

Peter Mieras is a curious man.

In his youth, the seas and waterways that surround his Netherlands home were of particular interest to him and spending Sunday evenings watching *The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau* only served to heighten his curiosity. Beachcombing, swimming and snorkling took him to the water but it wasn't until a 1982 holiday in Egypt introduced him to scuba diving that the love affair took hold. The experience left him with two certainties: he absolutely wanted to learn how to dive and he wanted to know as much as possible about this stunningly beautiful universe.

Peter Mieras is also an explorer and a teacher.

His initial diving course easily led to many more and he quickly gained the level of Assistant Instructor. He spent every free minute diving and his logbook holds a vast collection of locations and experiences from Hawaii to the Maldives, Australia to the Caribbean as well as France, Denmark, Holland and more. His dives range from wrecks, reefs, walls and caves, to fresh water lakes and rivers. It wasn't enough just to experience these places though, Peter also wanted to share them with others and in 1989 he picked up his first underwater camera, a Nikonos V and started taking photographs. He also became a scuba diving instructor, creating divers that were not only technically astute but who also respect the environments and inhabitants of the waters they dive in. Some of his photos have since been published in magazines, on websites and other media but he increasingly became intrigued with the behavioural side of underwater life and decided that video was a better medium to document it. He picked up a Sony VX1000E and never looked back.

In 1996 he visited British Columbia and spent two weeks diving in the waters of the Pacific Northwest. He fell in love with Vancouver Island and a little later with Kathy Johnson, a Canadian whom he met in The Netherlands. Canada would have to wait though as, together with Kathy, he founded his own dive training centre in the South of France. However, the diving experience on Vancouver Island never left the forefront of his memory and in 2003, when it was time to move on, they took over "Rendezvous Dive Adventures", a small diving lodge in the heart of Barkley Sound.

The couple now literally lives on the edge of the ocean and Peter has been filming in BC using his videos to entertain, educate and awe people. He sells his stock footage to TV stations and aquariums, and donates footage to educational programs and institutions. In 2012 he came out with "Kelp and Critters", a DVD intended as a fundraiser for various local stewardship and conservation efforts the couple had started. The unexpected success of "Kelp and Critters" led to requests for public speaking engagements and more footage requests. Although he was busy running his business and taking part in many research and conservation projects, he still managed to create "Blue Notes, an ode to the marine life in the Pacific Northwest". This movie shares his enduring love for the oceans, its inhabitants and the connections with other ecosystems.

Peter is a stewardship manager at the Marine Life Sanctuary Society, a first responder with the BC Marine Mammal Response Network, board member of the "Wild in Blue" project, and is a contributor to the Westcoast Aquatic Management Board. He was a winner in the *David Suzuki Foundation* "Ocean Stories" contest and was declared an "Ocean Hero" by the *Shaw Ocean Discovery Center*. He won the *Tacoma Dive and Travel Expo* video contest both in 2012 and 2013, and the *San Diego Underwater Film Exhibition* selected one of his videos for it's 2013 screening.

He and Kathy live and work in Barkley Sound and form an underwater video and photography couple that continues to explore, care for, and share the oceans.

Recognitions / achievements:

June 4, 2002: PADI Certificate of recognition for excellence for Peter Mieras for restoring confidence in a diver who was witness of a diving accident.

November 13, 2002: a letter from the French company CRITT crediting Peter Mieras for an idea for a nationwide software system that could be developed. It was presented to **Jacques Chirac, president of the French Republic**. The software was released in 2004

November 16, 2002: Certificate of recognition for excellence for Peter Mieras given by IT-College for the quality of teaching of instructor development courses during October and November 2002

June 2010: Letter of appreciation for video content made available to Tsawalk website of the West Coast Aquatic Management Board

October 2010: Letter of appreciation from the Bamfield Marine Science Centre for video clips made available for their web based learning program "Ocean Link"

December 2010: Letter of appreciation from the Vancouver Aquarium for video content made available in the public gallery for educational purposes.

September 2011: Letter of appreciation from the Vancouver Aquarium for the video footage made available for the Rockfish survey and Lingcod egg mass survey projects

April 2012: Winner of the Tacoma Dive and Travel Expo underwater video contest (video stewardship)

November 2012: Letter from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans thanking for the participation in a successful disentanglement of a humpback whale

April 2013: Winner of the Tacoma Dive and Travel Expo underwater video contest (video Socorro)

May 2013: Winner in the David Suzuki Foundation Ocean Stories Contest with video of the volunteer diver derelict fishing net removal program

Sept 2013: Winner of the adult category "Ocean Hero" by the Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre

Sept 2013: Video "The Net Benefit" was selected for screening at the San Diego Underwater Film Exhibition