

by Evelin Ilves

Eesti Naine is 90 years old. In Western culture 90 is often a considerable number – certainly to people, but in many other cases, too. But in many parts of Asia, for example, the thinking's quite the reverse.

In the cultural traditions of the Japanese geishas, women only grow more beautiful the older they get. It's the young women who have to wear make-up to conceal their inexperience from prying eyes. You won't find a trace of make-up on older faces – it's the wisdom and experience that comes with life that makes them ever more beautiful and captivating. To show all this with no embellishment is a gift, an honour and a joy at one and the same time.

This, to me, is exactly what's happened with Eesti Naine. The older it gets, the more it has to say and the bolder it becomes. We've spent quite a number of open-minded, enchanting and really rather close years together. I hope we've enriched each other's lives equally. To my mind inspiration is the most beautiful gift you can give someone, and I'm very grateful for it. I'm also grateful for the opportunity I've been given to inspire others.

Stay beautiful and grow only more so, Eesti Naine – and all Estonian women! And if sometimes it seems that beauty's abandoned you, remember the words of

The Little Prince

: "The

house

, the

stars

, the

desert

– what gives them their beauty is something that is

invisible

!" Sooner or later, however, what is invisible becomes visible to all.