

GROUNDBREAKING SERIES OF UNDERWATER SHORT FILMS MADE FOR LESS THAN THE COFFEE BUDGET FOR *THE HOBBIT*

REALM PICTURES ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE RELEASE OF "THE UNDERWATER REALM" ON CHRISTMAS DAY 2012.

"This is the most exciting project we've seen in twenty years. This project combines new technology and brilliant ideas with some deeply passionate filmmakers." Elliot Grove, Founder of Raindance Film Festival

Thousands of years ago, the most advanced civilization in the world sank beneath the waves. THE UNDERWATER REALM tells the story of five times throughout history that humanity has caught a glimpse of the survivors who still live on the ocean floor.

Created by a fully volunteer team, THE UNDERWATER REALM is arguably the most ambitious independent film project ever attempted. Made for less than half of the coffee budget for Peter Jackson's THE HOBBIT*, the team has recreated five different time periods, developed their own underwater lighting and speaker systems, and built a life size, fully rocking gun deck of a Spanish Galleon. The team have trained and worked with some of Britain's top SCUBA and free diving experts in order to bring this ambitious project to reality.

The films start in 2012 with a newlywed couple freediving in Hawaii. Next, we jump back to 1942 as a Spitfire pilot careers into the Mediterranean ocean. In 1588, a young cabin boy struggles to survive among the blood and smoke of the Spanish Armada. In 1208 a suicidal medieval girl finds new hope under the waves. Finally in 149 BC, we see the underwater civilization at its peak, as a young Atlantean girl struggles to save a drowning Roman soldier.

"We want to take our audience to a world they've never truly experienced before," explains Director David M Reynolds. "Two thirds of our planet and many of our beautiful landscapes and creatures lie hidden underwater. Too often we forget about them, and the tremendous impact our lives and pollution have on the oceans."

That is not to say that filming under the waves is easy. "Filming underwater is nothing like filming on land," explains DOP Eve Hazelton. "Light and sound behave differently, communication is difficult and every minute is vital as precious oxygen runs out."

Every step of the production has been documented via a weekly video blog, followed by the project's thousands of backers worldwide. During the month of December 2011, Realm Pictures embarked on ambitious fundraising campaign to raise \$60,000 and gave themselves 4 weeks to do it. Not only was the total reached but it was smashed with an incredible \$101,611. Backers include: Chris Anderson - the founder of TED, and Sylvia Earle - TIME magazine's first 'hero of the earth'.

THE UNDERWATER REALM is helmed by acclaimed independent filmmaker David M Reynolds, following on from his success with the award winning ZOMBLIES. ZOMBLIES has so far been watched by over four million viewers on YouTube, and attracted many influential fans, including Sir Richard Taylor, Head of WETA Workshop. Sir Richard memorably described the film as *"Bloody fantastic, beautifully shot, truly suspenseful - great zombies!"*

THE UNDERWATER REALM will be released worldwide on YouTube for everyone to experience on December 25. The release will be followed by a world tour in January 2013, with current stops scheduled in New Zealand, Los Angeles and New York.

To arrange an interview with the team or to receive more information, please contact producer Alan Mandel at 020 7993 8467 or alan@realm-pictures.com

A full EPK and more information can be found at www.theunderwaterrealm.com.

* Figures courtesy of the Government of NZ.