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## **Jackson Wild Announces 2022 Legacy Awards in Conservation and Media and 2022 Rising Star Award**

**JACKSON, Wyo.** – Jackson Wild is thrilled to announce the recipients of the 2022 Legacy Awards in Conservation and Media, as well as the recipient of the 2022 Rising Star Award. These three individuals have made outstanding contributions to the field of nature, science, and conservation storytelling.

This year's award recipients share in Jackson Wild's commitment to building an inclusive community of filmmakers, creators, and conservationists, and have demonstrated a dedication to creating environmental impact through media. They have been nominated by their peers and selected by the Jackson Wild Board of Directors.

"We are proud to recognize Brian Leith and Dr. Paula Kahumbu with our Legacy Awards in Media and Conservation for the tremendous impact they have had in their fields. Their achievements and contributions inspire our community and deeply illuminate our connection to the natural world," said Lisa Samford, Executive Director of Jackson Wild. "Jackson Wild is equally committed to amplifying and elevating early-career leaders. Faith Musembi exemplifies outstanding achievement and impact, and we are thrilled to recognize her incredible talent with our Rising Star Award."

### Legacy Award in Media

**Sponsored by [Terra Mater Studios](#)**

*Jackson Wild's Legacy Award in Media recognizes visionaries who have demonstrated excellence and innovation in delivering world-class media. Whether innovative filmmakers, producers, or thought leaders, these individuals have embraced the power of media to shine a spotlight on species and the environment to protect our planet. Their work demonstrates a career dedicated to content surrounding conservation and environmental impact.*

**Brian Leith** is this year's recipient of the Legacy Award in Media. Having grown up in Switzerland, Canada, Kenya, and Belgium, Brian ended up in London studying for a Ph.D. in evolutionary science; the

genetics of snails, *Cepaea nemoralis* – Grove Snail. But he soon took a job as a BBC Radio Producer, quitting the Ph.D. in 1978. As quid pro quo for not writing up his snail thesis, he published *The Descent of Darwin*, in 1982.

In the early 80s, at the BBC Natural History Unit, working as a presenter on the live environmental series *Nature*, reporting on issues from badger baiting to the deforestation of the Amazon rainforest (almost getting the BBC sued by McDonalds). Brian produced many environmental and wildlife films for the BBC, as well as writing pieces for *The New Internationalist*, *Nature*, and *BBC Wildlife* magazine, often provoking controversy and debate...

In 1990, Brian left the BBC to become an independent producer, working on Channel 4's series *Fragile Earth*. At Scorer Associates he produced several acclaimed projects for the BBC, including *Congo*, *The Cultured Ape*, and *Deep Jungle* for ITV, winning many awards amongst others the Grand Teton Award, Wildscreen's Special Jury Award, Outstanding Achievement award, Best of Festivals and a Grierson Award for *Charles Darwin and The Tree of Life*, with Sir David Attenborough.

Back at the BBC's Natural History Unit in 2007, Brian was executive producer on landmark series including *Wild China*, *Nature's Great Events* and *Human Planet*. Since, Brian's own production company has produced numerous series and films including: *Lobo the Wolf that Changed America*, *Elsa the Lioness who Changed the World*, *Wild Canada*, *Hidden Kingdoms of China* and the feature film for Disney Nature, *Born In China*.

The dynamic and inseparable relationship between humans, nature, and our ever-changing and degrading environment has always been at the core of Brian's thinking. This culminated in 2020 with his passion project, *The Age of Nature*, for PBS and BBC Studios.

#### Legacy Award in Conservation

#### **Sponsored by [Conservation International](#)**

*Jackson Wild's Legacy Award in Conservation recognizes either an individual, group, or organization that has demonstrated excellence in science & conservation. Their work places them in the field, embedded in nature and the environment, working closely with species, and often at great risk. The work can be recent or demonstrate a depth of years dedicated to conservation.*

**Dr. Paula Kahumbu**, CEO of WildlifeDirect, is this year's recipient of the Legacy Award in Conservation. She has a Ph.D. from Princeton University and is an ecologist committed to transforming conservation results in Africa and the world through science, advocacy, and education. She is one of Africa's best-known wildlife conservationists and sits on the boards of WWF International and National

Geographic. She is the brainchild of the Hands Off Our Elephants campaign with Her Excellency Margaret Kenyatta, the First Lady of the Republic of Kenya. The campaign is widely recognized for its singular successes in advocacy and the engagement of the people of Kenya to support the protection of elephants.

Dr. Kahumbu is the producer and presenter of Africa's first wildlife documentary series made by Africans called Wildlife Warriors which seeks to transform the conservation literacy in Africa by shining a light on the continent's front-line conservationists. The award-winning series is broadcast on free-to-air channels and in schools across Kenya through the Wildlife Warriors Kids program which takes children on scientific wilderness expeditions.

Dr. Kahumbu holds the title Order of the Grand Warrior (OGW) and is the Rolex NatGeo Explorer of the Year 2021, winner of the Whitley Gold Award 2021, and is a National Geographic Emerging Explorer.

#### Rising Star Award

**Sponsored by [Off the Fence Productions](#)**

*Jackson Wild's Rising Star Award recognizes an emerging leader in nature, conservation, and science media. This award reflects ongoing and exceptional contributions to our planet while demonstrating leadership and innovation that promises extended impact in the future.*

**Faith Musembi** is this year's recipient of the Rising Star Award. A producer and director, Faith is based in Kenya and Bristol, England. She is drawn to telling narratives that showcase the beauty of Africa's natural resources while highlighting the complex, but pertinent issues regarding their sustainable conservation.

Faith has directed sequences for series produced for National Geographic, Sky Nature, and Disney+. Her recent credits include: Chasing The Rains and Spectacular Earth. Faith is currently working on Queens, a series about female-led animal societies. The episode she is producing highlights the women filmmakers behind Queens and also shines a spotlight on incredible women breaking down barriers while fighting for conservation in different wilderness areas around the world.

If you don't find Faith in an office in Bristol, you'll find her in one of Kenya's breathtaking wilderness areas. Working in these wild spaces has affirmed Faith's commitment and passion for telling stories about the natural world and amplifying the dialogue about conserving its finite resources.

#### **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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