

DIVING DEEP: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MIKE DEGRUY

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

Iâ??ve seen quite a few Opening Night films at numerous festivals, but Iâ??ve never seen one quite like the Opening Night film at the 2019 Santa Barbara International Film Festival, *Diving Deep: The Life and Times of Mike deGruy,* a feature-length documentary that tells the story of Mike deGruy, an irrepressibly curious and enthusiastic underwater filmmaker who died suddenly in 2012 while filming for director James Cameron.

DeGruy had filmed the oceans for more than three decades becoming as famous for his on camera storytelling as for his glorious, intimate visions of the sea and the creatures who live in it. According to the filmâ??s website, divingdeepmovie.com if Mike deGruy were alive today he would be spending all his energy to fight on behalf of the ocean, for continued exploration, particularly of the deepsea, research, understanding and ultimately encouraging a reciprocal relationship with it before it is too late.

Inspired to share his legacy as a filmmaker and storyteller, and to spread his mission for protecting the ocean, his wife and filmmaking partner Mimi deGruy returned to the edit room to produce *Diving Deep: The Life and Times of Mike deGruy.* A documentary filmmaker in her own right, Mimi worked with Mike producing numerous hours of award-winning television for the National Geographic Channel, the BBC, and other broadcasters. Prior to working with Mike, she worked for CNN, on Turner Broadcastingâ??s â??Portrait of Americaâ?• series, and on the PBS series â??The Infinite Voyage.â?•

When she was finally able to watch footage after Mike died, Mimi deGruy found a piece sheâ??d never seen, shot not long after the Deepwater Horizon Oil spill. She watched it again and again and knew she had to make a film. The footage depicted a different Mike because at that moment, heâ??d gone from an artist sharing the wonder of the deep to an enraged and impassioned warrior.

Diving Deep: The Life and Times of Mike deGruy. is full of breathtaking footage shot by Mike and in-depth interviews with Sir David Attenborough, James Cameron, and Sylvia Earle, among many other DeGruy collaborators including his children Max and Frances. What emerges is a very human story of a man, his friends, acquaintances and family members who had a passion for the ocean and turned it into

a mission.

Along the way we see the numerous lives that he touched and his enduring call for everyone to look into their own backyards and find something that needs to be fixed and then fix it! Itâ??s almost fitting that he earned the nickname Mike Debris as he wanted his equipment to perform in an optimal way and that way was the Mike deGruy way. Anything less was just not acceptable. So, often times, Mike would modify the equipment to meet his needs. Unfortunately, it didnâ??t always turn out so well for the equipment!

Neverthelss, Mike deGruy, an Olympic caliber spring-board diver, swam, dived and filmed in oceans around the world and in the process became the first to film many rarely seen creatures in their own oceans. He was also a passionate advocate of the oceanâ??s creatures and became increasingly outspoken as an environmental activist.

Told through the eyes and voice of Mimi DeGruy, *Diving Deep: The Life and Times of Mike deGruy* celebrates deGruyâ??s remarkable life, career and what he passionately believed: we are destroying the ocean before we even know whatâ??s there. Mike deGruy had a tremendous belief in the ability of communities to work together to affect positive change and he saw in the next generation a group of people who could make that happen.

Oscar and Grammy award-winning singer/songwriter, Christopher Cross, wrote the filmâ??s closing tune, â??Diving Deep,â?• an ode to Mike DeGruy. Ultimately, the *Diving Deep: The Life and Times of Mike deGruy* is about hope.Highly recommended.

Category

1. #SBIFF
2. Santa Barbara International Film Festival

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