

Jhon Henriano

by Nicholas Kouvaras

Indonesia is the world's biggest polynesia in the world with 17000 islands and it is one of the most popular destinations for underwater photographers. The list with destinations here is endless. Banda Sea for hammerheads, Bali shipwrecks, the mantas and the Mola, Komodo and Raja Ampat with the liveboards, Lembeh's muck diving, Bunaken's walls, Wakatobi's caves and pristine corals and also destinations not so well known like Alor.

Many Photographers, amateur and professional, visit Indonesia for the biodiversity and the photographic opportunities. It is also home to many workshops, competitions and shoot outs.

But what is to be a local Underwater photographer here? We asked Jakarta based UW photographer Jhon Henriano.

Can you tell us a few things about you?

My name is Jhon Henriano, I am working for Indonesia's National Oil Company, I am the founder of Underwater Studio Jakarta and for the last 5 years I am also a professional UW photographer.



Canon EOS R5 with Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L lens in a Nauticam Housing. f/20 1/100 sec ISO 200 @16mm Manual Mode

What made you move from a recreational UW photographer to a Professional?

When I started taking pictures underwater, I never dreamed of becoming a professional. In 2018 and after winning a couple of UW competitions, I started getting job offers. My first jobs were mainly documenting underwater both for the private sector and for the government. In the beginning it was hard. There was a lot of competition in the market but I soon realised that experience and skill are not enough. You also

need to have ideas to create high quality content and the skill and the means to monetize your product. Becoming a professional helped me become a better photographer and establish strong collaborations but also cost me some friends who now see me as a competitor.

What are the typical job opportunities here in Indonesia for an UW photographer?

There are a lot of job opportunities in Indonesia. Mainly underwater documentaries for



promoting the tourist industry. Underwater modelling is also big here. We also work a lot with the promotion of products, like dive computers, masks, fins, etc. Nowadays baby photoshoots are becoming very popular.

What is your favourite place to dive and take pictures in Indonesia?

I will have to divide the answer to two categories. Wide Angle landscape and big life. If you are looking for beautiful landscapes for



Canon EOS R5 with Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L lens in a Nauticam Housing. f/13 1/160 sec ISO 400 @16mm Manual Mode

wide angle photography, beautiful corals, clear waters with consistent water conditions, I would choose Alor, Wakatobi, Raja Ampat and Labuan Bajo. If giant mantas, dolphins, sharks etc, is your thing, then I would go for Labuan Bajo, Nusa Penida, Raja Ampat and Weh in Aceh for the Mobulas.

Do you have an all time favourite picture?

I love this one top right.

Can you tell us about the experience of UW studio photography?

It is so exciting to have your own UW Photography Studio. Being able to try new things, control the light, Use various light sources, play with angles and all that in super clear waters. Trial and error makes your creativity pop out and you never have to think about time. We can spend hours in the water. In this way you can really get the most out of your equipment and set up. The best thing is that the studio is in my home. No commuting, no traffic, no worries.



Canon EOS R5 with Canon EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens in a Nauticam Housing. f/4.5 1/160 sec ISO 400 @24mm Manual Mode

If money was no problem what would be your next setup?

Hahaha! If money was no problem, maybe, I would try getting a medium format camera for the photoshoots and maybe a Canon EOS C300 Mark III for Video. Then spend a lot of money on Surface lights like the Aperture 1200D Pro. It would be an overkill but it is always good to have more power! Hahaha!

What do you use now? Do you have a different set up for the studio and different for the ocean and why?

I usually go with my Canon R5 and a Ninja V monitor for commercial projects, since I need to meet certain requirements. When Travelling, I use a Canon 5D mark IV in a Sea&Sea housing as it is a much more practical package. In terms of lighting I use the same for both set ups. Two strobes and 1 continuous light or 2 continuous lights with strobe function.

My Gear

Cameras:

Canon R5 with NA-Nauticam R5



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Canon 5D Mark IV with Sea&sea Housing

Monitor: Ninja V - with Nauticam Housing

Arms: Inon Telescopic Arms

Clamps: Weefine clamps

Strobes:

2x Sea & Sea YSD3 Mark II

2x Inon z330 mark II

Continues lights: 2x Weefine Solar Flare 12000lms

Lenses: RF 28 - 70, EF 24 - 70mm, EF 8 - 15 Fisheye

For studio set-up :

I use the same basic gear for the studio. There is no difference on the camera gear. I only use additional surface lights. My surface lights are a M600D Godox as main light, and an AD600 pro Godox also at the surface for fill in light or for hair and highlights.

“Do you have a different set up for the studio and different for the ocean and why?”

Not really the main difference is the main light. I am always depending on my main source of light and use strobes or lights just to fill in. In the Ocean my main light is the sun, while in the studio my main source of light comes from continuous lighting, the M600D with 780 watt led Power.

I do this because I love natural light and the natural colour. The

white balance, in this way, will play a major role in all conditions and set-ups. The main difference is that when you are in the ocean you have a big and unlimited power of light coming from the sun, while in the studio We have to control the main light to mimic the sunlight. Sometimes I have to raise the power when the clouds cover up my studio (outdoor pool). The aperture I work with while in the ocean is between F11 and F13 and in the studio it is between F5,6 and F9. The shutter speed is the same between 1/160 - 1/250. In every situation I make sure the exposure level stays in the middle.

What holds the top spot on your bucket list in terms of destinations?

If I am lucky, I would like to dive Tonga. It is at the top of my wish list. And Mexico with the cenotes. I would love to take pictures of the 2 layers of water.

Thank you, Jhon.

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Instagram

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