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Jackson Wild Selects Final Jury for 2022 Media Awards

JACKSON, Wyo. – Jackson Wild is proud to announce the final jury for this year’s Media Awards competition. Selected for their knowledge and expertise in nature and science storytelling, these individuals will decide the winners of the 2022 Jackson Wild Media Awards, considered the highest bar of achievement in natural history filmmaking.

- **Hashem Al-Ghaili** is a science communicator, filmmaker, VFX artist, and science fiction enthusiast who was born in Yemen. He obtained his master’s degree in Molecular Biotechnology from Jacobs University Bremen in Germany and currently works as a full-time science communicator. His Facebook channel “Science Nature Page” has nearly 34 million followers and reaches around 400 million users per week. His videos on Facebook have garnered over 18 billion views, and cover a wide range of subjects including astronomy, physics, biology, medicine, nature, technology, and innovation. His science communication activities extend to YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Hashem is currently working on his first Sci-Fi novel, entitled *Simulation: The Great Escape*, which he wrote during the early months of COVID quarantine. He is also finishing a sci-fi feature called *Orbital*, which is set to release later this year. He recently released the second trailer of his upcoming film.
- **Christi Cooper** is a Ph.D. neuroscientist, documentary filmmaker, and Emmy-award winning cinematographer. Christi focuses her storytelling and visual narratives on issues of justice and impact by creating human connections to the most pressing issues of our time. Her feature film *YOUTH v GOV* is now streaming on Netflix, and her film awards include Wildscreen’s Panda Award for Best Campaign Film; Jackson Wild’s Grand Teton Award; Cleveland International Film Festival’s ReelWomen Direct Award for Excellence in Directing by a Woman; Wood’s Hole Film Festival’s Best of Festival, Audience Award, and Jury Award for Best Feature Documentary; EarthxFilm’s Impact Award for Feature Film; among others. Christi is the inaugural SFFilm/Vulcan Productions Environmental Film Fellow and the first Jacob Burns Film Center “Focus on Nature” Artist-in-Resident.

- **Yolanda Ncokotwana** is a TV and film professional. Her experience spans live productions, documentaries, and scripted content. She began her television career in broadcasting where she worked her way up from the production department to becoming a Commissioning Editor. As a story consultant, she has worked on over 30 titles including multiple award-winning films. As a Development and Production Manager she was responsible for overseeing funding on documentary projects like *Buddha in Africa*, *The Sound of Mask*, *Skulls of my People*, *How to Steal a Country*, *Influence*, etc. Ncokotwana is responsible for managing the co-development incentives and has recently spearheaded the Netherland/SA co-development fund and the NFVF/Netflix coproduction initiative. She has done short courses in Project Management and Customer Service, is an alumnus of the Sediba Producers' Programme, and has participated in many panels locally and internationally, including Berlinale and Cannes.
- **Akanksha Sood Singh** is at the forefront of natural history filmmaking in India. With a career spanning over 2 decades, she has produced some of the biggest natural history films to come out of the country. Her work has been televised across the globe and won critical international acclaim. She has won five National Film Awards by the President of India, the Diversity Leadership Award by the World Congress of Factual Producers, and is one of the Jurors for the International Emmy – Documentary category. Akanksha is also the founder of the Women of the Wild series in India, Pakistan, and Malaysia.

The Jackson Wild Media Awards celebrate excellence and innovation in nature, science, and conservation storytelling. This year's competition saw over 600 entries from 26 different countries, with films competing for 24 content, craft, program, and special jury awards, as well as the Grand Teton Award, awarded to the overall best film in competition. For the full list of finalists, please visit jacksonwild.org.

Winners will be announced on Thursday, September 29 at the Grand Teton Awards Gala, the culminating event of the Jackson Wild Summit in Burgenland, Austria. To learn more and attend the Summit, visit jacksonwild.org/attend.

About Jackson Wild

For over 30 years, Jackson Wild has been a catalyst for accelerating and elevating impactful storytelling at the nexus of nature, science, and conservation. Through innovative and collaborative community gatherings, skill-building initiatives, and mentorship programs, Jackson Wild creates an inclusive forum for storytellers to more deeply illuminate connections to the natural world and our collective responsibility to the wild.

Jackson Wild's international board members include: African Wildlife Foundation, ARTE France, BBC Studios, Blue Ant Media / Love Nature, Borealés, Conservation International, Discovery, Doclights, GBH, Gorongosa Restoration Project, HHMI Tangled Bank Studios, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, National Geographic Partners, National Geographic Society, Nature/WNET, Netflix, NEWF (Nature, Environment, Wildlife, Filmmaking), Off the Fence Productions, ORF Universum, PBS, Saint Thomas Productions, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, Seeker, Smithsonian Channel, Sony Electronics, The Nature Conservancy, Terra Mater Studios, Wanda Films, and World Wildlife Fund US.

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