

Underwater Photography



A web magazine
Jan/Feb 2005

Inon D2000
Nexus/Nikon D70
Fantasea Nikon D70
Ikelite/Olympus 5050

Libor Spacek
Tsunami
Yap's critter hunt
Tasik Ria and KBR

Photocolour Kit
Shooting blue
Nudibranchs
Hans Haas book



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Cover photo by Libor Spacek

Editorial

Tsunami

So much has been written about this awful disaster which has brought death and destruction to such a vast beautiful area and I have little to add except to publish a first hand account by Jason Heller later in this issue.

It brings home the shock of deep fear, the sudden realisation of life threatening vulnerability on an ocean we have all felt was our second home. A place for adventure, enjoyment and productivity in the company of like minded souls. Yet such beauty is capable of such savage cruelty brought about by forces so far away whose power is unimaginable and whose effect seems so cold and merciless.

I hope like me you have donated whatever you can to help the rescue operation. Personally I chose The Disaster Emergency Committee www.dec.org but if there are any UwP readers who have not found the time to donate due to festive holiday commitments I urge you to do so.

www.dec.org.uk
www.google.com/tsunami_relief.html

UwP is back in sync

“Hi Pete,
Merry x-mas and a happy new year from down under. Now that’s out of the way, where is our bloody presents?? Got a twitch, goin’ stir crazy, need something to read!! Stop holding back on us you pommy bludger, where’s our magazine?? Too late, need medication!”

Bruce
(Australian)

UwP junkies (well the one above) have been e mailing me to complain that they’re not getting their regular supply of UwP crack.

It’s true we’ve skipped a beat in terms of publication dates and this was mainly to bring publication dates back in line with the calendar year. It also occurred whilst I and Deb Fugitt (in separate locations!) were overseas, away from internet access, and were unable to upload during December.

Anyway, UwP is back on track now and in harmony with the calendar year.

Calm down, Bruce. UwP is here. There, there. Everythings going to be OK.

Live and learn

To be honest, it was the last thing I expected to see and I hope I never to see it again.

I was at 20 metres in the Red Sea trying out a new video housing which I had built for my Sony PDX-10 widescreen camcorder. The housing was polycarbonate so I could see all of the controls in the housing and I had housed a separate 5.6” widescreen external monitor powered by a home made 12v battery pack installed in the main housing.

All was going well for about 15 minutes into the dive but then the monitor screen suddenly went blank. My initial response was to assume that I had not fully charged the separate battery pack but, when I looked down into the main housing, it was rapidly filling up with smoke! The home made battery pack was shorting out and generating a great deal of heat and smoke.

As the horror sank in I watched in fear as the battery pack actually started to catch fire and a small blue flame formed at the rear of the pack.

At this stage I envisaged the whole lot catching fire taking my PDX-10 with it but fortunately the flame died down but the smoke continued to fill the housing.

At this stage the cost of saving my camcorder outweighed my own

life as I surfaced rapidly and then realised I didn’t know the signal for “My video housing is on fire”. Luckily the RIB driver sensed my unease and was quickly on the scene. His English was as limited as my Egyptian but we both spoke a universal language when, in the safety of the RIB, I opened the housing back and enough smoke came out to send smoke signals to all boats in the area if I had had a towel and a knowledge of the smoke signal alphabet.

With the battery pack unplugged and removed from the housing the danger had been averted but it left me with a depleted sense of confidence to use the system again so I concentrated on still pictures for the rest of the trip.

Upon returning home I set about building a new battery pack which now has so much insulation it would pass any safety test. However the thought of this sort of thing reoccurring underwater has made me very, very wary.

Fortunately my confidence has now been restored as I have come up with the ultimate solution.

I have now modified the housing and fitted a remote controlled fire extinguisher.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

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News, Travel & Events

Digital Jam Grand Cayman January 2005

Calling all digital underwater photographers. Fed up with winter? Would you rather be enjoying a week of photographic diving on Grand Cayman's reefs and wrecks? Do you want the chance to win over \$20000 in prizes? Then this is what you have been waiting for! And you only have to wait until the last week of January.

Three of Grand Cayman's top dive operators, have joined up with Dive Chronicles Magazine to offer an exclusive week of digital photography with over \$20,000 in prizes to be awarded! Plus we're talking world class diving here, with awesome photo opportunities and diving especially geared towards photography. Clinics for your images and talks on digital photographic techniques will be held at each of the participating properties during the week, with an Awards cocktail party on Friday Evening on January 28th, 2005.

UWP Contributor, Dr Alex Mustard will be hosting Digital Jam at Compass Point/Ocean Frontiers to offer interactive workshops. Alex said "This is going to be a great event! I am



so pleased that I am based at the East End, where the island's best diving is! Digital Jam is not a photo-class. I will not be telling people that they must use this lens, this aperture and only photograph this sponge. It is about organizing diving specifically to help photographers get the images they want. I will be giving three lectures during the week to fill photographers with both the ideas and theory that they need to experiment and create exciting images."

Alex is a prolific contributor to UWP Magazine, known for sharing

all the secrets behind his images. And don't forget that Alex is also a marine biologist, and his unique insight into Grand Cayman's marine life will be a great benefit to all the participants in the Digital Jam.

If you are interested in participating in Digital Jam please contact Ocean Frontiers as soon as possible, there are a few spaces left.

Contact the dive centre directly:

lesley@oceanfrontiers.com

www.oceanfrontiers.com

Oregon Coast Digital Center

The Oregon Coast Digital Center is an enhanced learning center featuring in-depth digital classes. Jack and Sue Drafaahl have taken their 30 years of photographic experience and designed a work environment to help students better understand the digital realm. They provide personalized instruction on digital editing and specialized digital photography topics.

Through personalized attention during an intense three day workshop, the specific needs and goals of each student is addressed. At the Digital Center, their goal is to work directly with each student on their own images, instilling proper editing techniques so they will feel competent in their efforts when they return home.

The Oregon Coast Digital Center is located in the quiet community of Cape Meares, just outside Tillamook, Oregon and about 70 miles due west of Portland. The facility itself is within walking distance of the Pacific Ocean which makes it great for beachcombing.

www.oregoncoastdigitalcenter.com

Aquanauts Grenada



Aquanauts Grenada dive center is just steps from the rooms at True Blue Bay Resort and fully operational with two large dive boats, nitrox fill station, digital photo studio, plenty of room for guest equipment and a large amount of rental gear. Aquanauts also offers free shuttle services from hotels around the Grand Anse area.

Fortunately Grenada's dive sites were not effected by the storm and experienced divers might explore the wreck of the cruise liner "Bianca C" or of the mine sweeper "King Mitch", while beginners enjoy the beauty of such dive sites as "Veronica" or "Japanese Garden".

Grenada's Nature has also recovered thanks to some good rains in November, the hills are lush and green again, flowers are everywhere. Most of the tourist attractions are open and visitors may hike to a water fall, explore the old forts, rum factories or spice plantations. www.aquanautsrenada.com

Linda Pitkin exhibition at The Deep, Hull, UK Jan 10th - April 2005

The Deep, Hull's £45.5m Millennium Commission lottery project, is hosting an exhibition of underwater photography by Linda Pitkin. This exhibition will feature a selection of her stunning images of marine animals and scenes from tropical and temperate waters around the world.

Linda Pitkin is an internationally acclaimed underwater photographer and was included in the Women Divers Hall of Fame in 2003.

The exhibition is free of charge, open daily 10am - 6pm from January 10th to April 2005, and is located around the third floor café and Observatory Cafe of The Deep.

Linda's exhibition pictures are being made by the Giclée method, renowned for superior quality, intensity of colour, and longevity. Signed and numbered editions of these fine art prints will be available to order at The Deep or by contacting Linda Pitkin.

E mail L.Pitkin@nhm.ac.uk and website www.lindapitkin.net

Young Underwater Photographer Award

Ocean Optics is proud to announce that their very own Dan Beecham has won the Our World-Underwater Young Underwater Photographer Award at the prestigious Antibes International Underwater Film Festival. The monetary Award, sponsored by Rolex, has been awarded to Dan to gain experience and broaden his understanding of underwater image making.

Dan told UwP "I was cage diving in Gansbaai, South Africa with André Hartman when I took the picture. At this stage of my trip I had been in South Africa for three weeks. Previously I had been diving, or at least trying to dive, the Sardine Run.

When I arrived in Gansbaai, a few days after leaving the Run, the conditions around Dyer Island were ideal, with visibility over ten meters. This really made up for the bad luck on the Sardine Run. I took many pictures, both on film and digital, making the most of the short window of opportunity. This was the image I was most pleased with. I like the feeling of movement and how the shark looks like its just burst out of the gloom, jaws agape, with fish fleeing in



all directions.

The photograph was taken on a Fuji S2, with the Nikkor 10.5 mm lens, inside a Subal housing. Originally the image was colour and was framed in landscape, not portrait. I turned the image black and white as the colours were very muted, and cropped out a lot of the empty space surrounding the shark, a few alterations to contrast and brightness produced the final image."

E mail Dan scubabeecham@yahoo.co.uk

First ever 'Shoot-Out' competition with Eco Divers and Asian Diver!

In 2005, you are invited to rub shoulders with some of the world's top photographers by taking part in the first ever 'Shoot-Out' competition of its kind.

Eco Divers is the first company to host Asian Diver's 'Shoot-Out' competition, to be held at Tasik Ria Resort in Manado for diving Bunaken or Kungkungan Bay Resort, Lembah.

You don't have to dive both resorts to enter, just book in for a one (or two!)-week stay and use the stunning underwater vistas and marine life to shoot some of the best shots of your life!

Eco Divers' Rod Klein, resident digital photo professional and resident photo professionals, Cary Yanny and Steve Coverdale will be on-hand to offer advice and assistance. At the end of each week, your results are presented to a panel of judges to win a myriad of prizes - and critical acclaim.

Book now for the following Shoot-Out dates:

Macro Photography,
Kungkungan Bay Resort, 23 July to 30 July 2005

Wide-angle Photography, Tasik

Ria Resort,
30 July to 06
August 2005

As well as giving you the chance to make your mark in the world of underwater photography, this is also a great opportunity to dive one or both resorts and experience two very different worlds of diving in Bunaken and the Lembah Strait.

For booking information, email Eco Divers: www.eco-divers.com



Jim Watt Digital Shark Expedition 2005

February 3-11, 2005

Bahama Banks

Great Hammerheads and Tigers

On this trip, Jim will share his amazing imagery of sharks and dolphins and discuss his perfected technique of approaching animals and controlling background exposure, strobe lighting, as well as his preferred gear configuration. This expedition will be a great opportunity to learn, shoot, and dive with a master photographer.

Price: \$2800

For further details e mail

Jim@watt@ilhawaii.net

Underwater Images 2005 Call for Entries

The Underwater Images Photo and Video Competition is now accepting entries for the 2005 contest. The competition is open to amateur underwater photographers worldwide.

Entries can be submitted until February 1, 2005. Winners will be announced at Scubafest 2005 in Columbus, Ohio, USA on March 12, 2005. Entries from Ohio will also be entered in a separate local Ohio Category with separate prizes, in addition to the international competition entry.

Some of this year's prizes include dive travel on liveboards in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Belize, and the Bahamas; Land based dive trips in the Honduras Bay Islands, Hawaii, Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac, Provo, PNG, and Sipadan. Equipment prizes includes photo and video equipment, Dive equipment, books, software, marine jewelry. Don't miss your chance to be a winner of these great prizes.

Underwater Images is non-profit with proceeds donated to Marine education and scholarship purposes. visit www.uwimages.org

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Blue sharks and kelp forests

10th-18th September 2005

Leader: Charles Hood. Group size limit: 12 divers plus leader



Charles Hood, the accomplished underwater photographer and journalist, will return to the Channel Islands to lead this tour, which is his choice for the most unusual photographic opportunities and exciting shark encounters. Charles will be on hand for informal photographic discussion and critique, but non-photographers are equally welcome. Not only is this unique trip almost impossible to arrange on an individual basis, but travelling with Charles means that the group is completely in control of its own diving management and will certainly benefit from

Charles's knowledge and experience. Everyone knows how frustrating it can be to leave a spectacular dive site without the possibility of returning not a problem you will encounter on this expedition.

The trip consists of 6 days diving including both boat diving around Catalina itself and all day shark diving trips out into the Pacific Ocean. Night diving will be available (at extra cost). Nitrox, both 32% and 36%, is available for a supplementary charge, payable locally.

For full details visit
www.divequest.co.uk

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Celebrate the Sea 2005 / Asian Geographic Nature Imagery Competition Call for Entries

Now in its fourth year, the Celebrate the Sea Marine Imagery Festival has grown into the largest event of its kind in Asia – Pacific. From June 3-5 at the Suntec City Convention Centre in Singapore, the festival will get even bigger with the inaugural AG Eco Adventure and Travel Expo.

Until May 1st we invite you to take part in the prestigious event by entering our numerous international competitions.

Whether you are an amateur or professional, dedicated only to macro slides or digital wide angle, a writer of books, creator of DVDs or a landlubber with a camera instead of a hand – we have a competition for you.

Of all the competitions out there, why enter ours? Well here are a few great reasons;

Prizes – We know it is all about the prizes and the free stuff. With over USD 50 000 in prizes, Celebrate the Sea and Asian Geographic Nature Imagery Competition is the richest competition of its kind.

On top of this each entrant receives a free Masterpass for themselves and their companion. This is like a backstage pass, giving you



unlimited entry to the juicy material of the festival including the seminars, workshops, films and slideshows.

Learning Curve – Ask anyone who has excelled in their field and they will tell you that when it comes to improvement, criticism is your best friend.

With underwater image making luminaries such as light magician David Doubilet, Hassleblad Master Tay Kay Chin and trainer of digital shooters John Cosgrove judging your work, that learning curve is sure to take a steep incline!

Exposure – With the Singapore Tourism Board distributing information on the festival in 1000 points around Singapore and at each of its gateways around the world it will truly be an international affair.

Alongside the winners of Antibes, the Cannes of the underwater world, all finalists will be on display

for the duration of the show in our special gallery. The winners will also be published in both Scuba Diver Australasia and Asian Geographic magazines with a shot at the front cover.

Conservation – While this is a celebration, it is not without a cause. We hope through promoting the beauty of the sea to motivate people to take action and preserve what remains of this exquisite environment.

Of the 15 000 people expected through the show, many of them will be children. As they toddle around the gallery with mouths agape, it could be your image that inspires them to become the future guardians of our oceans.

If you have captured a piece of the ocean's splendor then don't let your image be like the tree that falls in the woods with no one to hear it – don't let your tree fall silently...or you shutter for that matter!

Check out more information
For underwater

imagery competition:
www.Celebratethesea.com

For terrestrial imagery
competition: www.asiangeographic.org

Cathy Church's Underwater Photo Centre & Gallery The World's Best ~ Cayman Islands



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Cathy's coffee table book
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at the Sunset House Hotel, Grand Cayman

Ocean Leisure Diving Centre Chiswick, London

Ocean Leisure has recently opened a brand new scuba diving centre right next to Stamford Brook Underground station, Chiswick, London W4.

The state of the art complex includes a spectacular stainless steel swimming pool, new training equipment, classrooms and a fully equipped dive shop. Unique in London, and having everything on site, courses can be arranged by Ocean Leisure more easily to suit the convenience of their customers.

Swimming in their pool is a warm and comfortable experience and is highly endorsed by current users including mother and baby swimming groups. The water is clean and is normally heated to a luxurious 33 degrees.

Thanks to a new electronic chlorination system their water feels softer and kinder to the skin and eyes compared to most heavily chlorinated public pools.

The pool is available year round



for private and corporate hire and is ideally suited to groups of 12 to 15 people.

For bookings and information call 44 (0)20 8741 4994.

www.oceanleisure.co.uk



S-TTL. THE END OF AN ERA.

Digital underwater cameras have been a real breakthrough for divers. Offering instant feedback to speed up your learning curve, user friendly features like auto exposure and autofocus, zoom lenses with macro built right in and negligible shooting costs, digital seems the perfect solution for underwater imaging.

Until you add a flashgun. Then the nightmares and confusion begin. Especially when it comes to getting the exposure right. With many guns you have to shoot manually. Often this means taking several test shots to get it right. Something you may not be able to do with a moving subject. Auto guns can help, but you need a camera with a fixable equivalent film speed and lockable aperture to use these properly.

Inon's D2000 puts those problems firmly in the past. It uses the best flash exposure system in the world to get your lighting exactly right. Your camera's own flash meter. Accurate, dependable and affordable, the Inon D2000 marks the end of an era. The end of poor flash photography.

Welcome to Inon. Simplicity through sophistication.



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New products

INON D-2000 digital strobe



Inon, the innovative manufacturer from Japan have introduced a miniature strobe for digital users. The Inon D-2000 which replaces the hugely popular INON D-180 projects a rounded light for improved results over traditional rectangular projected light. A major breakthrough in digital consumer end underwater imaging has come to realisation with the release of the INON D-2000 underwater strobe featuring TTL capability.

Current TTL compatible camera systems operate electronically. The INON D-2000 'S-TTL' system uses optical signals instead. The internal

flash on a digital consumer camera is enveloped with the Clear Photo System which cuts all visible light from being projected. The non visible infra red light which is invisible to the naked eye is transmitted through the clear polycarbonate housing down a multi core fiber optic to activate the INON D-2000. Digital cameras which fire pre-flashes are also fully compatible with the INON 'S-TTL' system. The INON D-2000 is controlled by the camera to obtain accurate exposures. The CCD in the digital camera measures the INON D-2000 strobe light coming through the camera lens. From there the camera will cut off the

internal flash which then cuts off the D-2000 flash when your camera has recognized the correct exposure of light - S-TTL!

If the subject matter or composition is complex with extremes in light and dark tones, 'S-TTL' may not always get it right. If this happens the D-2000 can be overridden with 24 manual auto step settings to ensure you get the correct exposure of strobe light you like best.

For further details visit www.oceanoptics.co.uk
www.inon.co.jp

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mailto:
gerald.hackl@austroair.at

Jonah 20D housing for the Canon 20D coming soon

Jonah Housings are made in South Korea by Dr. Kitae Kim a Professor of Mechanical Engineering and diving photographer who felt he could offer a more AFFORDABLE, High Quality alternative to some of the competitive aluminium housings for higher end Digital SLR Cameras.

Oceanbrite feel that his design and production know how and



their knowledge of what the Digital Camera Consumer wants from a Housing warranted bringing this excellent product to the USA and the underwater photography consumer.

www.oceanbrite.com

Sony HVR-Z1E high definition video



Here's a new video camera for which housing manufacturers should be designing a housing. It represents a breakthrough in image quality at a comparatively affordable price (compared to high-end high definition cameras, that is!).

Sony has announced a new multi-format digital video camcorder, the HVR-Z1E, which is set to join the existing DVCAM range, offering users an affordable migration path from Standard Definition whilst retaining the qualities of the popular DVCAM range such as ease of use and i-LINK (FireWire, IEEE1394) connectivity. Designed for the professional user, the HVR-Z1E incorporates a number of significant features over consumer oriented products, according to Sony.

Principal features of the new camcorder and VTR include:
Switchable recording and

playback of HDV, DV and DVCAM formats, providing the professional user with the flexibility to choose the format that suits the need of their production.

50/60Hz (PAL/NTSC) switchable recording and playback

2-channel balanced audio XLR inputs, with independent adjustment of input levels for each audio channel

Colour and B/W switchable viewfinder

Simultaneous operation of both LCD panel and viewfinder, giving professional users the opportunity to focus shots accurately via the viewfinder while simultaneously framing images via the fold-out LCD panel.

In addition to the professional HDV camcorder, Sony will also introduce a compact Video Tape Recorder - The HVR-M10E. Like the camcorder, the VTR supports the recording and playback of DV, DVCAM and HDV formats and incorporates a 16:9 colour LCD viewing screen. The compact VTR also benefits from both mains power and battery operation.

UwP will keep you informed as soon as housings become available.

For more details visit www.sony.com

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Gates EM419 External Color Monitor

The EM419 has a 4.1" /104mm color active matrix LCD to assist with framing and focus even in bright sunlight.

Sophisticated features like power-on auto sense and PAL/NTSC auto sense mean no worries about accidental battery depletion or different formats.

www.gateshousings.com



SEALUX housing for Sony VX2100 and PD170



The SEALUX MX 2100 underwater housing has been designed for the professional application of the Sony high-end-3-chip camcorder DCR-VX 2100 and DSR-PD170P.

www.sealux.de



or battery charger.

The newly-designed reflector provides even light from the center to the edges making it very suitable as a video light.

For further details visit www.seaandsea.com

FD-70 Housing for Nikon D-70 COMING SOON



Fantasea Line is pleased to announce the development of the FD-70 housing for the Nikon D-70 digital SLR camera. The FD-70 is scheduled to be launched in early 2005.

The target retail price with anti flooding insurance and standard lens port is less than \$1000.

Amongst the features for the FD-70:

On/Off, Mode select menu, ISO, Exposure compensation, WB, Image quality, Playback and trash, Multi selector control, Main Dial command, Sub Dial command, Nikonos 5 PIN sync socket for external flash, Monitor zoom, Magnified optical viewfinder, Light control for LCD screen.

Interchangeable ports system, Exposure compensation and much more. Operating depth to 60 meters/ 200 ft.

www.fantasea.com

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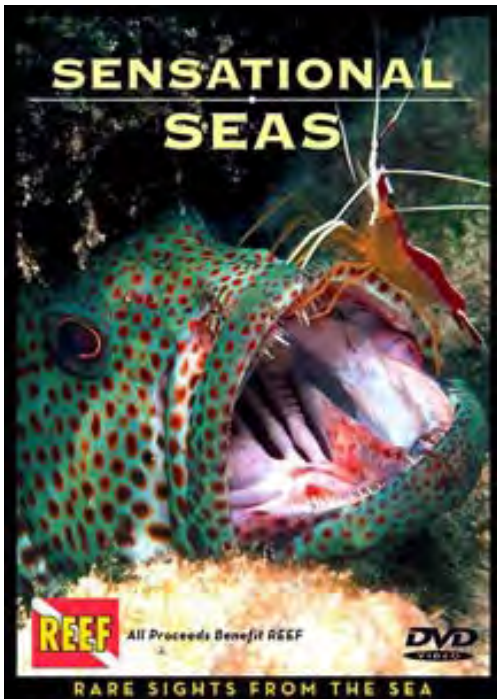
Every housing includes one year anti flooding insurance program!

Accessories:

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Purchase On-Line at best rates ever > www.fantasea.com
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For more information -
info@fantasea.com



Sensational Seas DVD

New World Publications is pleased to announce the DEMA premiere of Sensational Seas, a collaborative collection of exciting, unexpected, and spontaneously fun underwater images.

Escorted by veteran filmmaker Stan Waterman and distinguished marine journalist Cat Holloway, viewers will be treated to 90 minutes of previously unseen images from over 20 contributors. Dolphin courtship dancing, blenny turf wars, and remarkable false killer whales stalking sailfish are just a few of the

brilliant surprises awaiting the diver and nondiver alike.

“Sensational Seas lives up to the name” charms Anna DeLoach, producer and contributor, “and includes many sequences captured during once-in-a-lifetime encounters with some of the most exotic animals on earth”. Award winning contributors Howard and Michelle Hall, Frazier Nivens and Stan Waterman and 20 other talented filmmakers from around the world donated time and footage to the project.

Award winning contributors Howard and Michelle Hall, Frazier Nivens and Stan Waterman and 20 other talented filmmakers from around

the world donated time and footage to the project.

REEF (Reef Environmental Education Foundation) -- a nonprofit group of volunteer recreational divers who document marine life and population trends -- will receive all proceeds. The DVD will be available through dive retailers and directly from REEF.

www.reef.org

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Macro Lens

.54x Wide Lens

Epoque DCL-20 wide conversion lens

With 0.56 x magnification Digital camera can make 20mm wide angle photography with a 35mm digital camera lens. With 4 group / 5 element multi coated lens distortion is minimal. It can be used on the following housings:

Olympus PT-005/007/010/012/015
 Epoque EHS-200 Z, EHC-1000 and EHN-4500

For further details

www.epoque-usa.com



Nexus Nikon D70

Nexus enjoy a strong reputation for the quality of their camera housings. The new housing for highly sought after Nikon D70 Digital SLR looks set to maintain that position.

The D70 follows the design concepts already established by the Nexus Master series for the classic Nikon F90. Clean lines reduce drag, compact dimensions keep the weight to less than 2kg and the port mount remains the same as on the Master series to allow use of existing ports by Nexus F90 owners.

The hull is constructed from cast aluminium and is rated to 75 metres. Over centre catches secure the two halves of the hull. Handgrips provide a firm hold with easy finger and thumb tip control of shutter release, main and sub command dials and manual focus/zoom wheels.

The handles can be fitted with spacers for those with larger hands with the option of an adapter to set the left grip forward of the housing for use with longer ports. This can help improve the overall handling with front heavy lenses. With manual focus macro ports this also helps place the focus wheel at your finger tips. The grips accept a range of flash and focusing light mounts, including Inon.

Ports are provided for possible future accessories, such as an external power pack. The base is protected by an anti skid pad. This helps avoid chipping the anodizing in this high wear area. Threads are provided for mounting trays and using tripods.

Dual Nikonos V strobe connectors are standard. Internally Nexus use a modified Nikon hot shoe to connect to the camera. This incorporates TTL (with housed Nikon i-TTL flashguns) and ready light confirmation LEDs. The hot shoe can be



removed from the housing in seconds for storage.

Ocean Optics in London supply two hot shoe connectors with the D70 housing, the standard one will permit TTL automatic exposure with Nikon i-TTL strobes in housings. The second one, commissioned by them, is for use with underwater flash guns. These need to be used on manual power settings.

A staggering quantity of 24 controls are provided to access all key functions. Nexus designer Toshi has chosen to use low profile push buttons to operate the controls on the back of the D70. This

helps avoid damage.

A very efficient viewfinder reducer is provided with our Nexus D70 housings to provide optimum corner to corner viewing while wearing a mask.

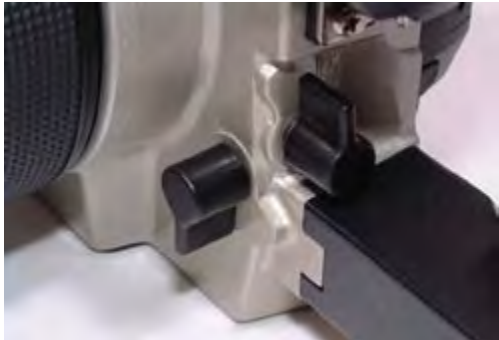
There are push button and rotary controls for Lens removal release, AE-L and AF-L, Meter pattern select, Exposure compensation, Bracket, Function, Mode select, On/Off, AF/M focus modes, Menu, ISO, WB, Trash, Quality, Playback, Focus



selector, Multi Selector, Main Dial command, Sub-command dial , Shutter release, Dual Sync sockets 5 pin Nikonos type., Dual extra socket pass through for remote operation, (3) 1/4x20 screw mount holes on bottom, Strobe mount on top of handles.

The weight on land is 4Lbs 7 oz and underwater weight depends on the lens/port configuration. The Nexus D70 housing is 5"x6.75x12.5 with handles attached.

www.oceanoptics.co.uk
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Think Digital

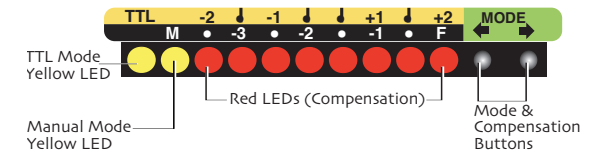
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The C5050 as a Prosumer Point-and-shoot

By Matt Segal

In this age of underwater digital photography, we are presented with a multitude of choices of cameras, housings, strobes, lenses, etc. Many of us see spectacular images and think, “I want to be able to take that shot” or “It’d be great to be able to show people what I see underwater,” and yet lack the financial means to buy a new dSLR system. For a total cost equivalent to that of a Light & Motion Titan D100 housing (roughly \$2700 without ports and accessories), I have over the past year been able to assemble a camera setup capable of shooting photos that I first could only dream of taking.

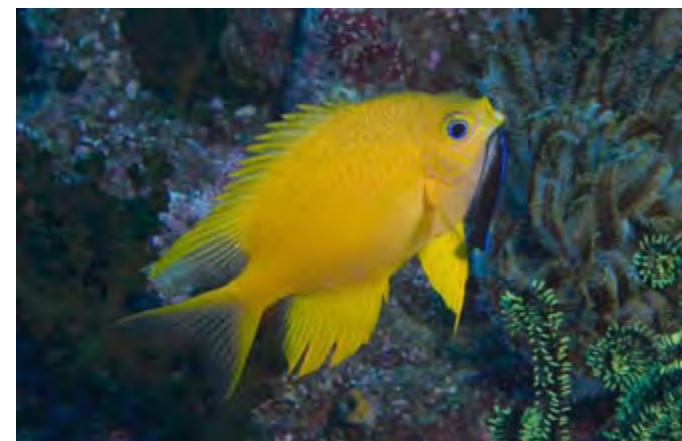
When I first looked into this whole business of things, I wanted a fair amount of flexibility, reliability, and capability for expansion. To accomplish this, I chose a series of components that, while in some cases not the most expensive or most advanced, suited their purpose. The setup is comprised of the Olympus C5050 digital camera, an Ikelite non-TTL housing for that model camera, a single Ikelite DS-125 digital strobe (with manual controller allowing 10 power settings), and a Transcend 45x 1gb CF card. While the C5050 was adequate in its own right for the majority of pictures that I looked to take, I knew that I would want to explore both macro and wide-angle photography, and I purchased the Inon UCL-165 macro lens and the Inon UWL-100 wide-angle lens to allow some room for creativity.

Despite the fact that Olympus has recently released two new editions to their digital line,



the C5060 and the C8080, 5.1 and 8.0 megapixel cameras respectively, the C5050 remains in high demand among fledgling underwater photographers due to its fixed zoom-lens design (lost in the C5060), its lower noise CCD (compared to the C8080), and its low cost for the amount of available control over aperture, shutter, and flash power. Additionally, the C5050’s ability to shoot RAW is incredible, and should always be utilized. The creative aspects over JPEG are innumerable. In regards to housing the camera, there are three major choices: Olympus’ PT-015, Ikelite’s housing, or the Light and Motion Tetra 5050. As a student, I chose the middle road and went with the Ikelite housing for the greatest amount of durability for the price. In the water with only the camera and the single-handle tray attached, the housing is just slightly negatively buoyant. The housing, like most of Ikelite’s products, is rated to 200ft. I doubt the casual photographer is going to be doing much exploring past that depth.

Being that the Ikelite housing is very well suited to Ikelite strobes (there exists the capability for a sync-cord connection), as well as the knowledge that the Ikelite DS-125 has one of the



Ikelite DS-125, digital ISO64. F5.6 1/200 manual exposure

fastest recycling times (on the order of 1 second), one of the largest strobe coverage angles (100° with the diffuser), and enough power to light any scene I could conceive of, I decided to stick with Ikelite in this area. The basic DS-125 has a selector switch for four manual power settings of Full, 1/2, 1/4, and 1/8. To complement these settings, I chose to purchase the Manual Controller, allowing me a range of 10 power settings, from Full to just under 1/16 power. The Manual Controller has a slave

sensor on the front, so if I ever was to experience a sync-cord failure, I would be able to aim the slave sensor at the camera's on-board flash. In regards to color temperature of the strobe, Ikelite made a decision many years ago to market strobes with a slightly warmer tone than the competition. Often, this serves to remove the anemic blue coloration of some subjects even when lit by a strobe. If this is undesirable, shooting RAW solves the problem completely through the absolute control of color temperature and tint.

Macro and Wide-Angle

The Inon UCL-165 macro lens, combined with either the Macro Mode (focus as close as 20cm) or Super-Macro mode (focus as close as 3cm), has proved itself to be a very powerful tool. Photographing smaller creatures such as crustaceans, gobies and blennies, or nudibranchs can be slightly more difficult with a prosumer digital camera as compared to a dSLR, and the macro lens allows one to just get a little bit closer to fill the frame with your subject. In both the local California waters where I dive, and on my recent liveaboard trip to Papua New Guinea, I found myself using this lens exclusively on some dives. It is true that the reduced depth-of-focus takes a little practice to get used to, but, in the words of another, "the results can be stunning." Especially when visibility is decreased (it's always a touchy situation in the Channel Islands), the macro lens is there to shoot everything small, where backscatter is less of an issue, and concentration falls more on composition than finding a variety of subject matter.

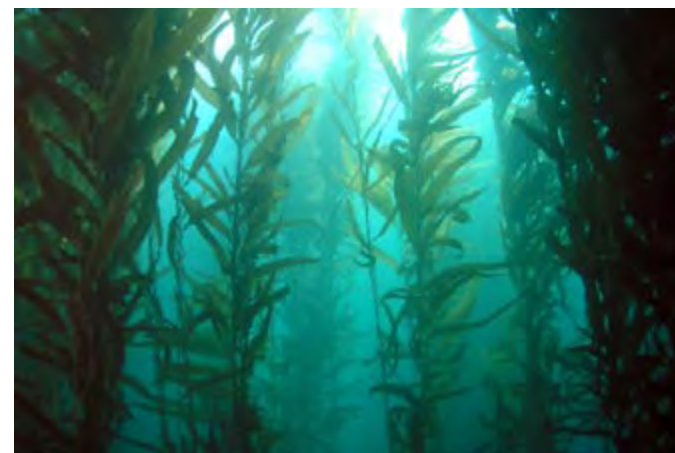
At the other end of the spectrum is the Inon UWL-100 wide-angle lens. With nearly 100° coverage, it captures the full field of view as

(Right) Inon UCL-165 macro lens, Ikelite DS-125, digital ISO64, F8.0 1/125, manual exposure
(Below right) Inon UWL-100 wide-angle lens, digital ISO100, F1.8 1/320 manual exposure

illuminated by a properly positioned strobe. If I wanted more coverage, I could buy the optional dome unit for the lens, which brings up the coverage to almost 130°, but would also require an additional strobe. Along with the wider field of view, this lens shortens the working distance of the camera, allowing for close-focus-wide-angle photography. Backscatter and lens flare are much more significant problems in wide-angle photography, and when I have used this lens in the past, my efforts have been towards trying to minimize both. I use the wide-angle lens a lot for ambient light photography, because of the fact that it collects so much more light than the standard lens, and there isn't the issue of backscatter. I'm still searching for the elusive "sun rays" that some photographers have become masters of capturing in wide-angle photography.

Conclusion

It is true that for those who have more money than they know what to do with, this is probably not the system they would choose to use. But, for the majority of underwater photographers, a simple, yet capable, system is much desired. My system started as the Olympus C5050 in a housing with merely the internal strobe, and in a matter of time, has progressed to a strobed system with various lenses and accessories that has resulted in photographs that I'm proud to have printed, framed, and mounted on my wall. Sure, I envy the dSLR photographers, with



their fancy setups and powerful lenses. And yes, I do eventually hope to join their ranks. But for now, I'm happy with what I've got, and the results it yields.

Matt Segal
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Libor Spacek

by Sabina Casarova

Libor Spacek was born in 1966 in Czech Republic. As a diving instructor and professional photographer he came up with an interesting idea of bringing studio methods down under the water's surface. The result is a unique photo collection of "Underwater Fine Art Nudes" which has been exhibited and published worldwide to great acclaim.

Watching the gorgeous female figures levitating in space, dressed in moonlight, you may be wondering, how did these breathtaking photographs come into existence, especially considering that this all had happened at a sort of weird location, which is a public swimming pool (you could never tell). Well, let's see how such a fine art nude underwater session works...

As with every other ambitious photographer, Libor gets kind of discomposed before the shooting. He has a lot of things to do and forgetting just one of them could spoil the whole event. And Libor is not that kind of person, who needs a crew of assistants around him. So everything is up to him.

First he gets his diving gear ready, so that he can spend more than three hours underwater... Then the photo equipment comes in order. Libor usually works with two cameras; Canon 10D digital reflex camera "instead of polaroid", as he says smiling, yet nearly one fifth of the exhibited images were shot digitally. The undeniable advantage of digital cameras underwater is that you can check the results immediately. The second camera is a 35mm Canon EOS 3. Both cameras have custom BS Kinetics underwater housings. And there comes the dilemma: which photographic material to use? Black&white or colour? Negative or slide? Sometimes Libor even considers medium format, but he hasn't chosen his type yet.

Let's not forget the lights please. Taking a good look at Libor's photos, you'll probably understand their special importance. One good guy invented fantastic 1000W lamps for Libor's use underwater. Don't worry, they work safely. But still they add some feeling of adventure.

Some props like costumes or other requisities are to be used, too. Libor's favourite thing to do except shooting nudes is fashion underwater.

A substantial element of Libor's shooting are the models. But these models have to have a very special relation to water plus swimming





skills and endurance (and fantasy as well). A three hour long session in the cold water is not easy. For the photographer, even though he keeps his body warm in a neoprene suit, the shooting is incredibly exhausting as well. So they all try to eat something to accumulate energy, but mostly there's no time nor appetite for it.

Transporting all the heavy gear to the location is hard work but if you ask Libor, why doesn't he ask another strong guy to help him, he will probably answer, "Me and my Sabi can manage, we don't



need anybody else to disturb us." These photos are so magic because everybody is alone while creating one joint thing. The photographer is alone with his lights and camera, the model is alone in the swimming pool - without goggles she can't see anything but contours, half blinded by the chlorine water.

Now comes the last lap of double or triplechecking if everything works, fits and is in the right place. It is very important is to close the housings VERY CAREFULLY, well sometimes you



need a seriously bad experience to realize this...

Libor starts to install the lights on the bottom of the swimming pool. Each time there is a different illustration, the lights are relocated during the shoot.

Models are getting ready for the shoot. They put on their makeup and dress up (depending on the shot). They try to concentrate on the posing underwater which is totally different from dry studio shooting.

Not much time is spent with conversation between the model and the photographer. Newcoming models are mostly asked to "try to do what they saw at the pictures". Of course it can never be the same. There are other powers taking effect in the water and that makes the model move even when she doesn't try to make any move.

And now that everybody's ready... Jump! Libor takes his place on the bottom and the model begins to rotate in this same old rhythm: Dive - pose and smile - click - up - breath - dive... Repeating over and over again but mostly without that click sound. Every now and then Libor breaks the surface to say what's wrong with the posing. The poor



model swallows some water and nods her head. And they go on.

There are mostly two or three models alternating as they get cold and hungry quickly. And what about poor Libor! He's staying down there all the time, except the necessary film changes.

At the end of the session the models are free to go home but the ghost of Libor has to get all that wet stuff out and then, instead of sleeping, he cares about his equipment. After a little nap a new adventure of lab work begins.

Recently Libor's been working on commercial



work and planning his next exhibition project. In the near future you can meet him and his naiads somewhere under the sea, using fish and sealife as extras.

Sabina Casarova

Sabina Casarova is a journalist, stylist and key model of the Underwater Fine Art Nudes project.

Cameras:

35mm - Canon EOS 3 in a BS Kinetics housing
Digital - Before: Olympus C5050 with its own PT015 housing

Later: Canon 10D with another BS Kinetics housing

Lenses: Canon, Tokina

Materials: Kodak (both bw and color, various types) 400 ISO

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When Paradise Goes Bad

A New Yorker's Account of the Tsunamis...

By Jason Heller

I was at sea scuba diving in the uninhabited Similian Island chain, an 8 hour boat ride from the island of Phuket, when the first wave came through. What would follow are a series of events that changed the lives of so many people forever. As an up and coming underwater photographer, I had planned on spending the week taking pictures of the breathtaking beauty of the reefs and island scapes, however, I spent the last 2 days documenting the devastation, destruction and compassionate rescue efforts that not even images can properly portray. We have experienced the two extremes of paradise. The idyllic beauty and the sheer destructive power of the amazing planet that we inhabit.

We were diving at a remote site in the open ocean called Richlieu Rock, a pinnacle in about 120 feet of water, which at high tide is exposed by about 10 feet, and during low tide is totally submerged. There was an abnormally strong current, as I literally had to pull myself across the bottom of the ocean floor, hand over hand, to keep from being washed into the current (which I would later learn was the actual wave passing through our relatively safe position in the open ocean). By the time I surfaced 34 minutes later, the sea was exhibiting extremely abnormal tides.

The tide tables indicated high tide, yet Richlieu Rock was exposed by more than 15 feet. We checked again and it had disappeared under the sea.

A whirlpool started forming around us. Shouts in Thai rang out as our engines immediately roared and our mooring rope was cut to avoid being sucked into the whirlpool or hitting the rocks. Word came over the radio that some divers were missing at a nearby Surin Island and our crew set a course to go help. By the time we approached Surin Island 30 minutes later, we watched in horror as a huge cruise ship was battered against the rocks, unfortunately not able to maneuver fast enough to escape the waves. Through binoculars we watched the life rafts being deployed. More news began pouring in of swimmers being swept to sea from a 30 foot wave on Phuket, and that more waves were continuing north and heading right for us. Our boat crew conferred with other boats also stuck at sea, and it was decided that the safest course of action would be to head south (yes in the direction of the waves!) towards the Similians where we had what they thought was some level of protection. As we hopped from one island cove to another, we



observed the abnormally low tide everywhere we stopped. The reefs were exposed in many areas, and the exposed islands looked more vulnerable than ever. It was like looking at a ring around a dirty bathtub. We made it to Similian Island #4, the only island that possessed a cell phone relay tower. However, it was nearly impossible to get a signal. Even when you could get a signal, you couldn't sustain it long enough to hold a conversation. SMS text messaging was the only means of communication. It reminded me of the hours post 9/11, when communication was nearly impossible. As sunset approached, there was an eerie calm all around us. We eventually moored our boat as recommended in water that

was over 100 feet deep, but in my opinion, far too close to shore. At some point we even fell asleep. We woke to shouts of imminent demise, "get your life vests, it's coming in 10 minutes!". I expressed my frustration that we were too close to shore, but the crew did not do anything about it. So I spent over an hour watching our depth on sonar, as my rudimentary understanding of tidal waves told me that we would lose depth as the tsunami approaches. Every 10 or 20 minutes for the next 3 hours, we received frantic warnings of the imminent wave coming our way. Passengers were saying their last goodbyes, however prematurely it was. There was talk of Navy boats coming to rescue us, but it would



be hours before they arrived. Boats can not outrun a tsunami. Thankfully the second set of waves never made it in our direction. However, I have no doubt that if they did, we were too close to shore and would have been pounded against the rocks.

In the morning, we set a course back to Phuket, an 8 hour trip. During the entire trip we observed everything imaginable floating in the ocean. As we approached the island, the quantity of debris increased. Lounge chairs, luggage, a refrigerator, trees and dead animals all floated past us. After we docked is when we witnessed the true level of what had happened. I have never witnessed such levels of devastation. The tsunami destroyed in a matter of minutes, what a hurricane

destroys over the course of a week. As we walked around Patong and Kamala beaches, which were hardest hit by the waves, the smell of decomposing bodies was everywhere. Rescue crews were trying to cope with the task at hand, including the logistical impossibility of accomplishing the recovery of bodies without the proper equipment. In some instances cars and buses were crushed like accordions and sent into the first and second floors of what used to be 4 and 5 star beach resorts. Images of European children with missing parents were heart breaking. For every local, there were two tourists killed or missing. The only way to try and locate missing friends and relatives was to look at boards of photos taken of the



recovered dead bodies. It was eerily reticent of the streets of NYC after 9/11. Unfortunately the chances of finding your loved ones here at this point are just as grim.

The last estimate was almost 100,000 dead and missing. But the world moves on. Hopefully a humbler and more compassionate place. We watched some tourists even going swimming in the beach, although just an hour earlier we saw a dead body randomly washing up on shore. Words and images can not paint a grim enough picture of what happened here and throughout the rest of the region that fringes the Indian Ocean. My thoughts go out to all who died or lost loved ones during this incredible natural disaster. My view

of the world has changed forever. I have always appreciated the power of mother nature. “Mother” as in that which gives life, “Nature” as in the uncontrollable and unpredictable and unfortunately, what sometimes takes life. The images and feelings from the last 72 hours will never be erased from my memory.

Jason Heller
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Yap's Critter Hunt

Bonanza for Macro Photographers

Story and Photos by Tim Rock

Four week's worth of "critter hunting" in Yap produced some fascinating creatures and a look at some varied and special marine habitants for those participating in the search for new and unusual marine critters.

Manta Ray Bay Hotel and Yap Divers, based in Colonia, Yap, in the Federated States of Micronesia, hosted the unique month of exploration. Led by Larry Smith, one of diving's most famed "muck diving" experts, and MRBH founder Bill Acker, daily dives to find the out-of-the-ordinary on the reef were both fun and productive.

Acker dived with Smith in Smith's backyard of Komodo and western Papua in Indonesia and was amazed at the amazing "muck" creatures Larry consistently found there. So he decided to bring Smith's talents to Yap.

"I knew we must have ornate ghost pipefish, pygmy seahorses and other unique critters," Acker said. "We just needed some trained eyes like Larry's to help us find them."

Yap has large inner lagoons and deep channels leading to open ocean.

There are more than 1500 fish species in the Micronesia area and most are found in Yap. Add to this an even larger number of invertebrates that make Yap prime ground for this sort of diving.

Among the finds, a pipefish with markings similar to that of a Janss pipefish but as yet unidentified. It is a beautiful little golden and blue creature known only by a common name of Barrier Reef pipefish. A capped razor coral shrimp, robust and ornate ghost pipefish and mating mandarinfish.

"What a wonderful, unique, diverse, thrill-a-minute experience here in Yap!" Smith reflected. "I had my nose in the reef looking for strange and beautiful small critters and a squadron of 5 or more manta rays were flapping all around overhead!! It was tough duty here in Yap."

There can be a problem, a good one, for photographers. Diving in places like Miil and Gufnuw Channels, where big mantas and cruising sharks are common, means there are both wide angle and macro opportunities. Personally, I decided



Aerial of Yap with Miil channel to the right. Nikon D1 Camera, 17-35mm lens, Polarizer. F4.5 at 1,000th shutter. Shot from rear cargo hatch of small plane. Height 4,000 feet.



This pipefish is an unidentified species known only by the common name Great Barrier Reef pipefish. Shot with a D100 in Aquatica housing, Twin Ike 125s and Sigma 50mm macro lens at F9 at 180th. Depth 60 feet (we also found one in only 15 feet!).



A cryptic nudibranch on a leaf at 80 feet. Angled Single Ikelite SB-125 strobe at 1/4 power, 50mm Sigma Macro lens, D100, F18 and 180, Aquatica housing.

to “think macro” and not let the mantas distract me, at least for a few days. I went five days using just a macro rig and then dedicated about 4 more dive days to wide angle in the mornings and macro in the afternoon. I finished up my two week stint leaning mostly to macro again.

Since we never knew what we would find, except during the mandarinfish dives, I mainly



A commensal shrimp living on a crown-of-thorns starfish. Angled Single Ikelite SB-125 strobe at 1/4 power, 50mm Sigma Macro lens, D100, F18 and 180, Aquatica housing. Depth 20 feet.

used my Sigma 50 and Nikon 60mm Micro Nikkor lenses. I had a housed Nikon D100 in an Aquatica housing. I was assisted by Natalia Vanderwyk, who also took photos when she wasn't modeling. She went for the smaller stuff with a D100 in an Aquatica using the 105mm lens. Dual and single Ikelite SB 125 strobes were used.

Muck diving is one of the most popular diving



Schooling manta rays at Garden Eel Flats, Miil Channel. Twin Ikelite SB-125 strobes at 1/4 power, 10mm Nikkor Full Frame Fish Eye lens, D100, F 5.6 and 60th shutter, Aquatica housing. Depth 80 feet.

activities among underwater photographers and marine life aficionados. It basically means divers look in odd and diverse habitats for unique marine life. This can range anywhere from the muddy bottoms of mangrove swamps, river spillways and under harbor piers. Also, the protected areas of lagoons and outer reefs are prime habitat. Divers are finding such odd habitats hold the most interesting and often colorful of marine creatures and fish.

For the most part, the water was fine and the weather cooperative. The first few days we had lower visibility as a storm had been in the area and the waves were kicking things up a bit. For macro, this isn't a major concern as everything is done so closely. But angling the strobes just right to keep the suspended sand particles from leaving too much scatter was a concern. Some creatures, like flatworms, were also found in areas that had a fine



Cleaning shrimp on a fishing boat wreck in Yap. Twin Ikelite SB-125 strobes at 1/4 power, 105mm Nikkor Macro lens, D100, F22 and 180, Aquatica housing. Depth 60 feet.

silty bottom. So working slowly to reduce silting was a priority.

Outside the reef visibility averaged easily 100+ feet. This is where we found a majority of the pipefish species. At outgoing tide, visibility in the channels can be lower but was still anywhere from 20 to 80 feet. So the main challenge was framing them up and waiting for the right moment or moments to snap the shutter. In all, the diversity produced over a couple of weeks of diving was very rewarding.

The diving in Yap included surveying some new spots, looking for the unusual in the tried and true spots and also combining some of Yap's famous



Mating mandarinfish at Rainbow Reef have become a hot item in Yap. Shot at late dusk with the help of DS125 strobe modeling lights and my trusty Hartenberger torch, D100, Nikkor 60mm macro lens, F14 at 1/60th. Depth: 15 feet.

big animal experiences within a day's schedule.

"We even stumbled across a W.W.II landing craft wreck with some kind of big torpedo or bomb not far away from it," Smith recalls. "This site will be one of the main attractions in the future for Yap macro photographers; but might have to get that bomb thing out of the way first!"

Dozens of "critters" ranging from shelled mollusks and nudibranchs to odd fish and phosphorescent corals have been observed. The list includes a variety of multicolored flat worms, nudibranchs not found in any of the opisthobranch ID books, a variety of ghost pipe fish (one species found in only one book and is unidentified), mantis shrimps, and cleaning shrimps of all shapes and descriptions, an unidentified big crab eating algae from the base of one of the mooring lines, whitecap prawn gobies and active mandarinfish.



Model Natalia Venderwyk with a striped clownfish at Peelaek Corner. Nikon D100 in Aquatica housing, Sigma 15mm lens, DS125 Ikelite strobes, F22 at 1/20. Depth: 50 feet.

"We observed them mating on almost every dive there, males fighting and locked in combat for over 20 minutes, and pajama cardinal fish eating the "smoke" that appeared at the spectacular climax of mandarin fish mating," Smith declared.

Yap's Rainbow Reef is an inner lagoon coral reef area near the mangrove forest. This is where the exquisitely colorful, but tiny and reclusive, mandarinfish live and come out at dusk to breed and do mating rituals. Sea grasses, sandy shallow channels, deep main channels, outer hard coral reefs and even the remains of an 1800s copper plated and wooden shipwreck all produced special "critters".

Smith also celebrated a personal milestone during this trip with his 17,000th (that's right, three zeros!) logged dive. This was done in the beautiful southern Yap Caverns. Dolphins accompanied the boat to the site. It was a fitting scenario for such an amazing landmark plunge.

The big critters included observing a huge grey



Larry Smith (left) and Bill Acker, Manta Ray Bay Hotel founder

reef shark with mouth wide open being cleaned only a few feet away from divers. And the old shark bottle call produced blacktips, whitetips, gray reefs and the always impressive silvertips rising from the depths. Spotted eagle rays, sea turtles, and, of course, the mantas, were seen on many of the dives.

At day's end, editing was easy. Each room at Manta Ray is equipped with a large desk area with multiple power outlets. It was a simple matter to plug in a laptop, an auxillary drive and download and edit. We used Photoshop CS to work on the keepers that couldn't wait until we got home. That instant gratification of digital is a real plus and also allowed us to get a good look at the rare creatures we photographed that day to help i.d. the inverts and fish.

In all, it was a rewarding

experiment by the Acker-Smith team and Manta Ray guests. The next hunt has a search for lacey scorpionfish and Micronesia's new pygmy seahorse species high on the list. Whatever the outcome, it will be a month of special diving that will certainly allow Micronesia's Yap to reveal a few more of its special treasures.

Critter Hunt runs from Wednesday to Wednesday for four consecutive weeks next June thru July, 2005. Check out the MRBH Website (www.mantaray.com) for details.

Tim Rock
www.doubleblue.com
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Tasik Ria & Kungkungan Bay

By Peter Rowlands

The offer of a flight only trip to visit two resorts in North Sulawesi in early December was too good to turn down. Three days at Tasik Ria Resort and three at the renowned Kungkungan Bay Resort would combine diving the spectacular Bunaken Marine Reserve then immerse myself in some glorious 'muck' diving.

As with my previous trip to this area last year I made sure that my flights to Singapore and from there to Manado were less than 24 hours apart so I could check my baggage all the way through yet still overnight in Singapore for a useful adjustment time for both body clock and climate.

Jim Yanny of Eco Divers, who had offered us the trip, met us at the airport and his welcome staff made light of the luggage. Less than an hour later we had driven through the seemingly endless sprawl of Manado, survived numerous near head on collisions and were entering the impressive Tasik Ria Resort.

'Resort' is defined in the dictionary as 'place frequented for some purpose or quality (health, holiday etc)' and they're not using the

term wrongly at Tasik Ria. The resort has a mature, solid feel with 22 pool-view rooms and 14 sea-view cottages interspersed with well tended gardens and tall palm trees.

My American dive buddy, Brian Jacobson, and I shared a pool-view room with air-conditioned ensuite mini-bar facilities, three features in a room which I have grown very accustomed to in my senior years but, as usual, there was never enough ice for Brian's drinks (Brian, ice takes up valuable alcohol space..) but a quick trip to the poolside bar saw him returning with a barrow load which he deemed sufficient for his first sundowner.

Brian and I were both shooting video this trip so we had two cases each - one for the equipment and a much larger one for the equipment chargers (when will we have a single charger that does everything?!). There are ample two pin round sockets to cater for any underwater photographer's charging needs and still have room to plug my hairdrier in.

The dive centre is a short walk from the room and there is another



(Above) Eco Divers fleet at Tasik Ria
(Right) A wall dive at Bunaken

short walk to the pier. A photo room is being built as we speak at the pier to eliminate the need to lug photo rigs back and forward.

The main attraction of diving at Tasik Ria is the Bunaken Marine Reserve, a world class sanctuary with some stunning and varied wall and reef dives. It is an hour's boat ride so trips leave at 8am and you return at about 4.30pm having had three good hour long dives punctuated by a very tasty lunch of local cuisine.

There are three dive boats - small, medium and large - so, if you





The speed boats at KBR mean your maximum time to a dive site is no more than 10 minutes

This chap kept us amused pushing out coral from his hole. Olympus C40/PT-012, Auto



*Thankfully this one is not in an aquarium
Olympus C40/PT-012, Auto*



were to book as a small group, Eco Divers would do their utmost to cater for the needs of you mildly eccentric underwater photographers and provide a tailored itinerary to suit you.

The dive guides at Tasik Ria are very friendly and knowledgeable, attentive when needed yet still give you space and time to operate underwater. Ours had a lovely gentle signaller to tell us he/she had found something interesting. It was a small ball bearing in a tube which they tinkled rather like a soft 'Afternoon tea' bell.

Brian and I enjoyed the Bunaken dives very much but we were just as keen to sample Tasik Ria's muck diving so we dived their nearby house reef which was excellent and a two minute boat ride away. One area had artificial 'reef balls' installed which were an absolute haven for a wide variety of marine subjects of varying sizes and Brian and I shot plenty of footage including a most co-operative green mantis shrimp comically removing small clumps of coral from around his hole. How easily we are pleased.

Night dives are available by arrangement and there is also a dusk dive on which mating mandarin fish are the main attraction.

After a fun day's diving and with the batteries on charge, it was time to top up our alcohol levels at the poolside bar where their list of cocktails was impressive. Suitably topped up we sauntered to dinner which was a good blend of local and international cuisine served by very friendly staff.

The three days flew by and after the last dive on the third day our photo rigs and dive bags were transferred to Kungkungan Bay Resort without us needing to disassemble them. Lovely.

Readers may remember my trip to this area last year when I experienced the local driving skills



Nudibranch graffitti

in all their scary glory. Overtaking into head on traffic yet calmly avoiding contact at the last minute without a fist being raised by either party. Now imagine the same thing again - only at night. Once again they displayed their skills of daring-do, only this time into the paths of oncoming lights. Our driver even had time to take a few mobile phone calls presumably from his wife checking up to see if he was still alive.

Kungkungan Bay Resort is a credit to the pioneering spirit of its American founders and I doubt if there is any underwater photographer who hasn't seen the stunning macro life images which have been taken



Leaf fish were very common and even I spotted some.

off its shores. When it was opened it attracted world class photographers some of whom stayed there for months as more and more exotic creatures were discovered and captured in all their glory.

Such award winning images were not taken in a twenty minute dive but were the result of many hours underwater, often at night, with back up cylinders and vigilant dive guides.

Those were indeed pioneering days but, as the owners' accountants pointed out, such intensive diving practices resulted in high overtime wages and little or no profit. Add to that the 9/11 effect on tourism in the area and KBR was becoming a

financial hole.

Enter Jim and Cary Yanny of Eco Divers who were hired to turn the resort around. Between them they have a wealth of experience from the Red Sea with Emperor Divers and they both recognised a challenge when they saw it. I don't think I would be unkind to say that in recent times KBR had slipped down the popularity stakes but Jim and Cary together with their managers Miranda van Roon and Steve Coverdale aim to put that right and they have already made progress.

There are 16 rooms in three categories - Traditional House, Cottage Suite and Deluxe. We stayed in a large cottage right on the waters'

edge just a short walk from the main catering and swimming pool centre and from the dive briefing area and very impressive photo room. Only the deluxe rooms are air-conditioned and there were times when it was very sticky and hot that I felt like going up to a Deluxe room to ask for a cup of sugar and then stay there overnight.

The diving at KBR is all about muck diving accessed by fast boats meaning a 10 minute ride at most. There are three dives a day at 0815, 1115 and 1445. Even at full capacity, the dive guide to diver ratio is good. Their English is certainly better than my Sulawesi which is nil but there was an air of timidity about most of them which I was not expecting. I had heard tales of these Tensing like characters whose keen eye and hard work had led to some amazing discoveries in the pioneering days.

Underwater, however, they seemed intent on showing us as much as possible even though we were happy to observe and photograph their first creature. No sooner had we settled when there was a loud blast on an air horn telling us to get over to where they'd found something else. The loud blast of compressed air sounded like an angry fart on land and was a far cry from the tinkle, tinkle at Tasik Ria.

Admittedly the visibility at KBR was not as good but I got the impression they were using their farts



There are 16 rooms in three categories - Traditional House, Cottage Suite and Deluxe. The deluxe have air-conditioning

to keep us herded together like whales use bubble screens. After a while it became slightly annoying and felt as if they were just going through the motions of showing us as much as possible in the maximum 60 minute dive without allowing us time to concentrate on our photography. If they want to attract keen underwater photographers to return, some toning down and retraining would be needed.

On one dive my guide farted loudly to me that he had found some flambuoyant cuttlefish eggs in a coconut shell. I came over to him and signalled my thanks and settled down to get some good, well lit footage. After a short time, damn me if he didn't fart again and then again in quick succession. This definitely was irritating as it made me jolt my video camera in mid shot so I abandoned

it and went over to where I was being abruptly summoned. My farter seemed unaffected by my glare as he pointed down towards the black sand. I glanced at the area unimpressed but then saw the flambuoyant cuttlefish pulsating. I forgive you, I forgive you. Just get a gentler signalling device.

Attracting underwater photographers to a fragile eco system is a contradiction in terms. I fully admit that there are those among us (and I am one sometimes) who deserve our reputation for careless control when trying to get a shot or a nice angle and the staff at KBR are strict with their guidelines about bouyancy and quite rightly so. If they are to preserve their unique marine heritage they must maintain discipline. Make sure you practice your buoyancy skills before visiting KBR. It will be worth it.

A week is too short a time to evaluate two resorts in detail, bond with the staff and dive guides and get some memorable images but in my short time I sampled good hospitality, very friendly staff and top quality diving.

In diving terms with Bunaken and muck diving, Tasik Ria and Kungkungan Bay really do offer the best of both worlds.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Bunaken & Lembeh North Sulawesi



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Photokit Color

by Alexander Mustard

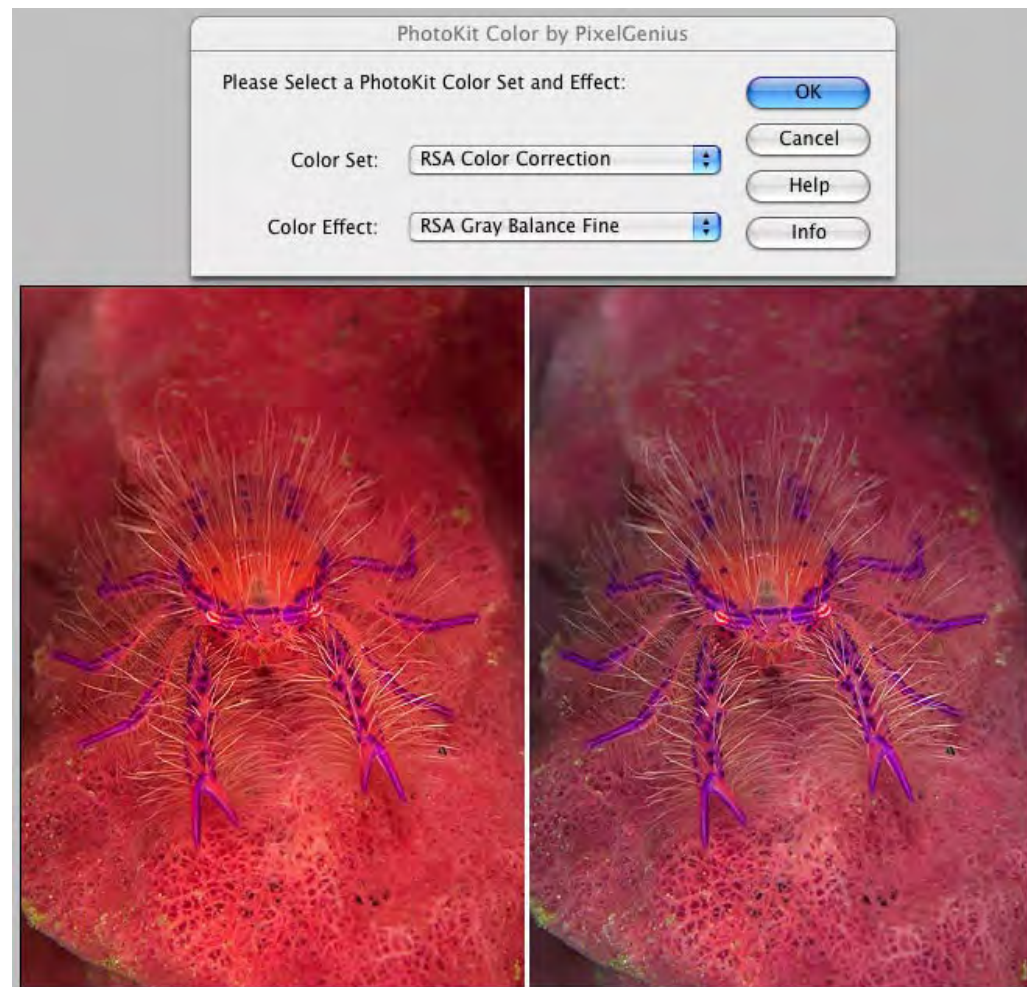
Martin Evening, Bruce Fraser, Seth Resnick, Andrew Rodney, Jeff Schewe and Mike Skurski. Type any of these names into Google and you will be left in no doubt that they leading lights in the world of digital imaging. Pixel Genius is the company that brings their many talents together, so I am sure that you can understand our interest when an invitation to try their latest software release, Photokit Color, popped up in the UWP inbox.

Photokit Color is software that makes precise colour adjustments, applies creative colour effects and automatically colour balances images using commands that accurately reproduce the effects of traditional in camera and darkroom photographic processes. The software works well and has been programmed by a group who really know their business, so the adjustments are accurate and are made with the utmost respect for image quality. The aim of this review is to discuss how applicable this software is for the underwater photographer. I do not intend to review all the effects, but I have tried to select the ones I think are most appropriate for the sorts of images we take.

Pixel Genius have shrewdly not

tried to re-invent the wheel, instead Photokit Color runs as a Plug-In within the industry standard and ubiquitous Adobe Photoshop (versions 7 and CS only). From start to finish I had no problems - the software was completely robust and is designed with a good slice of common sense. Importantly all the effects are applied as new layers, allowing the user to precisely control their strength by simply adjusting the opacity of each new layer. That said, taking on high resolution multilayered images in 16 bit/channel colour depth does require a healthy portion of RAM (note that 16 bit/channel compatibility is only available in CS). In addition the Pixel Genius website includes a comprehensive yet concise user guide, that includes helpful animated “mouse-over” examples of all the effects.

Downloading the software is very simple - I just filled in my credit card details, paid \$100 USD and clicked my mouse a few times. You can download the software for a free 7 day trial from www.pixelgenius.com. The Macintosh version is 6.2MB, and takes about the same time as UWP to download! Then I simply clicked a few more times to install it and just started up Photoshop and found the software ready and waiting under the FILE>AUTOMATE menu.



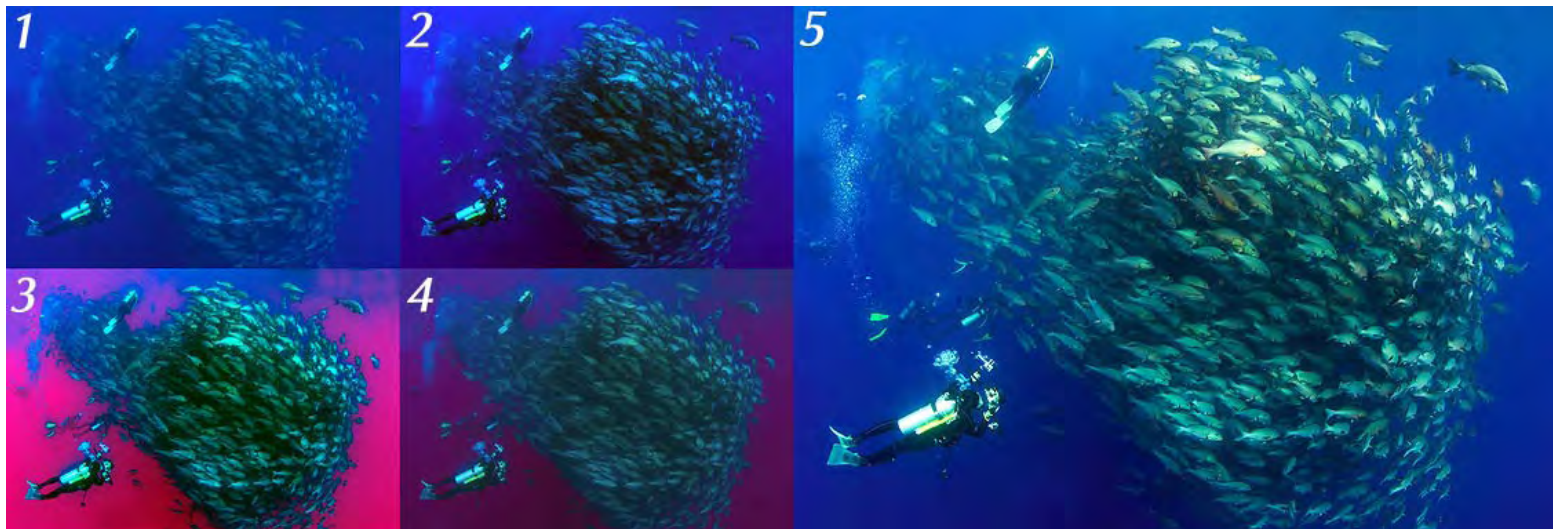
Macro shots on strongly coloured backgrounds can easily pick up a colour cast from reflected light, such as the left hand image of this hairy squat lobster. The RSA Gray Balance tool is very effective for correcting the colour balance in a single application.

The Photokit Effects

The 115 effects are divided into 8 colour sets. I doubt any user would use them all, but most would soon find a several favourites that they

would use regularly.

Probably the simplest set to understand is “Tone Enhance”, which is where I started. These effects adjust tone, either lightening or darkening the image in standard f-stop related



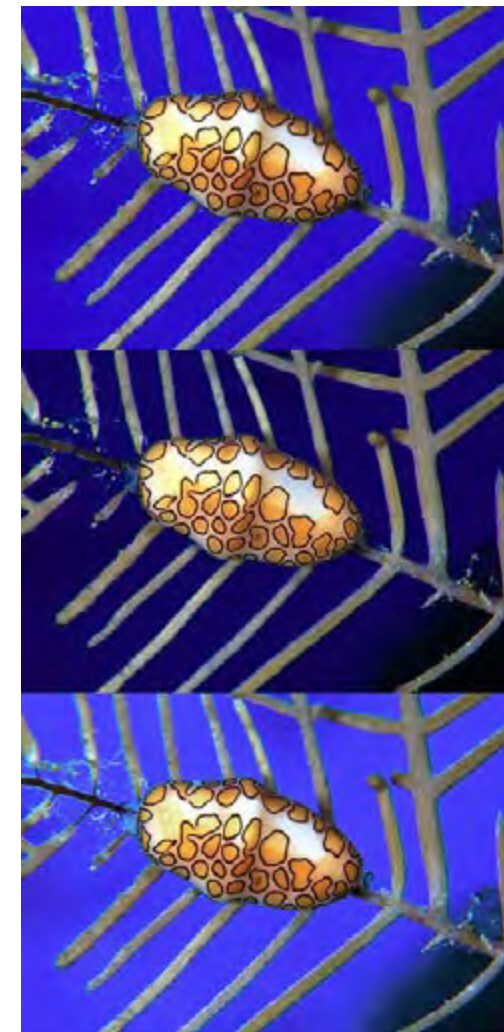
This image as shot (1) of a school of snappers is far too blue and offers an extreme test for auto colour balancing. 2) shows the application of Photoshop's Auto-Colour, 3) the application of Photoshop's Auto-Levels and 4) RSA Gray Balance. All struggle with the blue and all add too much red. 5) is processed manually only in Adobe RAW Converter, which seems the best solution for this type of image.

increments. Also within this set are contrast effects that selectively increase or decrease the contrast either in the shadows and highlights or in the mid tones of the image. I found that the Boost Contrast effect was particularly good at hiding shadow noise in high ISO, available light images that I had taken with a digital compact camera. In general, though, while this is a convenient interface and effective tool, I felt that knowing that I was adjusting tone by a 1/2 f-stop was a little irrelevant, and I would rarely feel the need for these tools in place of the standard Photoshop commands. Anyway, that gave me the excuse to move on to the feature I was most keen to try out:

the "RSA (Rule Seeking Algorithm) Colour Correction" set. Underwater our images can pick up colour casts in many ways: shooting through too much water gives a blue/cyan cast, taking a macro image on a strong coloured background (e.g a sponge) causes a cast from the light reflected from it, and digital photographers have the additional problem that incorrect white balance settings also create a colour cast. The RSA Color Correction tool appealed to me because unlike using Levels in Photoshop, RSA will correct the colour balance of the image without adjusting the tone or contrast. I found that this tool worked very well for flash dominated images, and blue

backgrounds were left blue so long as they didn't fill too much of the frame. However, as the area of blue in the image increased the more the software struggled, and the more I had to fade the opacity of the effect to get a pleasing result. When the images were too blue, like the extreme example fish school, the software really struggled and ended up painting the water red (note that Auto-Levels made a similar mess)!

I was also keen to try the "Colour Compensation Filter Correction" and the "Colour Temperature Filter Correction" sets, which both replicate the effect of photographic filters. I use both these types of filters underwater for available light photography



The flamingo tongue original image is top. The other two show single applications of Darken Blue and Lighten Blue effects. Lightening of blues is not as easy as darkening colours. This is clearly an effective post processing tool for controlling the background of underwater images.

Split Toning effects are a quick way of livening up black and white images, such as this image of the Wreck of the Gianni D. I have chosen strong tones here, to show the difference with the original black and white image on the left. But as with all the Photokit effects the strength can be controlled by varying layer opacity.



and I wanted to test if the software was a substitute for doing it in situ. Unsurprisingly it wasn't. It is much more effective to filter real light than the colours in a Photoshop file! I guess this wasn't a very fair test because we use very strong filters when shooting in available light underwater. These filters were effective for adding extra warmth to normal flash lit underwater images. I was not expecting to find much interest in the "Color Enhance" set, but actually these effects are a very easy way of selectively lightening and darkening colours in an image. I found them an excellent way to control the brightness and saturation of blue water backgrounds, without altering the fall off of light with depth. Darkening was generally easier than lightening, but for both this is a quick and effective fix. In addition, the saturation control was particularly useful for boosting reds in images. This set provides some useful tools for the underwater photographer,

some of which would become firm favourites.

The "Cross Processing" set replicates the effect of developing either C41 film or E6 film in the incorrect chemicals. While this technique was always popular with land photographers keen to produce a new interpretation of subjects familiar to their audience, it has never been a popular technique underwater, I guess because we find getting the correct colours much harder in the first place and having done so we are less likely to want to mess with them! Similarly the "Color Overlays" set that applies strong colour tints to images is also unlikely to be popular. I feel that both these sets are more of a curiosity for underwater photographers, but they may appeal in creative work such as swimming pool/model shoots. The final set, "Split Toning" turned out

to be another favourite. Split Toning is a chemical darkroom technique for adding colours to monochrome images, and this set recreates the effect in the computer. Julian Calverley made a big impact on British underwater photography when his split toned scenic pictures first appeared (see UWP Issue 1). Well this tool is probably best described as one-click-Calverley, since it only takes one application of Photokit to create your own look-a-likes. I found the blue/cyan, cyan/green and cyan/sepia splits the most applicable for underwater images. Easy to do and fun. I guess my only concern is that since Julian's style is so well known, it is difficult to recreate this technique without getting that Xerox feeling.

Photokit Color provides a very extensive set of effects for image manipulation, a decent number of

which are well suited for optimising underwater images. The main addition I would like to see is that the commands were accessible through short-cut keys, rather than only with the mouse. Other than that, these tools should appeal to both the Photoshop addict, who enjoys the hours in front of the computer creating new images, and also for the Photoshop-phobe, who is looking for a more photographer friendly interface to unlock the power of Photoshop. I think that this product will appeal less to those who already know how to fly Photoshop - and feel that they can create any of these effects for themselves without spending 100 Dollars. I admit that I would place myself in this later group. But wait! Stop the press! It is now a week after I wrote this review and I have to own up to the fact that I keep going back and using Photokit Color. Not because I have to, but because it is just so easy and it just works when you need to get a Photoshop job done. I'd recommend to everyone to download and try a week's free trial of this software, but be warned you might find it hard to say goodbye!

Alexander Mustard
alex@amustard.com

Capturing Images of Nudibranch Behavior

by Nonoy Tan

With so many beautiful photographic subjects in the reef, I have been tempted in the past to press the camera shutter indiscriminately. While this had provided me a variety of images, I soon noticed that it lacked the distinctiveness or uniqueness that I was looking for. Consequently, I decided to specialize and pay closer attention to nudibranchs, which are locally abundant in my country, the Philippines. Bearing in mind the large number of species and varieties available, there was no shortage of subjects. Soon enough, my fascination for them had blossomed into an even more specialized level of interest, i.e. capturing images of nudibranch behavior.

Considering the slow locomotion of nudibranchs, I had previously assumed that it should be very easy taking photographs of their activities. But after several attempts, I realized that I was wrong. While most nudibranchs cannot crawl or swim away as fast as fish, they can be found in constant motion particularly when engaged in some type of

activity. Thus, being able to “capture the moment” can be a challenge. I learned that success was dependent on how well I can identify a photographic opportunity, and then how fast I could compose, focus and then press the shutter. Eventually, I had to change my slow focusing F70 to a camera body that could fast-focus with the 105mm lens – my lens of choice for getting most nudibranch shots, although I sometimes use the 60mm for larger slugs. I chose the F100 because of its price, rapid auto focus, feature that allows changing the focus area (great for off-center focusing), and lighter weight compared to the more expensive and robust Nikon professional SLRs (F4 or F5, while the F6 wasn’t available in the market at that time). In order to keep things simple, I often kept the F100 at its fastest strobe synch speed of 1/250.

My choice for lighting is a couple of Ikelite 200 substrobes. Their fast-



A pair of Pteraeolidia ianthina engaged in a scuffle. Nexus housing, Nikon F100 with 105 mm lens, 1/250, F22, twin Ikelite 200 substrobes, RVP135

recycling times of 1.6 seconds and reliable focusing lights were right for the job. The modeling/focusing lights also provided illumination during night dives so I didn’t have to use a separate torch. The older Ikelite 200 substrobes, however, had to undergo a compatibility adjustment for the F100. Ikelite accomplished this for a minor fee. The customization, which I did myself, was gluing positively buoyant rubber pads (floaters) on the strobes. This made the heavy strobes

neutral underwater and therefore easier to manage on a Nexus housing, especially during long dives where holding a negatively buoyant camera set-up can be tiring.

Apart from the change in equipment, my diving conduct also underwent alterations. Hunting for nudibranchs meant meticulously exploring every square foot of reef and covering less ground per dive. Instead of the normal sightseeing across the reefs, I would just stay in



(Above) A pair of mating *Risbecia tryoni*. Nexus housing, Nikon F100 with 105 mm lens, 1/250, F25, twin Ikelite 200 substrobes, RVP135

(Top right) *Hypselodoris bullocki* laying its eggs. Nexus housing, Nikon F100 with 105 mm lens, 1/250, F16, twin Ikelite 200 substrobes, RVP135

(Bottom right) A pair of *Chromodoris willani* at the moment of initial engagement. Nexus housing, Nikon F100 with 105 mm lens, 1/250, F22, twin Ikelite 200 substrobes, RVP135



one or several places during the entire dive, waiting for nudibranchs to do something. This may take an hour or more. I remember spending one of those 120-minute dives watching a group of *Pteraeolidia ianthina* in very shallow waters. My patience paid off when a scuffle ensued between a pair of *Pteraeolidia ianthina*. Using

its sucker, an aggressive *Pteraeolidia* pounced its hapless victim, while the latter violently shoved away its assailant in self-defense. I learned that this hostile action was not uncommon among this species, and began to capture this behavior on film in following dives.

Because there wasn't enough



Marionia sp. swallowing a Golden Gymnodoris. Nexus housing, Nikon F100 with 105 mm lens, 1/250, F16, twin Ikelite 200 substrobes, RVP135

literature on nudibranch behavior, I had to depend on information from very few experts; nonetheless I was largely relying on my first-hand observations. It was a process of self-training and gradually learned that it is sometimes possible to predict specific slug behavior depending on the circumstances. For example, the presence of two or more individuals of the same species in close proximity to each other increases the chances of a mating or an aggressive behavior. Also, the availability of food sources nearby (such as cnidarians and algae)

is certainly a condition for feeding. Apparently, knowledge gained through study and past observations has helped me identify good situations that are worth investigating. In the waters of Ligpo Island (near Anilao) for instance, I have observed that a certain species of fish always lays eggs on a specific piece of rock, and that the nudibranch *Hypselodoris krakatoa* is fond of feasting on those fish eggs. Thus, I inspect this piece of rock every time I am in search of the *Hypselodoris krakatoa*. There are however occasions when the



A Nembrotha lineolata stretches to feed. Nikon F100 with 105 mm lens, 1/250, F16, twin Ikelite 200 substrobes, RVP135

unexpected happens. This was the case when I took photographs of a nudibranch eating another slug. At first, I didn't know that this type of "cannibalism" was possible. After sending the images to a nudibranch expert, I was informed that the *Marionia* nudibranch was swallowing the slug, *Golden Gymnodoris*. This was a total surprise for two reasons. First, as far as present scientific knowledge is concerned, the *Marionia* feeds on soft corals and not slugs; and second, the *Golden Gymnodoris* being a predator of other slugs, ought to be

the one doing the feasting.

This brings me to another vital ingredient in photographing nudibranch behavior, which I would describe as "luck" – for the lack of any precise explanation. After having observed the *Marionia* eating a *Gymnodoris*, I subsequently endeavored to find something similar in the same vicinity. After subsequent dives, not only was I unable to see such behavior again, but also I couldn't even find a single *Marionia* or *Gymnodoris*. Apparently, the consistency of abundance or scarcity



Hypselodoris krakatoa feasting on fish eggs. Nikon F100 with 105 mm lens, 1/250, F16, twin Ikelite 200 substrobes, RVP135

of the Marionia (and other slugs with but a few exceptions) in the same location cannot be ascertained. Where they were once plenty, the same nudibranch species seem to vanish after sometime, and then inexplicably reappear. Thus as a matter of strategy, the way to increase the chances of getting those rare behavioral shots is for the underwater photographer to spend more and even more time underwater.

While capturing images of nudibranch behavior presents unique challenges, it can be enthralling and

addictive. After my first few images, I got hooked and slug activity had become the focus of ensuing dives. Undoubtedly, this quest has given me another reason to stay underwater.

Nonoy Tan
nonoytan@yahoo.com



Nonoy Tan was born in Manila, Philippines. He started diving in 1997, and immediately took a keen interest in underwater photography. He is especially fond of capturing images of marine life behavior and critters found during endless muck dives. By profession, Nonoy is a development worker, and spends most of his time (when not underwater) in the poor, rural communities of Africa and Asia.

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The Art of Shooting Blue:

Basic Techniques for Using Natural Light

by Ethan Daniels

So you've seen articles like this before, I know, but give me a crack at enlightening you with a few of my tricks. I promise not to try and sell filters, film, flashcards, cameras, doohickies, or thingamajigs to you. All I want to do is impart some very basic, common sense, and easy-to-do ideas that may assist your photography.

Too many would-be underwater photographers are adamant about using artificial light on each and every shot they take. You see every major professional photographer carry a gigantic housing, along with at least one, and usually two stadium lights attached. To give these people their credit, they do know when and where to use those strobes. This article is being written to refute the case for what I call "over-strobing," the use of staged light too often. Don't get me wrong, there are many practical uses and cases in which strobe light is warranted. On the other hand, there are also a plethora of possibilities of shooting with pure, unadulterated, natural light waves (or photons) direct from our nearest star, the sun.

If you remember waaaayyy back to your earliest physics class (or if you can't dig that deep into your

memory, then try thinking of your open water class) you learned that light hits our planet in waves. To over-simplify the issue, the frequency of those light waves determine what colors you see, i.e. red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet (ROYGBIV). The ocean filters certain light waves out, beginning with red, then orange, yellow, and so on the deeper you get until there is no light and there's nothing to see. So, as you descend during a dive fewer colors are apparent.

Twenty meters down you will see mostly blue light, that is if you're in clear, nutrient-free, tropical waters where natural light photography works best. Nutrient rich regions will have much more of a green cast to the water and using only natural light is more challenging, though certainly still applicable. Places like California's kelp forests are perfect for natural light images when visibility cooperates due to light beams that filter down through the canopy.

You understand that bit, now how does one go about creating a visually stimulating image with pure blueish light underwater? Since you're not relying on color to make your image



A Japanese "Jake" seaplane shot down during WWII makes another wonderful opportunity for a wide angle ambient light image. There are many angles that make this image pop but the one seen here is a classic. Taken on a bright morning dive with decent visibility, the aluminum plane glows with reflected light.

*Equipment: Nikonos V, Sea & Sea fisheye lens Exposure: 1/60th at f/8
Film: Fuji Velvia 50*

pop you need strong contrast. Timing your dive when there is strong sunlight and decent visibility is one way to get this effect. The stronger the light and the fewer particles in the water the more dramatic the contrast will be in the image, which is what you want. Also, the closer you are to the subject the deeper the contrast, which is why wide angle lenses like a 15mm or fisheye lens works wonders. If a super wide angle lens isn't in your quiver

then use a 20 mm or even a 28 mm. Each of these lenses has its advantage depending on the subject. A 28 mm or 35 mm could be used to fill the frame with a shark or eagle ray silhouette from a distance. Admittedly, shooting macro subject with natural light can be difficult due to the extremely small depth of field that is available. But, never say never. Come up with a beautiful natural light macro image and you'll be heralded around the



The silhouette of a diver and the forward kingpost of a WWII wreck, the Chuyo Maru. If my strobe fails, which it does with maddening frequency, I'm forced to shoot silhouettes. This was one of those days. Luckily both the sun and visibility were cooperating, plus I had a beautiful coral festooned WWII wreck to work with.

*Equipment: Nikonos V, Nikonos 15mm lens
Exposure: 1/90th at f/22 Film: Fuji Velvia 50*



Blue Holes in Palau is a beautiful example of a site that screams for super wide angle ambient light pictures. The cavern is so large it is difficult to fit all of it in with a 15mm lens. It is also important to have good visibility.

*Equipment: Nikonos V, Nikonos 15mm lens
Exposure: 1/30th at f/2.8 Film: Fuji Velvia 50*

world.

Cloudy days are not optimal for shooting with ambient light, though striking images can still be manufactured. For low light conditions, you'll need higher film speed, or greater ASA on your digital camera, but that's not a huge deal. Now that we're on the subject of film speed, let's also break a few rules here and use whatever speed you want. Ninety nine percent of the time I will load my camera with slow 50 ASA film due to the virtually non-existent grain and color that it produces. You'll hear from other sources that shooting natural light requires at least 200 ASA. Throw that recommendation out the window. In the tropics, where light intensity is strong and the water is nutrient-free, there's almost never a need for 200 ASA (except for deep dives, well over 30 meters) and I've never shot anything higher than 100 ASA even in California! For those of you who have actually caught up with today's digital technologies, it's a bit easier to experiment with different ASAs on the same dive. Using slow speed film, or a low ASA, only means that you'll have to either slow your shutter speed or open your aperture. Again, no big deal. If you're still using film, try some black and white some time, you'll be surprised at your product.

Alright, now you know to use whatever film you're most comfortable with. To be sure and get the exposure correct you can either learn through the painful process of trial and error, like I did, use a light meter (if you have the cash), or use some tricks of the trade. First, I will tell you that whatever you do, BRACKET a few shots. You never really know what is going to look best so either bracket using your aperture or the film speed dial (on a Nikonos). If an image is worth taking the time, energy, and compressed air to get, it's worth doing at least twice

while bracketing. A good friend of mine taught me this trick, using a Nikonos, with the shutter on automatic, bump your film ASA dial up to twice what the film speed actually is. If you're using 50 ASA, dial in at 100; if using 100 ASA, dial in at 200, etc. This works magic if the subject is below you swimming across a reef, or when shooting a wreck horizontally.

Now on to what you really want to read about, what type of subjects look best on film or a monitor in natural light. This short list may seem rather obvious to some, but I constantly watch divers shooting subjects without a strobe that will be blob-like and indefinable on film. Proper composition of a subject is key to producing a good photograph. I spend more time thinking about composition than I do about any other photography related issue. Not only is it critical to each image, but it's a lot of fun coming up with new and innovative ideas of how to position yourself and your subject.

The most frequently done natural light shot is the silhouette. A well positioned, powerful silhouette can be a defining image for a photographer. A few of my silhouettes sell better than all the rest of my library combined! If the sun can be incorporated into the shot it gives the subject more contrast and I can't overemphasize the importance of dark vs light.

When I think of the quintessential

ambient light image, I automatically think of a wreck. Wrecks are marine time capsules that when captured in a crisp natural light shot seem filled with history and ghost-ridden. A sense of nostalgia is attached to these timeless images, similar to black and white pictures of relatives that have been passed down for generations.

Another option when shooting natural light in an area where there are shallow caverns is to focus on light streaming down from above. A perfect example of this is Blue Holes in Palau where three holes in the reef flat allow light beams to fill a large limestone cavern with blue light.

Large animals like sharks, rays, and people can make impressive natural light shots either as a silhouette, against a reef wall, swimming over a wreck, or on top of a clean, sandy bottom. Generally, I shoot all of these subjects with slow, 50 ASA film, at 1/60 at varying f-stops depending on the angle.

One last bit of advice, don't be afraid of breaking any of those strict photography rules you read in magazines or books! Finding new and innovative ways of shooting subjects is part of the magic of photography so don't pay attention to those who dwell on saying "you must do this, you must do that..." Go out on your next dive and break all of the u/w photography commandments! No one is grading you on the images that don't work,



*A Spotted eagle ray, *Aetobatis narinari*, glides into the sun. It's important, when shooting straight up, to know where your bubbles are. It helps to be swimming into a bit of current because your exhaust is swept away. I didn't have to get that close to this animal because I had a 28 mm lens on the camera.*

Equipment: Nikonos V, Nikonos 28mm lens Exposure: 1/90th at f/22 Film: Fuji Velvia 50

so experiment and analyze what you come up with. Remember, you learn through doing. Oh yeah, one more time, BRACKET!



An unusual all black Manta birostris swimming over a shallow reef. This was only a tough shot because of how difficult it was to catch up with the manta from above. The key here was getting close without spooking the ray. Never look an animal in the eye as they seem to find that intimidating. I drained my tank fairly quickly on this dive huffing and puffing trying to stay up in the water column with a knot and a half of current.

Ethan Daniels
daniels_ethan@hotmail.com

Hans Hass

Under the Seven Seas

by Patrick Baker

Books of fine underwater photographs are now commonplace. As beautiful as many of these are I have lost count of the “coffee table volumes” featuring the underwater world that have appeared in the past 35 years. However, the first such book, a now very rare volume, appeared in Germany in 1955 and in England the following year.

Hans Hass's *I Photographed under the Seven Seas* is an compilation of his photographs, work which had begun just before WWII. On page after page are unique images from Hass' pioneering underwater experiences; the first sub-surface pictures of whale sharks, sperm whales, manta rays and coral gardens. Of the 148 images only a handful are in colour, reflecting publishing practices of the time rather than photographic ability. Hass had in fact been producing underwater colour since 1939 although the majority of his published work was monochrome. (In 1997, on being shown some of Australian photographer Wade Hughes' modern black-and-white pictures, Hass exclaimed “Ah, Real Photography!”).



In this book his pictures, and those of his colleagues and wife, Lotte, were complimented by Hass's description of the “Why, When and Hows” of his work; the research expeditions as well as the principles and technical details of underwater photography.

However, as ground- (wave-?) breaking as this book was it was not Hans Hass' first underwater photographic publication. In 1942 he produced *Fotojagd am Meersgrund*, an even more rare, photo-filled handbook, on what must have seemed at that time the improbable, even impossible, practice of underwater photography.

Some years ago, unable to find an original of Hans Hass's *I Photographed under the Seven Seas* I asked Helmut Debelius if he could

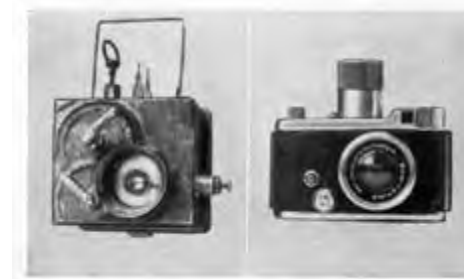


keep an eye open for a copy of the German version. He wrote back to say he had been unable to find me one... but “wondered if this was of interest”. I opened the package and there was “this”; Hass's 1942 underwater photographic primer. Here for me was a book of dreams; a book of which I had been unaware!

Although unable to read the German text I was entranced as I turned over page of illustrated page (200 pages, with 104 photographs). My knowledge of Hass's early exploits had been gained from many readings of *Diving to Adventure*, the first in 1955. That classic describes the failures of his first photographic attempts and is illustrated with a small selection of his successes. *Fotojagd am Meersgrund* shows, apparently,

Hans and Lotte Hass with underwater Leica and the very first RolleiMarine camera housing; Queensland, 1952

State-of-the-art underwater Robot camera, circa 1942



the whole collection of underwater pictures from his first, 1939/40, Caribbean expedition. Now I could see how he learned from his initial failures and, with impressive self-will, gained success. He was aged 20 but was already sure of the potential for direct biological observations under the sea, with photography an essential tool for communicating this to the widest possible public. Among the illustrations are pictures of aluminium and transparent (German plexiglass?) housings, goggle divers, with and without fins and usually armed with long fish spears. But, mostly, unique photographs of the underwater world. There is a motor drive sequence and several colour plates. Longley and Martin's 1927 National Geographic article had shown colour photographs



Colour plate of Jörg Böhler amongst Caribbean corals

taken on very slow Autochrome glass plates, illuminated, albeit realistically, with a virtual bomb of magnesium flash powder. Hass's available light photos, taken on the early, rather subdued, 35mm Agfacolor Neu film, are the earliest colour images I have seen taken by a free-swimming diver. 16mm movie film was shot using tripod mounted camera and bulky diving helmet, before discarding these too to swim freely. (Some of this film can be viewed on the *(British) Historical Diving Society's* video, *DIVING From the Past -Into the Future; Part 1*).

The book has a forward by "The Sea Devil" himself, the raider Count

von Luckner, a Great War hero to Germanic youth. In fact Hass bought his first research ship *Sea Devil* from the Count. He never got to actually operate it as a mobile research base, for it was seized by the Soviets as war booty. However, by 1942, the seeds for the future of modern underwater research and photography had been sown. Within 10 years Hans and Lotte's *Xarifa* had begun to explore the Oceans, manned by marine scientists and equipped with laboratories and finely engineered still and movie cameras designed by themselves. The world-wide awareness of the underwater world had begun.

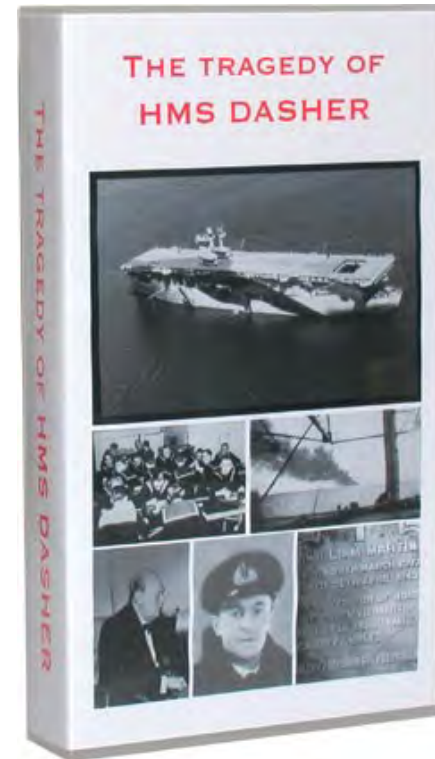
Pat Baker

patrick.baker@museum.wa.gov.au

Baker Portrait by John Mokrzycki



The Tragedy of HMS Dasher



On March 27th 1943 HMS Dasher, a hastily converted aircraft carrier, mysteriously exploded and sank within 8 minutes in the Clyde. Of the 528 men on board, only 149 survived. 379 lives were lost.

Of the 379 who perished, only 23 were given an official burial. However many more bodies - either brought ashore or washed up on local beaches and possibly burned beyond recognition, lie in unmarked plots. To this day, no acknowledgement has been made of the number or the whereabouts of these unmarked graves.

"The Tragedy of HMS Dasher" is a 54 minute documentary video about the short life and tragic end of a ship that is still surrounded in controversy.

Using archive footage and interviews with survivors and witnesses, the video recreates the events leading up to the tragedy and then exposes the Government's absolute veil of secrecy regarding the truth about the sinking. This lasting and callous secrecy has left hundreds of families not knowing what happened to their sons, brothers, relatives or loved ones and most went to their graves still not knowing.

VHS copies cost £16.95 (+£2.50 UK post) Total £19.45

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Book reviews

Magic Lantern Guide Nikon D70

by Simon Stafford

It seems odd that there should be a demand for a book about the Nikon D70 when it is already provided with a comprehensive instruction manual at the time of purchase.

However, this 240 page 5 x 7.5" paperback takes the instruction much further with expanded explanations of all of the camera's functions as well as hundreds of very useful hints and suggestions based on practical experience.

I particularly liked the section on the Custom Setup capabilities. These settings allow you to control the camera to your own requirements and, whilst they are dealt with in detail in the camera's manual, the Magic Lantern goes into much more detail and provides logical suggestion on each of the 25 custom settings.

There is a comprehensive section on Manual and i-TTL flash photography which I found very informative for my land photography as I use the i-TTL almost exclusively. Underwater, however, I feel much more comfortable with Manual flash exposure.



Finally there is a good section about digital images in general and an especially useful one about working with digital images and the 'workflow'. This offers very practical advice on the organisation needed to work with your work as there is much more to it compared to film images.

The Magic Lantern guide picks up where the camera's instruction manual leaves off and provides a level of information which will definitely help you understand this amazing camera more and almost certainly improve your images.

Magic Lantern guides are published by www.larkbooks.com

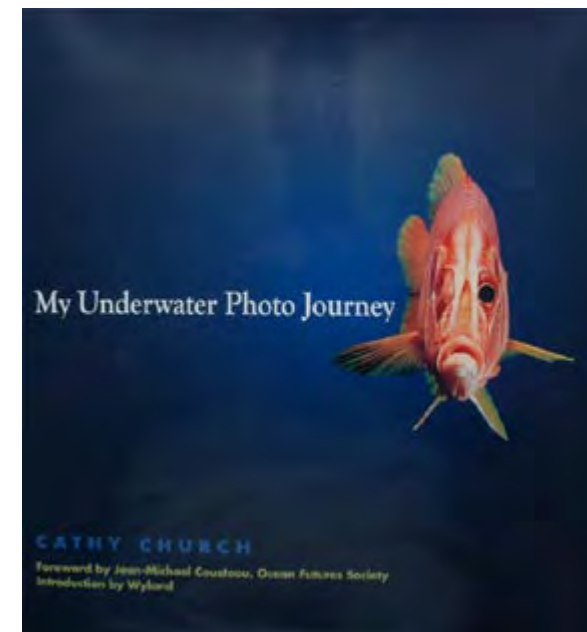
My Underwater Photo Journey by Cathy Church

Cathy Church is without doubt an icon in underwater photography who has devoted the majority of her life teaching others how to improve their shots either in live courses or in any one of her four books on the subject.

In the course of her career I suspect the majority of her shots were taken with tuition in mind and put to good use imparting encouragement and enlightenment to her students. This book, however, as the title suggests, is more about the shots Cathy takes for herself.

Cathy's back yard for the last 15 years has been the Caymans and a lots of the images in this book were taken there. Sure there's other international destinations like the Solomons, Maldives, Papua New Guinea etc but for me it is the Caribbean shots are the highlight of this book. I've heard so many underwater photographers belittle the area but Cathy's shots are a confirmation that it is far from barren.

This is a book you can read through or dip into as each image stands up on its own with a short caption and camera details. As I went through this book I was trying to



think just what it was that makes it so different and then I realised that I was getting a beautiful sense of calm from nearly all the images. They are beautifully lit, sympathetically composed and very consistent in their quality.

There are just over 140 images in this 11" x 10" book which costs \$39.95 (+ shipping) and they are available direct from www.cathychurch.com

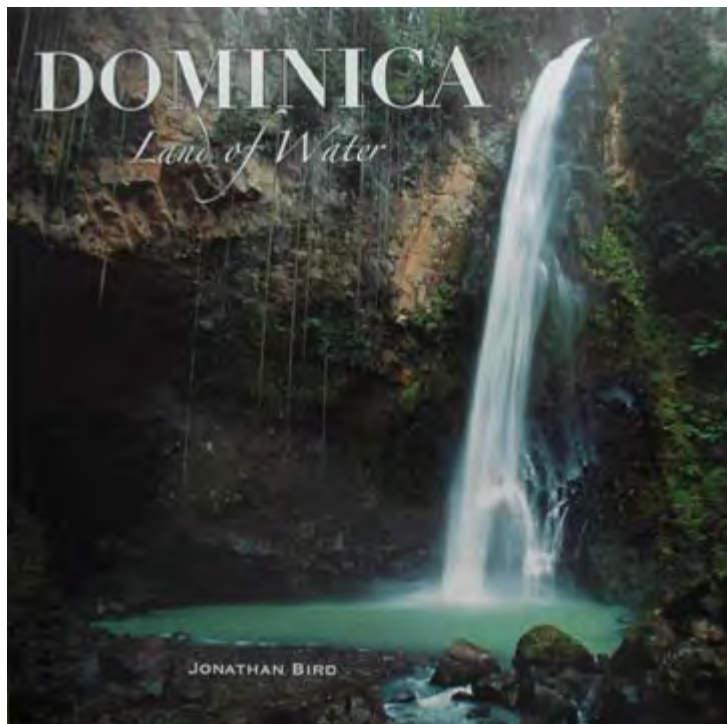
Dominica Land of water by Jonathan Bird

This 9" x 9" 96 page book is a visual celebration of the natural world of Dominica.

Having visited the island in 2002 I spent a week sampling the delights of this amazing island both above and below the water but obviously a week is not long enough to capture all the elements on film.

Jonathan Bird's book "Dominica - Land of water" is the result of many trips to the island and the images he has captured are excellent. Half the book is surface shots and half underwater and it confirms that Dominica is one of those rare places where both habitats are pristine. The lush tropical rain forests compete with the dazzling underwater colours to provide a complete natural package.

For anyone who has visited Dominica this book is the ideal

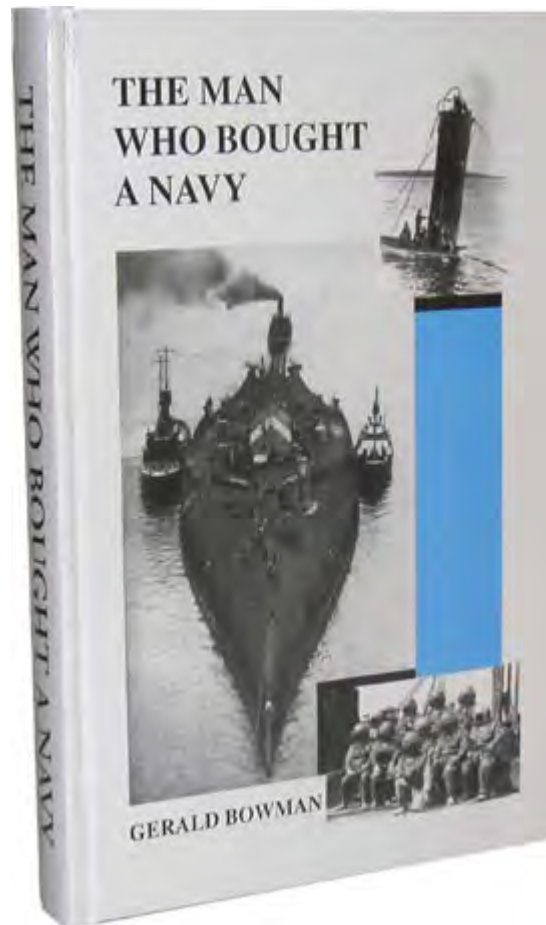


reminder and for those who have yet to visit this book confirms it should be the next place you should go.

Copies cost \$19.95 and are available at www.jonathanbird.net

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

The Man who bought a Navy



Pieced together after much research and told for the first time in this autobiography is the astounding story of what is regarded as the greatest achievement in the history of marine salvage - the raising of the German Fleet at Scapa Flow.

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The type of articles we're looking for fall into five main categories:

Uw photo techniques - Balanced light, composition, etc

Locations - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards

Subjects - Anything from whale sharks to nudibranchs in full detail

Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment

Personalities - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

**If you have an idea for an article,
contact me first before putting pen to paper.**

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How to submit articles

To keep UwP simple and financially viable, we can only accept submissions by e mail and they need to be done in the following way:

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2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 144dpi

Size - Maximum length 15cm i.e. horizontal pictures would be 15 cm wide and verticals would be 15cm.

File type - Save your image as a JPG file and set the compression to "Medium" quality. This should result in images no larger than about 120k which can be transmitted quickly. If we want larger sizes we will contact you.

3. Captions - **Each and every image MUST have full photographic details** including camera, housing, lens, lighting, film, aperture, shutter speed and exposure mode. These must also be copied and pasted into the body of the e mail.

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Martin is now offering one-to-one tuition on any aspect of UWP, from branching out into digital to mastering techniques such as close-up, macro, wide-angle and composition. Tuition will focus on your own personal requirements, whatever may be important for you. Phone Martin or Sylvia Edge on 01202 887611 or e mail martin@edgeunderwaterphotography.com Also go to web site www.edgeunderwaterphotography.com

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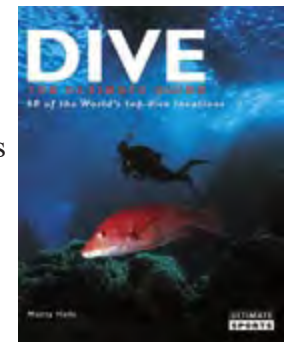
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Parting shots



Wolf Eels. I searched the internet and low and behold the ocean pout and wolf eel are from the same family - zoarcidae! This was great news to me, I now have a favorite specie to photograph. I am now fully involved in photographing Ocean Pout and I am building quite a collection of shots of this playful eel.

I hope all avid photographers have the same experience and develop a love for a particuluar subject, it injects new fun into underwater photography. My next goal: sunken German U-Boats!!!!

Vernon Heagy
vernh@smokeysdiversden.com



Do you have a nice shot with a short story behind it?

If so e mail me and yours could be the next "Parting shot".

peter@uwpmag.com

I have done alot of East Coast Wreck Diving [NJ, DE, MD] and I have photographed alot of different animals. But have never really taken an interest in any specific species until recently. After a trip to British Columbia, I fell in love with photographing Wolf Eels. But after returning to my native PA, there of course were none to photograph. Soon after I was diving off the coast of Delaware on the wreck Northern Pacific, a 500ft ocean liner lying inverted at 140fsw. I noticed these "eels" hiding everywhere. I started to approach and photograph them and they were not shy nor did they retreat into their holes. They actually seemed to enjoy the attention and were very curious about the bubble-blowing diver in front of them. "FLASH" and they were still curious, it was amazing. I could shoot them all I wanted and they just stared at me. Needless to say I shot about 50 pics that dive and 50 more pics on the 2nd dive of the day. After showing some of the other divers on the dive boat my pics [digital is wonderful in this way] I was informed this specie was the Ocean Pout.

I returned home to start my investigation between Ocean Pout and