

Physical get togethers

I make no bones about devoting six pages of 'Tatler' style coverage to the UPY Awards Ceremony held in Mayfair, London on Friday, February 9th because this was a first of its kind for the Competition.

Saeed Rashid's excellent pictures capture the atmosphere perfectly - the excitement, joy and celebration in a room full of 2024 winners.

The big difference at this particular event was there was no static display of winning images - these were all presented on a high quality LED screen. This provided undistracted time and space for the winners to socialise and get to know each other. A chance to chat to someone you have always held in high regard, admired their work but never actually met face to face.

Lots of underwater photographers meet on dive sites but they are usually absorbed getting ready for a dive and setting up a camera.

The UPY Awards Ceremony was a concentrated social and worked so well because of it. It was facilitated by The Crown Estate, longterm sponsors of the Living Together Category and it took UPY to an even higher level.

Hopefully now my appendix and I have gone our separate ways, I'll be able to attend next year :-)

Editorial

Focal length? Field of view forever

Alex Mustard's precise review of Nauticam's excellent new FCP-1 water contact port gives me the perfect opportunity to get my fork out and rake over some old ground in the hope that positive seeds will be sown to simplify the confusing world of lens specification.

In the old days it was so easy. Apart from marketeers meddling with 110 format, there was, in the main, just one film/sensor size - light sensitive 35mm film (35mm is the physical height of the film) exposed to light via a shutter - 36mm wide x 24mm high. This was shortened to 35mm and everyone knew where they were and what it meant.

Lenses were designed to cover this format in a variety of designs to achieve different angles of view. Theoretically these variations of view could be quantified as Focal Length - the longer the number the narrower the coverage and vice versa.

This resulted in familiar terms/numbers which we were able to associate with. 20mm very wide (94°),

35mm wide (54°) and 50mm standard (40°) etc etc.

Did you notice how I quietly slipped in the angle of coverage (or field of view)? That's because this number (or angle) is now more important than ever before because the simple days of '35mm' are, to an extent, over.

We now have various sensor/shutter sizes other than just good old 35mm. True it still exists and is now called 'full frame' but there are smaller sizes - 1/2", 2/3", M43rds, Super-35, DX, APS-C, etc. Ideally all of these formats need matched lenses but, with adaptors, manufacturers allow us to 'mix and match' but this should really be called 'mix and mismatch'. The choice becomes bewildering.

However, at the end of the day, all we should really be interested in is "What field of view will I get?". Lenses could then be described as M43rds, F4, 90° - M43rds sensor format/size, F4 maximum aperture, 90° angle of coverage. Likewise DX, F2.8, 130°.

That seems so simple to me.

Shoots of recovery

Judging by the record number of entries in this year's UPY Competition, the days of the 'C' word and the 'L' situation seem to be well behind us and camera sensors are being exposed more than ever before in ever more remote areas.

Commercial airlines have had to make important business decisions since then regarding the reopening of flights to smaller airports.

Take Egypt as a good example where Hurghada for decades was the main airport for flight arrivals to the west coast. In time, as it became busier and busier, decisions were made to develop smaller airports to take the load off Hurghada and so, for example, Marsa Alam, a few hours coach ride to the south, became attractive to tour operators like TUI in the UK.

The gradual reopening of these 'arteries' is vital, making it much easier to arrive locally and be in your resort within minutes rather than extra hours and that, certainly for me, is a big attraction. Here in the UK we are lucky to have the world class diving Red Sea so comparatively near and I plan to take advantage of that again and again.

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