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If you cannot go out, shoot studio portraits at home, like this one of Olga Torrey, using seamless background paper and radio flash triggers to fire speed lights off camera in a soft box. If you do go out, be safe (right); Times Square, New York City—using water as a reflection and design element (far right)

Text and photos by
Larry Cohen and Olga Torrey

As countries around the world have placed populations in quarantine with stay-at-home orders in an effort to stop the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, many underwater photographers have found themselves stuck inside with no option to travel or go diving. Two of *X-Ray Mag's* regular contributors are based in New York City, a current epicenter of the pandemic. They share their images of the transformed “Big Apple,” normally bustling with people and traffic, in intriguing side-by-side comparisons with underwater images from their archives, and offer some ideas and tips on how underwater photographers can keep their skills sharp and minds active and creative during their time at home.



LARRY COHEN



OLGA TORREY

What Underwater Photographers Do When **Put in Dry Dock**



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Comparison and contrast of shape and color: Giant manta ray in the waters off San Benedicto, Mexico (below), and a monarch butterfly collecting pollen in a New York City park before migrating south (right) Getting low and shooting up is a good perspective when creating images on land or underwater. Photos by Olga Torrey



Most underwater image-makers start out as surface photographers. Once they get their scuba certification, it is a natural progression to begin capturing images underwater. However, while on dive trips, most underwater shooters will also take shots above the waterline. So, what happens when we underwater photographers are not permitted to dive and cannot travel?

During the worldwide corona-

virus pandemic, many of us cannot even leave our homes but still want to be creative. Here are some ideas:

- While being grounded, we can still capture still-life images and portraits at home.
- There is also the Getty Museum Challenge This is a fun project that involves picking a work of art and



Comparison: Pair of ocean pouts on Resor wreck in New Jersey (above), and pair of juvenile great horn owls in Ephrata, Pennsylvania (above). Photos by Larry Cohen.

Dry Dock

recreating it, using what you have in the house. All of these at-home projects will improve your studio-lighting skills, which will improve your understanding of light, and thus improve your underwater imaging. (Learn more at: blogs.getty.edu.)

- Taking an online editing software class is also a good use of time. There are also many tutorials on the Internet that will improve your postproduction skills.
- The time stuck at home can also be used to organize your digital files and update your website.

Some photographers, who are lucky enough to have a great view out their window, can create images with a telephoto lens.

In the United States, we are encouraged to stay home unless we have to go out for essential errands or to get to work, but our movements are not restricted at the time of this writing. We thought this was a good time to treat our hometown as a travel location. Major cities, including New York City, now have empty streets. So, on our limited outings, we took our cameras with us to photograph sites that are normally very crowded. It is impor-



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Comparison and contrast of color and composition: Papua New Guinea reef, teeming with life (right) and an empty Time Square, the night New York went on pause in response to the coronavirus pandemic (far right). Above water and underwater wide-angle lenses are useful for seascapes, landscapes and cityscapes. Photos by Larry Cohen.



tant to document this surreal time in history and show the new normal.

Of course, we need to wear a mask, gloves and stay far away from any other people that might be on the street. In New York, state and city parks are still open. Besides getting fresh air and exercise during the pandemic, the parks are a good location for landscape and wildlife images, especially birds.

As image-producers, we need to use this time to stay active and creative. This is a time for learning new skills and looking at life from a different point of view. Working on improving our above-water photo skills will improve our underwater imaging techniques and help us create unique images above and below the waves. ■

Larry Cohen and Olga Torrey are well-traveled and published underwater photographers based in New York City, USA. They offer underwater photography courses and presentations to dive shops, clubs and events. For more information, please visit: liquidimagesuw.com and filimage.nyc.

Comparison: A *AChromodoris annae* nudibranch, reaching for Christmas tree worms (above left), and a ladybug, sheltering from the sun in a New York City park. Photos by Olga Torrey.



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Comparison of lines and shapes: Challenger 600 jet submerged in Dutch Springs, Pennsylvania. When the water is cold, visibility is usually better since there are no algae blooms. This is a good opportunity to photograph large structures with ambient light. (right), and a Harrier jump jet monument in Havelock, North Carolina. Using a wide-angle lens and shooting at a low angle can make a small puddle look like a large lake. (far right).

Photos by Olga Torrey



Dry Dock



Comparison of lines and shapes: Japanese Zero plane parts in the Fujikawa Maru wreck, Chuuk Lagoon, Micronesia (far left). Shooting inside the wreck's cargo hold, strobes were the only lights that illuminated the plane parts. US jet on display at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York City (left). When taking photos above water, just like in open water, your flash can be used to illuminate the subject. Use your shutter speed to change the exposure of the background. Photos by Larry Cohen.





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Comparison of shapes and angles: Divers on the wreck of the German submarine U-352 North Carolina (right) and the USS *Growler*, which is the only US guided-missile submarine the public can visit, located at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York City (far right). A submarine conning tower is an interesting subject above and below the water because of its shape. When photographing shipwrecks, using divers adds a human element. Using different lenses will create a different look. A fisheye lens was used for the *Growler* photo. Photographing the submarine at sunset, speed lights were used to fill in the shadows. The lens was set to a small aperture to control the flair when shooting directly into the sun. Photos by Larry Cohen.



Dry Dock



Comparison of light and shape: Gray reef sharks, swimming under a circle of sunlight in the Gardens of the Queen marine park of Cuba (far left) and the circle of a full moon, rising up behind a pine tree in a New York City park (left). When shooting underwater sunball photos, place the subject in the frame so that it covers the bright center of the sun. Use a small aperture so the circular edge of the sun is not too bright. The subject will be in the shadow, so use your strobes to get detail in the subject. When shooting a moonball photo, set your camera to expose for the bright moon. Leaving the subject in the shadow as a silhouette can be effective. Photos by Olga Torrey.



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Critter comparison: Sea lions playing in the waters of Isla Espíritu Santo, Mexico (right), and a harbor seal relaxing during low tide in Sandy Hook, New Jersey (far right). Similar subjects may require different lenses on land. Photographing harbor seals resting on rocks during low tide required a telephoto lens. I experimented with gear, using a manual focus Novoflex 600mm rifle lens from the 1960s. Photos by Larry Cohen.

Take the X-Ray Mag Photo Challenge

Stuck inside? Using found objects at home, or what you can photograph looking outside your window, why not try recreating one of your own underwater photos from your image archives? The five best shots will be shared on our website. Here are some tips:

Match the colors. Find objects at home that have similar colors as your underwater image and arrange them in a similar way as they are composed in your underwater image.

Match the shapes and lines. Arrange objects from home to mimic the lines and shapes found in your underwater image.

Think outside the box. Try an



Color and shape comparison: Dorid nudibranch, *Goniobranchus leopardus*, on soft coral in Papua New Guinea (above) and crocus plant blooming early in spring in New York City (right). Above or below the waterline, there are many small subjects for which to use your macro lens. Photos by Olga Torrey.



abstract approach rather than a literal representation. Go macro and get close in on a subject. Try using unusual elements. There may be dry goods in your pantry or things in the fridge that may come in handy. Who knows? Your composition might be edible after the photo shoot.

Take a look at the lighting. Use creative lighting techniques, homemade snoots, and other lighting fixtures and filters found in your home to recreate the lighting found in your underwater image.

Make use of reflections. Mirrors, glass, liquids, water... experiment with reflective surfaces and shooting angles through them.

Mix it up. Do several and pick the best one. The more attempts, the better chance for a great image.

Photography tips. Use your camera, smartphone, tablet or computer camera to capture the image. If you do not have a tripod, steady your shot with a homemade tripod

made out of objects found in your home. If you are in the shot, you can use a remote shutter release device, the timer on your camera or have someone at home take the shot. Try taking different exposures and angles of the same composition.

Share your images. You can post your images on Twitter or Instagram at: **#xraymagphotochallenge**. Or send them through our Facebook page: **@XRayMagazine**.

Please remember to post both your original underwater shot and your new homemade shot, so viewers can see them together and compare.

Captions. Tell us briefly the story behind your images, where they were shot and what objects you used in your homemade image.

Please keep your images family-friendly and mind the social media's policies for posting. Most of all, have fun! ■



Anglerfish 4K Underwater HDMI Field Monitor

The AFCL-HD57 by Canadian manufacturer Anglerfish is a 4K resolution 5.7-inch field monitor designed specifically with underwater videographers and photographers in mind. It features a 5.7in IPS Screen, full 4K resolution, a brightness of 550cd/m², 1400:1 contrast, support of 1920x1080 (HD) and 4K input, and customizable menu colours. Each model gets colour-calibrated before shipping. The monitor is powered by a Sony NP-F750 (4-cell, 7.2V rechargeable) lithium-ion battery pack, which allows a run-time of approximately four hours. By using a special 50Wh battery pack, the run-time can be extended up to 6.25 hours. Additional features include bright-



ness histogram, peak focus assist (three colours options), zebra exposure (1-100IRE adjustable), Scan Mode (Under Scan, Over Scan), Check Field (Red, Green, Blue, Mono), Anamorphic Mode (1.3x, 2.0x, 2.0x magnification), Ratio marker (4:3, 13:9, 14:9, 15:9, 16:9, 1.85:1 and 2.35:1), colour temperature adjustment, and various output formats from 480i up to 4K UHD. The monitor's body is made of aluminium, comes with standard ball-mounts and can be operated from -3° to +50°C (27° to 122°F). anglerfishlighting.ca



Inon UWL-95 Wide-Angle Wet Lens

The UWL-95 is a wide-angle wet lens specifically designed for compact cameras with 24mm lenses. It is available with M52 or M67 threads and offers a 95° field of view underwater. By attaching an optional dome-lens unit, the field of view (underwater) can be increased up to 141°. Using the UWL-95 reduces the minimum focusing distance of the camera lens, according to the manufacturer. Its weight is 605g topside, 396g underwater. The UWL-95 is depth-rated to 60m (200ft). As of April 2020, the wide-angle

lens is compatible with the Olympus TG 3, 4, 5 and 6 series and with Sony RX100 M3, 4 and 5. inon.jp



Lomography Analogue Aqua Camera

Lomography's new Analogue Aqua is a simple-to-use, reloadable camera, which comes in an underwater case, depth-rated to 10m. The camera is available in two versions, pre-loaded with one of two Lomography films: Colour Negative 400 for classic analogue character or LomoChrome Purple for violet tones. Once the 27-exposure, pre-loaded film is full, it can be replaced with another roll. The Analogue Aqua operates on a single AA battery, features a basic fixed-focus, 31mm F9 lens, with allows one to focus on anything from 1m (3ft) to infinity. The camera has a permanent, fixed shutter speed of 1/120s. In addition, it features a built-in flash (with a recycle time of 15 seconds). lomography.com



Gates GT14 Underwater Imaging Light

The Gates GT14 Underwater Imaging Light unites various practical features for the underwater videographer into a compact, travel-friendly package. It provides up to 14,000 lumens of light, with a 90-degree beam angle. A big, glove-sized power ring switch rotates through seven different light power outputs, including a very low power mode for night diving. Fuel gage and light level indicators are mirrored to provide easy reading from either side. A water-cooling contact behind the LED enables higher efficiencies for high light power outputs and longer burn times without overheating the LED. On full power, the light works for 30 minutes; on half-power, 75 minutes; and on low power, 10 hours. The battery pack can be charged in three hours. The GT14 provides 5000K colour temperature, is depth-rated to 137m (450ft), has a dry weight of 1.4kg topside, and a negative weight of 538g underwater.

gateshousings.com

SeaLife Micro 3.0

SeaLife's newest flagship of permanently sealed underwater cameras comes with a Sony 16MP 1-inch sensor, RAW-shooting option, an improved 2.4-inch LCD display and 4K video capabilities. The built-in 19mm equivalent f/2.8 lens has a field of view of 100°. The camera features an on-board 64 GB storage. Its battery provides enough energy for three hours of continuous use, according to the manufacturer. Compared to its predecessor, the Micro 3.0 offers faster burst shooting (10fps vs 5fps) and reduced shutter lag (0.1s vs 0.5s).



Other new functions are WiFi capability, time-lapse and burst shooting up to 10 fps. Furthermore, the Micro 3.0 now supports manual white balance. The camera is depth-rated to 60m (200ft). sealife-cameras.com

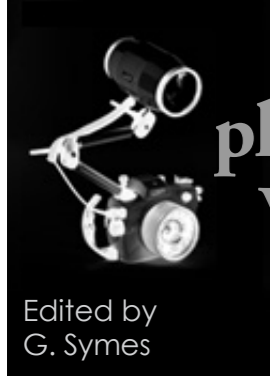


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Edited by G. Symes

"Back to the surface," by Delbos Yannick of France, winner of the Portfolio Category, Lens Beyond Ocean Photo Competition 2019. A mother humpback whale guides her calf at Saint Paul off Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean.



Lens Beyond Ocean submission deadline extended

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the dates of the Malaysia International Dive Expo (MIDE) have been changed to 4 – 6 December 2020. As a result, the final submission date for the Lens Beyond Ocean (LBO) international photo competition, which is hosted by MIDE, has been extended to 1 November 2020.

The LBO international photo competition, now in its tenth year, keeps on getting bigger and bigger, having drawn entries from over 850 underwater photographers around the globe as well as sponsors providing US\$25,000 in high-quality prizes. These include dive travel packages to some of the top dive destinations in Asia to top-end dive gear and camera equipment, which participants can look forward to competing for in the contest.

Judges

This year's judges include renowned underwater photographers Tobias Friedrich of Germany, Jason Isley of the United Kingdom/Sabah and Nurul Yazid of Malaysia.

Be a winner

If you are a diver, passionate about sharing your underwater images and experiences, LBO offers a great chance for you to show off your talent. First and second place winners will be selected in each of seven categories, including: Macro, Wide-Angle, Portfolio, Compact Camera, Creative, Freediving, and 3-Minute Video. Judges will also select images for honorable mention as "Memorable Pictures."

Showcase of winning entries

Winners will be announced on Friday, 27 November 2020, and awarded prizes on MIDE's main stage on Saturday at 11:00 a.m. In addition, all winning images will be on display in

the foyer, and winning videos showcased on the main stage's big screen, during MIDE from 4 – 6 December 2020 at the World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur.

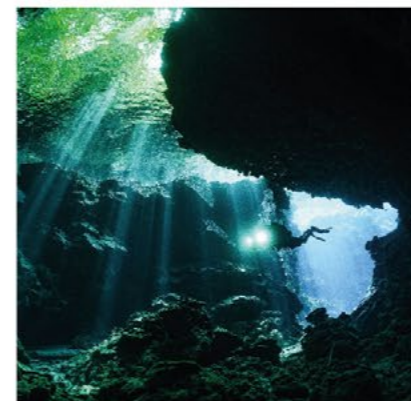
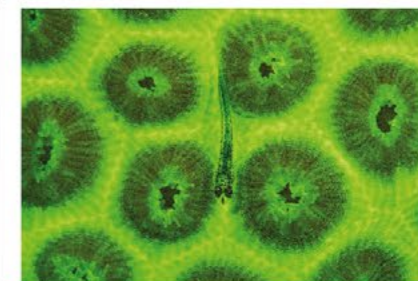
Submission deadline

The final date is 1 November 2020.

Call for sponsors

The benefits to your business or organization in sponsoring the event or donating prizes is expansive international exposure, as your logo will be included on all print and online promotions and collateral. Your company or group will also be listed as a sponsor on the Lens Beyond Ocean website, with a link to your organization's website. In addition, your logo and brand will be present and promoted on social media, the Lens Beyond Ocean gallery banner and the venue banner on display during MIDE 2020. ■

For more information, please visit: lensbeyondocean.com.



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