Parting Shot

Since none of you have submitted any Parting Shots for this issue, it falls on me to fill this space.

This shot was taken in the early 1980s in the waters around Plymouth, Devon, England.

I'd had this idea to backlight macro subjects with a variety of coloured filters over the second strobe (we called them flashguns in those days) with the main strobe providing front lighting. I attached a Cokin filter holder to the front of the backlighting strobe so that I could slot in and remove squares of coloured Perspex (alright Plexiglas if you must). This strobe was out on an extended articulated arm so that it could point back directly into the lens. Then the trick was to find a macro subject such as this white anemone on a clean edge where I could get the rig over the subject and get the shot.

Hilsea Point near Plymouth has particularly craggy terrain and after a while I found this suitable subject protruding from the top of a sharp rock formation with room behind and in front of it to lower the rig over it.

There are times when all the thought, planning and preparation come together and make the shoot simple and this was just such a time. This was in the days of totally manual exposures so I knew exactly what the right settings would be for this fixed setup. All I had to do was slide the first piece of coloured Perspex into the Cokin holder and gently lower the rig over the subject and then take the shot. The next step was to lift the rig out of the way, remove the filter and replace it with another coloured one.

The colours I had decided on were, this one, blue, which created a tropical background, a green one to simulate British waters and then I got carried away and had a red one to simulate the Red Sea and a black one for the Black Sea!



Pentax LX camera with a 50mm macro lens in a Hugyfot housing with a Subatec S100 front strobe and an Ikelite Substrobe 50 as a backlight with a Cokin filter holder. Kodak Ektachrome 64 film, home processed when I got back from work on Monday evening. 1/60th @ F22, full power on both strobes (who needs metadata!).

PS. The linear line of brighter light behind the subject is the diffused light from the straight flash tube.

Happy days.

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Do you have a shot which has a story within a story?
If so e mail it with up to 500 words of text and yours could be the next Parting Shot.

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