

The Aphrodite Inheritance

One thing is clear: Michael Bird loves Greek mythology and beautiful islands. This fact is confirmed by his series "Who pays the ferryman" which took place in Crete.

It is further emphasized in his most recent work "The Aphrodite Inheritance" which was filmed in Cyprus and the inheritance of the Greek goddess of beauty will undoubtedly attract a large number of viewers considering the popularity of the ferryman. This series attracted four million viewers who gave it high marks, 7.8, which is unusual for a television series.

Whether or not Bird's latest work will be more or even as greatly appreciated remains to be seen. In England the series centred around Aphrodite was less successful whereas Bird's first series "The Lotus Eaters", which strangely enough was never aired in the Netherlands, had an even bigger impact.

The story for the Lotus Eaters came to Bird while in Ibiza and was his original choice as location for the series but the weather conditions were unsuitable so it was re-located to Crete.

The story was filmed in the village of Agios Nikolaos in Crete and as a result of the success of the series in England many Brits spend their holidays in this small town. One of these tourists told Michael Bird that he had fought with the resistance in Crete during the war and that this was the first time he had returned to the island. Bird based "Who pays the ferryman?" on this story. This series was such a great success, that according to Bird, the public was practically screaming out for a third Bird series.

Adventure

For Bird the greatest disadvantage of filming on a Greek island were the ever increasing costs. The great BBC were unable to finance a new series on their own so Bird, who had chosen Cyprus as the location, came up with the idea of asking the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation to co-finance the production. The Cypriots were interested and asked Bird if he had a story for the new series to which he unjustly replied "Yes, I do." He would come and tell them about it in person. According to Bird he only came up with an idea for a story at a height of twelve kilometres in a plane on its way to Cyprus. So when he met up with the television authorities cum money lenders, he was able to paint a picture for an exciting new television series.

Murder

"The Aphrodite Inheritance" eventually consisted of eight episodes in which the main character, David Collier, receives the news one day that his brother has been involved in a serious car accident. He flies to Cyprus immediately but on arrival he hears that his brother has died. During the course of his stay in Cyprus however, he becomes more and more convinced that his brother did not die in a car accident but was murdered. As the local police do not seem to trust

him and he in turn has little faith in the law enforcement on the island, he decides to take over the task of tracking down the perpetrator and providing evidence that his brother was indeed murdered.

Cast

The part of David Collier, the main character in the series, is portrayed by Peter McEnery. As usual in Bird's series, he is joined by a beautiful Greek actress, in this case Alexandra Bastedo. The typical English actor Brian Blessed (Tiberius in "I Claudius") can be seen as a typical Cypriot, the sixty year old Basileos. The part of police inspector Dimas is played by Godfrey James. The series will be aired by the AVRO every Monday starting on the 12th of November, with the exception of the 21st of December.

**Translated from Dutch to English by Anna Pereboom
for the Michael J Bird Tribute Website**

<http://www.mjbird.org.uk>