

World Festival of Underwater Images

by Phil Rudin

For its 39th year, the World Festival of Underwater Images sports a new logo, has set a new attendance record and has moved into a new home. The Festival with support from the Mayor of Marseille has moved into the Congress Center of the Chanot Park. This is an outstanding venue for a show of this type and size. The Center has a 1200 and an 800 seat theater which were nearly full during every presentation I attended.

This international event began in 1974 as an artistic, scientific and cultural festival to showcase the underwater world through still and motion imaging. Event President Philippe Vallette, Honorary President Daniel Mercier and new Director Remi Attuyt have done an excellent job in maintaining these founding principles for the Festival.

The show included a 1000 m2 exhibition hall with excellent photo displays, photo equipment sales (both video and still), publications, books, travel destinations, marine art, clothing and much much more. Outside the entrance to the Festival was a large diving tank where anyone that wanted to experience scuba diving could be outfitted with equipment and a one on one dip with an instructors.

I will celebrate fifty years as a certified diver in February 2013 and as I travel about the world it is apparent that the diving population is ageing. This show is addressing that issue by drawing young attendees into the world of diving. Standing in front of the dive tank and seeing the smiles on the many young kids trying out diving for the first time was

up-lifting.

Inside the Festival was another large touch pool where children could discover a number of rays, sharks and other animals of the Mediterranean. A third area had instruction on marine animals for children and an art area where they could draw marine animals on paper submerged in a shallow pool of water. In all I found the show to be very engaging for young and old alike.

The shows four days from 1 Nov. to 4 Nov brought together some of the worlds finest photographers, videographers and filmmakers to present their work in the large full screen auditoriums and to compete for the coveted show awards. The results were a tribute to the patience and persistence of the presenters during countless dives to record the beauty, rarity and unusual behavior found in the worlds oceans. All of the presentations revolved around a single goal of preserving our delicate ocean resources. A total of 130 films and 200 images from thirty countries were judged in a number of different categories. I will provide a link to the winning photographs at the bottom of this article.

One of the highlights of the event for me was the Golden Palm award winning film “Salmon Surprise” directed by Bertrand Loyer and Produced by Saint-Thomas Productions in Marseille. The documentary film focuses on the gallant journey a school of Sockeye Salmon through two millennia in Alaskan waters as they readapt after each eruption to the sulfurous waters below the





Aniakchak Volcano. This film depicts the epic journey of the Salmon as they encounter a series of predators including sharks and bears as they make their final journey upstream. This HD, 5.1 surround sound film's quality was excellent with narration by French actor Jacques Gamblin.

A highlight from the winning underwater images was the Portfolio category where a number of photos from the same photographer are judged together for a total score. The 2012 winner is Davide Vezzaro of Switzerland with a stunning portfolio of ten images both wide angle and macro from a number of locations

around the world. The color prints category was won by Yvas Gillet of France and the black and white prints was won by Jorgen Rasmussen of Denmark both with excellent images. The Mediterranean Sea Prize was won by Stefano Gradi of Italy and in the Young Photographer category by Kirill Tolmachev of Ukraine. This is a truly international contest of stunning underwater imagery for all to enjoy.

A concept model of Jacques Rougerie's Sea Orbiter was on display along with other past projects to round out the scientific section of the show. Sea Orbiter is a vessel which will be built using recycled aluminum



for long term missions as an oceanographic research platform. The 58m high 550 ton vessel is designed with twelve levels, six above and six below the waterline for use as an international science laboratory and multimedia platform for global communication. The project is projected to house about twelve crew and will begin production in 2013.

With an gate of around 7400 the 39th World Festival of Underwater Pictures has broken all past attendance records and is well on its way to new heights in its new home in the city of Marseille.

A complete list of this years

winners and some past winners can be found at this link along with information on how to enter the 2013 competition. I encourage all who read this to consider entering the 2013 competition just be aware you will need to bring your "A" game if you expect to be competitive.

Phil Rudin

www.underwater-festival.com

Guidelines for contributors

The response to UwP has been nothing short of fantastic. We are looking for interesting, well illustrated articles about underwater photography. We are looking for work from existing names but would also like to discover some of the new talent out there and that could be you! UwP is the perfect publication for you to increase your profile in the underwater photography community.

The type of articles we're looking for fall into five main categories:

Uw photo techniques - Balanced light, composition, etc

Locations - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards

Subjects - Anything from whale sharks to nudibranchs in full detail

Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment

Personalities - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

**If you have an idea for an article,
contact me first before putting pen to paper.
E mail peter@uwpmag.com**

How to submit articles

To keep UwP simple and financially viable, we can only accept submissions by e mail and they need to be done in the following way:

1. The text should be saved as a TEXT file and attached to the e mail

2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 144dpi

Size - Maximum length 15cm i.e. horizontal pictures would be 15 cm wide and verticals would be 15cm.

File type - Save your image as a JPG file and set the compression to "Medium" quality. This should result in images no larger than about 120k which can be transmitted quickly. If we want larger sizes we will contact you.

3. Captions - **Each and every image MUST have full photographic details** including camera, housing, lens, lighting, film, aperture, shutter speed and exposure mode. These must also be copied and pasted into the body of the e mail.

Parting Shot

The eye of the baitball
by Cristóbal Serrano (Spain)

Runner-up

Behaviour: Birds category

Veolia Environnement Wildlife

Photographer of the Year 2012

Cristóbal found this great circling shoal of grunt fish in the Sea of Cortez, Mexico, and watched it over two days. He would dive down and then sit on the sandy bottom some 20 metres below the surface to watch. 'With the sky behind the fish ball,' he says, 'it looked like a shimmering body of energy. I just needed a focal point to get the picture I was after.' A pelagic cormorant was also watching the fish, and now and then it would shoot a hole through the ever-tightening baitball (tightening in response to the predator), making it easier for it to pick off individual fish. Cristóbal tried to predict the angle that the cormorant would use. After many attempts, using a fisheye lens and strobes to illuminate the fish and the sandy bottom, he got the shot.



*Canon EOS 5D Mark II, Canon EF 8-15mm f4 L USM lens, 1/125 sec at f4.5, ISO 100
Seacam housing with Seaflash 150D strobes.*

www.cristobalserrano.com

Do you have an image which has a 'story within a story'?
If so we'd love to hear from you.

E mail us and yours could be
the next "Parting shot".

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