CANON G7X + FANTASEA HOUSING FG7X REVIEW

My adventure with G7X & FG7X

When I unpacked the camera from it's original package and held it in my hands for the first time, it appeared elegant, compact but weighty and… quite technical. The camera body looks sophisticated and fit quite comfortably in my hand. The large 3'' flip-up LED touch screen allows

Leafy Seadragon, Rapid Bay, SA by Elizabeth Solich with Canon G7X in the Fantasea Housing FG7X

the photographer to display, preview and compose pictures. My new camera was also equipped with a wifi allowing for easy posting of images to social networking and media sites such as Facebook®, Twitter®, YouTube™ and Flickr®. It was also possible to save them to a photo album to share anytime, anywhere.

I already knew about the impressive 20.2MP sensor that the camera is equipped with and how outstanding it was comparing to other point-and shoot cameras on the market at present. It provides for high quality detailed photos, even in low light with diminished noise and distortion. My partner, underwater photographer Paul Macdonald explained to me how the superb 24-100mm zoom lens would provide a flexible solution for photographing wide angle subjects at 24mm through to tiny super macro

subjects at 100mm. I anticipated it would suit my macro photography with an aperture range of f2.8 to f11 at 100mm allowing for considerable depth of field control including the ability to blur messy and distracting backgrounds.

I felt very excited to try my new G7X camera underwater. The Fantasea FG7X housing was my choice to enable me to take the G7X into the depths.

So when my FG7X housing arrived, I was surprised at how light and compact it was. I asked my partner Paul for help in setting it up. Very soon the camera and housing was mounted on a tray with Loc-Line strobe arms and optic fibre cables connecting a pair of YS110 strobes to the housing. It was so easy to set up to allow me to start experimenting with camera and housing on land. Soon I was playing with my new G7X and Fantasea housing.

My previous underwater photography system was quite simple by comparison. The G7X has full manual controls and the Fantasea housing allows access to all those controls. Needless to say I had many more buttons to explore and understand. I found all housing controls to be very clearly labeled, so it didn't take me a lot of time to learn how to manage the camera's functions through the housing. I found it extremely easy to travel through various

Blue Ribbon Eel of Lembeh by Elizabeth Solich with G7X / FG7X

Pufferfish of Lembeh by Elizabeth Solich with G7X / FG7X

options and selecting intuitively the chosen one. In no time at all I was quite comfortable with this camera system.

The Fantasea FG7X housing has a double o-ring sealing system with a simple to use latch and locking mechanism. FG7X housing comprises a see-through rear section which allows the user to monitor water penetration at every stage. It also has a moisture detection system which in the unfortunate event of a leak, flashes a red light and sounds an audible alarm.

So it was long before I was ready to take the Canon G7X and Fantasea FG7X housing underwater for the first time. So there I was cruising under South Australian's Rapid Bay jetty, seeking for inspirational marine critters to photograph with my new system. At the end of the dive I saw a Leafy Seadragon meandering at the bottom of a pylon, next to the exit stairs. Wanting to protect the Leafy Seadragon from the stress of numerous flashes from my strobes, I took only a couple of pictures, easily changing manual settings via the housing buttons to adjust shutter speed and aperture to allow for correct image exposure.
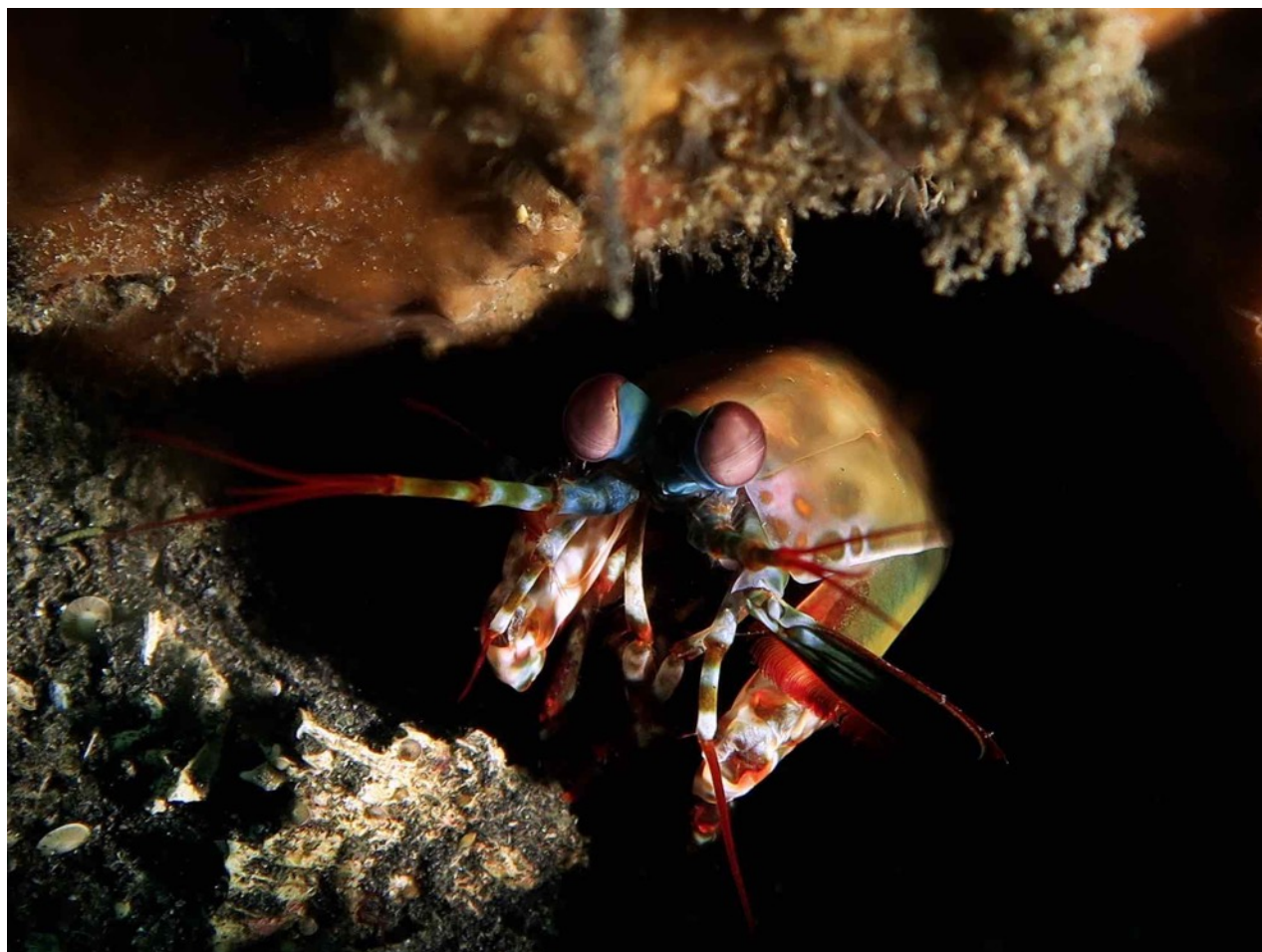
When I downloaded the RAW and jpeg image files I was pleasantly surprised by the excellent quality of my

Nudibranch of Lembeh by Elizabeth Solich with G7X / FG7X

first attempt at photography with this camera and housing. I appreciated the amazingly sharp, clear images. I was captivated by the new control I had over light providing a fantastic platform with which to portray the amazing sea critters.

Mantis Shrimp of Lembeh by Elizabeth Solich by G7X / FG7X

Now having significant control of my camera system and I really felt excited as our Lembeh trip approached. Paul and I spent 9 days diving the spectacular Lembeh Strait (Indonesia) which was my next underwater excursion with the G7X and Fantasea housing.

Hairy Frogfish of Lembeh by Elizabeth Solich with G7X / FG7X

**White-eyed Moray Eel of Lembeh by Elizabeth Solich with G7X / FG7X**

The FG7X simplifies accessing the various settings, that includes the Auto Focus. I choose to select single point AF to control the focus point in my composition. I utilised the option to reset the AF frame to the small size and locked the focus, by refining it with a half press of the shutter button and kept experimenting and learning.

Lembeh Striped Shrimp by Elizabeth Solich with G7X / FG7X

I utilised Canon/Fantasea systems in various configurations of video lights, strobes and strobe arms, seeking to reduce backscatter and shooting super macro and wide angle and everything in between. It allowed me the flexibility to take photos of the tiny shaun the sheep nudibranch to giant frogfish or even fellow dive buddies. I was even able to capture a great shot of a large Slipper lobster which appeared to everyone out of depths on one of our Lembeh Strait dives.
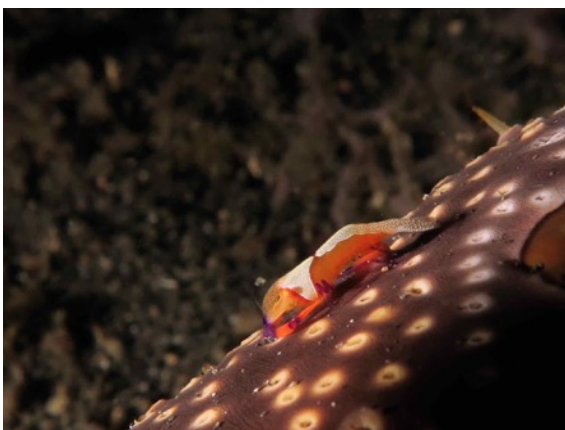
Emperor Shrimp of Lembeh by Elizabeth Solich with G7X / FG7X

Although I sometimes struggled to understand whether the photos that I just took are sharp enough, despite of monitoring them on the LCD while diving, I still managed to take some sharp wow pictures that I was really proud off.

The handling of the Canon/Fantasea system in the water is convenient and efficient, even when exposed to strong currents.

Comparing images with other photographers in Lembeh I was somewhat surprised that I was able to capture with the Canon G7X images to rival those of the professional and semi professionals. In

fact I had a similar sensor in a smaller easier to use housing with lens flexibility. I wasn't limited by having to make a lens choice before the dive like the dSLR users did.

G7X in the Fantasea housing instantly improved my underwater photography outcomes to the point I am now quite proud of several of my images.

Hairy Frogfish of Lembeh by Elizabeth Solich with G7X / FG7X

White-eyed Moray Eel of Lembeh by Elizabeth Solich with G7X / FG7X