



Beneath the Sea
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Meadowlands Exposition Center
Secaucus, New Jersey



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BENEATH THE SEA proudly presents their DIVING PIONEER for 2019 Cathy Church



Cathy Church is an avid biologist. She earned a BS in biology from the University of Michigan where she also learned to SCUBA dive. She was studying marine biology at Stanford University's Hopkins Marine biology station in Monterey, California when she met Jim Church, a scuba diver who was pioneering underwater photography. Cathy wanted to document her underwater work and spent many dives with Jim exploring ways to use the Calypso camera and flashbulb systems with homemade accessories. She continued on to the University of Hawaii where Jim joined her and they married. She earned her MS in Marine biology but in the late 1960s, in Hawaii, she was not able to break the barricades against women divers and she quit pursuing a career as a scientist. Instead, she turned to two other activities—underwater photography and a job teaching 7 and 8-grade science in California. She and Jim continued pioneering underwater photo techniques. Cathy co-authored hundreds of magazine articles and four books on underwater photo techniques and offered seminars throughout the USA. Her first week-long photo courses were taught in Grand Cayman in 1972. She developed the first franchised photo courses for dive shops through NASDS. She has photographed for

many clients including Kodak, Nikon, the US Virgin Islands, and the Cayman Islands. Her poster "Wonderland" earned a Certificate of Distinction from Creativity Magazine for best travel poster of the year in 1991.

Forty years later Cathy is still developing new twists and turns to her photography, adding fine art black and white to her style in 1995. In the early 2000s, of course, she moved on to digital. In 2009 she released her new "Imagination Collection" showing her sense of art and humor and providing yet again a new look. She is always keeping up with developments so that she can teach her students the most up-to-date techniques. She has taught thousands of divers on how to enjoy their photography. She still offers seminars throughout the USA and teaches regularly at her underwater photo center in Grand Cayman. Her enthusiasm when she teaches and her kindness toward her students have won her accolades from divers around the world. She encourages people through her writing, her seminars, and her classes to enjoy the wonders of the undersea environment. She spends many hours successfully coaching people who are fearful of the water on how to become snorkelers and divers. Her latest book, a coffee table book "My Underwater Photo Journey" is not only a collection of her favorite images from the first forty years of her career, but there are free photo lessons on-line for each image. Cathy believes in sharing everything she has learned and she has found many ways to do that. She received the prestigious NOGI award for the arts from the Academy of Underwater Arts and Sciences in 1985, the "Reaching Out Award" from the DEMA Hall of Fame in 2000, was inducted into the Women Divers Hall of Fame in 2000, was voted into the Explorers' Club in 2001, received the "Paul Revere Spike Award" from the Underwater Club of Boston in 2001, and was a charter recipient of the Platinum Pro5000 Card in 1993. In 2010 Cathy became a Diver of the Year for Arts at Beneath the Sea. This year Beneath the Sea is pleased and proud to honor Cathy Church with our Pioneer award recognizing her contributions to diving through her early ground-breaking work in underwater photography.

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