Spectacular nature & wildlife films: ORF's “UNIVERSUM Dinner” went digital

**Online screening instead of the annual meeting at the Côte d'Azur. ORF UNIVERSUM and ORF-Enterprise presented highlights of internationally successful nature films for the first time in an interactive online showcase and gave an exclusive insight into upcoming titles.**

Vienna – The “UNIVERSUM Dinner” is usually an established component at the annual content fair MIPTV. This year, due to the pandemic, it did not take place on site in Cannes (France), but as a 100% online format. For the first time, the presentation of the UNIVERSUM series of nature films took place as a digital screening event on April 12, 2021, when the blue-chip documentaries were presented to co-production partners and buyers from around the world. Proven features were of course retained: In addition to a first look at the new ORF UNIVERSUM documentaries, interested participants were able to talk live with the award-winning producers and makers of the films.

“The pandemic could not stop the producers and filmmakers from developing outstanding ideas for UNIVERSUM and realizing them under sometimes very difficult conditions. Nature filmmakers have to be patient and unexpected obstacles are part of their everyday life. In the current situation, their achievement in bringing the world closer to us in breathtaking nature shots and unique films cannot be appreciated enough," emphasizes Head of ORF UNIVERSUM / Natural History **Gernot Lercher**.

“Thanks to more than 30 years of experience and many years of cooperation with partners from all over the world, ORF UNIVERSUM stands for the highest quality and technical innovation even in these challenging times. Thanks to ambitious filmmakers and our committed co-production partners, viewers around the globe can continue to expect blue-chip nature and wildlife films," adds **Armin Luttenberger**, Head of Content Sales International at ORF-Enterprise.

**UNIVERSUM presents spectacular animal and nature films**

The UNIVERSUM series starts the new programming season with two impressive nature films. "Water of Life - Wilderness, Whisky, Highlands" by **Jackie Savery** and **Nigel Pope** is a co-production by ORF and ORF-Enterprise in cooperation with ARTE. It portrays the spectacular landscape and wildlife around a traditional Scottish whisky distillery. In "Russia’s Revenant – The Return of the Siberian Tiger", a co-production by ORF, ARTE, National Geographic, BR, SVT, Channel One Russia and Interspot Film in association with ORF-Enterprise, viewers follow a giant Siberian tiger as it traverses the taiga forests to find a new territory. Due to its stealthy hunting style, the rare tiger is difficult to spot in the undergrowth. Thanks to his intensive study of tigers as part of his biology degree, award-winning director **Franz Hafner** ("Russia's Wild Sea") manages to track them down and get them in front of the camera. He works with the latest 4K camera traps to capture the animal's migration in breathtaking images and brings viewers up close to the majestic cat.

The documentary "Austria's Wild Heritage - One Country Six National Parks" by **Heinz Leger** is a co-production by ORF and Interspot Film and puts the national parks in the heart of Europe in the spotlight.

**Migrating birds and Colombia’s wild: the next highlights are in production**

“Colombia - Wild and Free” is currently in production. In this co-production by ORF, NDR, PBS, ARTE and Cosmos Factory in cooperation with ORF-Enterprise, **Harald Pokieser** portrays rebel groups that protect the untouched forests of the Colombian national parks. Since the declaration of peace, the country reveals its natural splendor and the dazzling as well as extraordinary diversity of wildlife.

The co-production “Life on the Wing - Miracle of Bird Migration” by ORF and PKM Film, in which directors **Leander Khil** and **Mario Kreuzer** take a completely new look at the largest bird migration on Earth, is awaited with anticipation. The UNIVERSUM animal film does not only show the commute between North and South but depicts countless varieties of the far-travelling migratory birds through spectacular protagonists, whose stories are told in a very personal way.

Please find pictures of the key subject “Russia’s Revenant – The Return of the Siberian Tiger” (© Interspot Film/Franz Hafner), Gernot Lercher (Head of ORF UNIVERSUM / Natural History), and Armin Luttenberger (Head of Content Sales International at ORF-Enterprise) for further use via this link: <https://cloud.orf.at/index.php/s/aPM555eTADmcDkP>