

Films have the power to change our thinking – NaturVision Film Festival 2019 takes stock

Ludwigsburg: With some 16,700 viewers in total, the 18th NaturVision Film Festival, which kept Ludwigsburg entertained from 11 – 14 July 2019, was a superb success. Overall visitor numbers were up 25 percent on last year. At the Open Air Cinema, audiences defied freak weather with umbrellas and wellington boots. The Audience Award, for which the votes were counted on Sunday evening once all screenings were finished, went to the documentary "Der Bach" by Jan Haft.

Claus Wollenschläger, who runs the Central Filmtheater in Ludwigsburg and co-organises the NaturVision Film Festival, is hanging up new signs: From now on in his cinemas you can only get drinks in glass bottles – where possible from local manufacturers. What finally made up his mind to take this decisive step was the documentary "A Plastic Surgery: Coca-Cola's Hidden Secrets" by Sandrine Rigaud, winner of the German Conservation and Sustainability Film Award at the festival. "I was appalled by the mountains of plastic the Coca-Cola Company alone produces and by the lies the company spreads with its recycling behaviour. Clearly the main responsibility for this lies with the manufacturer. But as someone who sells these products, I feel equally obliged to no longer play this dirty game", explains Wollenschläger.

Engaging with social debate

From the outset, the firm belief that films have the power to change people's thinking was a key motivator for the festival organisers. In their film programme they opt for a combination of captivating nature and wildlife films and critical environmental films. In the process, NaturVision has become visibly more political in recent years: "The latest publications on climate change and species extinction are making the discussion on the environment and sustainability louder. You see it not just in the Fridays for Future movement, where people want to be informed and active; but the much-increased viewer numbers and above-average number of young visitors show that we are a place for people to come with their concerns", explains Martina Edin, who is responsible for marketing and communications at NaturVision.

Nature film: a mix of beautiful images and sad reality

The festival public chose the documentary "Der Bach" [The Stream] by Jan Haft as their favourite. The film not only reveals the wonders of a barely noticed habitat right on our doorstep; it also addresses the endangerment of this fragile ecosystem through industrialised agriculture and documents the consequences of a slurry accident. Jan Haft brings to the screen what many makers of environmental and nature films witness first hand on a daily basis: The "nature paradises" that

The NaturVision Film Festival is organised by Earth Vision UG, in partnership with Film & Medienfestival gGmbH, the city of Ludwigsburg and the Central Filmtheater. The Festival is sponsored by the Ministry of the Environment, Climate and the Energy Industry for Baden-Württemberg, the Filmförderung Baden-Württemberg, the State Institute for Communication Baden-Württemberg and the RNE (German Council for Sustainable Development). Partners and supporters in 2019 include IBA'27, SportRegion Stuttgart, Wohnungsbau Ludwigsburg and the Wirtschaftsförderung Region Stuttgart. Media partners are arte, forum Nachhaltig Wirtschaften, enorm, greenup, bioNachrichten, utopia, LIFT and the Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung.

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they capture in their films have long been acutely at risk and many species have already disappeared. Festival Director Ralph Thoms therefore thinks it's only in keeping with the festival's self-image and activity over the years that NaturVision has now initiated the "Ludwigsburg Appeal", which is also being submitted to local politicians in the state of Baden-Württemberg. Under the slogan "More Room for Nature", environmental and nature film-makers are calling on policymakers for immediate action on nature, wildlife, species and climate protection.

With projects like "Plastic-free City", best-of events and its own film productions on the special themes, NaturVision is also active and engaged in-between festivals. The 19th NaturVision Film Festival will be held from 16 to 19 July 2020.

To relive the 2019 festival, visit our photo gallery here: <https://festival.natur-vision.de/de/index/festivalfotos/festivalfotos-2019.html>

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