



you're even a slightly bit interested in wreck or reef photography.

Most folk who try a fisheye lens for the first time come away from the experience sold, as it just massively improves the picture quality and contrast of reef and wreck scenes especially if the visibility isn't great.

So a big thanks to Adam and Steve from Nemo Photo for allowing me to test and try out this Olympus TG 7 rig, my next task with it is to use it with a Backscatter strobe out in Lembeh which is another first as Olympus have a very nifty automatic function with certain strobes.

I'll get back to you about this.

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Issue 141/27

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Sigma 105mm F/2.8 DG DN Macro Art lens

by Phil Rudin

Sigma is a Japanese company founded in 1961 which exclusively provides quality photography and video-related products worldwide. All products are manufactured in Aizu in the Tohoku region of Japan. The Sigma 105mm F/2.8 DG DN Macro Art Full Frame lens is the subject of this review and combines the very latest in technology and optical performance in a classic mid-telephoto macro with up to life-size (1:1) reproduction.

The Sigma 105mm F/2.8 DG DN Macro Art autofocus lens was specially developed by Sigma for the mirrorless full-frame L-Mount and Sony FE-mount cameras. The Sigma 105mm macro has an F/2.8 to F/22 aperture range and a rectilinear angle of view of 23.3 degrees or around 35 degrees (at 157.5mm) if you switch to APS-C mode. The lens has all metal construction with a plastic lens hood and ships with a nicely padded carry case for travel.

The lens weights in at 710g (1.6 lb) and is 74mm X 135.6mm long or (2.9" X 5.3") making it a bit longer (V130.5) and tad heavier (V602g) than the Sony FE 90mm F/2.8 macro which

many of use have used for years. The front filter size is the same 62mm as the Sony 90mm and it has nine rounded diaphragm blades with seventeen lens elements in twelve groups.

The Sigma 105mm Art has manual and "A" settings for aperture control with an on/off click stop an AF/MF switch and a focus limiter switch with stops of full (1:1 to infinity) 0.5 meters to infinity and 1:1 to 0.5 meters. I find the 1:1 to 0.5 meter range, which is the same as the Sony 90 macro to be too limiting and would rather see the range expanded to 1:1 to a meter giving the advantage of speeding up auto focus over the full extension to infinity.

Unlike the Sony 90 macro the Sigma 105 has no image stabilization and relies on the in-camera IBIS feature on Panasonic and Sony full frame cameras. The Sigma 105 macro retails around \$710.00 for Sony and \$800.00 for Panasonic L-mount in the US V. \$1098.00 for the Sony 90mm.

We all have our own 'go to' lens review sites which do above water testing and frequently focus on the



extremes like corner sharpness, LoCA (longitudinal color aberration, bokeh and more at F/2.8 or the widest F/ number. This is all great but most underwater photographers rarely shoot macro with a full frame camera below about F/9 and F/13 to F/22 is much more common. When shooting underwater the air/water interface of the flat macro port will likely cause far more problems than those above water review concerns. In fact the flat or macro dome ports will likely cause more color aberration than the macro lens alone. In the case of the Sigma 105 macro the LoCA numbers are



quite good above water. Full frame cameras with high megapixel numbers like the Sony A7R V with 61MP tend to expose lens flaws more easily than say M43 cameras with lower (20's MP) and quality lenses are a must for full frame. The Sigma 105mm Art is one of those lenses that is well suited to high MP FF

photography.

After using the Sony 90mm F/2.8 macro for about a decade I can say without hesitation that the Sigma 105 macro provides a bit better edge to edge sharpness and the color rendering is excellent. For those using older Sony FF cameras you will find the focus to be slower than the Sony 90mm. This was not a big issue for me using the newer A7RV AF system but the lens still hunts a bit more than the 90mm.

We would of course like all areas of a photo to be in crisp focus if desired but everything in photography is a tradeoff. Each of use has a limit for what they will tolerate as far as image quality is concerned and many equipment choices will be made based on cost and personal tolerances.

Field Testing The Sigma 105MM F/2.8 Art Lens

For this review I was shooting the Sigma 105mm macro with the Sony A7RV (61MP) in a Marelux MX-A7RV housing with two Marelux Apollo S strobes fired both wirelessly and with fiber cords using a UTechnics flash trigger. Marelux has a verity of macro port options which include a dedicated macro port 104 for Sigma 105, macro port 71 with a 30 locking extension and the macro port 32 used with 70mm's of port extension.

Nauticam users shooting Sony have a choice of a dedicated N100 macro port 110 or the N100 to N120 35.5 port adapter II with N120 extension ring 20 II and the macro port 60. Nauticam also has port choices for Panasonic L-mount housing users.

I chose to use the Marelux 32 port which I own for other lenses and a combination of extensions (in my case a 30 + 40) because I already use both the 30 & 40 for other lenses when I travel. I can also add a



Flabellina sp. with eggs taken today on the house reef at Scuba Seraya Resort, Bali Indonesia. Sony A7RV, Sigma 105mm macro, Marelux housing, two Marelux Apollo S strobes and Marelux +10 C/U lens, ISO100, F/22, 1/250th sec

15mm extension when using a dry closeup lenses like the Nikon 5T or extension tubes in the 15mm range.

During a recent trip to Bali, Indonesia I also



Tiny Goby hiding on orange sponge, Scuba Seraya Resort, Tulamben, Bali, Indonesia, Sony A7RV, Sigma 105 macro, Marelux housing and two Marelux Apollo S strobes, with MX+15 C/U lens, ISO 100, F/20, 1/250th sec

used the Marelux +5, +10 & +15 closeup lenses both as standalone lenses and stacked for up to +23 magnification. I found the Sigma 105 macro to be the better choice over the Sony 90 macro for all



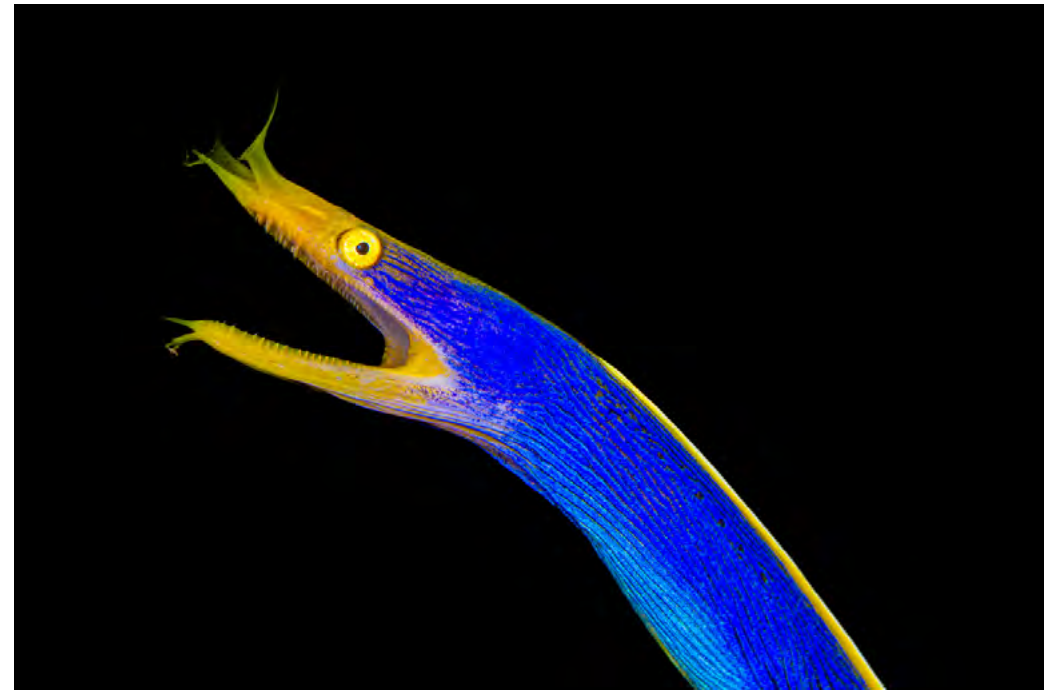
Small Hermit Crab (dardanus pedunculatus) trying to hide on pink tube sponges. Sony A7RV, Sigma 105 macro, Marelux housing and flat port, two Marelux Apollo S strobes with UWT flash trigger, one strobe off camera with Marelux red filter. Scuba Seraya house reef Bali Indonesia, ISO 100, F/18, 1/250th sec

of my “super macro” and use the 90 macro when I want a bit wider view and with C/U lenses to +10.

I used Apollo S strobes which are small with four Marelux six inch double ball arms and I was able to move the strobes just about anywhere I needed them to get light on the subject. I also used the Apollo S strobes off camera with color filters and other accessories triggered with the LumiLink 2.0 wireless flash trigger. The LumiLink trigger allowed me to

fire the off camera strobes without any on camera flash as a slave or any pesky fiber optic cords getting in the way. For flotation I used one or two 1500ml Flexibuoy's which can be easily moved underwater for best balance.

With the Sony 90mm macro the focusing ring is pushed forward on the lens for auto focus and pulled back for AF off. The Sigma 105mm macro AF/off switch is on the side of the lens and is pushed forward for AF and back



Adult Ribbon Eel (Rhinomuraena quaesita) Scuba Seraya Resort house reef, Tulamben, Bali. Sony A7R V, Sony Sigma 105mm macro, Marelux housing and macro port, Apollo S strobes, ISO-100, F/16, 1/250th sec

for off. With both lens configurations you can mount the camera and lens from the rear of the housing and with both I have bumped the lens off the auto focus setting when inserting the camera into the housing. Warning, always check that AF is engaged after the camera is in the housing even if you are only making a battery change and don't fully remove the camera. I intend to resolve this issue on the Sigma lens with a small stop and some tape because it happened more

than once on a recent trip.

Above water I manually move the aperture ring on the lens to change settings. Underwater you need to set the lens to the “A” setting on the aperture ring and use the lock on the lens to keep the “A” locked in place. This allows you to use the camera controls on the housing to change aperture settings.

In the water I used the same lens settings I use with the Sony 90 macro, Manual mode, AF-C, focus area