

Houston Underwater Film Festival 2023
Midtown Arts & Theater Center Houston

April 29-30, 2023

For tickets and more information huff.hups.org or scan the QR code



Saturday, April 29, 3:00 PM

Raffle drawings held at the end of the show

Made in Texas - *films by Texas Filmmakers*

1. Octo Antics

Craig Beasley

Unusual octopus behaviors including, walking, standing and mother carrying eggs.

2. The Best Mucking Time Ever

Justin Wallace

Come dive with me as I show you where I had the best mucking time ever!

3. The Time is Now

Jason Borkland

The importance of Marine Protected areas. The need to support scientific research, to allow the preservation and expansion of these vital areas

4. Masters of Camouflage

Betsy Beasley

This film explains the techniques of camouflage used by underwater creatures. Film shot from all over the world.

5. Expect the Unexpected

Jennifer Opiela-Miksch

There are many things you expect to see underwater when you visit the Socorro Islands: sharks, dolphins, and manta rays to name a few. Then on one dive, out of the mist, arrives something you never imagined being able to see, and your life is changed from that moment on.

6. Nudi Blues

Dennis Deavenport

In the world of gastropods, nudibranchs are often the star of the show. Their bright colors and odd shapes make for never ending interest. This film is a mix of underwater beauty and education.

Art House Flicks – *nontraditional underwater films*

1. An Ocean of Possibilities

David Sánchez Carretero

A love and respect relationship between the sea and the man. A man who always took care of the sea while he enjoyed it, and today, when he is ill, receives the same favour from the sea. A short film that seeks to give visibility to a cruel disease that currently has no cure, ALS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. With the aim of improving the situation and increasing research.

2. Reminder

Akın Bağcılar

Short story of a god in human form who reminds people of their wrongdoings!

3. The Octo Connection: Life & Love. Oaki the Octopus

Cara Fucci

A female diver connects with a wild octopus on a deep and meaningful level. Oaki the Octopus is smart, inquisitive, curious, and quite entertaining. Cara became obsessed with him and spent hours each day swimming and interacting. His antics made her laugh, and learn, and the two of them cultivated an amazing bond of love and friendship. Cara never intended to make a documentary. But the events guided her to film a gripping story that the universe demanded be told. The story of Oaki the Octopus.

4. Roque Prelude

Banni Leclerc

Roque, a 29-year-old from Madrid, elite swimmer, finds himself in an extreme personal situation only one year after having achieved the world record and the gold medal in the 100-meter freestyle at the Paris Olympics.

5. Resurrection Under the Ocean

Serkan Aktaş

"Resurrection under the Ocean" is about the resurrection of a man who was helplessly sinking to the bottom of the ocean, after falling to the bottom of the ocean, with a symbolic narrative.

6. Beneath

Morgan Le Faucheur

The film reveals the Cannes Underwater Museum by Jason de Caires Taylor through the legendary tale of the Man in the Iron Mask, who was detained in the royal prison of the Island of Sainte-Marguerite in Cannes during the 17th century.

7. The Diver's Son

Nick Sneath

A short film documenting the story of a man following in his father's footsteps. Sandy Rijgersberg shares some of the difficult events of his past and his quest to recover a lost keepsake.

8. 13 METRES

Matthieu Boivineau, Cédric Martin

The life of a free diver told through the depths of his underwater adventures, up to 13 meters. Where everything changed.

Protect and Respect the Oceans - *films with an environmental or conservation emphasis*

1. Plastic Ocean

Sabrina Inderbitzi

Plastic pollution increases continuously. Animals are living in plastic and there are areas, where 6x more plastic debris is swimming in the ocean than plankton. Plastic bags cause the death of many marine animals, when they are mistaken for food. The ocean supplies half the oxygen we breath. So, we need healthy oceans.

2. What can we do for the "Blue"

Haonan Huang

The ocean is the cradle of life, the ocean is a blue treasure. There are many fresh water resources, chemical resources, biological resources and so on in the ocean. It raises us without asking for anything in return, it gives to us without asking for anything, it is so beautiful and selfless. However, with the development of industry and fishery in recent years, the Marine environment has been continuously destroyed and the living environment of organisms has been continuously worsened. This film follows divers as they use their underwater perspective to learn more about the sea and raise awareness of marine conservation.

3. Honu's Beach

Fumika Yazaki

It is a short wildlife documentary about the relationship between Hawaiian people and Hawaiian green sea turtles and their unique behaviors.

4. Grayling the Lady of the Stream

Mark David Barrow

Feature length film of the life of grayling within one river, documenting the sheer beauty of this freshwater fish, how they feed and why rivers are so important within the natural world and the role they play.

5. AquaLastic

André Martinho Brito, Joaquim Seixas Beteriano

Due to our actions, the oceans are now home to more than 150 000 000 tons of plastic waste that threatens their biodiversity. If we do nothing to change it, by 2050 this plastic will take the place of thousands of marine species. Changing our habits and attitudes is the key to reversing this problem, the motto for returning to oceans their legitimate inhabitants. In rivers the seas begin, in attitudes life is preserved!!! AquaLastic, more water less plastic!!

6. Know Plastic, No Plastic

Arjun Bhagat

We all know plastic is bad. But do we have any idea how bad? Let's look at some numbers. India discards about 15, 00 tons of plastic a day. This is equal to approximately 27 A380 planes-the world's largest passenger plane. Now imagine this in 1 year. It amounts to 9, 778 A380s. And 97, 780 A380s in 10 years.

7. Clever Corals

Florian Guthknecht

How corals play with their environment.

8. The Sea and Me - Below

Dominic Joyce

The Sea and Me is a series that aims to help us understand what it is about the ocean that is so fascinating to us humans. This episode follows Georgie, who is an up-and-coming underwater photographer based in the UK. The episode follows her through some of the most underrated coastlines in the world on her mission to show the world what lies beneath the surface.

9. Once Upon a Time

Alfred Schaschl

Once upon a time there existed a mysterious population – they lived peacefully and were hidden in the ocean depths – on the other side of our blue planet. They looked like creatures from another world. While some of them were keenly aware of their beauty - some other creatures lived a secluded life only a few rarely could see them. What made them feel so strong was their mutual affection and their wish to lead a life in lasting peace. But this beautiful ideal world was at great risk - dark forces were emerging to destroy this prosperous piece of land enslaving their creatures. But these enemies were powerful

armored and armed to the teeth. The armored warriors were moving closer and closer and the enemy scouts were already positioned. It would appear to be an inevitable fight. But in the end loveliness and goodness always win. If human beings do not exterminate all these wonderful creatures, they will survive and continue to live happily ever after in the depths of our blue planet.

Meet the Filmmakers, April 29, after the show ~6:00 PM

Raffle drawings are held just after the program in the theater. Then, join us after the Saturday performance for informal conversation with film directors, HUFF organizers and attendees at the Holman Draft Hall, located diagonally across the street from the theater.

Sunday, April 30, 3:00 PM

Short Videos – *underwater films up to 3 minutes*

1. Hunters

Casiano Perez Diaz

"Hunters" shows us a short hunting sequence of two cuttlefish during a night dive in Spanish waters. During the night the behavior of marine fauna varies with acceleration and the art of camouflage, speed and the keen sense of sight of some species is vital for survival.

2. Similan. The World is Waiting.

Thummayut Wattanawongwan

The Similan Islands, the uniqueness archipelago in the Andaman Sea, located part of southern Thailand. Its own diversity attracts divers from all over around the world shall experience it at least once. If you only expect just extraordinary coral lives and scenes, then Similan's creatures and others will just surprise you.

3. MAURITIUS

Olivier Bourgeois

Mauritius underwater wildlife is for sure one of the most beautiful of the Indian Ocean. An extraordinary marine richness to which are added many wrecks. The strong presence of soft corals welcomes abundant aquatic life; the beauty of the lights creates a unique dramatic ambiance and atmosphere around the wrecks. "MAURITIUS" is the first part of the triptych of subaquatic poems "Blue Paradises Season 2".

4. White Shark Tooth Exam

Skyler Thomas

How much do you really know about the teeth of a white shark?

5. Anemone City

Gilles Charvet

Dive « flight » of an Anemone City in the Maldives.

6. Beneath The Blue | Watamu | Turtle Reef

Shazaad Kasmani

Underwater video of marine life in Watamu Kenya.

7. The Underwater Puppies - Sea Lions

Veronika Kovacova

Playful young sea lions.

8. Below the surface of the red sea

Beat Rysler

The red sea hosts a vast amount of diverse coral and fish species. Join us on a short trip through the most beautiful sceneries of this unique environment.

9. Human Connection

Leon Mitchell

A thought provoking and poetic look at the deep connection we all share with water and the oceans around us.

10. Malpelo: Mountain of Sharks | Trailer

Kevin Mannens

Days away from the closest land lies a seamount that attracts thousands of sharks. These graceful animals have been around for millions of years, but are now critically endangered by illegal shark fin fishing.

11. Faszination Tigerhaie

Sabrina Inderbitzi

Lennart Voßgätter is a marine biologist and researches the tiger sharks in Fuvamulah. A huge population of over 180 animals. Lenny about his fascination and his motivation to protect these charismatic animals.

12. FLUO GAMES - The Night of the Tentacles

Vanessa Cara-Kerr

I LOVE CORAL REEFS! That's why I dedicate so much time and effort to show this world in the most beautiful way possible - when fluorescing... at nighttime! As one very clever person once said "you only protect what you love" - so I want to make more people fall in love with corals... some may seem boring and brown by day - especially in the Caribbean reefs, corals tend to be a little colorless compared to, e.g., the Red Sea, but at night, when you shine blue light at them, they show you their most beautiful colorful and exciting side. And when it is FEEDING time, the show begins and the tentacles come out... a feast in the night.

13. Bird's Eye View

Sven Dreesbach

Where do we all come from? The online commercial centers around a single dive on a single breath. Taking the viewer onto a journey back to a time when our lives had just begun. Told with ethereally beautiful underwater photography of a free diver exploring a kelp forest in the depths of the ocean. Bird's Eye View explores the primal relationship between man and the sea. It dares to shine a light on what viscerally attracts us to it by drawing a direct connection to instincts long lost along our path to becoming human.

14. Sharkydelity

Alfred Schaschl

In places where the nine heavens of the Gods kiss the sea turning it into fire - in places where the Gods inhabit the forests, mountains and depths of the oceans - Ma'ō has been living there - a divine nature. This empire of the ocean was known as Hawaiki - I have come to call it Sharkydelity. Even if this fire has almost gone out in this day and age, this myth will keep blazing at the bottom of the oceans - let us keep alive together the fascination of Ma'ō myth.

Ma'ō => Shark in Tahitian language

Hawaiki => Is the Māori name for the mythical land where some Polynesian cultures trace their origins and ancestry.

15. Whalou the Whale

Jerome Renaud-goud

Story of Whalou, a 2-month-old humpback whale from La Reunion.

Animation and Dance – *underwater films with animation or dance*

1. Explosive Love

Alba Rodríguez

A lonely puffer fish finds love in an unlikely place.

2. Sweet N' Salty

Hunter Mascia

A mermaid's biases jeopardize her relationships and bakery.

3. Free to Swim

Okeremute Ovuorho

Plastic pollution has become one of the most urgent environmental issues we are facing presently. This film is about a discus fish and her fry. They lived happily for a long time until giant plastic materials were introduced into their environment, they now had to struggle to search for food and space. One day, in her hunt for food for her little fry, the discus fish got stuck in one of the plastic containers, she tried so hard but couldn't get out. Unfortunately, she died from suffocation weeks later. In an attempt to escape the same tragedy, the fry

sadly fell into the same situation. Entanglement in plastic debris is responsible for the deaths of many aquatic organisms. It is estimated that about 1.1 to 8.8 million metric tons of plastic waste enters the world ocean from coastal communities every year.

4. The Sea Begins Here

Raul Martinez Mondejar

A beach goer learns about littering and polluting.

5. Sansara

Evgeniy Shaman

Sometimes we feel like prisoners in our own prison! This is the most cruel prison with the most stringent rules, the one from which is not possible to escape at all! We cannot escape from ourselves! But we are capable to live out the transformation of the soul, and when we have fallen so hard that we hit the bottom, then we can soar to Freedom!

The heroine of the film "Samsara" lives out her soul transformation under the water while holding her breath! Water is our life resource, a resource of transformation!

6. The Encounter

Ekaterina Victorovna Ulyanova

A curious stingray meets a new inhabitant of the ocean. How will their meeting end?

7. Bardo

Fiorella Spitzer

An old Fisherman finds a rope along the shore that lures him into a chasm on his final journey, leading him into another existence from which even his Dog cannot save him. A story about life, passing away and what happens in between.

8. The Old Man and the Sea

Eylül Yarkin

The central character is an old fisherman named Santiago, who has not caught a fish for 84 days. Santiago takes his skiff far out into the deep waters of the Gulf Stream, where he soon hooks a giant marlin. With all his great experience and strength, he struggles with the fish for three days, admiring its strength, dignity, and faithfulness to its identity; its destiny is as true as Santiago's as a fisherman. He finally reels the marlin in and lashes it to his boat. However, Santiago's exhausting effort goes for naught. Sharks are drawn to the tethered marlin, and, although Santiago manages to kill a few, the sharks eat the fish, leaving behind only its skeleton.

9. If Only

Shreyans Zaveri

"If Only" is a short film following the afterlife of a whale. The purpose of the film is to talk about whaling and how whales are mindlessly murdered year after year for food.

10. Lui

Belén Prado

The story tells the life of Lui, who is a hawksbill turtle in danger of extinction, we will see his birth, and progressively how he becomes an adult. In this adventure he will meet Griffin, a

yellow butterfly fish, who lives in the reefs near where Lui is normally living. The two of them will become inseparable, and from the moment they met, one always moved side by side with the other. Everything was going great in the sea, until one day a boat of poachers arrived in the area where Lui was, and since that moment, their life took a 360° turn. After that event, different things happened that resulted in the fact that the only thing that remained of Lui was his shell, which later became an object that many people use in their daily lives. My motivation for telling this story is to create awareness in people about the respect that should be given to defenseless animals; I would like to try to make people more aware of their actions and see the background of things, that they can come to see that an object is just an object, but a life is worth more.

11. Falling Free

Jakub Wittchen

Falling Free is a film about space, freedom and movement. About the beauty of being in water and being water.

12. Our Ocean

Priya Shah

Animated film concerning pollution of shipping.

13. The White Whale

Weiwei Gao

'The White Whale' production started July 2022 and finished January 2023.

Our passion is ignited and shaped by a connection to the outside world when we were young. The White Whale tells such a story. It is about a lifetime pursuit of love for the underwater world.

Feature Length – *underwater films of more than 3 minutes*

1. Baja

Christoph Weber

Exploring the beauty of the underwater world around Baja California, Mexico.

2. Blackwater - Cozumel Style

Walter Marti

Wonderous things can be seen the Blackwater. Strange gelatinous creatures, active crustaceans, larval fish and inquisitive squid.

3. Last Night in Paradise

Blane Henderson

By day the 'Paradise' dive site, in the Marine Park near Cozumel Mexico, is usually a secondary dive site. It's a place where the current is very mild, the contour flat and the depth a mere 10 meters/35 feet deep. But, at night, the location morphs and becomes alive and vibrant with an abundance of nocturnal sea life; it's absolutely throbbing with activity! This is a short film about a night visit to this site. The reef and area are alive with the

croaking vibrations of 'splendid toadfish', colorful hunting octopus of all sizes, turtles like Hawkbills and Loggerheads, assorted eel types, and huge crab that come out to forage along with the odd slipper lobster and numerous nurse sharks! If you watch closely, you'll also catch glimpses of translucent bfin reef squid. With mild currents, shallow depths and a warm 83-degree water temperature it's definitely a fantastic 'night dive' site worthy of a visit by the beginner or the experienced diver!

4. Seasons in the Pacific Northwest

Juan Francisco Rodriguez

An inspirational short film showcasing life above and underwater during different seasons in the Pacific Northwest. Rockfish, Lingcod, colored Anemones, Puget Sound king crab, Giant Pacific Octopus and Wolf eel are just a few examples of the many characters giving life to this dream world.

5. Deep Gold

Richard Brooks

We join a solitary Sailfin Snapper on a reef in the Pacific who is soon joined by an enormous aggregation of its fellows for an incredible experience of life and death.

6. Mediterranean Dream

Lutfi Tanriover

Beauties of Mediterranean Sea.

7. Monad Shoal

Thummayut Wattanawongwan

I'm Game, 32 years old diver from Thailand. My diving activity started about 12 years ago, I have just fell in love with it since. I have been traveling around the world trying to explore, experience, record and capture underwater its special moments. All this, just because, I want to share its beauty in each different place with everyone and hope they will fall in love and appreciate them, same way I've had 12 years back when I first started. It is more passion than just a career, where it reminds me, I always want to be an Ocean Ambassador.

8. A Little Girl's Dream

Cheryl Holmen Dean, Nick Dean

A short personal documentary of Cheryl as filmed by her parents and then by her husband as she realized her childhood dream of swimming with wild dolphins.

9. Bouncing Back





Cindy Liphay

"Bouncing Back" is the sequel to last year's SDUFEX video and Houston Underwater Film Festival award winning film, "What Happened to You?" This story reaches out to the global audience to relate to our human experience of resuming life after the Covid lockdown by empowering underwater creatures to stir our emotions, help us reflect, and lighten our hearts with healing laughter. The encouraging message is about how to get "unstuck" and back into the mainstream of life and living.

10. Wonders of the Coral Triangle - Diving in Raja Ampat and Komodo

Celine Monfort

Discover the incredible underwater biodiversity of the Coral Triangle! The Coral Triangle is a marine area located in the western Pacific Ocean. It shelters:

-  nearly 600 hundred species of reef building corals
-  six of the world's seven marine turtle species
-  2000 species of reef fish
-  120 million people who rely on its coral reefs for food, income and protection.

But it is threatened by climate change and destructive fishing practices. You love it? Protect it! And don't forget to respect the beautiful environment you are living and diving in 🙏

Awards Reception, Sunday April 30, ~5:45 PM

Join us immediately after the Sunday performance for awards, conversation with film directors, raffle and sale of underwater photographs to benefit Houston Underwater Film Festival. Held in the Gallery across the breezeway from the theater in the Match. Cash bar and cocktail buffet. The reception is open to all and the buffet requires a ticket (huff.hups.org).