

Press release
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Whale and Wood are the top winners at the Innsbruck Nature Film Festival 2022 The Christian Berger Camera Award goes to the Snow Leopard

The 21st Innsbruck Nature Film Festival has its winners: "Patrick and the Whale" receives the Grand Prize for the best nature film and "Wood - Der geraubte Wald" for the best environmental documentary. In keeping with the festival's motto "You are Nature", whale and wood came out on top in the renowned international film competition. Both are Austrian productions whose protagonists actually come from all over the world and thus treated the audience at Innsbruck's Metropol Kino to beautiful emotional images from the depths of the ocean and gripping, eco-thriller scenes. The main prizes for the two categories Nature Film and Environmental Documentary, each endowed with 3,000 euros, were donated by trusty festival partners, the City of Innsbruck and Innsbruck Tourism.

The jury statement for "Wood" reads: "This is a story about the trees that we should never stop fighting for. The film reminds us that with bravery, it is always possible to hold the powerful to the mark, and to strive for a better protection of the environment." Regarding "Patrick and the Whale", whose prize was accepted by producer Wolfgang Knöpfler, the jury said: "The message of the film could hardly be more important at this time: Humans are not a species separated from the environment but have always been part of nature - and are still intimately connected with it. A heartwarming documentary with magical moments and incredible images that ends in a beautiful dream."

The Special Award for Best Cinematography, the Christian Berger Camera Award, goes to the French duo Marie Amiguet and Vincent Munier for their "Panthère des Neiges", which they cinematographed and directed. The cinematography and imagery left the Oscar-nominated filmmaker Berger, who spent four days on location at the festival himself, gushing: "You see the light, the landscapes, the animals and the people. You are also writers with your camera and your direction. I am honoured to present you this award for your beautiful 'Snow Leopard'."

For the 21st time, the festival at the Metropol Kino in Innsbruck celebrated nature, the environment, and its careful treatment. It was rounded off with excursions into the unique outdoors of the Tyrolean capital.