

2022 FILM COMPETITION WINNERS

Grand Prize



Sponsored by Doña Paula | \$5000

The Territory

(USA, 2022, 86 mins)

Director: Alex Pritz

Producer: National Geographic, Alex Pritz, Will Miller, Sigrid Dykjær, Darren Aronofsky, Gabriel Uchida, Lizzie Gillett

The Territory provides an immersive on-the-ground look at the tireless fight of an Indigenous community against the encroaching deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon. With awe-inspiring cinematography, the film takes audiences deep into the Uru-eu-wau-wau territory and provides unprecedented access to the farmers and settlers illegally burning and clearing the protected Indigenous land. Partially shot by the Uru-eu-wau-wau people, the film relies on vérité footage captured over three years as the community risks their lives to set up their own news media team in the hopes of exposing the truth.

"Alex Pritz and his crew truly deserve the Grand Prize for *The Territory*, a hard hitting film that brings out the conflict between the Indigenous people of Brazil and the "settlers". We are left with a deep impact and a sense of despair as the young native leader and his mentor struggle to fight a losing battle to save the Brazilian rainforest that are critical not only to the local population but to the world at large. The courage and tenacity of the outnumbered natives is inspiring. The film is an alarm and call to action to save the "lungs" of the earth."

- Divyesh Muni, jury member

Best Film: Exploration & Adventure



Sponsored by Happy Yak | \$2500

A White Dream

(France, 2021, 52 mins)

Director: Mathieu Le Lay

Producer: Bonne Pioche, Alexandre Soullie

Wildlife photographer Jérémie Villet loves traveling alone through the white expanses of the northern hemisphere. With only his pulk and his telephoto lens for company, he seeks out animals that survive in extreme cold, hoping to capture that perfect image that expresses his intimate relationship with wildlife and the harshness of the landscape.

"Two French guys venture to the extreme north of Canada where they test their knowledge and filmmaking skills in wild landscapes where temperatures can reach -60°C. This is a remote place that reveals fauna and flora which have been preserved by blizzards and storms. In the middle of all this, the young photographer Jérémie Villet searches for the elusive mountain goat, an animal from the last ice age that is extremely difficult to observe in winter. We follow filmmaker Mathieu Le Lay on his 21st century adventure. He shows that as a photographer of the extreme he is not afraid to sleep on the mountainside, he becomes a director and curator of the extreme itself in his quest for wild beauty. He tells us about man's desire to be in osmosis with both nature and the animal, without disturbing it on its territory, the essence captured like a white dream. As the English poet Gilbert K. Chesterton said: "The world will never starve for want of wonders; but only for want of wonder." *A White Dream* is a true legacy of that spirit here today in Banff!" —Juliette Barthaux, jury member

Best Film: Environment



Sponsored by Mountain Equipment Company | \$2500

Nuisance Bear

(Canada, 2021, 14 mins)

Director: Jack Weisman, Gabriela Osio Vanden

Producer: Documist, Will Miller, Jack Weisman

Churchill, Manitoba, is famous as an international destination for photographing polar bears. We've seen the majestic images and classic wildlife series captured here, but what do these bears see of us? Through a shift in perspective *Nuisance Bear* reveals an obstacle course of tourist paparazzi and wildlife officers whom bears must navigate during their annual migration.

"For those of us who hail from small northern communities, it is rare to see portrayals of our worlds, realities and experiences reach cinemas around the world; and for that we celebrate. This film captures the complexities, interconnectivities and intimacies of relationship between a community and their neighbours - the great Northern Polar Bear."

- Erynne Gilpin, jury member

Best Film: Mountain Sports



Sponsored by Mountain Hardwear | \$2500

Tempo II. Movements in Jungle

(USA, 2022, 6 mins)

Director: Thomas Woodson

Producer: Kyle Richardson

A conceptual exploration of the shared feelings between music and mountains — Tempo II. Movements in Jungle is set in the world's largest urban jungle, exploring styles of Brazilian drumming and trail running.

"Let the Land speak. Let the sounds of our racing heartbeat lead the way. For those of us who live, breathe, and dream mountains and mountain sports – it is the sound of the breath, heartbeat, footsteps, and forest surroundings that become the soundtrack of our lives. This year, the jury is delighted to celebrate a gorgeous and powerful film as the winner of the 2022 Mountain Sports Category."

- Erynne Gilpin, jury member

Best Film: Mountain Culture



Sponsored by Helly Hansen | \$2500

Pasang: In the Shadow of Everest

(USA, 2022, 71 mins)

Director: Nancy Svendsen

Producer: Follow Your Dream Foundation, Christy McGill, Sharon Wood, Richard Levien

Cast: Pasang Lhamu Sherpa

Pasang chronicles Pasang Lhamu Sherpa's tragic and inspiring journey to become the first Nepali woman to summit Everest in 1993. As an uneducated, Indigenous woman and a Buddhist in a Hindu kingdom, Pasang's dream to scale the legendary mountain pits her against family, foreign climbers, her own government, and nature itself. Her determined pursuit of Everest plays out within the context of her nation's quest for democracy and the emergence of the commercial climbing industry. As told by the Nepalis who knew her, by some of the world's most notable alpinists, and by Pasang herself, her historic quest would transfix her country and uplift a new generation's belief in its possibilities.

"Many of the best-known mountaineers become icons because they are visionaries who will stop at nothing to reach their goals and who refuse to give up, even after utter failure, often repeatedly. This intimate portrait expertly mixes archival footage, family video and interviews with world-renowned mountaineers reflecting on their place in the story. By layering personal, cultural, and political barriers, this multifaceted story shows how Pasang Lhamu Sherpa spends her life overcoming, in order to become the first Nepalese woman to summit Mount Everest. Huge congratulations and thanks to Nancy Svendsen and team for celebrating this unsung hero." — Faith E. Briggs, jury member

Best Film: Climbing



Sponsored by Arc'teryx | \$2500

From Shade to Light

(France, 2022, 70 mins)

Director: Sebastien Montaz-Rosset, Davina Montaz-Rosset

Producer: Sebastien Montaz-Rosset

Dive into the mind of French alpinist Charles Dubouloz as he attempts a rarely repeated route on the fabled north face of the Grandes Jorasses, spending five frigid nights alone above the lights of Chamonix, France, in the dead of winter.

"Alpinist, climber, and steep skier Charles Dubouloz seems to know how to do everything! Last January, he made a winter solo ascent that amazed the mountain world. In six days, he managed to climb the Rolling Stones route, one of the hardest on the north face of the Grandes Jorasses in the French Alps. This is a rare performance to be placed in the annals of the Mont Blanc massif, alongside some of the greatest names in mountaineering. In addition to its difficulty, the route is known for its bad bivouacs. Charles sleeps in his hammock when he can but has to spend a night half-seated, with a temperature of -30°C chilling him to the bone. In an interview, Charles declared: "I'm very happy to show that we, the climbers of today, are capable of going very fast on a route but also of doing what the older generation did, that is to say, climbing in a rustic and somehow innovative way." Sebastien Montaz-Rosset, a mountain guide, and filmmaker, was at the forefront of capturing this moment, and he graces us with this magnificent film, *From Shade to Light*." — Juliette Barthaux, jury member

Best Film: Snow Sports



Sponsored by Mountain Joe | \$2500

Balkan Express

(Germany, 2022, 40 mins)

Director: Philipp Becker, Jochen Mesle, Max Kroneck, Johannes Müller

Producer: El Flamingo GmbH, Philipp Becker

German mountaineers Max Kroneck and Jochen Mesle book a one-way train ticket from Munich to Thessaloniki – and start their 2500-kilometre journey back home by bike and ski. They explore the mountains of the Balkans, looking for the most beautiful ski runs and sharing good times with locals along the way.

“Two – that’s the age at which Max Kroneck first got on his skis. He grew up in the mountains and snow. No wonder he is one of the best-known free riders on the scene today. As for his long-time friend Jochen Mesle, you only have to savor the last few climbs in this film to see the skier’s endurance. Those two are German-quality alpine diesel engines. But make no mistake, they are first and foremost forward-thinking environmentalists. Particularly at ease with distance and yet very sensitive to the environment, they decided to minimize their impact on the planet by opting for clean modes of travel, allowing them to achieve their childhood dreams while defending the values of respect for nature that are dear to them. This is how we find them in this bicycle-ski journey from Germany to the Balkans. This film is dynamic and entertaining, with four cameras, two of them held by Jochen and Max themselves. Their journey proves to be an efficient recipe for an escapist film in the Balkans, a true paradise that exhales the air of old Europe that is far from mass tourism.”

— *Juliette Barthaux, jury member*

Best Feature Film



Sponsored by Wild Life Distillery | \$2500

Fire of Love

(USA, 2022, 94 mins)

Director: Sara Dosa

Producer: National Geographic, Shane Boris, Ina Fichman

Katia and Maurice Krafft loved two things — each other and volcanoes. For two decades, the daring French volcanologist couple roamed the planet, chasing eruptions, documenting their discoveries. Ultimately, they lost their lives in a 1991 volcanic explosion, leaving a legacy that forever enriched our knowledge of the natural world. *Fire of Love* tells a story of primordial creation and destruction, following two bold explorers as they venture into the unknown, all for the sake of love.

"Fire of Love tells the love story between the unique couple of French geologists, Katia and Maurice Krafft. Their deep passion towards volcanos and to life itself leads them to the most remote places on earth, spending thousands of hours observing, studying, comparing, and learning about the wonderful behavior of mother nature. With an outstanding archival composition, fascinating cinematography and a wonderful sound design and film score, this film masterfully takes the audience on a far and unknown journey. This enchanting couple manages to ignite the viewer's curiosity and immerses us in their magical world. It shifts our perspective about the unknown. It is not something to be feared, it is something to go towards. They ultimately lost their lives in a 1991 volcanic explosion, but left a legacy that forever enriched our knowledge of the natural world." — *Joaquin Gomez, jury member*

Best Short Film



Sponsored by Banff Lodging Co. | \$2500

Wood Hood

(USA, 2021, 16 mins)

Director: Alexander Cullen

Producer: Resonant Pictures, Alexander Cullen, Andy Isaacson, Manny Almonte

DeVaughn is a 15-year-old kid from New York City who loves skateboarding and craves a "quiet place" to escape the chaos of his home, the city, and kids that steal from him. The film follows a weekend-long group camping trip, and as we weave between the city and the woods, a place that is unfamiliar and historically inaccessible to many, we witness the joy and growth that is possible when kids have an opportunity to find that "quiet place".

"This coming of age story is a stunningly beautiful and deeply loving portrait of a young Black man facing challenges that have changed him from social butterfly to loner. Told with care and consideration, this intimate portrait of DeVaughn, brings us with him on a journey into the woods as he seeks and finds a quiet place of belonging in the outdoors. This is a hopeful and real glimpse of what is possible when community shows up for youth and they are allowed and invited to thrive. Congratulations to Alexander Cullen and the entire team behind *Wood Hood*."

— Faith E. Briggs, jury member

Creative Excellence Award



Sponsored by Core Values Cider Co. | \$2500

Creation Theory

(USA, 2022, 20 mins)

Director: Ben Sturgulewski

Producer: SturgeFilm, Ben Moon, Justin Sweeney

In *Creation Theory*, nature's raw elements converge in the Westfjords of Iceland, taking us on a journey from the interstellar birth of gravity and rhythm, to their ultimate human creative expression: surfer on wave, snowboarder on peak, and musician on stage.

"By pushing the boundaries of genre and reality, Ben Sturgulewski invites us into an experience. Through this journey, we dance on waves and explore not only Iceland, but through the space-time continuum. This interrogation of inspiration, paired with the otherworldly score of Griff Washburn, brings us into the cosmos and the ever-present elements that create this planet we love. Huge congratulations to the entire team behind *Creation Theory*."

— Faith E. Briggs, jury member

Audience Choice Award



Sponsored by BUFF® | \$2,500

Wild Waters

(Switzerland, 2022, 86 mins)

Director: David Arnaud

Producer: Red Bull Media House, MOVIO

Adventurer, competitor, daughter, friend, pioneer, hero, and badass human are all words used to describe French kayaker, Nouria Newman. In *Wild Waters*, we follow Nouria as she prepares to become the first female to run a 100-foot (30 m) waterfall; we watch her grow from a young, keen Olympic hopeful to one of the greatest kayakers of all times - male or female. However, running some of the world's hardest whitewater isn't Nouria's biggest life challenge. Realizing that the expectations placed upon her as both an athlete and as a woman weight heavily on her decisions and ambitions, she pushes back to make her own path. It is this central aspect of her life – this refusal to conform to others' expectations – where Nouria is able to use kayaking as a way to transform into her truest self, and become a once-in-a-generation kayaker.

Special Jury Mention



Hey, Gunesh!

(Georgia, 2021, 23 mins)

Director: Ana Jegnaradze, Marita Tevzadze

Producer: Namimeter, Ana Jegnaradze

Fasha and Gunesh look like each other and move like each other. Fasha is a father and is responsible for hundreds of sheep. Gunesh, his eldest daughter takes care of twin lambs. Fasha is responsible for Gunesh as well and he gave her a name that means the sun. He now also wants to give her the most precious thing – her independence.

"This delightful, poetic, short film portrays the curious and atypical story of Gunesh, a little girl from Keshalo village in Georgia. This masterpiece reminds us about the essentials of kindness, family and freewill in its relationship with nature and wildlife. Her father Fasha, shows great wisdom in guiding his young daughter in her discovery throughout her childhood. He encourages Gunesh's interest and curiosity by opening her eyes to a better future, where she can fulfil her deepest dreams, leaving behind their long family farming tradition. Combining outstanding cinematography, breathtaking landscapes and a magnificent use of silence as a narrative element, this masterpiece transforms the spectator, rekindling hope for humankind."

— *Joaquin Gomez, jury member*

Special Jury Mention



God's Buffalo

(Nepal, 2021, 15 mins)

Director: Bishnu Kalpit

Producer: Film Crew Nepal, Bishnu Kalpit

Homan Singh Shivabhakti ekes out a living farming in the hills of Sindhupalchowk district, east of Kathmandu. He loves and worships his buffalo which has brought him all the good things in his life. All is well until devastating floods ravage the area and Homan Singh's buffalo disappears.

"An unexpected flood in Melanchi, Helambu and Paanch region in Nepal, caused massive destruction taking the lives of many people and shifting their way of living forever. This poetic piece gives us the chance to learn about the deep love between 71-year-old Homan Singh Shivabhakti and his precious companion, a beautiful black water buffalo. By sharing their lives together in the mountains and learning from each other, this remarkable couple reminds us about the fragility of our planet and how human compassion can bring out the light inside each of us in a world of unpredictable chaos. With a delicate, intimate and fine camera work, the filmmaker Bishnu Kalpit captures the humanity and fragility of Homan creating a work of absolute excellence."

— *Joaquin Gomez, jury member*