

My Shot

by Peter Rowlands

In a round about way I have local Devon underwater photographer Dave Peake to thank, in part, for this shot. Let me explain.

Dave had been telling me of this special place in the north of Cawsand Bay where there are very colourful formations of Cornish volcanic rocks on the shore so one day, when the tide was right and it was relatively calm, he, Peter Rustage and I went over there on my boat and anchored slightly offshore.

We swam inshore to the rocky area but the viz was quite turbid and, although we could see the rocks, and I could definitely see their photographic potential, it wasn't to be so, that day.

On our swim back to the boat we came across this area of string weed where the viz was just as limited but, once back in the boat, we all said how good it would be for potential images. When I asked them why they had not told me about this site they said "We have only shore dived the rocks so we never came out this way and never knew it existed!"

Suitably motivated, I made a plan to revisit it when the tide was high after a spell of calm, rain free weather. That particular combination didn't occur until a couple of weeks



iPhone 11 Pro in a SeaFrogs housing with a Greenwater Magic Filter. 1/120th F2.4. 125 ISO

later when I dived the site with Marie Anderson as my patient model.

Once underwater we found the viz was still not perfect but certainly 'doable' so, armed with just my iPhone 11 Pro in a SeaFrogs housing with a Greenwater Magic Filter, I set about taking shots using the amazing 'Pano' feature.

For the uninitiated this involves starting the exposure and panning the camera across the scene from left to right. As the camera pans, the software takes vertical slices and stitches them together 'live' so you can see how the shot is developing; it is a most enjoyable photographic experience but it does not always turn out as

envisaged. The camera can get fooled by open water but, no problem, just move slightly and retake the shot until it turns out better.

On this dive I took about thirty shots and I'd say just over half worked but the obvious advantage of digital is that it costs nothing to take the shots so, if at first you don't succeed etc etc.

We were in no more than five metres of water so the light levels were good and the somewhat basic iPhone

Auto White Balance was able to give pleasing results with the help of the GreenWater Magic Filter of course :-)

The image was 'tweaked' (contrast/clarity) slightly in Lightroom and I'm not sure what caused the light streak at the top of the frame so it's 'warts and all!'

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**Do you have a favourite shot or an image/s
which made a dive special.
E mail yours with some text to
peter@uwpmag.com
and yours could be the next My Shot/s**

Parting Shot

Devils Den is a popular freshwater spring in North Central Florida. This location is unique as it is a karst window that opens into a vast air-filled chamber. Most karst windows are simply surface openings into our underwater river systems. An entrance, if you will, into a cave system where the water comes to the surface. Devils Den is different. A diver descends via a set of stairs starting at ground level and going down another 30 feet to the 'lake'. The ceiling is a dome of rock with a round skylight (the karst window) in the middle.

Rocks from the ceiling have fallen into the lake making this a dive site of swim throughs. Visibility is generally in the 40-foot range, but it is very dark as the only area illuminated by the sun is directly under the karst window. UW photos require strobes or video lights.

On this specific dive my dive buddy and model extraordinaire Soo Yon Ryu and I agreed to shoot in and around the rock passages. No caves, just areas that look like caves. Our dive time that day was just around an hour, and I felt like I had some good shots.

We surfaced under the skylight and I began to arrange my camera and strobes for the narrow stairs. I loosened all the joints on the strobe arms allowing the strobes to hang straight down. Final arrangement is easiest if everything is always in the same position when I begin the process.

I looked up and saw Soo Yon floating on her back looking up into the sunlight. It was magic! She looked like a nymph floating in a sacred spring. A Naiad out of mythology. I was able to lift the camera out of the water for a quick series of



Sony A7r IVa, Nauticam Housing, 35mm lens, ISO 1600, f16 @ 1/80

shots. If I hadn't let the strobes hang down I never would have been able to raise the camera out of the water and get this shot. My exposure settings were unchanged from underwater – light from my strobes being replaced by the sunlight.

George Sharrard
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which has a story within a story?
If so e mail it with up to 500 words of text
and yours could be the next Parting Shot.**

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