

- For Immediate Release -
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Planet in Focus International Environmental Film Festival Announces 2019 Award Winners

Brett Story's *The Hottest August* named Best Canadian Feature and **Alexander John Glustrom's *Mossville*** named Best International Feature. **Polina Teif** winner of The Green Pitch with ***Eulogy for the Dead Sea***

The 20th Planet in Focus International Environmental Film Festival took place October 15 to 20, 2019 planetinfoocus.org

TORONTO - The [Planet in Focus International Environmental Film Festival](#) (PIF) has unveiled its award winners for 2019, wrapping a successful and celebratory 20th anniversary edition. Announced at the festival's Closing Night Gala, the awards include:

Best International Short

Plantae

Guilherme Gehr (Brazil, 2017)

Guilherme Gehr's fantastical animation that serves as a poignant call for rainforest protection was awarded by Planet in Focus Board Member **Ravi de Costa**, TRT World Acting Executive Producer **Stavroula Logothettis**, and 2018 Best International Short Winner **Eric Daniel Metzgar**.

Best Canadian Short

Biidaaban (The Dawn Comes)

Amanda Strong (Canada, 2018)

Amanda Strong's mesmerizing stop motion animation driven by words of Anishinaabe writer Leanne Betasamosake Simpson was awarded by Institute Manager at imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival **Adriana Chartrand**, Pure + Simple Marketing Manager **Kate Petriw**, and 2018 Best Canadian Short Winner **Farhan Umedaly**

Best International Feature

Mossville

Alexander John Glustrom (United States, 2019)

Alexander John Glustrom's urgent documentary about the decimation of a historic Black community at the hands of industrialization was awarded by JAYU Executive Director & Founder **Gilad Cohen**, Festival de Cine Verde de Barichara Festival Artistic Director **Juliana Paniagua**, and F3 Media Distributor **Natalia Sterlikova**.

Best Canadian Feature

The Hottest August

Brett Story (Canada/USA, 2019)

Brett Story's "film about climate change, disguised as a portrait of collective anxiety" was awarded by Programmer and Editor-in-Chief of POV **Marc Glassman**, CFC Chief Digital Officer **Ana Serrano**, and 2018 Best Canadian Feature Winner **Slater Jewell-Kemker**

Mark Haslam Award

Zagros

Ariane Lorrain, Shahab Mihandoust (Canada, 2018)

The Mark Haslam Award is named in honour of the festival founder and bestowed to a film that gives voice to individuals, communities, struggles or stories that are under-represented in the media and is made by a filmmaker who is a member or participant of that community. The 2019 award was granted to **Ariane Lorrain** and **Shahab Mihandoust** for **Zagros**, a finely observed portrait of traditional carpet making in western Iran, by Planet in Focus Programmers **Julian Carrington** and **Lesley Johnson**.

Green Pitch Prize (worth over \$30,000 in services & cash)

Eulogy for the Dead Sea

Polina Teif

As part of PIF's Industry Day Polina Teif's *Eulogy for the Dead Sea* selected out of six in-development projects, with the award chosen by Good Influence Films Founder & CEO **JoAnne Fishburn**, TIFF Programming Associate **Aisha Jamal**, Hot Docs Industry Programmer **Madeleine Russo**.

The Green Pitch Prize was sponsored by: Eggplant Picture & Sound, SIM International, William F. White International, Dynamix Solutions, Pie in the Sky Studios, The Source Shop, Trinity Square Video, Supergroup Sonic Branding, Vistek, Daniela Ponce Publicity.

Previously announced 2019 honourees include International Eco-Hero **Louie Psihoyos**, Canadian Eco-Hero **Melina Laboucan-Massimo**, and Rob Stewart Youth Eco-Hero **Autumn Peltier**.

About Planet in Focus

Planet in Focus is a non profit organization whose mission is to use film as a catalyst for change by raising awareness of critical environmental issues through a variety of media-based initiatives including; the Planet in Focus Environmental Film Festival, the Green School Tours, Eco-Film Lab, Cross Canada Campus Tour and year-round screenings that showcase the best environmental films from Canada and around the world. PlanetinFocus.org

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Press contact: Jesse Cumming - jessecummingpr@gmail.com - 416 732 7852