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**CLAIRE NOUVIAN:
ARE YOU CURIOUS ABOUT THE DEEP BLUE WORLD?**

According to Claire Nouvian, there is another real world beside this one in the universe, which sometimes has sunshine, and sometimes is like star-studded night with various shining animals we have never seen ... That is the deep sea. It is undisturbed, slow and quiet, says Claire Nouvian.

Written by Hu Xiawei

Photo courtesy: Rolex Matthieu Lunard

Curiosity is not inborn

Claire Nouvian has many professions, including traveling reporter, producer, and film director. Now she is ocean ambassador of IUCN. Before the interview, we expected to see a woman in her fifties, because it seemed only possible for such an age to have so many experiences. When we saw her in person, our surprise and delight were unconcealable. She looked calm, warm and gracious. She had a few wrinkles around the corner of her eyes which must have been the result of too much laughter, but they were totally negligible. Were I a woman, I would have asked how she managed to look so perfect without makeup.

Claire Nouvian spent her childhood in North Africa, where she lived with her family. While others might have enjoyed a sunbath on the beach or a cup of mint tea under a palm tree, Nouvian's parents chose a special way of entertainment. They would drive the SUV on the most treacherous roads into the Sahara desert where there were no other people. Nouvian still remembers those weathered bones she saw at the age of 4, which were used as road signs. She began to wonder who left those bones and when. Since then she has maintained a sensitive curiosity about the world.

On earth but outside the world

Jules Verne, Nouvian's fellow countryman, described the deep blue world in *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* as a beautiful place with coral forests, pearls and huge octopuses. Claire Nouvian also wrote a book about the ocean floor. This encyclopedia of the oceans entitled *The Deep* is more real and credible than Verne's novel, but both present a magical and romantic deep sea world.

In 2001, as a photographer of the Discovery Channel, Claire Nouvian had a chance to watch a documentary about the ocean in a California aquarium. She was totally amazed by what she saw. She even suspected that it was a trick of Tim Burton. Her curiosity encouraged her to explore that mysterious world, but she couldn't find any reliable book on it. She felt confused, "We humans make great efforts to search for ET and water on Mars, but how come no one has done something for the oceans on our earth?"

In 2005 Claire Nouvian had the first opportunity to dive to the sea floor. She said it seemed everything stopped moving down there. "At different depths you'd have different feelings. Sometimes there's sunlight, and sometimes it's like a starry night. If you go deeper, it becomes totally dark."

S = Style Weekend

Claire = Claire Nouvian

I regret not having been born in the same age as Franz Schubert

S: As a happy mother to be, at what time do you expect your baby to go in the sea for the first time?

Claire: I will put it in sea water at 2 or 3 weeks. Since my boyfriend lives in a coastal city, it won't be very difficult.

S: Won't you be worried that such a tiny body may be frightened by the sound of the sea?

Claire: Not at all. It should be familiar with the sea. It will stay in my body for ten months, during which it will be in a world that is the same dark, quiet and full of water. So putting it in the sea is like having it return.

S: Are you an out-and-out vegetarian?

Claire: My diet is made up of rice and vegetable. Occasionally I will have some offshore fish. Just a little. I will definitely not have deep sea species. When I was little my father had me eat shark fin, but now I can't stand it. I think man has stayed at the top of the food chain for too long.

S: Do you remember how many times you have dived to the sea floor?

Claire: The first time was in 2005. I have dived more than 10 times into the deep sea. As for the shallow regions, it's spectacular.

S: Do you usually wear a wrist watch when diving?

Claire: Yes. I like watches. I think it's a practical tool as well as a good ornament. I'm not saying this because I'm working with Rolex. But I do want to say something about this cooperation. I have always wanted to hold an exhibition about this book or the deep sea materials we have collected. When Rolex knew my idea, they decided to give me support.

S: What other interests do you have in life?

Claire: I'm a classical music lover. That's something I have loved most since childhood. I used to practice playing the piano when little. Now when I'm not busy I'll play some records for my baby. I'm telling you, I'm regretful that I hadn't been born in the same age as Franz Schubert; otherwise I would have made a perfect wife of his.

1. The deep sea is a quiet world.
2. 3. Deep sea creatures we'll see at The Deep exhibition

The Deep China Tour at Hangzhou

Oct. 1, 2010 – Jan. 20, 2011, Rolex, the world top wrist watch brand, presents The Deep China Tour Exhibition at Zhejiang Science and Technology Museum in Hangzhou. The Deep, which opened on Apr. 17 in Shanghai, is the world's first major exhibition that reveals the secrets of the deep sea and showcases marine lives. After a world tour in many cities, it is brought by Rolex this year to Chinese audience who love the sea and nature.