

## Houston Underwater Film Festival 2022

Midtown Arts & Theater Center Houston

April 2-3, 2022

For tickets and more information [hups.org/huff](https://hups.org/huff) or scan the QR code



**Saturday, April 2, 7:00 PM**

**Short Video - *films no longer than two minutes***

**1. A Change of Seasons Underwater**

Marcell Nikolausz

The film follows the underwater life of freshwaters in Germany. The lakes and rivers always show something new, something interesting during the four seasons.

**2. Strange Neighbor**

Saleh Bukhamseen

Strange neighbor we don't know about it that much !!

**3. Aquatic Swingers of Nelson Bay**

Ivan Millington

The Video is a short informative/humorous overview of the mollusk "Aplyasia Gigatea" or Sea Hare which is found in Australia and is possibly the largest of its species in the world.

**4. The Scorpion & The Hermit**

Guy & Anita Chaumette

In this amazing, never-before seen underwater footage, a hermit crab is cleaning a scorpionfish, as a part of its daily ritual.

We wonder if the crabs are even aware of the fish hidden in such a sophisticated camouflage?

### **5. Skelly, the Skeleton Shrimp**

Jerome Renaud-goud.

Short film about Skelly, a skeleton shrimp. We will see it interact with other skeleton shrimps, reproduce and live its life on a hydroid. The action takes place in Amed, a small village in Bali, Indonesia.

### **6. Octo Hunt**

Nick Skiadopoulos

You rarely get to experience an octopus in full hunting mode. I was lucky enough to spend 15min with this guy hunting for his breakfast.

Location - Blairgowrie pier, Melbourne Australia

Date - March 2020

### **7. Naked Gills**

Celine Monfort

Discover the beauty and the diversity of the underwater macro world of the nudibranchs! These soft-bodied, shell-less, marine gastropod mollusks, have been named from the Latin nudus "naked" and the Ancient Greek βράγχια (bránkhia) "gills". An unsuspected world of beauty, in all shapes and colors.

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

### **1. Ad Aqua**

Lionel Pawlowski

We dream about space exploration but what about exploring the blue world?

### **2. Meet Ramón**

Pilar Aldirico

Ramón, a fur seal pup, was rescued from an oil spill when he was just a few days old. He lives now in a marine wildlife rescue center, with many animals that also carry plastic issues. Ramon's story is about hope and survival. Which ocean do we leave to him?

### **3. Conserve What We Love**

Lotte Twaalfhoven

Why you should love, care for, and protect the ocean.

### **4. Citsalp**

Jean A. Evangelista

CITSALP is an animated film based on the negative effects of plastic in our world and the responsible consumption and production of plastics.

### **5. Cozumel Reefs & Covid**

Guy & Anita Chaumette

The change in the coral reef systems of Cozumel due to Covid.

### **6. Secrets of a Trash-Filled Harbor**

Rowan Kevin Hannaway

Finding beauty in the filth. This short film shows the disastrous effects of dumping plastics in the ocean, while exploring some of the magnificent marine life now calling this area home. Filmed entirely on a smart phone at a single location in Lombok, Indonesia.

### **7. Shark Rescue**

Skyler Thomas

Divers remove a deeply embedded rope from an underweight dusky shark leading to an unexpected reaction. Will leave viewers rethinking sharks as mindless killers, but whether or not they even have the capacity to show appreciation. Includes footage filmed months later of the recovered and healthy shark that ends the film on a 'feel-good' note.

### **8. The Sea**

Ronald Faber

'The Sea' is a monody of the sea and a direct appeal to her viewers to take responsibility in order to save the sea for future generations. The German magazine 'Unterwasser' wrote about 'The Sea';" Through the narrator, the viewer is directly involved, the often inevitable distance of the viewer is dissolved. Matching, aesthetic pictures are held together by the good commentary and the pleasant speaker, underlined by the appropriate music".

### **9. Charmolypi**

Dragomir Milinkovic Clauss

WE WILL BE KNOWN FOREVER BY THE TRACKS WE LEAVE.

Degree of pollution made by humans, especially to seas and oceans, has stopped being only a concern a long time ago, urging us to react immediately. We are living in a time when the passiveness of countries and institutions made all of us, with at least a trace of an ecological awareness, take a personal initiative in cleaning and preservation of nature. Fashion industry, as one of the major polluters, has a huge liability and duty to act responsibly towards our living space which we share with other living creatures. Because of human recklessness, our planet has been over-polluted, and animals and the entire ecosystem suffer from its damaging consequences. Unfortunately, negligence about the cohesion between humans and nature, will eventually be the price for its survival.

## **10. The Ghost Nets**

Marco Filippo Spinelli

The 'Ghost Nets' project (Le Reti Fantasma) stems from the need to tell one of the biggest problems linked to sea pollution through the voice of the Sea. Every year, 640,000 tons of fishing nets are abandoned in the oceans, according to the annual reports of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the data is increasing.

Two brothers venture into the seabed of their area and find abandoned fishing nets that continue to "fish" incessantly, preventing the free course of marine life. Therefore, they decide to get to work: they will try to "free" that corner of the sea. Then the question arises: what would the Sea, tired of so much exploitation by humans, say if it could speak? What would it ask for? The answer is crude and direct: the sea would scream its disappointment in humanity, asking to be simply "left in peace", free from the nets that do not let it "breathe".

### **Art House Flicks – *non traditional underwater films***

#### **1. Plastic Ecosystem**

Stefie Gan

Plastic Ecosystem follows the journey of "new marine life" in the oceans and their behaviors. Millions of tons of plastics litter the oceans and we study their behaviors. The film follows different characters of the oceans, the journey of a school of plastic spoons, the behavior of plastic bottles, the moods of plastic knives. This mockumentary also captures a few surprising behaviors of plastic bags and forks that mimic natural wildlife. Split up into three different lighting settings, this film is not your conventional narrative but a vignette of the rich variety of life in this plastic ecosystem. This film encourages viewers to be more conscious of plastic consumption and also think about the consequences and their effects on the planet.

#### **2. Keep it Clean**

Lutfu Tanriover

A film representing ocean pollution.

#### **3. Lagoon**

Sarah Carlot Jaber

Sarah Carlot Jaber of Belgian-Lebanese origins was born on the 12th of November 1985 in Ibiza, Spain. Sarah grew up in a multicultural context and developed from a young age a strong interest for photography, dance and theatre. It is after succeeding her university program in arts, cinema and culture that she headed towards "IAD". She quickly realized

that staging was the way she wanted to follow. In parallel, she is passionate by geopolitics as well as feminism and is a member of a activist group called the "LilithS".

#### **4. Gone Muse**

Evgeniy Shaman Kostochko

The film "Gone Muse" tells through the metaphorical world of Water about what happens to each of us! How we reach a dead end and fall into a Crisis! 2020 has turned the world upside down for the most of us! How to overcome a crisis situation? Find inspiration, desire, energy, new solutions, push off from the bottom and soar up to the precious air! We hope that our film will help many to cope with difficulties!

#### **5. Blue Aeolian**

Marisa Cecchetti

Summer 2021, the desire to be in the middle of the sea, away from the post-covid chaos, from the hysteria of tourists who never miss an opportunity to fight even on vacation, desire for freedom. The boat is certainly the ideal way to escape from the ever-growing world population on an Earth that has a limited surface area. But many think the same way and decide to travel on the surface of the sea. And it's naval chaos!

All that remains is to sink into the navy blue that welcomes silent little fishes unaware of the chaotic world above them, but full of micro-plastics. The blue envelops and wads the superficial noises, that shouting of drunk kids looking for fun after a period of seclusion. But despite this underwater, the noises of the engines of boats and speedboats heading everywhere remain, competing to get there first ... (where?).

This time the dancer uses an expert team to stay a few seconds at a depth of 10 meters, wrapped in the warmth of the blue of the Aeolian Islands, freeing the body from any constriction due to earth's gravity and accompanying a fabric, also blue, which it dances lightly in the marine liquid. Here in the Aeolian Islands the volcanoes have left traces of their restlessness by sculpting rocks with strong shapes and colors. Dance as bodily liberation, freediving as absolute silence. The Blue Aeolian video expresses this liberating state which, while being temporary, regenerates body and mind, preparing them for another battle against the crowded "social-superficial" world.

#### **6. The Longing and the Sea**

Lennart Rossenfeld

This film is about a deep love story. A long time ago a lady fall in love with a seaman. At a certain point the seaman left her. She was so deep in love that she was going to die just to see him one last time. Their meeting point is beyond the sea, deep down in the ocean. This story is based on a poem of Heinz-Walter Hoetter.

#### **7. Unborn**

Sasha Marie Speer

Shot entirely underwater, *Unborn* is a poetic journey about becoming a mother. About grief and loss. Hope and wonder. What if a woman cannot conceive? What if she loses a pregnancy? Can she still fulfill her dream?

This film immerses the audience in those emotions through an original score and stunning visuals. We are brought into the heart and soul of the protagonist as she navigates the worlds of her reality and dreams.

### **Made in Texas – authors who live in Texas compete in this category**

#### **1. Sand**

Dennis Deavenport

"Sand", what it is, where it comes from, and the creatures that live in, on, and above it. Here are some of their stories.

#### **2. Weird, But True**

Betsy Beasley

Does it seem that things under the sea can get pretty strange? Watch and see just how strange they really are.

#### **3. Sea Lion Behaving Badly**

Kathy Talk Long

Hoping to have dives with sea lions, I got a little more than I was expecting. The calm waters of the Sea of Cortez is teeming with life. Entering the water with a red filtered GoPro and both hands on the tray, brought the thrill of a lifetime with such a close encounter with these amazing creatures.

#### **4. Jellyfish & Herring**

Mohammed Karim Ghonima

Life beneath the waves can be tough so the last thing this group of friends need is a seagull stalking their every move.

#### **5. The Dance – Rays in the Sea of Cortez**

Zaide Louise Scheib

I'd like to think these spotted round rays were dancing to entertain the divers, but the reality is that they were involved in a detailed mating ritual running around the reef, oblivious to the divers.

#### **6. One Decision Away**

Jennifer Opiela-Miksch

We are often just one decision away from completely changing our lives. This short film shows what is in store for someone willing to just jump into the water.

## **7. Evolution**

Dennis Deavenport

A film created without a story, focusing on everchanging abstractions of real film clips to create moods and a sense of awe and reverie.

## **8. Magic (in the) Grass**

Betsy and Craig Beasley

Seagrass is a part of the marine ecosystem that is largely underappreciated. Divers tend to rush over it to get to the coral, but this movie shows that the seagrass is a fascinating place and interacts with the more familiar sand or coral formations. Seagrass is also a vital part of the climate change challenge as it is fundamental to saving our oceans and, indeed, the planet from the effects of climate change and CO2. It is disappearing at an alarming rate so it is important to raise awareness of its role in the marine ecosystem. It is also important to slow down and enjoy the grass!

**Sunday, April 3, 3:00 PM**

**Feature Length – *underwater films of more than 2 minutes***

### **1. Arthropoda Crustaceans**

Vicente Leal

Arthropods, Arthropoda, are a phylum of invertebrate animals that are characterized by presenting an exoskeleton, by having a segmented body and especially by having articulated appendages, which gives them their name derived from Greek. It is the edge within the animal kingdom that has the greatest number of described species and also the one with the largest number of individuals on planet Earth. There are many animals belonging to this group and in this audiovisual, we will see many.

### **2. French Polynesia**

Olivier Bourgeois

French Polynesia is an underwater paradise like there is no other. Some say fifty shades of blue. My Odyssey through these islands and atolls is one of the most spectacular diving expeditions I had the chance to do. A crystal-clear water, hundreds of different reef fish species, corals and pelagic, to sum up: an exceptional beauty both in terms of flora and

fauna. French Polynesia is known as the largest shark sanctuary in the world, probably the only place in the world where you can see 6 species of sharks in a single dive. I could speak for hours about it but a short film can speak 1000 words.

### **3. This is Egypt - One Step Ahead**

Simone Piccoli

One of the best reasons to go scuba diving in the Egyptian Red Sea is undoubtedly the spectacular array of marine life. Some destinations are great for finding big stuff, others great for macro, and Egypt has them all. More than 200 different species of coral are found among its reefs, and more than 1,200 species of bony fish, at least 10 percent of which are endemic. The Red Sea's clear waters allow sunlight to penetrate much deeper than other tropical destinations, making the extent of coral and the vibrancy of its color nothing short of spectacular.

### **4. What Happened to You?**

Robert (Bob) Yin

The message is about feeling hope beyond Covid-19. This story reaches out to the global audience to relate to our human experience of the lockdown lifestyle by empowering underwater creatures to stir our emotions, help us reflect, and lighten our hearts with healing laughter.

### **5. Freaks**

Julie Ouimet

The ocean is home to many weird, ugly and even scary looking creatures. By their appearance or behaviors, they seem to be freaks of nature, mistakes of evolution and sometimes nightmarish visions.

### **6. Above, Below and Beyond**

Richard Brooks

Showreel of underwater, aerial and Time-lapse footage from the Pacific.

### **7. The Magic of Socorro**

Blane Henderson

The Magic of Socorro was filmed during an eleven day dive trip to the Socorro Islands Nov 2020. Socorro, also known as the Revillagigedo Archipelago, is located about 250 miles west of the Mexican Baja and is composed of four islands, Socorro, San Benedicto, Roca Partida and Clarion. A designated UNESCO World Heritage site, the Socorro Islands are accessible only via a live-aboard dive boat. Magical encounters occurred on every dive. We were visited by large oceanic mantas, some with wing spans up to 20 feet (6 meters), that seemed to love being tickled by our bubbles. Wild yet playful dolphins also appeared on two dives seemingly seeking interaction. Curious and abundant sharks: Silvertips, Scalloped



Hammerheads, Galapagos, Silkys, Tigers, and on one occasion a Whale Shark! This is truly an epic world class diving location that should be on every serious diver's bucket list!

## **8. Freshwater**

Erkan Balk

Freshwater bodies, underwater research.

## **9. Backyard Diving**

Marcell Nikolausz

Recent years, due to the Covid pandemic and travel restrictions our favorite dive sites were beyond our reach. However, this was an opportunity to explore our local waters, to dive in lakes and rivers in our backyards. This short film is devoted to the wonders of the wildlife of our rivers and lakes.

## **10. Wreck Island - Underwater Photographers Meeting Vis 2021**

Marcin Trzcinski

September's meeting of underwater photographers on the small Croatian island Vis. A week full of wreck and macro diving. Excellent Mediterranean food and hundreds of cats - real owners of this land.

## **11. Nothing Prepares You**

Jeff Dykstra

The first time you see a Great White Shark. It changes you.

## **12. The Art of Buoyancy**

Guy & Anita Chaumette

How do marine creatures deal with buoyancy?

## **13. Other Plans**

Roy Davidson

Covid 19 caused a major change in travel plans, but made me appreciate what our home seas had to offer.

## **14. Time and Tides**

Georgie Bull

We often celebrate the Jurassic Coast for its world-class fossil hunting, but modern marine fauna are thriving in rocky reefs made from the very deposits their ancestors were buried some 200 million years ago. In Time & Tides, a debut film from student filmmaker Georgie Bull, the beauty of this juxtaposition between nature's past and present is showcased using a range of underwater, topside and drone shots.

## **15. Crustaceans**

Guido Schmitz

Crustaceans have been present in almost all waters of the world for millions of years and have successfully colonized almost all niches of the ecosystem, some living openly visible others hidden and well camouflaged. Some species by day, some by night. Here are a few species from the Northeast Atlantic from the coast of Norway.

## **16. The Origin - Life around the Hot Spring**

Claudia Schmitt

It is believed that life on Earth originated at volcanic hot springs. White smokers and black smokers still exist today, mostly in the deep sea.

In a few places on this planet, volcanic hot springs are within the reach of scuba divers. Like the ones in the deep sea, they are an important habitat and attract a universe of marine life, often highly camouflaged or extremely tiny. Dive into a world of fish that look like sponges, crabs that decorate themselves with anemones, mysterious ornate ghost pipefish and more critters of the deep.

All of the footage in this short film has been filmed around a hot spring in Sulawesi, Indonesia.

## **17. Flying with Mantas - Socorro Islands**

Blane Henderson

Flying with Mantas is an underwater nature film, a compilation of footage taken during an eleven-day trip aboard the 'Vortex' live-aboard boat, a converted Canadian Coast Guard cutter, in the waters off the Socorro Islands, Nov 2020. Also called the Revillagigedo Archipelago, it is located about 250 miles west of the Mexican Baja and composed of three dive worthy islands, Socorro, San Benedicto, Roca Partida. If you want to fly with pelagic mantas then this world class location is the place to do it! We were visited by large oceanic mantas, some with wing spans up to 20 feet (6 meters) on almost every dive, usually up close and very personal. They love to soar through a diver's bubbles and seem to love being tickled by them. Try a 'Manta Sombrero' on for size by rolling onto your back as they approach. They will slow down for you to swim along beneath them within mere feet! Or drop down just over the top of them and swim along above them and get a remora's perspective! If approached slowly they don't seem fearful of divers, at least in these waters! Additionally, a variety of curious sharks like Silvertips, Scalloped Hammerheads, Galapagos sharks, Silky sharks, and Tiger sharks swim by checking things out! This is truly an epic and world class diving location.

## **18. Blackwater - Anilao Style**

Walter Marti

Every night the world's largest animal migration happens. Billions of animals from the deep ocean rise to shallow water to feed and mate. This is just a taste of what can be seen in the inky blackness.

### **19. Seasons**

Siv Ystebø, Vidar Skålevik

Above the arctic circle, in Northern Norway, you will find an old ferry dock. Filmmakers Siv and Vidar have captured marine life as the seasons change. Dive into the crystal-clear water during the polar night and watch the lifeless site explode with life under the midnight sun.

### **20. We**

Julie Ouimet

It is what unites us all. It is what drives us, what occupies our thoughts, in some cases obsesses us. It is what makes us see things differently, hear things differently, sense things differently. It creates bonds and lifetime friendships. It defines who we are, what we do, where we go and more importantly how we see the world. Because WE are divers!

### **21. Tiger (Shark) King**

Clayton Conn

More than 20 years ago conservationist and diver, Jim Abernethy, discovered the "affectionate" side of large predatory sharks after removing a fishing hook from the jaws of a tiger shark. Since then, he has removed thousands of hooks from sharks in the warm, clear waters off the Bahamas and has brought divers to safely encounter these apex predators with the goal of destigmatizing sharks as mindless killers.

## **Awards Reception, April 3, 5:00 PM**

Join us for awards, conversation with film directors, raffle and sale of underwater photographs to benefit Houston Underwater Film Festival.