MIT Sea Grant
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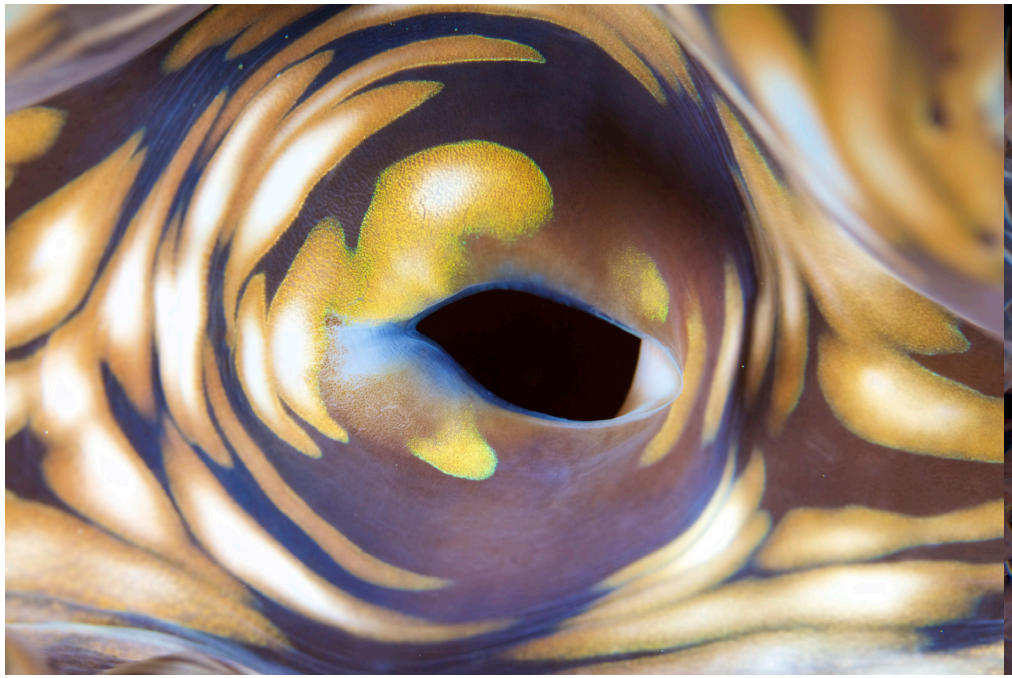
UNDER A THOUSAND WAVES

Keith Ellenbogen

Opening March 2017



COVER Soft Coral, *Dendronephthya sp.*, and Soft Coral Crab, *Hoplophrys oatesii*, Vatu-I-Ra, Fiji, 2015, Digital C-Print mounted on Acrylic, 50x30.

ABOVE Giant Clam, *Tridacna gigas*, Namena Marine Reserve, Fiji, 2013, Digital C-Print mounted on Acrylic, 50x30.

INSIDE A Vibrant Coral Reef Seascape, Vanua Levu Barrier Reef, 2010, Digital C-Print mounted on Acrylic, 50x30.

Sea Grant
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

UNDER A THOUSAND WAVES

Keith Ellenbogen

Katádysi Art Gallery @ MIT Sea Grant

Opening Reception: March 17, 2017 5 - 9p

Artist Talk: TBA

In "Under a Thousand Waves", Artist Keith Ellenbogen presents the state of the Earth's coral reefs through various perspectives. Three images present reefs from the viewpoint of a diver with an artistic, but un-aided eye, while other images magnify scenes that would otherwise exist beneath the depth of our view, rendering the unseen as abstractions. This exhibition is remarkable in its breadth, from photos of the smallest polyps to large coral reef seascapes, and these photos document scenes that are becoming increasingly difficult to capture. At first glance, we may find some familiarity with these images as part of our present reality, when in fact they are recordings of a past vitality that is being lost, that we wish to protect and recover. Ellenbogen elicits the rhythm of of the reef by exploring the movement of color, shape, and texture to reveal the complex beauty of life within coral reef ecosystems.

The Earth's coral reefs provide habitat for a remarkable diversity of marine life. The size of a single coral may be tiny, but the vast structural networks that they construct in the ocean are relied upon by microscopic algae as well as large mammals, similar to the forests we frequently visit on land. And the manner of destruction is just as profound, albeit by different methods. The burning of fossil fuels by humans causes a rise in the amount of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO_2). This CO_2 dissolves in seawater and increases its acidity, which harms corals and many other animals that rely on calcium carbonate shells such as clams, oysters and snails (aka shellfish). This process, known as ocean acidification, is a major contributor to the destruction of coral reefs world-wide.

MIT Sea Grant has launched a major trans-disciplinary effort in supporting ocean acidification research involving scientists from MIT and other Massachusetts universities. While there are no coral reefs along Massachusetts' coasts, there are significant populations of shellfish that form the basis of fishery, aquaculture and tourism industries in maritime Massachusetts and New England, and the issue of local ocean acidification applies just as strongly.

The Katádysi Art Gallery represents a unique opportunity for MIT Sea Grant to motivate a dynamic forum for art and science among the MIT and surrounding communities. Keith Ellenbogen's work shows the diversity and sheer beauty of tropical coral reefs, from his assignments around the world, and reminds us all of what's at stake in a global effort to understand, and ultimately reverse ocean acidification, and MIT Sea Grant is honored to display his work as the first exhibition in our new space.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Keith is an acclaimed underwater conservation photographer who works at the intersection of art, science and technology. He was the 2015 CAST Visiting Artist in Residence at MIT. Keith is a Senior Fellow with the International League of Conservation Photographers; Fellow with The Explorers Club; and Fellow 2016 Fulbright Alumnus-in-Residence for the Greater New York Chapter. He holds an MFA from Parsons School for Design and was awarded a U.S. Fulbright Fellowship in Malaysia 2006-07 and is currently an Assistant Professor of Photography at SUNY/ Fashion Institute of Technology, New York.

ABOUT THE MIT SEA GRANT

MIT Sea Grant sponsors a wide variety of marine research, through an annual funding competition open to Massachusetts university-based researchers. Our in-house research includes the work of the Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) Lab, and the Design Lab for naval architecture and systems. The MIT Sea Grant Marine Advisory Services group conducts applied research in coastal habitats, marine bioinvasions, water quality, climate change, fishing communities and policy, and offers innovative, hands-on marine science education programs.

Our rigorous research program, dedicated outreach programs and integrated educational projects are aimed at providing real-world solutions to coastal questions and at helping to create the coastal stewards of tomorrow.

SUPPORT

This exhibition was made possible with support from MIT, the Council for the Arts at MIT (CAMIT), and the Center for Art, Science, and Technology at MIT (CAST).

Council for the Arts at MIT

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