

Mermaids

Visualizing the Myths & Legends

Photographs by
Ralph Clevenger
John Kelsey
Eryn M. Brydon
Beatriz Moino
Liz Grady
Chiara Salomoni

Mermaids: Visualizing the Myths and Legends is now available for inter-museum loan through the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum!



Mermaids: Visualizing the Myths and Legends is an exhibition of 16 fine-art underwater photographs on mounted canvas featuring mermaids off the coast of the Santa Barbara Channel Islands.

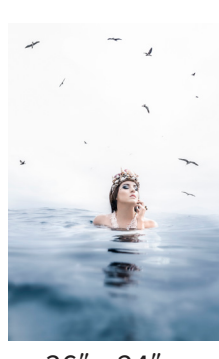
In ancient times, sailors returning home from long voyages told fantastic tales of mysterious sea creatures – giant krakens that could toss ships into the air, sea serpents dragging boats to their doom, and mermaids who lured sailors to their death. The myths of sea creatures and merfolk are part of nearly every culture in human history.

In 1000 BC, the Assyrian goddess Atargatis (who transformed herself into a mermaid out of grief for accidentally killing her human lover), was worshiped in temples with huge ponds full of fish. The Greeks called her Derketo, and also spoke of the Sirens, beautiful but deadly women of the sea. In Ireland, they have the Merrows, Russians have Rusalka water nymphs, and in Norway and Scotland, they have Finfolk. Mermaids still surround us in a myriad of forms – art; sculpture; books; movies; paintings; tattoos; even Starbucks – and maybe in our ocean waves if we're willing to use our imagination.

Most of these images come from an underwater photography course taught by Ralph Clevenger through Brooks Institute. Students spent several days living aboard a dive boat at the Channel Islands, working with professional mermaids to create visual stories, conceptual images, and portraits for their portfolios. While the photography students scuba dive in wetsuits, the mermaids dive only holding their breath, and without any protection from the cool waters. Together, the photographers and models bring to life these mythical creatures in a unique and exciting way.

A video slideshow of more mermaid photographs set to music is available to run during the exhibit.

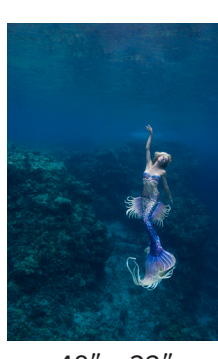
Printed on canvas to enhance the play of light and color of each underwater scene.



36" x 24"



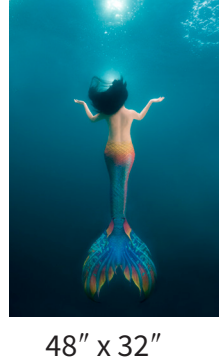
48" x 32"



48" x 32"



48" x 32"



48" x 32"



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48" x 32"



48" x 32"



32" x 48"



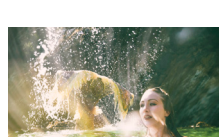
32" x 48"



32" x 60"



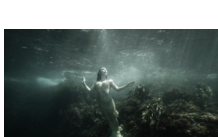
26" x 48"



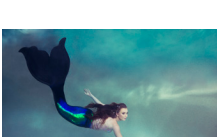
16" x 24"



16" x 24"



16" x 24"



24" x 36"

For more details and availability please visit sbmm.org/traveling-exhibits. To book this exhibit, contact Emily Falke by email at efalke@sbmm.org

Ralph Clevenger grew up on the coast of North Africa and began diving in the Mediterranean Sea at the age of seven with his father. He went on to study zoology and worked for the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego before attending Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara. He holds a BS in zoology and a BA in photography. He was a senior faculty member at Brooks Institute for more than 33 years, teaching courses in natural history photography; on-location lighting; video production; and undersea photography; among others.

Clevenger pursues his passion for the natural world specializing in photography and video projects of eco-travel, wildlife, and the undersea world. His work is represented by Tandem/Stills+Video.

John Kelsey grew up on beautiful Vancouver Island on the west coast of British Columbia, Canada. Greatly affected by natural beauty, Kelsey's photography reflects his appreciation of the natural world. He is now exploring the northwest through photography and videography for clients in Canada and the United States.

Eryn M. Brydon is a visual artist specializing in underwater portraiture and fine art. She teaches underwater photography and cinematography at Mount Saint Mary's University. Her work focuses on the connections that humans foster with the ocean.

Beatriz Moino grew up in Guatemala and began taking photographs at 13 years-old. Her passion led her to study professional photography at Brooks Institute. Moino received a BA with a minor in photography and entrepreneurship from Universidad Francisco Marroquín in Guatemala.

Liz Grady discovered her bond to photography at 15 years-old, finding her escape in the darkroom and a love for this medium that has evolved into a career. She now works as a photographer, digital tech, and stylist in the photo industry.

Chiara Salomoni specializes in underwater wildlife and fashion. Co-founder of Project Mermaids, she now works with the Italian chapter of Keiko Conservation. Recently, she co-founded Mermaids for Change, and works with One Ocean Diving in Hawaii on shark conservation.