

Maintenance & Care

Check the o-rings with a magnifying glass for tears and scratches. When cleaning the camera equipment, make sure you have a clean and well organized working space



Ports/domes made of acrylic glass are easy to polish, but only on the outside. Never touch the inside, not even to polish

Text by Kurt Amsler
Translated by Arnold Weisz
Photos by Kurt Amsler

Dependable and well functioning camera equipment is the foundation of good pictures. This article gives you some hints and tips on how to maintain your equipment in flawless condition.

Some of the most important parts of your camera equipment are the o-rings. Without watertight o-rings there won't be any underwater photography. It

doesn't matter if they are made of neoprene, silicon or viton, they need to be in perfect shape.

Keep it clean

On every dive, the o-rings are strained by extreme forces as they are pressed against the grooving on the underwater housing, including water and the particles it contains. It is therefore just a matter of time before so many particles are left around the seals, that the camera housing starts to leak. To



Checking the TTL- function is vital. Just flash the camera. If the strobe flashes immediately and then recharges without delay, it's ok

In addition to the large o-rings on i.e. the lids, there are smaller but no less important o-rings on all bushings. These I recommend to be serviced about every 100 hours (underwater). This is usually only possible on more advanced camera houses. On simpler camera housings of synthetic material (except Sea & Sea) this is not possible.

Strobes/ flashes

Your strobe/flash devices also need to have their o-rings serviced and cleaned. The pilot lamp is ideal for testing the apparatus. Test all flash settings. The recharge time should of course be longest by the strongest setting. All other settings should allow for quicker recharging. The TTL is best tested when you point the strobe directly into the lens and fire it. If the strobe flashes, but the pilot lamp doesn't come on, you have a circuit contact problem. The reason for such problems are often lack of maintenance. If the contact has

Maintenance

grease, moisture, or is oxidized, you will get a short, which will affect the controlling mechanism of the TTL. Always clean the contacts with alcohol, and keep a spare cable with you. Nothing is worse than finding the 'perfect shot' and then the strobe fails. To avoid such mishaps you should always test the batteries before entering the water. Battery testers are cheap and easy to buy. Some cameras manufacturers inform you about the batteries' charge rates, but often just one flash can separate a red from the green light.

After diving

After every dive, you should always rinse the housings in fresh water. When you come home from a dive trip, you should always soak the housing/strobes 30 minutes in water containing white vinegar (about a teaspoon per litre). This is to dissolve all salt crystals. Then, repeat this twice without the vinegar for 30 minutes. After you have rinsed it off for the last

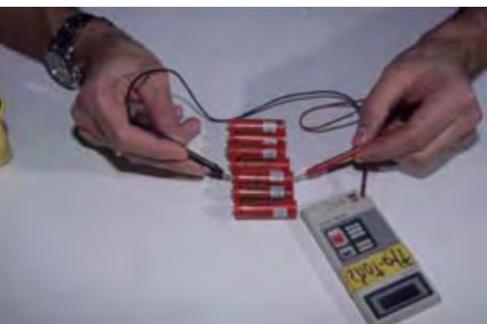


prevent this, you need to clean all the o-rings after every film-, memory card or battery change. Additionally, you have to grease the o-rings. Don't use any sharp objects to remove the o-rings. Use your fingernails. Have a close look at the o-ring, clean it with a paper towel. Never use cotton Q-tips, as they leave behind an 'anti-grease' surface, which eventually can lead to leaks.

on the silicone o-ring you risk that they are not flexible enough, which may lead to leakages. o-rings made from neoprene or viton can be greased with all kinds of grease, but silicone o-rings should only be greased with the grease that is recommended by the manufacturer. Otherwise, you may deteriorate the quality.

Greasing O-rings

Again, and again the questions arises about how much grease should be applied to the o-rings. The whole point of greasing the o-rings is to make it easier for them to slide into place as an increase in water pressure starts to work on the camera housing. Using neoprene and viton o-rings, only apply silicone sparsely. The o-ring may shine slightly, but there shouldn't be any visible grease on them. The silicone o-rings need three times as much grease, as they seem to absorb the grease. If you don't apply enough grease



Working batteries are essential. Cleaning tools: WD-40 spray and cleaning tissues



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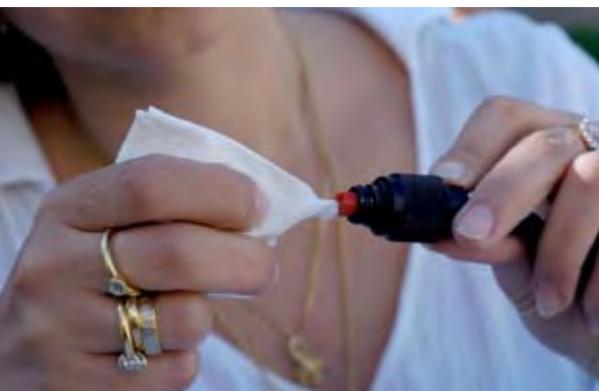


photo & video

time and dried it, you should apply all parts (metal, screws, shafts and bushings) with the anticorrosion formula WD-40. Remove all o-rings made of neoprene or viton and store separately. This prevents them from losing their shapes. Then, remove all batteries. Non-removable batteries should be charged. It is best if your charger has a trickle charge setting. Even though some divers feel that this kind of maintenance is time and labor intensive, it will be worth your while—and your camera will not give up when you have the 'perfect shot' in your frame.

Practical tips for maintenance and care:

- On a regular basis, clean all the o-rings after every film, memory card or battery change.
- The anti-corrosion formula WD-40 is perfect for protection of your equipment. Spray it on all metal parts to avoid salt depositing.
- Rinse your housing after every saltwater dive with freshwater. If you are not going to use the housing within the near future, soak the housing in freshwater to dissolve all salt crystals.



Maintenance

If you get at leak, nothing helps. Return to the surface and save the equipment

- Especially the humid and salty air near the ocean quickly affects the contact points and batteries on your equipment. Clean the contacts with either sandpaper or cleaning spray. You can also use an eraser.
- To keep a good working connection between the camera and strobe, regularly clean the contact points with alcohol. Often grease from the o-ring will get into the cables or contact points breaking the electric flow.
- To avoid surprises during a dive, always test the strobe, the zoom rings, and the shutter to assure faultless operation.
- Small scratches on acrylic ports can easily be polished off. On glass ports on the other hand, this is not possible. To avoid such scratches, always protect your domes/ports with a neoprene protector.
- To avoid a "memory effect" and to maintain long-life for your batteries, you should only recharge them when they are almost empty. Modern battery charges often come with a discharge function.
- To ensure that your batteries have sufficient power before you enter the water, you should always test them.
- Keep all your maintenance tools like silicone grease, o-rings, battery charger, battery tester, etc, in a small waterproof case when you travel.

Clean the contacts with a tissue and some alcohol

For workshop information, please visit Amsler's website at: Photosub.com ■

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FSD-1100

Fantasea has released the FSD-1100 Housing for Canon's PowerShot SD1100 IS / IXUS 80 IS camera. Composed of durable injection molded polycarbonate, the compact, lightweight design offers full function controls along with double o-ring seals on all command control buttons. Other features include a radial o-ring main seal, new flash diffuser design, LCD screen glare protection, stainless steel buckles and a 46mm threaded port ring, suitable for a wide variety of filters and accessory lenses. The robust design allows for use in depths of up to 60m. A one-year free D.E.P.P flood insurance policy is also included. www.fantasea.com ■



Nikon unveils the 12.1 megapixel D700 digital SLR

Utilizing the same FX format CMOS sensor as the flagship D3, this 12-megapixel camera boasts features such as a built-in flash, Nikon's first self-cleaning system for the FX-format sensor, and a top ISO of 25,600. Especially notable for the underwater photographer is the large viewfinder. The five frames per second shooting speed can be boosted to eight with the addition of an external battery pack. Nikon's 51-point auto focus system coupled with two Live View shooting modes enables photographers to frame shots using the three-inch high-resolution LCD monitor. In addition, employment of Nikon's Picture Control System enables image adjustment to a series of preset parameters including Standard, Neutral, Vivid and Monochrome. These presets also allow easy image sharpening, tone compensation, brightness, overall tone and saturation. There is already a lot of speculation as to whether the D700 will fit into D300 housings. The D700 retails for US\$2,999. ■

Gates EX1

Constructed with "Bulletproof" machined aluminum and a black type III 'hard' anodize finish, the Gates EX1 housing for the Sony PMW-EX1 is engineered for discriminating professionals. From marine research and military to TV and movie productions, Gates housings are tasked with critical projects the world over. In addition to providing a perfect grip, the adjustable handles enable fingertip access to more than 20 different functions. Flexible trim weights can be added or removed for ideal buoyancy and control. Precision ports, along with the optional EM43 high-resolution monitor, afford the sharpest HD images. Each housing comes with a 2-year renewable warranty. www.gateshousings.com ■



Ikelite substrobe

A new and improved version of the popular D-125 strobe introduced in 2001, the Substrobe DS-160 is compatible with all Ikelite TTL systems and cameras ranging from Nikonos systems to the latest digital models. When utilized in either manual or TTL mode, recycle times are virtually instantaneous when fired at fractional power and a speedy 1.5 sec from full discharge. In manual mode, ten powers in half-stop increments allow for precise control over exposure. With minimal drain on the strobe's battery, the powerful 5-watt LED modeling light is ideal for focusing assistance or night diving. The concentrated beam automatically turns off and on when the strobe fires. Also included is a rechargeable NiMH battery pack, flash diffuser, and standard mount with through-bolt. The Smart Charger is available separately. An optional mount with 2.5cm diameter ball allows the attachment of the strobe to a TLC or Ultralight arm system. List price is \$840.00. www.ikelite.com ■

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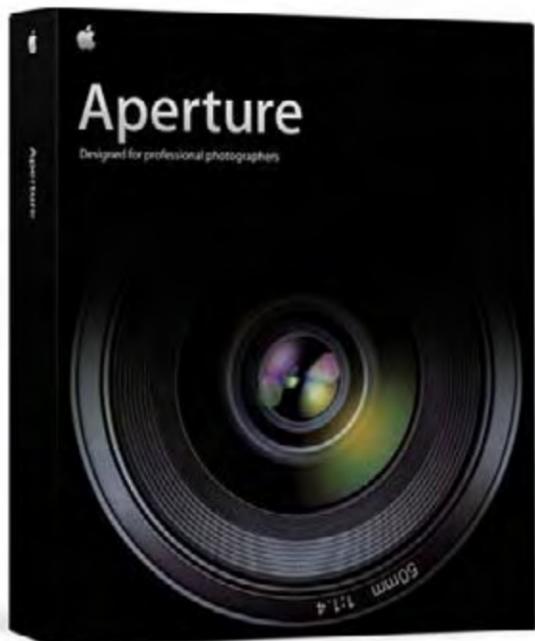


Ikelite WP-80 Wide Angle Port

WP-80 Wide Angle Port is an interesting option for select Ikelite video housings. This represents the premium end of Ikelite wide-angle options and delivers the ultimate in resolving power, particularly important in high-definition applications. www.ikelite.com ■

Seatool

The new Seatool housing for the Canon Rebel XTi packs a lot of features into its compact size. The smallest and lightest underwater digital SLR system on the market, the XTi underwater housing fits the ultra compact Canon Rebel XTi camera like a glove. Loaded with full SLR features such as TTL, fast focusing, no shutter delay and a large LCD monitor, the camera delivers beautiful crisp images with minimal noise. For the traveller seeking a high-end yet lightweight carry-on system, the Canon Rebel Xti fits the bill. Price US\$2,299.00 www.backscatter.com ■



New Aperture

With dozens of image editing and export plug-ins, automations and scripts, and third-party book and web themes available, Aperture's capabilities can be easily extended to access an entire industry's worth of imaging expertise without ever leaving Aperture. The page breaks down the add-ons into four categories. Image Editing Plug-ins adds a variety of specialized tools for noise reduction, selective adjustments, lens correction and much more. With Export Plug-ins, send photos to Facebook and photo sharing websites directly from Aperture. Automations & Scripts turn complex multi-step tasks into one-click operations that extend existing Aperture features and allow straightforward integration into a workflow that includes other applications such as Keynote, Mail or InDesign. Finally, Extras features third-party web and book themes offering a variety of creative design options that allow greater flexibility when presenting your photos in print and on the web. ■



Zillion housing

Japanese manufacturer Zillion has released a housing for Canon's EOS 450D. Named the ZAP-KissX2 (the 450D is named the Kiss X2 in Japan) is available in a wide assortment of colors and is brimming with features including AF frame select and Zoom, exposure compensation, metering select, easy direct/white balance select, AF mode select, playback and manual focus dial. The ABS resin/Acrylic resin/stainless steel construction is rated to depths up to 60m. Optical fiber cable connectors for strobes are built in. www11.ocn.ne.jp/~zillion ■

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New Depth-of-Field Calculator for iPhone

A new native application for the iPhone promises to help photographers take control of DoF (Depth of Field). The application is a DoF (Depth-of-Field) calculator, which allows you to calculate the depth of field of your pictures in advance of the next photo shoot. After you have set all required settings (camera, focal length, aperture, subject distance), the DoF Calculator calculates all the required information (near limit, far limit, depth of field, hyperfocal distance, depth of field in front of the subject as well as behind the subject, circle of confusion), which you can use for your perfect picture.

The DoF Calculator is available now through iTunes for US\$7.99 ■



ULTRAccompact

The Ikelite ULTRAccompact digital housing for the Coolpix L18 is indeed compact and cool; it slips into your pocket to carry along on any adventure. Housing measures only 15.2 x 11 x 8.6 cm (6" x 4.4" x 3.4") including controls and port. Camera and housing together weigh under 0.66kg (1.5 lbs) above water and are nearly neutral underwater. All camera controls are fully functional through the housing and depth rated to 60m (200ft). Includes USB Cable, Audio and Video Cable, Strap, two AA Alkaline Batteries, and the Nikon Software Suite for Coolpix. www.ikelite.com ■



Underwater Australasia Photo Competition 2007-08 Winners

The annual *Underwater.com.au* photo competition is over, the judges have spoken, and we are ready to announce the winners of the fourth annual underwater australasia photo competition. As in every year, we have selected two winners each month until June 2008—one in the Open Category and one in the Novice Category.

Text by Tim Hochgrebe

Thanks to all of you who contributed to this amazing competition. The quality of entries was even better this year, and we are looking forward to a great 2008-09 competition. If you didn't win this year, don't despair—continue to dive, take photos and submit them to us.

The prizes for our fourth annual competition were absolutely AMAZING! Thanks to all the sponsors of this competition.

We have seen over a thousand fantastic entries over the last year, and the winners of the 12 monthly competitions were in the finals to compete for very exciting prizes including a week dive trip for two at Lotus Hotels

and Resorts with the choice of Villa Almarik, Gili Trawangan, Lombok or Bali; a custom made dry suit from Apollo; a Taka live-a-board trip from Cairns; and a dive trip for two to the Tutukaka coast, New Zealand, with Poor Knights Divers in New Zealand.

A VERY big thanks to the judges, who included legendary underwater photographer Michael Aw and contemporary underwater artist Richard Vevers from Underwater Australia, as well as of course us, the underwater team.

Okay, now to the winners of the 2007-08 competition—drum roll please... ■

3rd prize,
Novice category:
Larry Medenilla
with a incredibly
lit *Chromodoris* at
Anilao, Philippines

1st Prize,
Open category:
Matt Tworkowski
with a great
atmospheric
shot of stingless
jellyfish at the jellyfish lake, Palau,
Micronesia



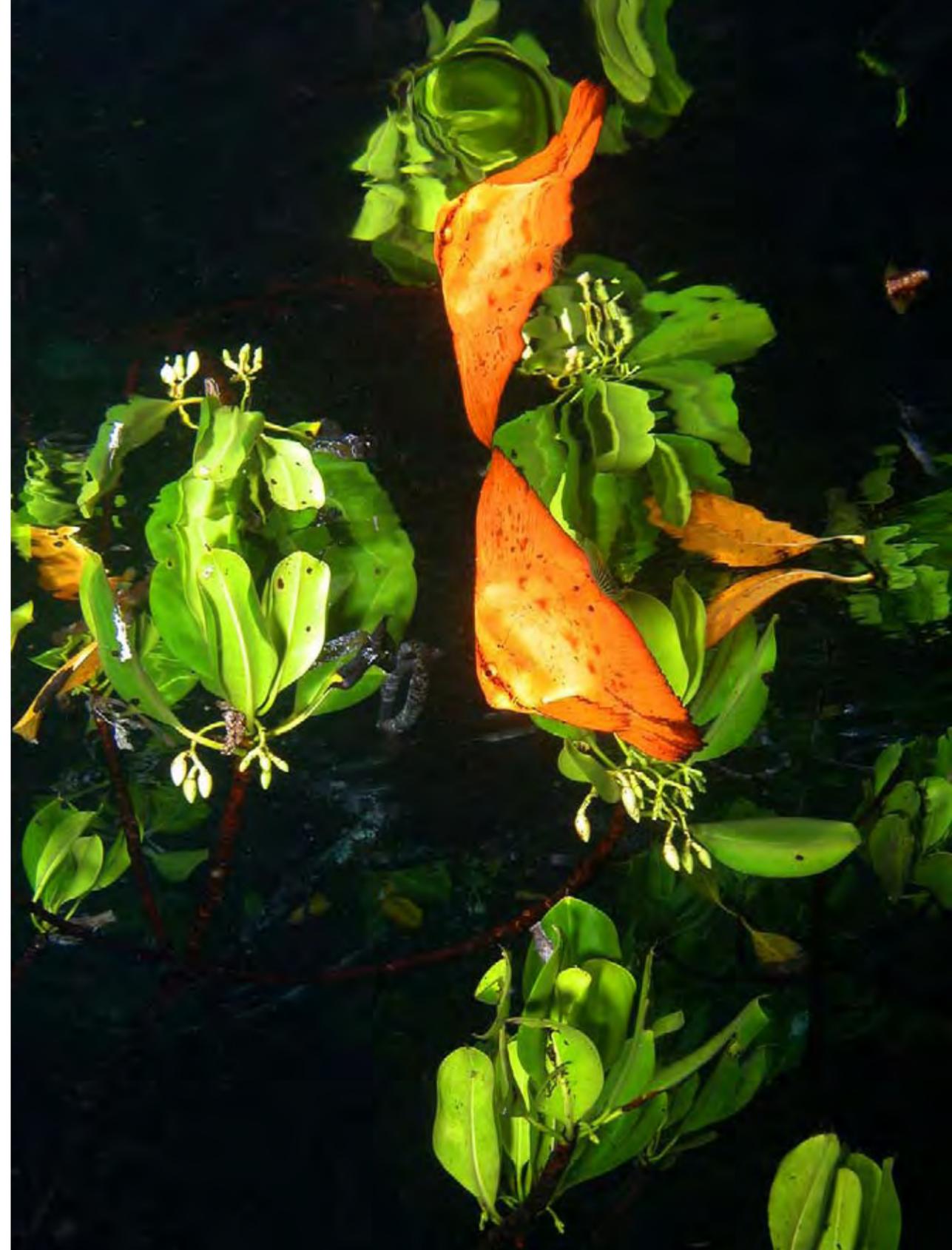


1st Prize, Novice category:
Larry Medenilla, with his super-close-up of
a Pygmy seahorse from Anilao, Philippines



2nd Prize, Novice category:
Caelum Mero, with *Take me to your
leader*, Point Franklin, Victoria, Australia

Photo Competition Winners



3rd Prize,
Open category:
Linda Johnston,
with a magically
mirrored juvenile
Orbicular Batfish
at Raja Ampat,
Indonesia



2nd Prize, Open
category: Peter
Hitchins from South
West Rocks, with
the ultimate shot of
Grey Nurse Sharks
in Fish Rock Cave





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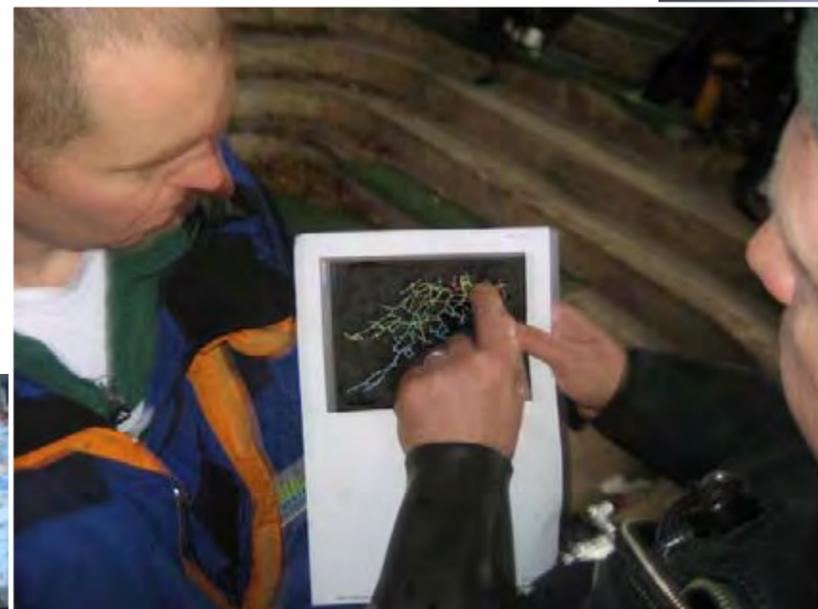
girldiver.com



Budapest

Beneath the streets

Caving in the City



Text and photos by JP Bresser

I was actually heading somewhere completely different—a small island in the Seychelles. But since this trip got cancelled just prior to departure, I decided to go to a tech divers conference in Budapest instead. That in itself was an interesting event with presentations on all aspects of technical diving. The cherry on the cake was a forum discussion on rebreather diving with some of the most “famous and well known” rebreather divers on the planet. And to make it even more interesting, the more “controversial” camps of the rebreather world were also represented. A tech dive conference with familiar faces, new ideas and knowledge, and equal minds. But why on Earth head for Budapest?



Members of the dive team meet in the spa room the ruins of an old hospital in Budapest before the dive

Budapest was once known as the “Paris of the East”. Today, it is a gateway for a group of countries that hope to join the West. I found that it was also a gateway for enthusiastic technical divers striving for more knowledge and experience. This may sound like a long way to go just for a two-day conference on diving, but there was much more to it than just a conference.

Underneath the city lies a huge cave system with warm thermal water, and we got a permit to dive into it. Isn't life beautiful?

The dive

On a drizzling Monday morning

after the conference, we gathered in the middle of Budapest in front of an old iron gate with a big lock on it. We were joined by three teams including a group of Dutch cave-trained cave divers and some American friends who also wanted to dive the cave.

Curiosity got the better of us, so we climbed onto the surrounding wall to see what was hiding behind it. What we could see was an old building built in a traditional style and a small pond covered with duck weed. Through the few open areas of the pond, we could see the crystal clear water beneath, and our heart beats sped up as our

Unique Dive Site

I look at a glass wall between other buildings that is showing a hint of a construction well hidden behind it. I climb on the wall and discover a dark pond and something that looks like an ancient bath house. Is this really the entrance?

—Anton van Rosmalen
(Team 2)

Geared up divers descend into the cave via a gated stairway. TOP CENTER: On a convoluted map of the cave system, the guide shows the route to the dive team



Budapest

enthusiasm peaked.

At the same time, a tram rumbled through the street.

It's a strange place for a cave entrance. Aren't caves supposed to be somewhere in a desolate landscape in the middle of nowhere? Usually, one will just find something like a small muddy pond near which the entrance is hiding. This was completely different.

We were in the middle of a European capital, on a busy street with trams and cars passing by.

Here, an old public bath house was located, built around 1600 with architecture influenced by the Turks. It was hardly noticeable with that big wall around it

and the old crappy gate hiding the entrance.

We met our guide Joseph Espanol, who goes by the nickname 'Joe' among those distinguished fellow divers who find it hard to pronounce Bulgarian names. Joe is one of the divers exploring this cave system and an avid cave diver.

After some dragging and lugging, our equipment was spread all over the pavement in front of the wall, and Joe opened the gate. We geared up in a former spa of a hospital across the street, which was in some places almost completely collapsed. There was an empty pool that was

After passing through the narrow tunnel, the cave opened up

once dedicated to medical treatment in the warm thermal water.

Most of the chambers looked completely deteriorated, and beams of sunlight penetrated through the holes in the ceiling and the entrances, giving the place a theatrical ambiance like that of a film set.

While we rigged up our gear and analyzed the gasses, Joe briefed us on the specifics of the cave, which is known as

Molnar Janos (named after the pharmacist, Janos Molnar, who explored the dry parts of this cave around 1860).

Joe produced a color-copied



map of the system, which—with all its psychedelic colors and lines—had a remarkable resemblance to a cobweb made by a spider on LSD. His finger flashed swiftly over the small folded paper with its incredible amount of colored lines.

It took a while before I realised that Joe was showing us the direction of our planned route through the cave. After three T's, I was already lost.

We questioned Joe about the condition of lines and how the T's were routed and marked, but the answer wasn't what we expected and hoped to hear. The lines in the cave were thick, too thick for



Divers edge into a narrow rock corridor, barely able to fit in sideways





Squeezing through the entrance to the cave

when he started telling us about the walls which were covered with crystals that we could expect to see, and the gin clear water of 20°C. I thought, "Who cares about double-enders anyway?"

Plunging in

We got into our gear and walked toward the pond. In front of us, we found a small iron staircase entering a narrow dark tunnel into the ground. While we climbed down, I felt the temperature rise. I stepped into the steamy water, a weird sensation considering it was cold winter upstairs.

our cookies (markers that cave divers use on lines to mark a change in direction or an intersection between lines) and in several places, they were kept in position by thinner lines, so each intersection looked a bit like an exploded web.

On the route we were supposed to follow, this would not be just one intersection, but more like 22 of them. To make it all a little easier, each intersection was marked with a big white arrow pointing towards the exit.

We secretly brought extra double-enders instead of cookies, so we could mark each intersection on our exit side, although it was questionable whether or not we could swim with 22 double-enders in our dry suit pockets.

Joe captured our attention again

We floated into the narrow rock corridor and were barely able to fit through while positioning ourselves side ways. With small movements and kicks, we shuffled a little further until we all had some space to perform bubble checks, valve and s-drills.

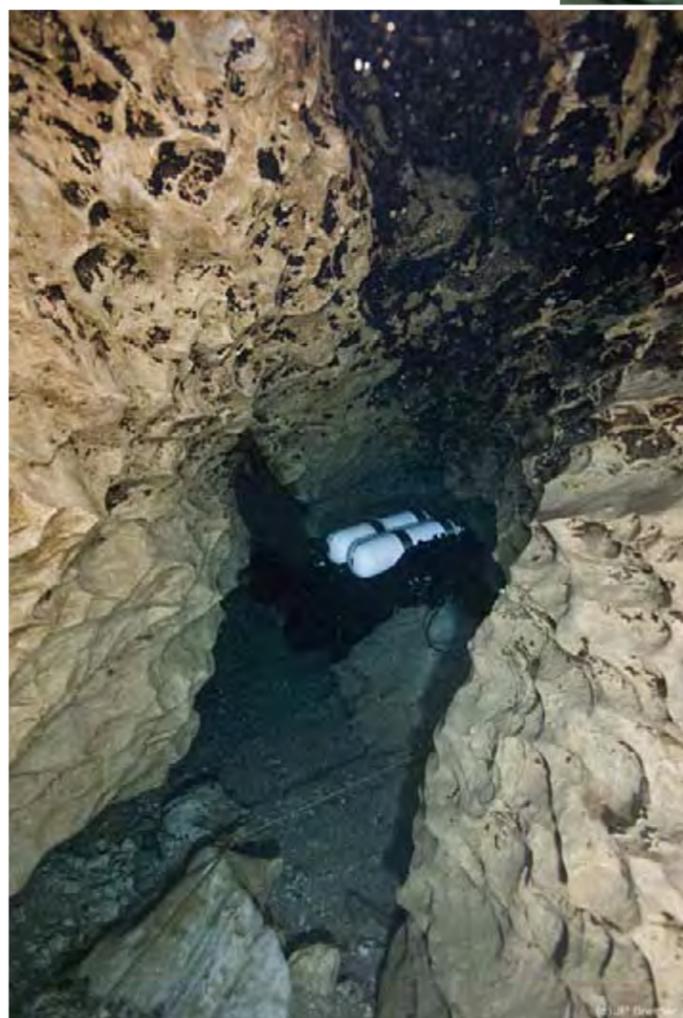
Joe descended into the narrow tunnel, and when he reached the bottom, I could see him disappear through a small hole. One by one, we descended, pulling ourselves through the narrow entrance, and started a swim of approximately 200 meters through narrow passages and restrictions.

Although the water temperature was perfect, the visibility was disappointing as the water was a little milky. I still enjoyed the sneak-throughs and

Budapest

the narrow passages, combined with the bluish light effects given by the disappearing HID lights of divers, Marloes and A-M, who were swimming in front of me.

Suddenly, the cave opened up, and I saw the first of many line intersections in front of me. A cluster of



lines exploded in all directions, kept in place by a thick rope dropping from the ceiling. And as promised, in the middle was a big white arrow pointing towards the exit.

Joe led on, and after a few more hair balls of line, we followed a line leading steeply downwards and broke through a thermocline. The result was



Scenes from the cave dive under Budapest





THIS PAGE: Divers explore Molnar Janos cave, which has giant caverns of sparkling crystals and impeccable visibility

crystal clear water and a remarkable decline in temperature.

I heard my buddies yelling in amazement, and my own “WHOA!” shortly followed as I saw an irregular, high room in front of me that continued as far as the eye could see. I never expected something like this, especially not after the somewhat silty narrow tunnels we had just passed through. Immensely impressed, we followed Joe as vertical canyon-like corridors with walls like snow-covered sugar pies were followed by big cathedral-worthy rooms. It felt like flying. The environment could—in my opinion

—have been compared to the caves in Florida or even Mexico. What a thrill! I felt so lucky to be here and hoped this dive would last forever.

The cave

We passed several rooms in which five trucks parked next to each other could easily fit. I heard Todd laughing in his regulator when I pulled Robert’s fin, and we performed a dance together at the sight of this much beauty. Flying through this extraterrestrial world—or rather inter-terrestrial world—gave one an intense feeling of life and peace at the same time.

The cave was awesome. We swam through huge rooms that were meters high, without exception. The visibility was superb, the water was warm, and everywhere our lights went, there was the reflection of crystals on the walls.

—Anton van Rosmalen
(Team 2)

Budapest

Several times, Joe drew our attention to the cave’s beauty by moving his light to the walls of crystals. They were sometimes dark brown and sometimes clear as glass, but everyone of them exploded with a rainbow of color when our light beams hit the crystals. It was almost unreal.

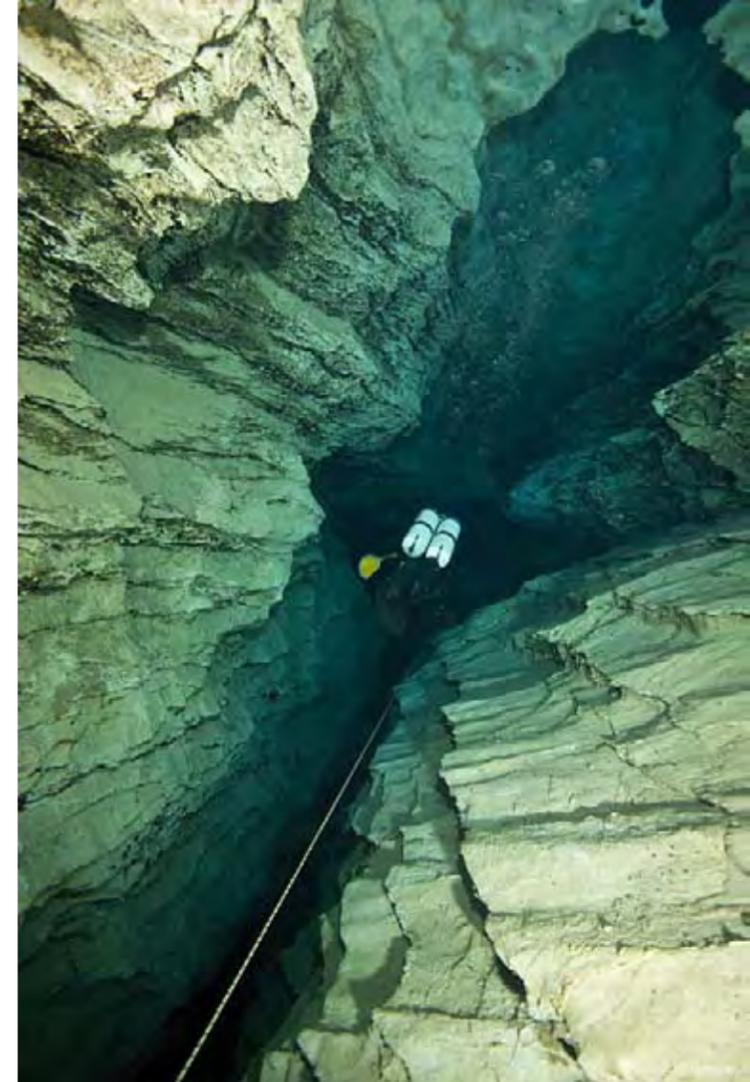
Unfortunately the nasty reality of the end of the dive hit us when our gas limits forced us to turn back. We gave a thumbs-up signal and returned with the anticipation that our way out would be another great experience.

When we ascended to shallower areas again, the warm water embraced me like a blanket. The game of sneaking through the small passages and restrictions began again for a second time, and with a heavy heart, I surfaced into the small tunnel where we had started our dive. Yelling and screaming with excitement, we tried to tell each other about all our impressions of the dive.

Lasting impressions

In a small room almost at the end of our dive, we took a 5-minute deco stop to compensate for the yo-yo dive we had just made. Todd used this time to teach us the basics of geology using Robert’s wet notes. Again, I got to appreciate how four people could hover in a small room like this without creating a complete silt-out.

While we undressed in the surreal surroundings of the old bath house, we agreed not to spread enthusiastic stories about this awesome cave. We all suffered nightmares from “Ressel, France on a sunny summer day” where cave divers had come from all over the world to combat each other to be “first” in the cave and have a more or less acceptable visibility before colleague divers ruined the joy of clear cave water with lousy swimming techniques and lots of



On the way back, I swam most of the time on my back and enjoyed the vastness of the enormous rooms we passed. We stopped at some of the beautiful crystal formations to study them more closely.

—Anton van Rosmalen
(Team 2)

imprudence.

So in case anyone asks, this dive was officially made in a cave under Brooklyn, New York City, because in Budapest, they have never heard of sub-capital-caves, and we will keep the exact location a secret to ourselves. ■

Jo Wooler



“It is mainly the idea and wonder of nature, in particular the sea and it’s inhabitants, that influence and inspire me. I am in awe of the sheer magnificence of our oceans and seas and what lies within, and celebrate this through my work.”

— Jo Wooler

*Mother and Calf by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture
70 x 10 x 10 cm*

P O R T F O L I O

Sea Horse III by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture
50 x 20 x 4 cm

Avid diver and Australian metal sculptor, Jo Wooler, has always been artistically inclined, enjoying the process of creating whether it be drawing, painting, writing, sculpting, or playing musical instruments. Through her life she has always made gifts for loved ones, and explored many mediums in the process.

It was through her husband Drew that she discovered the medium of stainless steel. He had a boat building business, and used to pick up work in various ports during the four years when they lived on their first catamaran and sailed up and down the east coast of Australia.

"I loved drawing the sea creatures we encountered on our years on board, and playing around with some of Drews' stainless steel off cuts one day when we were in port earning some money, I created a fish," said Wooler. "This I gave as a gift to a friend, who was quite impressed as was everyone my friend showed it to."

Wooler has no formal training, but she did study art through school, and took on a mentorship at an engineering firm when she became interested in stainless steel as a medium for her work. She now has a Diploma of Engineering, Cert III in C.A.D. and Cert III in Engineering, Fabrication Trade—education which enabled her to explore and develop her skills. "I love the consistent challenges faced with working with such a difficult medium, and realizations and discoveries I make along the way as I develop new techniques and processes of working with stainless."

Artistic process

In the beginning, Wooler used off cuts of stainless steel, and hunted around scrap yards for her materials. As her arts practice developed, she realized she wanted to be specific with the grade of stainless steel she was using. So, in order to be certain that it was marine grade, she started buying it from manufacturers by the sheet. She returns her scraps and off cuts to be recycled.

Wooler primarily works with sheet stainless up to 3mm thick. "When I have a design idea, I will either draw it directly onto the sheet, and then cut it out with a cutting wheel on a grinder. If the design is quite intricate, I will use my plasma cutter to cut the design out. I then go around the edges cleaning up the dags with a grinding wheel. Depending on what I am trying to achieve, I may polish or texture the piece. I use heat to shape and colour the stainless. I use a tig welder to weld my pieces together."

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Inspired by the sea

As for choosing fish and marine life as subject matter, Wooler says it is a profound interest for her. "I am inspired artistically and aesthetically by the beautiful shapes, curves and colours in nature."

"My artistic mission is to inspire all who appreciate my art work of the wonders of our sea, and how vitally important it is that we protect our seas and oceans. I love to inspire my fellow artists, and help them see that they can be self sustained within their arts practice if that's what they want." — Jo Wooler



Coral Trout by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture
65 x 25 x 5 cm

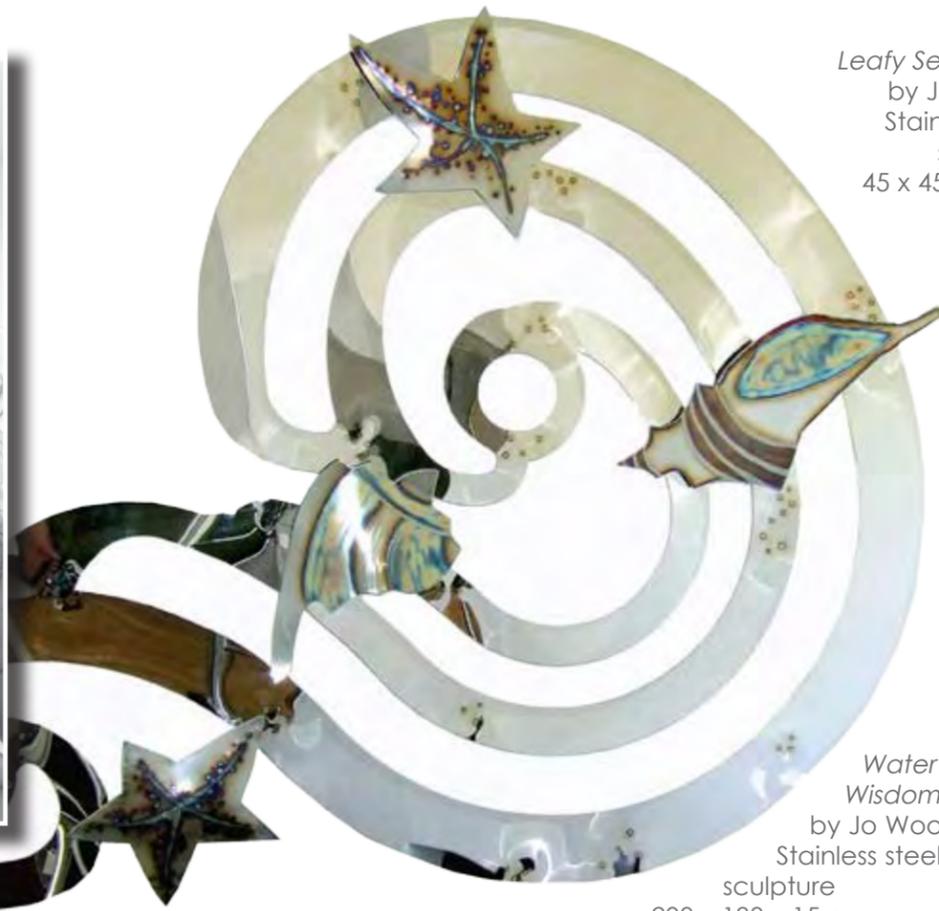


Lionfish by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture, 30 x 30 x 10 cm

Text edited by Gunild Symes
All artwork by Jo Wooler
Photos courtesy of Jo Wooler



Artist and diver, Jo Wooler



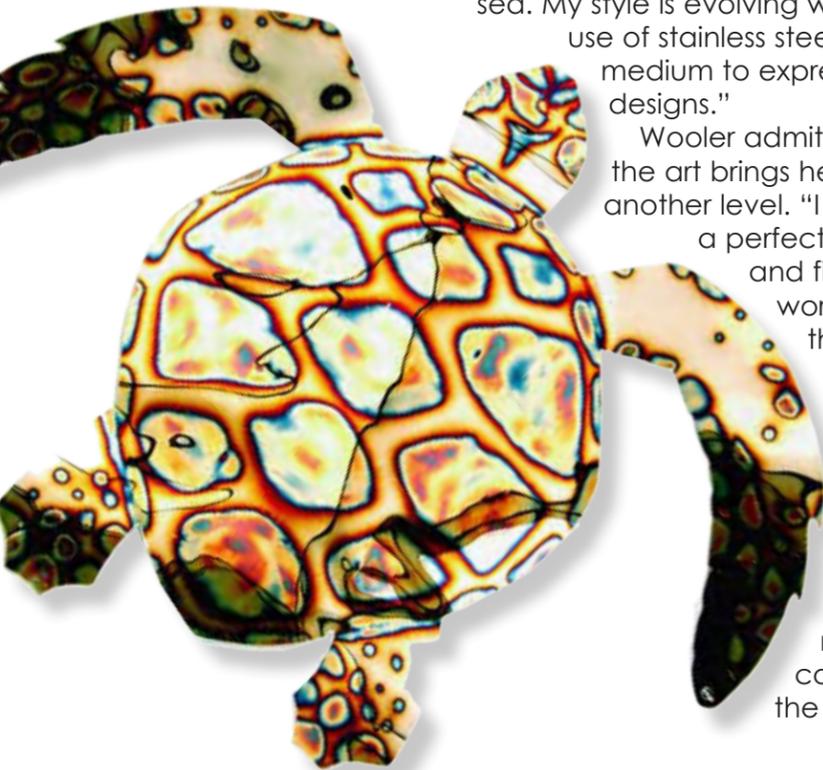
Leafy Seadragon
by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel
sculpture
45 x 45 x 10 cm

Water
Wisdom
by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel
sculpture
200 x 180 x 15 cm



Jo Wooler

Turtle by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture
100 x 80 x 10 cm



She added, "I have a contemporary artistic style that is colourfully simple. A lot of my work is representative of marine creature developed through my passion for the sea. My style is evolving with the

use of stainless steel as a medium to express my designs."

Wooler admits that the art brings her to another level. "I am a perfectionist, and finish my work to a standard that I see present in the miracles of nature. So much so, that when I'm sitting hand filing or finishing edges of a piece, I quite often go into a meditation that connects me with the moment, letting

everything fall away. I find this same peace when I am surrounded by nature and still in the moment, the way nature is—every minute of every hour of every day."

"I believe if you have a dream and determination, you will succeed."

Wooler said that she is not aware of any other female stainless steel sculptor, and would be very interested to find out if there are any out there. "I am in quite a unique position, and regularly get surprised responses from people in the industry when they learn of what I do. I certainly feel the respect of my male counterparts who work within the stainless steel fabrication industry and are in awe of what I create with stainless steel."

Her sculptures are most often displayed on feature walls and as free standing pieces. Yacht, business or corporate owners can commission her to create artwork built into their project. She said, for example, that she can create "a fabulous freestanding seascape sculpture" that may serve as a partition for a saloon or galley area on



Mantarays by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture
130 x 120 x 5 cm (left)
90 x 80 x 5 cm (right)

Sensational Sailing II
by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture
200 x 80 x 15 cm



a yacht, or the client or office area of a business or corporation. She also creates commissioned pieces for foyer entrances and entertaining areas on yachts and business or corporate venues, which become exclusive to the owner or project.

There is no limit to the size of work Wooler can create, and she enjoys the challenge of larger works. In fact, in the future, Wooler wants to get involved in creating public art, as the medium of her work is very suitable for this application, she said.

"Amongst my creations are a host of endangered species including whales, dugongs, turtles, leafy seadragons and dolphins. The appreciation of these pieces, and subsequent understanding of their predicament will hopefully bring to the forefront of peoples' minds the importance of protecting our oceans for their future as well as our own."

Artist & diver

Wooler has been scuba diving for 20 years. She first began diving when she was growing up in Cairns. She was fortunate to have a water loving family and opportunities to experience this wonderful sport at a young age. She served as a tour guide for several years in Cairns, taking people up through the Daintree, around the Tablelands and out West. Through industry association, she was able to enjoy diving on a regular basis on a variety of reefs within the Great Barrier Reef.

Prior to developing her art, Wooler was in the hospital-



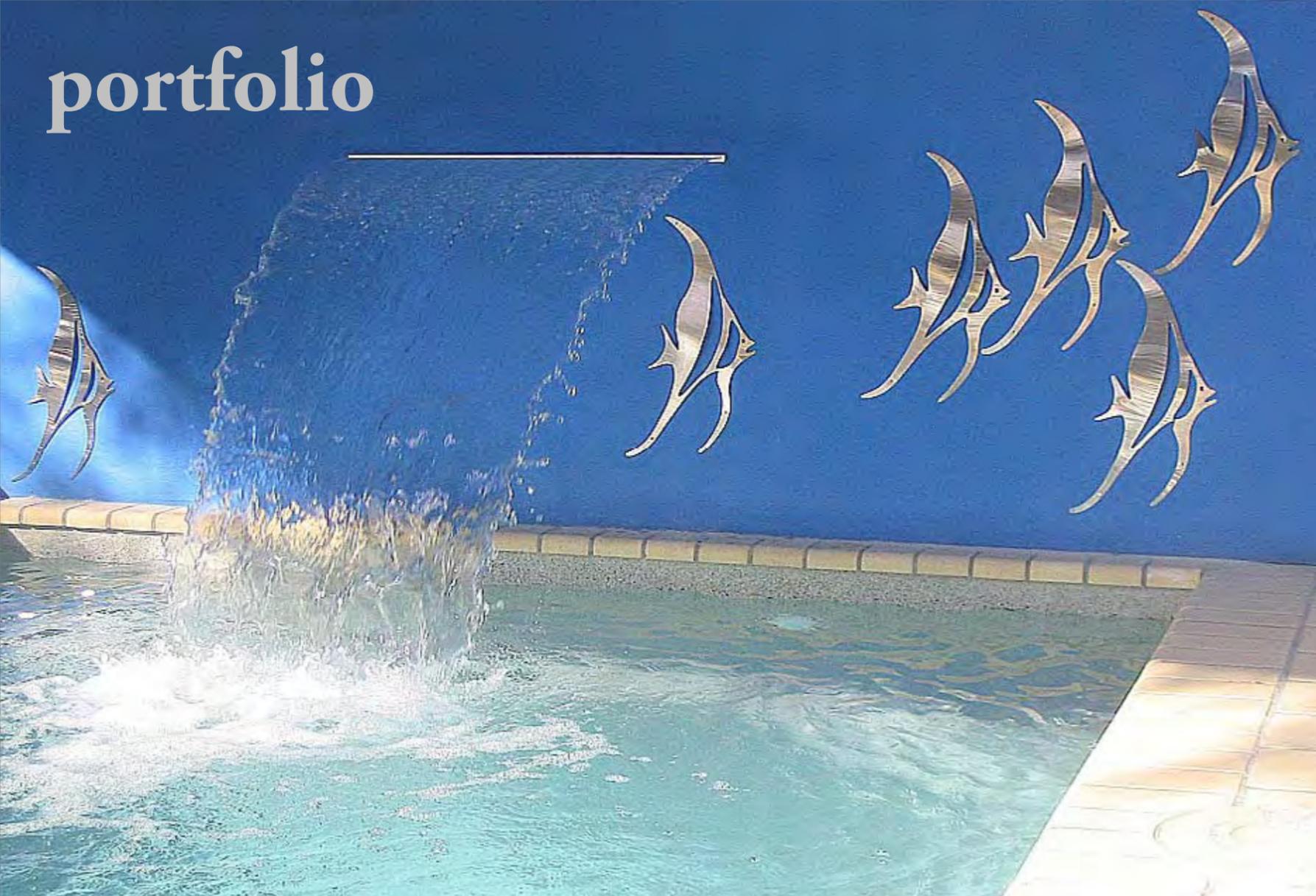
Southern Bluefin Tuna
by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture
110 x 45 x 10 cm

"I believe there is much more under the surface of our oceans than we can begin to imagine. We have so much to learn, it is one of our greatest resources."

— Jo Wooler



Whale by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture
105 x 50 x 15 cm



Angels by Jo Wooler, Stainless steel sculpture, 55 x 25 x 5 cm each

ity industry, through which she was able to travel easily. She traveled around Australia enjoying many dive destinations including Ningaloo Reef, West Australia.

"I love the peace and tranquillity when I'm diving. I could stay down there forever, there is so much beauty and wonder," said Wooler.

As Wooler's gallery, Mojocreations Floating Gallery, is currently based on the Capricorn Coast, Queensland, she can often be seen diving off Great Keppel Island. Her favourite places to dive include the Ribbon Reefs off Cape Tribulation, Queensland, Australia. She has yet to enjoy international diving but has aimed her sights on Papua New

Guinea and The Maldives. "I would love to swim with whales. They are the most amazing creatures."

Currently, she is working towards exhibiting in Dubai next year, with a selection of contemporary abstract works inspired by the ocean. She is also working on two *Sensational Sailing* pieces for a design, construction and development group in Queensland who want to mount them in the foyer of their newest development on the waterfront in Manly. In the future, she aspires to making her artwork totally exclusive, with limited works being made for select clients for investment purposes.

In the past, Wooler has taught art classes or workshops upon request.

However, in the future, she intends to make herself available as a motivational speaker, to inspire fellow artists to work towards a path of self-sustaining practice.

Wooler's works have been shown at the World Trade Center in Amsterdam, Netherlands, and in several Australian galleries in Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. In addition, her works appear in several public, corporate and private collections in Europe, US, Canada and Australia.

For more information and to order directly from the artist, visit Jo Wooler's website at: www.mojocreations.com.au or call +61 (0) 7 3283 6929. ■

Jo Wooler



Seahorse I by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture
30 x 15 x 2 cm



Seahorse II by Jo Wooler
Stainless steel sculpture
35 x 20 x 3 cm

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Bangram Island, India
Thetis Island, British Columbia
White Sea Beluga Whales



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