

SCUBA H2O MAGAZINE  
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# Scuba & H2O Adventures Magazine

**AMOS NACHOUM**  
WILDLIFE EXPLORER

**PLATISPHERE ART**  
WITH A PURPOSE

**INSPIRATION IN SCUBA**  
CENTRAL TEXAS GIRL SCOUTS

**FLORIDA'S TREASURE EXPRESS**  
DISCOVER SUNKEN GALLEONS



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ABOUT THE COVER:  
*Deco-Services' diver and  
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 Don Costanza captures the  
 Keuka under the ice*

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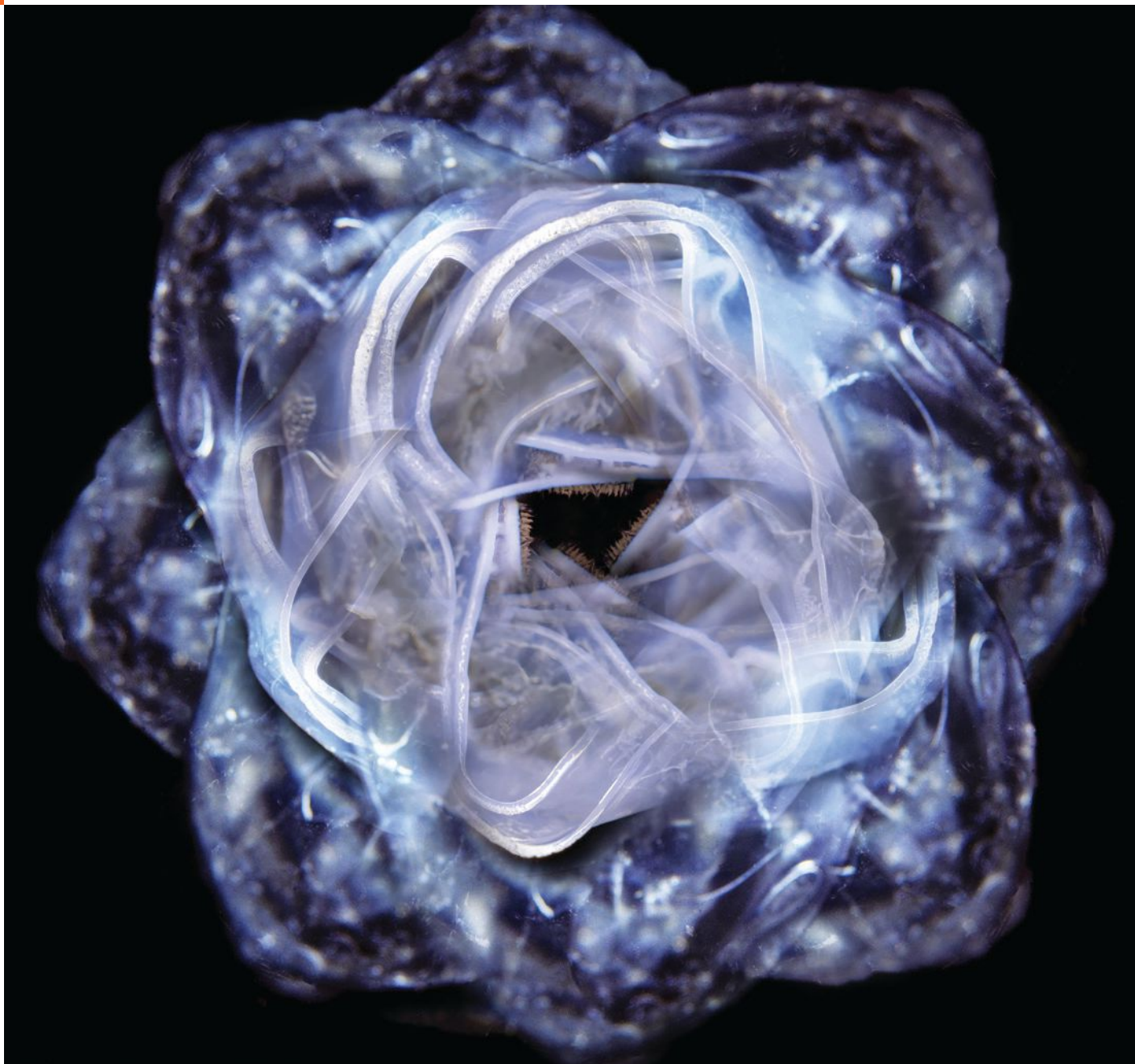
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We encourage readers to participate in determining the content of this publication by giving us their opinions on the types of articles they would like to see. We invite letters to the editor, manuscripts and photographs related to diving or dive-related business. Send us your stories and photos!





## Plastisphere – Profile of an Artist with a Mission

*Article by Michael Salvarezza & Christopher P. Weaver; Photos by Kristen Regan*

Divers understand both the beauty of the underwater world and the fragility of the ocean's ecosystems. One of the most insidious threats to life in the ocean and, indeed, on this planet is the massive introduction of plastics into the marine ecosystem. Plastic is designed to last hundreds of years or more and because of our affinity for single-use plastics, we are creating a veritable tsunami of trash. Over 8 million metric tons of plastic pollution

finds its way into the world's oceans every year, killing untold millions of marine creatures.

The term Plastisphere was created to reference the ecosystem of microbial organisms that form on floating plastic. These drifting habitats have the potential to host dangerous pathogens and leach toxic chemicals into their aquatic environments.

Kristen Regan is a visionary

photographer and artist whose latest exhibit titled "Plastisphere" explores the sublime beauty of this microscopic world with the intention of raising awareness of the dangers it truly represents for the marine world. We sat down with Kristen to learn more:

**Tell us a bit more about Plastisphere. What inspired you to create these images?**

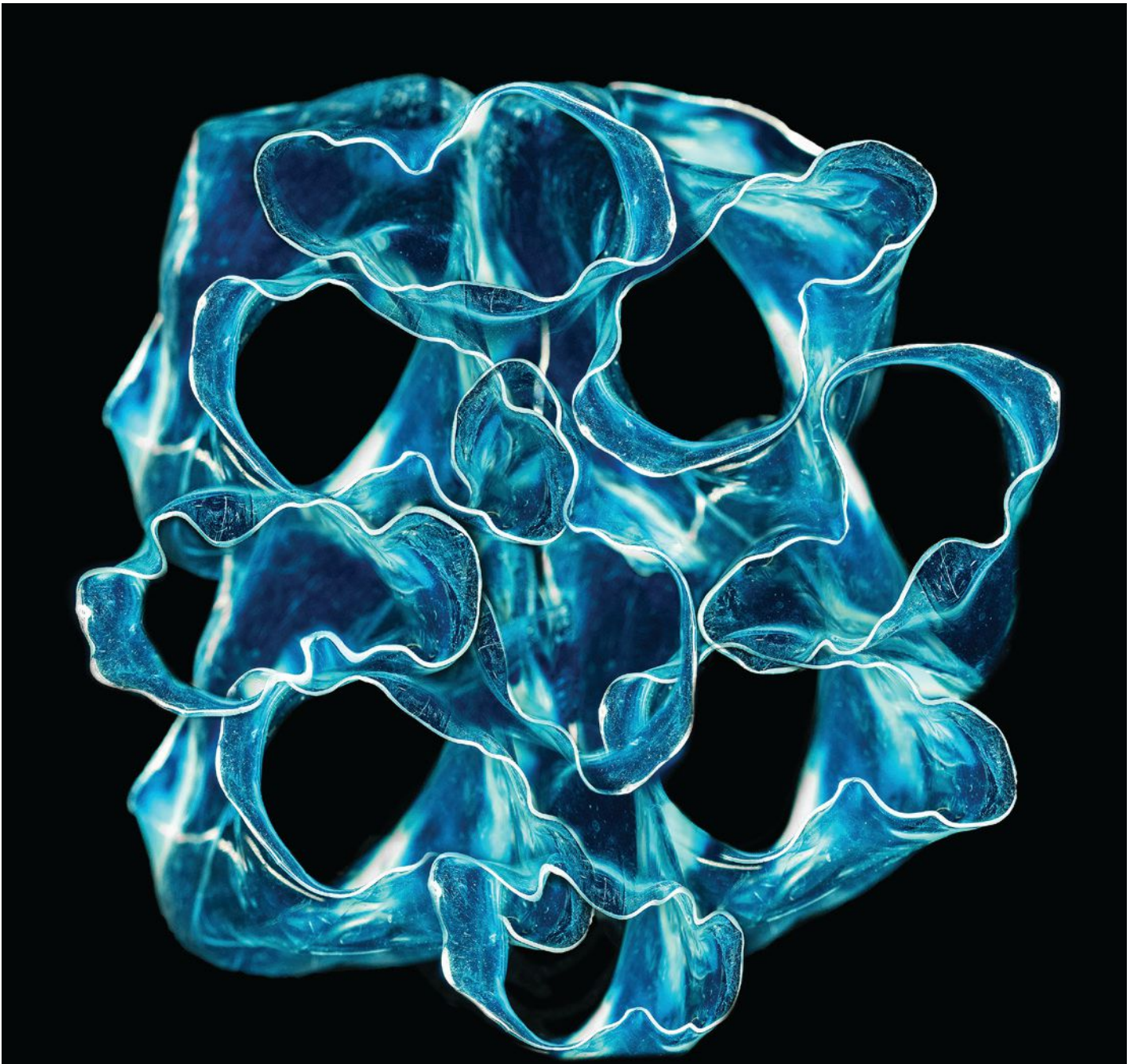
I am really passionate about

trying to minimize my impact on the environment and to inform others about small changes in their habits that can make a real difference. This led me to my current body of work Platisphere. I wanted to create something that was aesthetically pleasing while raising awareness of the overwhelming problem of plastic waste, particularly plastic that ends up in our water. If I can convince one person to buy a reusable water bottle and eliminate the unnecessary waste of disposable water bottles I feel I will have succeeded.

**The subjects of these images are exquisite in their beauty. Are they direct copies of living organisms or are they interpretations? What techniques did you use?**

Some of my past work has relied on the unpredictable and transformative properties of liquid and I was a little surprised to find that plastic has some of those same qualities. I collected discarded water bottles, some clean, some dirty and weathered. Using a blowtorch and a heat gun I melted the plastic, which

produced some surprising results. The thin translucent plastic looked like liquid glass and it becomes harder than you would imagine. I fell in love with the new delicate sculptural qualities the plastic bottles had transformed into. Initially, I used a flatbed scanner to digitize the melted bottles but I wanted the light to have a more luminous quality so I started photographing the bottles on black velvet with a ring light strobe and a macro lens. I wanted the plastic to emulate the look of Darkfield Microscopy of phytoplankton specimens. Once





the plastic was photographed I used Photoshop to combine multiple photos into a variety of composites. I was heavily inspired by images of plankton, which is referenced in the title of each piece. My creations are new 'specimens' complete with scientific-like names that incorporate the brand name of the product with a creature it was inspired by. The image Sapphirina Dasania references the type of water bottle photographed, "Dasani" and "Sapphirina ", a tiny Crustacean known as a Sea Sapphire. The males of the species flash a brilliant iridescent blue color that scientists think play a role in communication and mate recognition. Another example would be Ctenophora Aquafinas, named for the Aquafina bottle used and the resemblance to a Comb Jelly. Ctenophores (Greek for "comb-bearers") have fused cilia arranged along the sides of the animal. Many ctenophores, like various other planktonic organisms, are bioluminescent. In a way, I am inventing my own species of plastic plankton.

Many people know that floating plastics can kill marine life such as turtles, marine mammals, birds and fish, but what dangers are associated with the microscopic world where planktonic life is known to actually ingest these substances?

I was shocked to see a video of plankton eating plastic proving that tiny bits of plastic like

microbeads and larger pieces of degraded plastic have been introduced into our food chain through bioaccumulation. Phytoplankton is the base of the marine food chain and it is one of Earth's most critical organisms responsible for producing half of the world's oxygen. Scientists have predicted that plastic will outweigh fish in the oceans by 2050 if critical steps are not taken now to reduce and remove plastic from our environment.

**Tell us more about your other collections. What generally inspires you?**

I really enjoy working with organic materials and creating still lifes that reference the vanitas paintings of the 16th and 17th centuries because this genre uses objects as symbols to remind the viewer that beauty and wealth are fleeting pleasures that all come to an end. This theme is still present in my current work by photographing plastic still lifes to question a culture of consumerism and sustainability.

I believe my inspiration for a project comes from the process. I may start with an idea of what I want out of a concept but it will be the process of working with the material that informs the final product.

**Do you work with others to help bring awareness to this issue?**

I would love to work with more

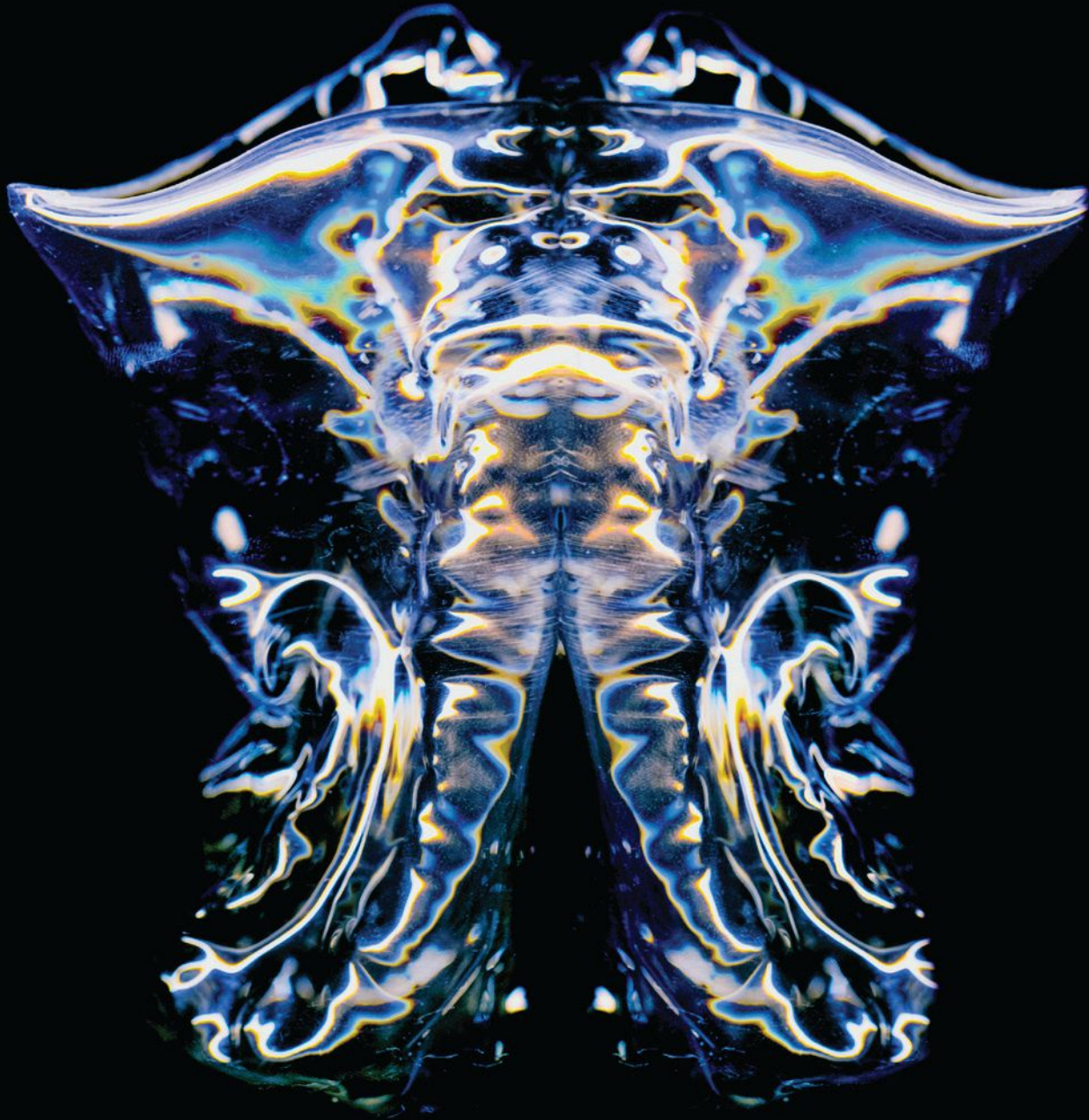
like-minded artists to raise awareness about the devastating effect plastic is having on our environment. I did collaborate with my mother on a piece for our two-person exhibition at Luna Fine Art Gallery at the Hilton on Pensacola Beach. I have to give my husband James Miller credit for keeping me informed about environmental issues and being my biggest supporter. His passion for environmentalism has prompted me to create work that will hopefully have an impact in our world by changing societal views on single-use plastics.

**Where can our readers see more of this collection?**

My 14 piece series can be viewed through January 31st at Luna Fine Art Gallery at the Hilton on Pensacola Beach. A portion of the Plastisphere series will be on view at the Gallery through the end of April and 12" x 12" signed and numbered prints will be on sale through the Hilton gift shop on Pensacola Beach. Five pieces from the Plastisphere series were purchased by Innisfree hotels for their private collection to be displayed in their Executive Boardroom at the Hilton on Pensacola Beach and Innisfree's new hotel the Mercantile in New Orleans. My work can also be seen on my website [www.KristenRegan.com](http://www.KristenRegan.com).







Kristen Regan © 2018

## ADVENTURE TRAVEL SPECIALISTS UPCOMING ESCORTED LAND & SEA PACKAGES:

AUSTRALIA & SPIRIT OF FREEDOM NOV 9-26, '17

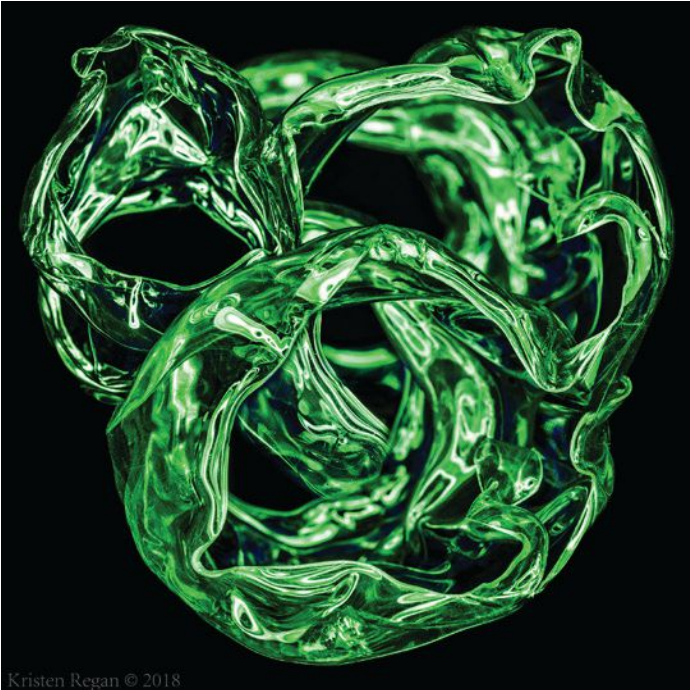
FIJI & SIREN LIVEBOARD APR 12-26, '18

EGYPT & BLUE O TWO - AUG 10-24, '18

PH: 215.256.6000



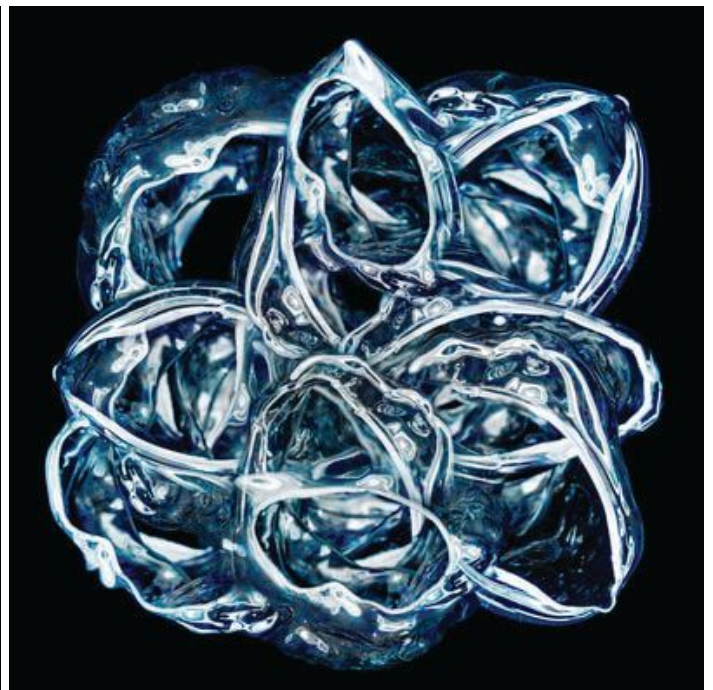




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*A variety of plastic bottles were collected, cut and melted to transform the vessel into a more organic shape. The resulting pieces were shot on a black background with a ring light to emulate the look of Darkfield Microscopy of phytoplankton specimens. The vivid colors presented in the Plastisphere series evoke the bioluminescent characteristics displayed by many species of dinoflagellates. With these images, it is my objective to engage and captivate the viewer with the delicate sculptural qualities that plastics can exhibit while raising awareness of the devastating effect plastic is having on our environment.*

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## Meet Kristen Regan: Photographer

Kristen Regan received a Master of Fine Art degree at Savannah College of Art and Design and a Bachelor of Fine Art degree in Photography from the School of Visual Arts in New York. She is currently a faculty instructor teaching photography at Pensacola State College. Her work has been published in the New York Post, Marlboro Magazine, ESPN Magazine, as well as several photographic catalogs. Her photographs have been featured in galleries in Puerto Rico, New York, Maryland, Georgia, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama and Colorado.

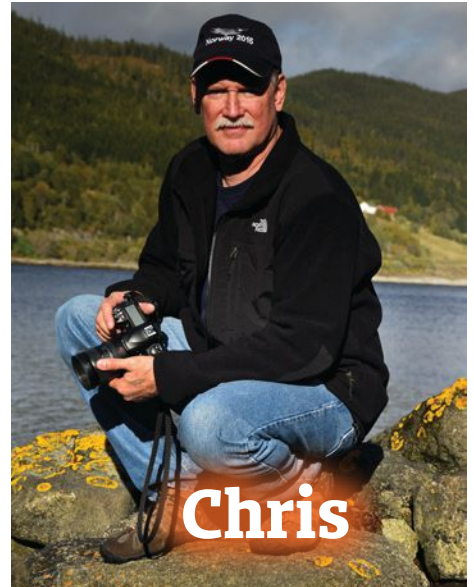


## About Eco-Photo Explorers: Michael Salvarezza & Christopher P. Weaver

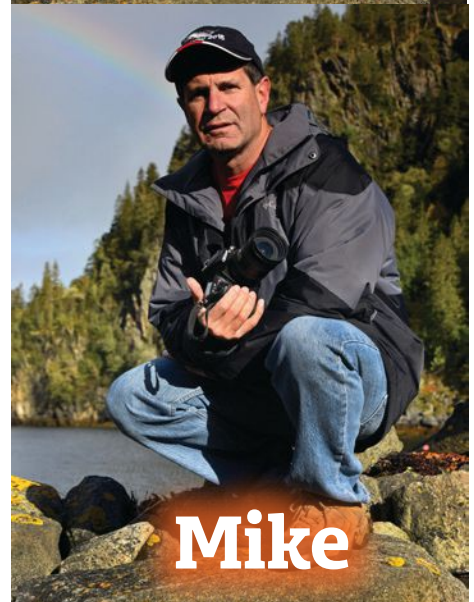
Michael Salvarezza and Christopher Weaver have been diving the waters the world since 1978. In that time, they have spent thousands of hours underwater and have accumulated a large and varied library of photographic images. They have presented their work in many multi-media slide presentations, and have appeared previously at Beneath the Sea, the Boston Sea Rovers Underwater Clinic, Ohio ScubaFest and Our World Underwater. Mike and Chris have been published more than 125 articles in numerous magazines, including National Geographic Adventure, and have authored numerous articles for the majority of the dive publications the world over. Their work has also been used to support a number of research and educational programs, including the Jason Project for Education, the Atlantis Marine World Aquarium in New York, The New York Harbor School Billion Oyster Project, The Northeast Ocean Planning Recreation Survey and the Cambridge University and the University of Groningen Arctic Centre work on monitoring the transformation of historic features in Antarctica and Svalbard. Mike and Chris are the Executive Producers of the annual Long Island Divers Association (LIDA) Film Festival.

Eco-Photo Explorers (EPE) is a New York based organization and was formed in 1994 to help promote interest in protecting the environment through knowledge and awareness through the use of underwater photography. Photography, multimedia slide presentations, lectures and freelance writing are all used to accomplish this goal. Christopher Weaver and Michael Salvarezza make up Eco-Photo Explorers. Both live in New York on Long Island and have been scuba diving together since 1978, but didn't seriously start photographing the ocean realm until 1989. Since then, they have spent thousands of hours underwater accumulating and putting together a large and varied library of high-resolution stock photography from around the world. They specialize in all aspects of underwater still photography (wide angle and macro), nature photography, magazine and technical writing and have produced many multimedia slide programs that are designed to educate as well as enlighten the public about the marine environment and the various threats that exist to destroy it.

[www.ecophotoexplorers.com](http://www.ecophotoexplorers.com)



**Chris**



**Mike**