

Ocean Art Winners

The prestigious Ocean Art Underwater Photo Competition, organized by the Underwater Photography Guide, has announced its 2018 winners.

The Best of Show is a graceful photo of three Giant Devil Rays performing a “ballet”, which uses soft, ambient light to accentuate the movements of elegant giants, shot by Duncan Murrell.

The judges evaluated thousands of entries from 70 countries before selecting the final set of images as Ocean Art winners.

Ocean Art 2018 judges included prestigious underwater photographers Tony Wu, Martin Edge, and Marty Snyderman, accompanied by Underwater Photography Guide publisher Scott Gietler.

Over \$80,000 in prizes will be awarded, making the Ocean Art prize value among the highest in the world.



This was an amazing and unique encounter with these beautiful rays. I have seen them quite a few times in Honda Bay, Palawan, often in the vicinity of the whale sharks that I have been photographing for more than ten years, but I only managed to get close to them on one occasion when there was a large shoal of them feeding on a huge bloom of krill; I was mesmerized as they ascended all around me like a squadron of fighter aircraft. On this occasion there was no apparent feeding behaviour as five of them swirled around me. I was subsequently informed by an expert on mobulids that what I witnessed was courtship behaviour with several males in pursuit of one female, which has rarely been seen or photographed before. Like many wild animals they evidently lose any caution when they are engaged in courtship behaviour like this. I approached three of them that were interacting with their graceful balletic movement just beneath the surface, and after creating the striking formation in this photo by converging right in front of me one of them proceeded to swim directly at me and downwards, brushing up against my body as it swept below me. I was absolutely stunned and surprised by the bravado, or perhaps aggression, curiosity or sexual arousal that compelled that normally shy animal to make contact with me; it was as if I was included in the courtship and being touched by his sexual abandon. Or another possibility is that he was attracted by the reflection in the glass dome port of my housing because he came right towards my face. The one coming from the left has been identified from another photo as a female from the bite marks beneath her pectoral fin inflicted by the males, and the other two are mature males. It was without a doubt one of my most amazing intimate wildlife encounters.

Location: Honda Bay, Palawan, the Philippines

Equipment Used: Canon EOS 6D with Canon 15mm F2.8 fisheye lens. Inon X2 housing with no strobes, just ambient lighting

Camera Settings: F7.1, 1/200 sec, ISO 500

www.uwphotographyguide.com/2018-ocean-art-contest-winners

Don't settle for 2nd best



Film - No Filter No
White Balance



Digital - No Filter Manual
White Balance



Magic Filter Manual
White Balance

Digital cameras have opened up new possibilities to underwater photographers. For available light photography manual white balance is an invaluable tool for restoring colours. But when you use it without a filter you are not making the most of the technique. You're doing all the hard work without reaping the full rewards. These three photos are all taken of the same wreck in the Red Sea. The left hand image was taken on slide film, which rendered the scene completely blue. The middle image is taken with a digital SLR without a filter, using manual white balance. The white balance has brought out some of the colour of the wreck, but it has also sucked all the blue out of the water behind the wreck, making it almost grey. The right hand image is taken with the same digital camera and lens, but this time using an original Magic Filter. The filter attenuates blue light meaning that the colours of the wreck are brought out and it stands out from the background water, which is recorded as an accurate blue.

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