
S&P Global

DEEP DIVE

TREATMENT BY
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INTRO

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VISION

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In this sense, the flashlight becomes a perfect metaphor for S&P — it is the companion that helps us tread the unknown to find the exceptional. But it's not just the flashlight. Everything we encounter along the way can be read as a metaphor. Be it the fish that look like graphs, the risk of a shark, or a blue Whale that, in its enormity, represents the global marketplace.

It's also worth noting that although the amount of light physically diminishes, tonally, things never get dark. With the S&P torch as our companion, we feel confident (even when confronted with a shark) and filled with optimism to see what lies deeper in the water. The film, in this sense, ends with an ellipsis. Yes, our narrative arc presents a standalone (and standout) journey, but with S&P, there is always more to discover.



CINEMATOGRAPHY

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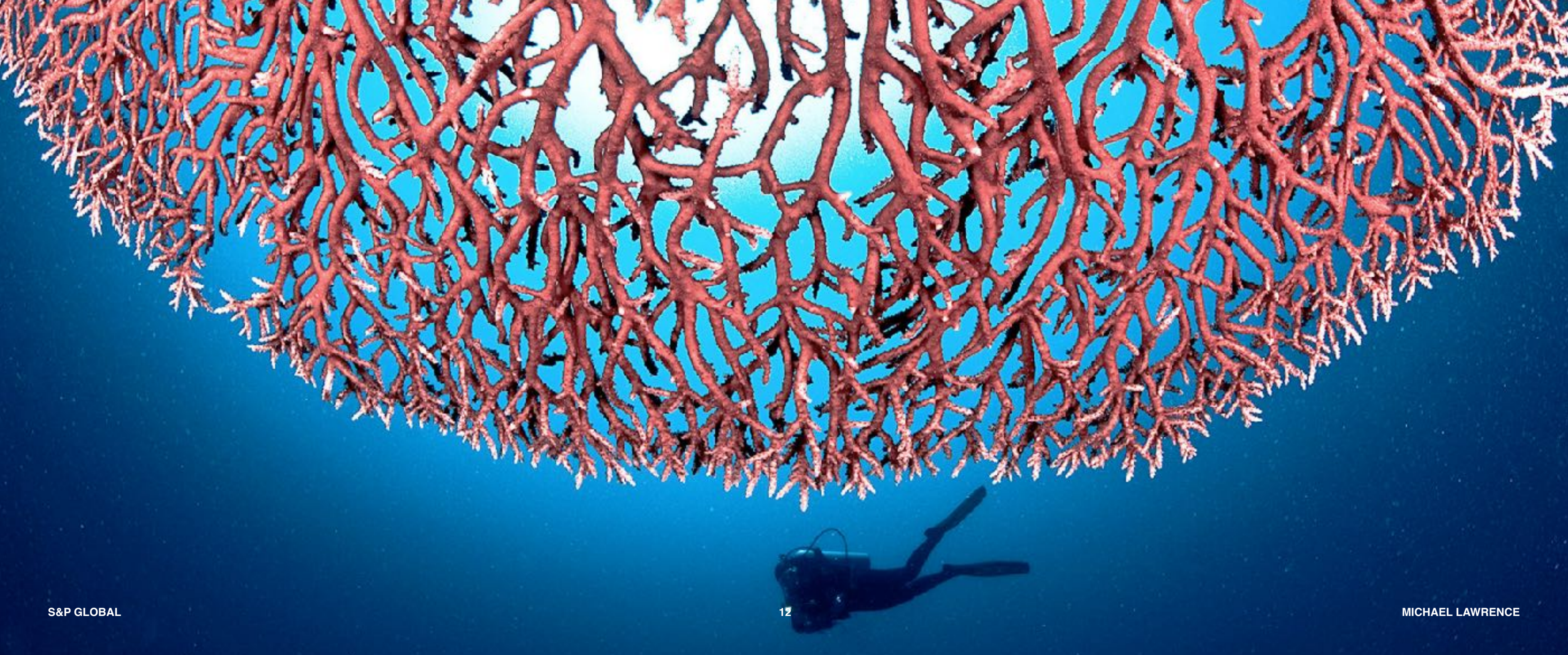
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This is even truer in the deeper parts of the ocean, as a light beam cuts through the unknown to find something extraordinarily vivid. Of course, we'll also have film lights — a light source or mirror above the water, plus a moving light that travels with the diver. Because the background is fairly uniform, we can even have this in frame and paint it out.

We need to make a conscious decision about lensing. Rather than go for the 8K GoPro look, we shoot on anamorphic. The subtle differences in lens characteristics and depth of field make things we might usually miss suddenly seem extraordinary. And with the wider frames, we can be on a close-up of our diver and still take in their surroundings — so that we have both intimacy and scale in the same shot.

We'll also play with frame rates to create moments of perfect synchronicity and add dynamism to the piece. As a standard, I suggest shooting at 48 FPS so we have more malleability in the edit. We can ramp back to regular, keep things in slow motion, or use something in between to hit a real sweet spot when connecting with music and sound. We can also play with shutter angles to affect the amount of motion blur and make movements feel slightly hyper-real.



THE DIVER

There are two ways we can go about this. On the one hand, I love the idea of our protagonist being a free diver. Freed from the scuba gear, we have a more intimate and emotional connection to the individual. We see their skin. Their hair flowing in the water. The relative braveness (and vulnerability) of a free diver amidst the wild forces of nature also ups the stakes as they travel through the unknown to find something spectacular.

I love the image of a slightly older diver, too. I can imagine a Korean woman diving for pearls or a Hawaiian man who has spent his entire life in the ocean. People like this almost become universal in their specificity, as they are so authentically themselves.

On the other hand, a scuba diver — and all the gear that they bring with them — becomes universal in a non-specific way. But that's not a bad thing either, as it allows us to focus solely on the metaphor of diving rather than the person. From a logistical point of view, there is more flexibility with a scuba diver. They can stay underwater longer, and we can rotate divers (like we will rotate crews) seamlessly to keep shooting safely and continuously.

Whichever option we choose, there is one thing we need to ensure — and that is that the person (or people) we cast is able not just to dive but to respond to the different physical and emotional requirements of each moment. There will be a light choreography (a curation in movement rather than dance) throughout our spot. Some scenes call for a burst of intensity. Others call for elegant swimming. Others require a moment of pause as they take in their surroundings in awe. Our diver needs to be able to give us this entire range.



ENHANCING WHAT WE SHOOT

Again, the chapter title should say it all. When it comes to VFX, it's about elevating what's already there — photographically collaging things and creating a tapestry or a few specific tableaux — rather than creating 3D objects from scratch. For example, we may have to key in the shark from footage that an additional crew shoots or create a matte painting to make our scenes feel more vast. Because the underwater background is fairly uniform, achieving seamlessness should be reasonably simple.

Although this work will be done in post, the process should start now. As mentioned, we want to break down the script and see what scenes might need enhancing, and make a detailed checklist. This helps us during the shoot, as we go in with the knowledge of how the more intuitive moments will be enhanced.

SOUND DESIGN & MUSIC

Close our eyes, and we should still be able to experience this journey. Because much like the light changes as we submerge ourselves deeper underwater, so does sound. Starting above water, in the middle of the sea, with just the sound of waves and wind, we dive in. Everything becomes increasingly muffled as we dive deeper, but there is still so much life. We might hear noises coming above the surface. The swimming of fish nearby and the ever-nearing sound of a blue whale song. Then, at times, there is silence — allowing us to focus on the beauty of a particular moment.

These are just some brief examples of the makeup of our sonic tapestry. Like with our shots, we want to make a plan of our sounds before the shoot. This mean we can give the list to our recordist — trying to capture as much as possible for real (though foley will remain a great tool). We can then use these sounds to build a soundtrack (something tonic and ethereal, but avoiding the Enya-type cliches) or complement it with a track we choose.

A vibrant underwater scene featuring a coral reef on the right and a diver with a flashlight in a cave on the left. The text "DEEP DIVE" is overlaid in the center.

DEEP DIVE

"DEEP DIVE" :60

The sea, seen in a sparse but striking tableau. Its waves lap just beneath our lens. The horizon stretches out, seemingly infinitely. The water looks cold. Uninviting, but not grim or brutal. There is an austere beauty to it. Soaring above us, we can hear the cry of gulls.

VO: What do you see when you look at the surface? Just that. The surface.

OFF-CAMERA VOICE: Three! Two! One!

Suddenly a figure crosses our frame. It happens so quickly we can barely make full sense of it. Before we know it, water splashes up from the surface of the sea. Whatever it was is now beneath the surface.

Our camera tilts backward following the splash of the water as it shoots up in the sky, then keeps tilting to come back on itself and go underneath the water.

As we cross the surface, everything becomes muffled. The light changes. It takes a moment for our exposure to readjust. Once we settle, we see the figure that crashed before us. It's a diver. They move majestically through the water — surrounded by beautiful marine life.

VO: It's when we dive in that discovery begins.

We follow the diver. Schools of colorful fish swim past our lens as the dancing algae/sea kelp distorts in the corners of our wide lens. Compared to the stillness above water, this place is bustling.

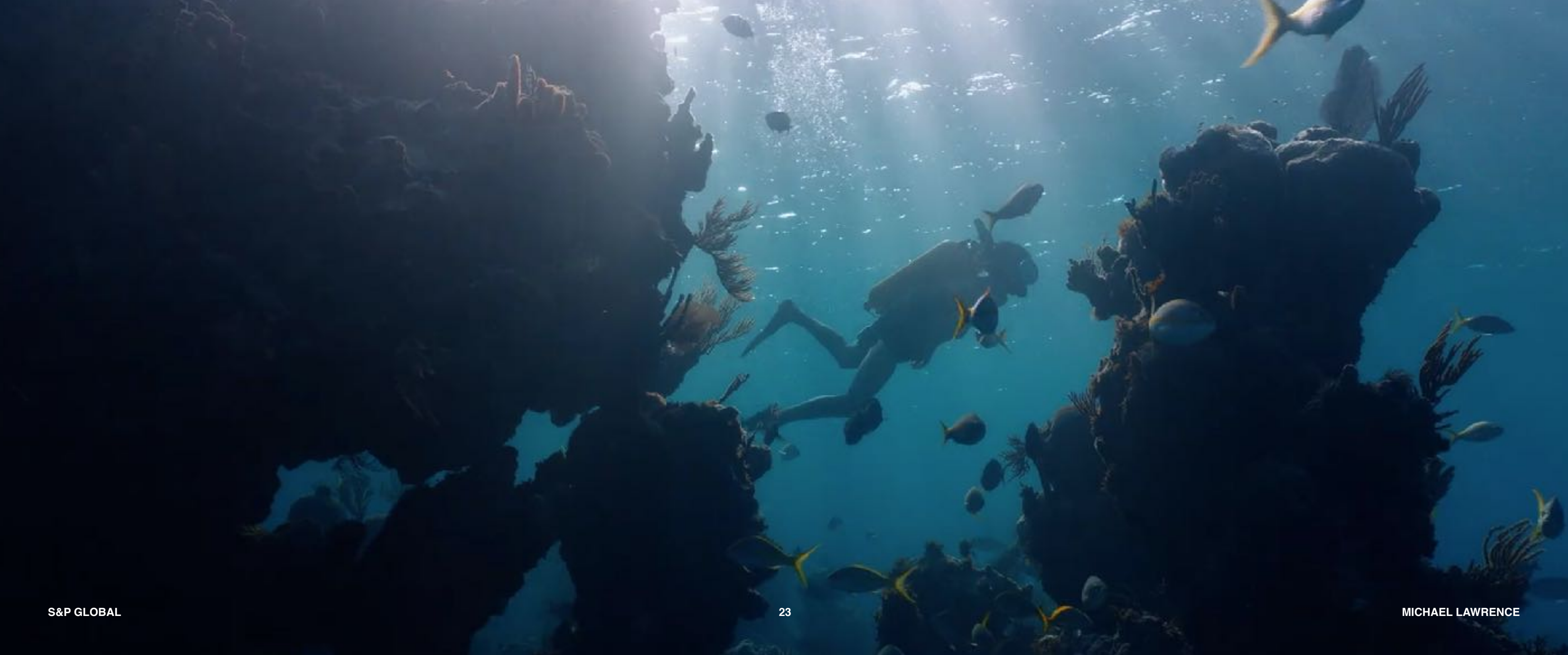
The diver begins to go deeper, becoming smaller in our frame, which shifts into a striking, vast wide shot. More fish come through, and at a greater distance from them, we can see how their formations look like graphs.

VO: Gathering and dissecting data; predicting trends...













Cut up close to the diver as the fish swim right past their goggles — creating beautiful patterns against them. As the diver's head turns to follow them, our camera rotates with them.

We shift into slow motion, as the fish move in front of the diver. It feels like a moment of clarity, in which all these disparate factors (represented by the fish) start to make sense.

Then suddenly, we hear something swimming towards us off-camera. Our camera rotates to see a hammerhead shark coming at us...

VO: ...and projecting risk.

We cut wide to see our diver diving down — deeper into the water and away from the shark.

Cut. The water has become a darker blue, but we are still in the Twilight zone.

We follow the diver as they energetically power through an underwater archway that essentially forms a ring around our frame. Our camera spins on its Z-axis, as we weave through. Meanwhile, an oarfish swims up next to our diver. It's so long that it pretty much extends past the entire archway. It's a friendly moment, as human and fish move side by side.

Then gradually, we realize that we aren't in an archway, but moving through the wreckage of a ship. As the diver swims through what might once have been the ship's grand ballroom, a few deep water jellyfish sway in the wreckage. The old chandeliers that are next to them — which almost has the same shape — only adds to the strange, ghostly beauty of the moment.

We come out the other end of the ship, and as we do, it feels like the diver is leading us upwards. Except we're moving away from the surface light — deeper into the twilight. The sense of weightlessness here is perfectly matched by the VO...

VO: Setting aside assumptions and questioning everything from how we do our work to what our work can do.

Cut to a first-person POV. Now it feels like we are moving down again. But suddenly, the flashlight goes off. For a moment, there is very little light in our frame. We can just about see the silhouette of the diver underwater, when gradually, a few clusters of blue light begins to swim towards them. The clusters create a beautiful, almost mystical presence in frame, and as they come closer, we realize that they are firefly squid.









A blue halo now envelopes our diver. The squids swim past the diver, who follows them, trying to fix the flashlight. A few pats on the base of it, and then, it works again. As if they know their job is done, the squids now swim back up away from the diver, who thanks them.

Except one, it seems. We are in the midnight zone now, and it's darker here, but one bioluminescent light still remains. We feel it must just be another firefly squid — but then we realize it belongs to an Angler Fish. With its single light glowing, the Angler fish bursts menacingly towards our diver, who scurries away from it.

It's an intense chase, and just as the diver is running out of steam, the Angler fish stops, and turns away. It's as if it were spooked by something.

VO: Down here in the depths, a new world of possibility emerges.

Coming from the distance, we begin to hear a song....it is majestic. Primal. It comes something that sounds alien but which connects with us immediately on a human level.

VO: Essential Intelligence from S&P Global takes you here.

Our diver begins to swing towards it. But they can't quite find where it is coming from. Again, down starts to become up. We lose our sense of place. Not just us thought the camera, but the diver too.

We cut to our diver's point of view. Coming from the darkness, we can make out the shape of something gigantic heading toward us. With each beat — almost like a strobe light — the figure gets closer. So does the sound of the song.

Providing the data, technology, workflow solutions, and expertise.

We cut to a shot of our diver as they continue to try and repair the light. The beam comes on fully now, creating a beautiful glow in our frame. We see the diver take on an expression of awe... becoming suddenly very still. Fully at peace. What have they seen?

We cut to a wide shot of our diver, face to face with a giant blue whale. It was this majestic creature that was creating the song. Despite the difference in size (and species) between it and the diver, it feels like we are witnessing a moment of genuine connection.

You need to push below the surface and plumb the wonders beneath.

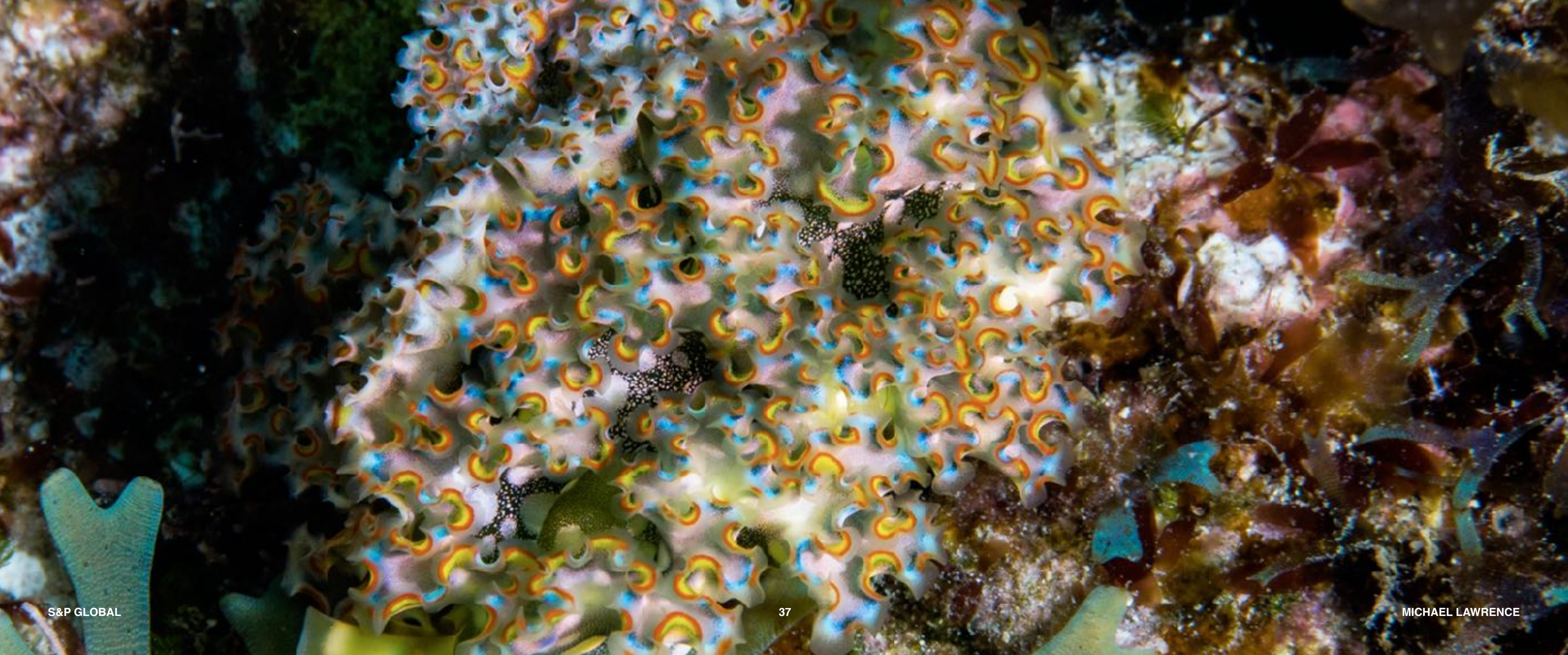
Cut later. Our diver continues to swim deeper and deeper. With the flashlight illuminating the way, there is still so much more to be explored.

VO: Because a better, more prosperous future awaits. It's yours for the seeking.

VO: S&P Global. Seek & Prosper. TTL: S&P Global. Seek & Prosper

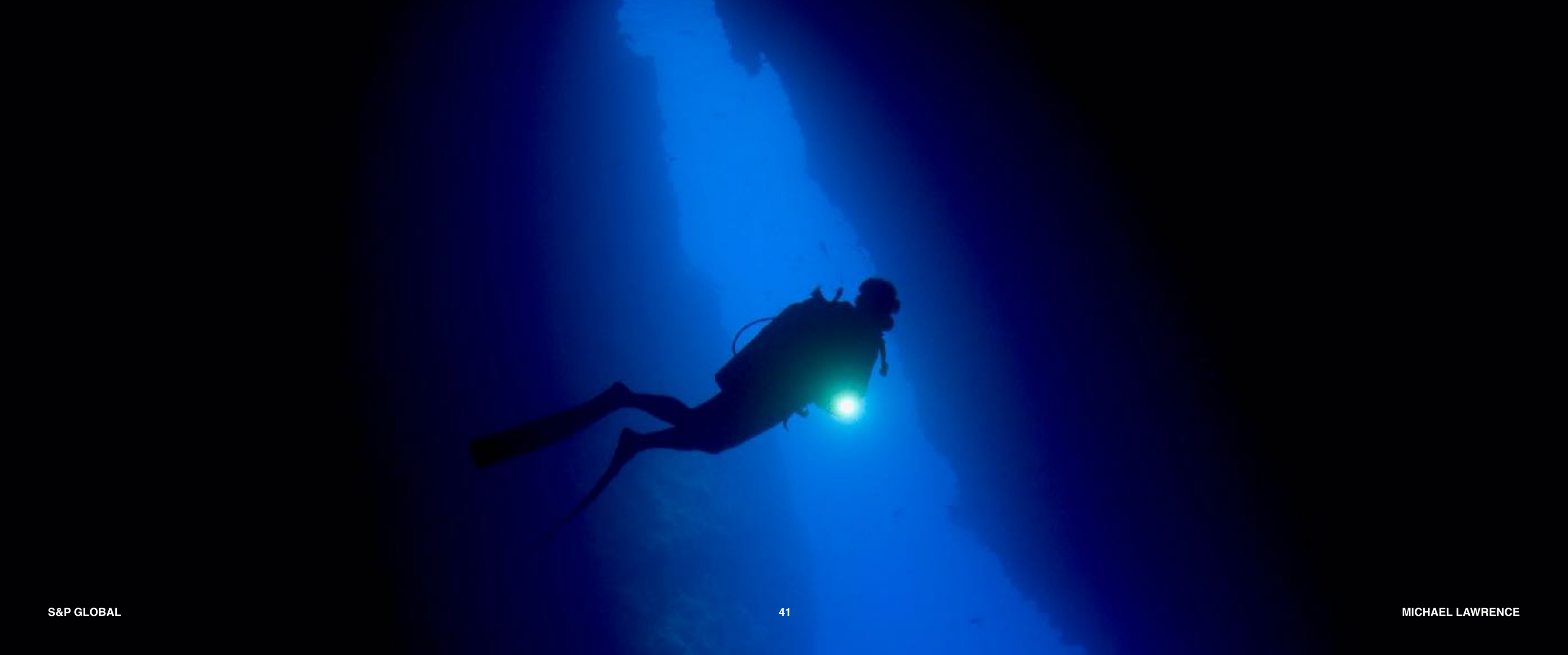












LOCATION

This goes hand in hand with the casting. The smartest option for us is to shoot somewhere that our diver(s) know well. This means that they can help us find the most special places to shoot and what to reasonably expect at the time of shooting. Having intimate knowledge of the location also means we can better determine which gaps need to be filled with VFX.

In terms of the water's surface, we are starting away from anything crystalline (this is an adventure into the unknown, after all), but it also doesn't need to be Vancouver in the winter. Somewhere in between would be ideal. As a starting point for our search, I like Thailand, where I've shot before January, but let's explore.

IN CLOSING

It's hard not to see a metaphor in, or a least a parallel between, our journey making this spot and that of our diver. Because this is just the beginning, and as we dive deeper (the pun is unavoidable, I'm afraid), there will be so much to discover. What we can say for now, however, is that every decision we make should take us away from documentary and closer towards the poetry of cinema.

It's an ambitious task but approached the right way, we can create an experience that feels so far unseen. Ultimately, that is a perfect reflection of what S&P does — guiding us through the unknown, to take us somewhere magnificently new.

