

Real video

My main interest is shooting video underwater and up until now I have been mainly using a Sony HVR-A1 in an Amphibico housing.

I say mainly because I have also strayed into the hybrid world of Micro 4/3rds where the Panasonic GH2 gave excellent results but the handling of the housing was far from ergonomic in terms of producing video footage. In addition the GH2 is primarily a stills camera and I found myself switching from stills to video and back again and this is a recipe for bad results from both. I am living proof of that :-)

I remember Peter Scoones saying to me that he couldn't shoot stills and video on the same day. The mindset needed would be too confusing to pull off both properly. Berkley White of Backscatter, when I interviewed him for this magazine, went even further and said that he would shoot only stills or video for an entire trip.

The problem is that there are two completely different thought processes to shoot stills and video. Stills is a lot simpler in that you only need to concentrate on one shot at a time because the next shot has nothing to do with the previous one.

With video there is so much more to think about in order to achieve an end result. If you are aiming to

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produce a short film, say, of your dive trip you should plan what shots you need to produce a logical and non jarring story. We have a specific way of viewing scenes that makes the most sense to us as an audience.

It all sounds a bit too serious but it is necessary if you are to end up with a polished, seamless end product. The more you plan, the easier it will be to edit.

Anyway I'm about to move into the world of 'tapeless acquisition' and am looking for a new camcorder rather than a stills/video camera. Sure a camcorder can shoot stills but when you pick up a properly housed camcorder your mindset immediately thinks of shooting moving images and that's where I want to get to.

Unfortunately there is far less choice in the camcorder market and even less in the housing market. In addition, in order to achieve the image quality one is used to from the large chip stills cameras you need similar sized chips in a camcorder and that's where things get very expensive.

If you are still awake, I will keep you informed of progress.

Extreme weather

I don't know what it's been like where you live but here in the southwest of the UK we've had the wettest year on record preceded by the driest March since records began when we were staring down the barrel of a hosepipe ban.

Since then the heavens have opened up and caused flood alerts all over the country bringing another bout of misery to an increasing number unfortunate homeowners.

From a selfish point of view the rain is a real pain because it washes the rich red soil down into Plymouth Sound mainly via the river Tamar. The result is certainly not conducive to underwater photography for a few days.

We are told that it is the result of the jet stream moving position. It used to protect us from colder northern air but now it's further south most of the time. The theory is that warmer water to the west of the Atlantic is causing the shift.

The debate rages that it is proof of global warming and I certainly don't know enough to agree or disagree. What I do know is that I can produce UwP anywhere in the world where there is electricity and a reliable broadband connection so I'm going to see what next summer brings and then decide.

One is 70

It only seems like yesterday that UwP was celebrating its 60th issue but that just confirms that the years go by faster as you get older.

At the risk of repeating myself (which is an increasing occurrence these days) nothing about UwP is planned yet for every single issue sufficient content arrives to make an interesting and attractive publication. It never ceases to amaze me and I have all of the generous contributors to thank for their support and enthusiasm. To a man and a woman they are a pleasure to deal with and that makes my job so enjoyable.

This particular issue has more location articles than normal but that's just how it's turned out. I suspect most readers like to read about new equipment so if you feel like doing a write up of your experience with your latest purchase, I would like to hear from you.

In addition the Parting Shot has been a bit thin recently. It is the section that I like the most when a quirky 'story within a story' comes together with an eye-catching image. They only need up to 500 words and a single image.

Perhaps now the next issue will be made up entirely of Parting Shots!

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