



Florida Institute of Technology

SIR ROBERT MARX LECTURE SERIES MAN'S UNDERWATER EXPLORATION OF THE SEA

***Florida Institute of Technology Sponsors
Sir Robert Marx***



Who the first divers were, we do not know. Nor can we be safe to assume that fishing for mollusks, crustaceans and other food was a major reason. We do know that men were diving as early as 4500 B.C.; archaeologists have unearthed shells in Mesopotamia that must have come up from the seafloor. However, there is a gap in the history of diving of more than a thousand years—until the Theban VI, Dynasty of Egypt, around 3200 B.C. The vast number of carved mother-of-pearl ornaments discovered at many of the archaeological sites there indicates that diving was widespread, for the shells the ornaments were made from what could only have been obtained by diving.

The Cretans, who flourished around 2500 B.C., worshiped the god Glaucus who is still the patron saint of Greek fishermen, sailors and divers today. The early Greek divers were very successful and reached depths of over 100 feet holding their breath; staying below for as much as five minutes. They were considered the most courageous men of their time and they brought back man's first knowledge of the undersea world. They first started bringing up sponges and supplying the known world with them until recently being replaced by synthetic ones, and were used to recover sunken treasures, as well as in undersea warfare.

There is documentary proof that there was abundant pearl diving in India and Ceylon around 550 B.C., and in the Americas even earlier. In the ancient world, there were plenty of uses for divers. Occasionally they were used for bizarre tasks, as an amazing story of the Greek historian, Plutarch, reveals. The Roman general, Marc Antony was persuaded by Cleopatra to participate in a fishing contest. Knowing himself to be a poor angler and not wanting to lose face with the Queen of Egypt, he hired a diver to keep his hook well supplied with fish. Unfortunately, Cleopatra's spies discovered the trick. Antony's face must have been very red indeed when his first catch on the second day of the contest turned out to be a large dead fish—salted and ready for the frying pan.

In Japan, the Ama divers have been at their profession since before the time of Christ and in most cases they are women. Using only goggles, they are capable of holding their breath for as much as five minutes on each dive. In addition to bringing up pearl oysters, they dive for shellfish and seaweed.

In this fascinating lecture, Robert Marx, using colored illustrations and his vast knowledge of this topic, will take us all over the world from the earliest times to the present with entertaining tales of adventure, bravery and danger.



LOCATION:
Gleason Performing
Arts Center

DATE AND TIME:
Tuesday,
Feb. 20, 2018
7 p.m.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION:**
321-674-8096 or
www.fit.edu and click
on the Campus Calendar

**The Gleason Performing Arts Center is
located at 150 W. University Blvd., Melbourne, FL.**

FREE LECTURE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

Florida Institute of Technology is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate, baccalaureate, master's, education specialist and doctoral degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Florida Institute of Technology. Florida Institute of Technology does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, protected veteran status or any other protected minority in the admission of students, administration of its educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, employment policies, and athletic or other university sponsored programs or activities. Contact the Title IX Coordinator at (321) 674-8700.