

# 'One Epic Ocean' Marks Two Years as SeaWorld Abu Dhabi's Star Attraction

*MacGillivray Freeman's Experiential Must-See Film Sets New Standard for Immersive Storytelling on World's Largest 360-Degree LED Screen*

LAGUNA BEACH, CA, UNITED STATES, August 6, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Celebrating two years of remarkable impact, [MacGillivray Freeman Films](#) (MFF) announces the continued success of [One Epic Ocean](#), the acclaimed 360-degree film spectacular anchoring the \$1.2 billion [SeaWorld Abu Dhabi](#) marine park. Since its debut in May 2023, this immersive cinematic journey has become the park's emotional and experiential centerpiece, helping drive record attendance and contributing to more than 20 international awards for innovation, design, and storytelling.



SeaWorld Abu Dhabi's One Ocean Hub features the world's largest cylindrical LED screen.

“

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*Shaun MacGillivray, President,  
MacGillivray Freeman Films*

Presented four times daily inside SeaWorld Abu Dhabi's One Ocean hub, the 14-minute spectacle is presented on the world's largest 360-degree LED screen spanning 716 feet in circumference and 50 feet high—the equivalent of nearly ten IMAX® screens arranged in a circle. Projected at an unprecedented 44K resolution, the display offers nearly three times the pixel clarity of the Sphere in Las Vegas, making it the highest-definition natural history film ever created.

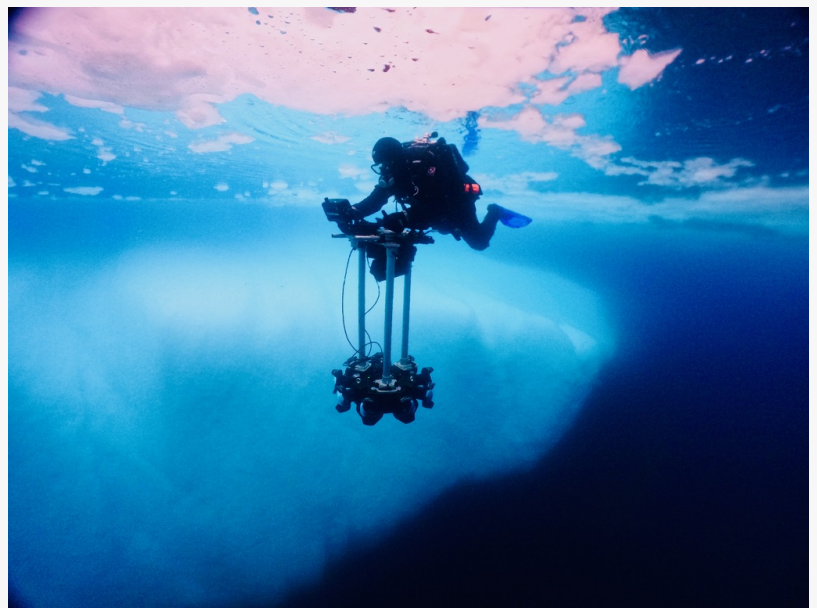
As the world's largest indoor aquarium theme park, spanning five floors and nearly 2 million square feet with

15 million gallons of water, SeaWorld Abu Dhabi earned Guinness World Record recognition in 2024. With more than 2 million visitors in the past year alone, the park has become a global benchmark for immersive themed experiences.

## PIONEERING FILMMAKING MEETS CUTTING-EDGE TECH

With two Academy Award® nominations for its ocean films *The Living Sea* and *Dolphins*, MacGillivray Freeman Films was the natural choice to produce the park's signature live capture content in partnership with SeaWorld, Miral and Thinkwell. For *One Epic Ocean* and other displays, MFF produced 114 minutes of original 22K-resolution content (up-scaled to 44K during playback)—the largest production of its kind.

To capture footage in full 360-degree clarity, MFF and a team of engineers developed two entirely new camera systems: one underwater rig featuring nine 4K compact cinema cameras, and another topside aerial rig with five 6K cameras mounted on a drone. "The underwater camera system was an incredible feat of engineering," said Director of Photography Jonathan Bird. "Getting nine cameras to work in perfect unison underwater? Borderline impossible."



The underwater camera rig used to film *One Epic Ocean* featured nine 4k compact cinema cameras.



Filming a whale shark for *One Epic Ocean*

From the Arctic Circle to the Antarctic Peninsula, the MFF team filmed across eight countries on five continents, traveling 66,000 miles in nine months. "We carried more than 30 heavy film equipment cases through airports, jungles, ice fields, and reefs," said production manager Meghan MacGillivray. "This was a monumental undertaking."

"The main challenge was taking a prototype camera system that had only been tested in an aquarium out into the world's most extreme environments," said cinematographer Zach Peterson. "One month we were fighting to keep the camera from overheating in the 93-degree waters of Abu Dhabi, the next we were trying to keep the camera batteries from freezing in the icy waters of Antarctica."

## CREATING A VERY DIFFERENT POST-PRODUCTION PIPELINE

Editing footage at this scale required groundbreaking post-production methods. Over 1.3 million

frames were digitally stitched and blended by CGI artists at Light Sail and MFF, with 300,000 frames undergoing rotoscoping—a labor-intensive process of tracing objects for removal, then re-compositing the removed objects into the backplate images, frame by frame. The final master files totaled 24.5 terabytes and are played back uncompressed and upconverted live in real time from 22K to 44K resolution.

“To complete a project of this magnitude required that traditional post-production methods be tossed out the window,” notes Terry Brown, VP of Technology and Digital Post.

“This is by far the most complex, most challenging piece of content we’ve ever created,” said Shaun MacGillivray, President of MFF. “We had to invent two new camera systems, new storytelling techniques, and new ways to get 22K content to play seamlessly on the world’s largest cylindrical screen. The result is an emotional, fully immersive experience that connects deeply with audiences.”

#### MORE THAN A FILM - A GATEWAY TO WONDER

One Epic Ocean does more than dazzle—it sets the tone for the entire SeaWorld Abu Dhabi experience. As senior correspondent Joe Kleiman of In Park Magazine says: “Whether viewed at length or in passing, One Epic Ocean prepares guests for the adventures ahead in an engaging and emotional way.”

The result is an immersive experience unlike any other. Imagine standing in an enormous space when suddenly the 50-foot walls begin to change color and ocean life begins to swirl around you. The animals are so close, you can see the colors in a whale’s eye!

The show’s immersive visuals are complemented by a 70-speaker spatial audio system, adding a rich auditory layer to the experience. Visitors frequently describe the show as “breathtaking,” “transformative,” and “the highlight of the entire park.”

In addition to One Epic Ocean, MFF produced eight educational films and a vertical-format film for SeaWorld Abu Dhabi’s “Endless Ocean” realm, plus CGI backplates for live sea lion presentations. In total, the company delivered nearly two hours of finished content, cementing its role as a creative and technical powerhouse.

#### A LEGACY OF INNOVATION

MFF’s pioneering work in immersive filmmaking dates back to 1981, when Disney tapped the company to produce the CircleVision 360° film Wonders of China for EPCOT. That 35mm nine-camera project ran for two decades and was seen by more than 100 million people. With One Epic Ocean, MFF continues its legacy of transporting audiences to the heart of the natural world through unmatched cinematic experiences.

#### ABOUT MACGILLIVRAY FREEMAN FILMS

Based in Laguna Beach, California, MacGillivray Freeman Films is the world’s foremost

independent producer and distributor of giant-screen 70mm films with nearly 50 films to its credit. Throughout the company's history, its films have won numerous international awards including two Academy Award® nominations for The Living Sea and Dolphins and three films inducted into the IMAX Hall of Fame, including Everest, the highest grossing giant screen film of all time. MacGillivray Freeman's films are known for their artistry and celebration of science and the natural world. It is the first documentary film company to reach the one-billion-dollar benchmark for worldwide box office.

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