alone for one month. When the plane left he felt lonely, but also incredibly free.

Michio tried to show this freedom in his photographs. He took playful photographs of polar bears and majestic photographs of Arctic mountains.

However, in 1996 while he camped alone in Kamchatka he was killed by a bear. "We only have one life to live," wrote Michio. He seemed truly happy as a photographer. He loved his work and Alaska.

Questions & Answers

- 1: What did Michio do when he finished university?
- 2: What type of photographs did Michio take?
- 3: What happened in 1996?

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In Michio's photographs, the beauty of Alaska will stay with us forever. That is the magic of photographs. However, because of global warming the Alaskan wilderness is changing.

Arctic glaciers are melting. The polar bears and seals cannot hunt for food. The caribou habitat is growing smaller. Inuit are also losing their traditional way of life.

The Alaskan wilderness was special to Michio. He showed us the importance of life on the Earth. Perhaps his photographs will change someone's life.

Maybe Michio's photographs will encourage us to think about the beautiful Earth we share.

Questions & Answers

- 1: What is the magic of photographs?
- 2: What is global warming doing?
- 3: What do Michio's photographs show us?