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#### **PRESS RELEASE**

Bristol-based Tigress Productions' film *Hippo: Nature's Wild Feast* has won a Panda Award at this year's Wildscreen Festival held in Bristol. The win came in the Innovation category and the film also received nominations in the Popular Broadcast and Presenter-led categories.

The programme was produced for Channel 4 and Animal Planet and is a high-tech natural history event that presents the most comprehensive illustration to date of nature's food chain in action, presented by Mark Evans. Filmed over a week in Zambia's Luangwa Valley, *Hippo: Nature's Wild Feast* reveals an ecological system in action as Africa's most iconic animals - including lions, leopards, crocodiles, hyenas and vultures – fight for survival at the height of the dry season.

Dick Colthurst, managing director of Tigress Productions and executive producer on the project, says "We pride ourselves on making daring programmes so I'm delighted *Hippo* has been recognised as a truly innovative programme that has moved natural history film making forward. By definition, innovation involves risk and there were never any certainties making *Hippo* which is why Channel 4 and Animal Planet deserve huge credit for commissioning it."

The panel said of the film: "The judges felt this was an interesting new idea, exploring the less appealing aspects of life and nature in the African bush. It was a very clever and unexpected way of showing audiences how nature works. There was always a lot going on and one never quite knew what would happen next – part of its appeal".

The hippo is one of Africa's deadliest animals. But when one of these massive animals dies, an astonishing chain of events begins. A hippo carcass is a cache of two million calories just waiting to be recycled back into the food chain. A network of state of the art remote control cameras set up around the carcass captured the action night and day as one ton of flesh and bone was reduced to scraps.

An international team of scientists and researchers watch from a studio tent just metres from the carcass, analysing the action. With fierce showdowns between rivals for these vital calories, the experts explain the different eating mechanisms of the animals.

All the action from the carcass site was streamed live online over the week, culminating in the airing of the 90-minute documentary on Channel 4 at the end of the 7 days. The show was supported by a strong web presence and Twitter campaign where viewers could ask the presenter, Mark Evans, and the experts questions about what was being seen online. The film was also screened during Wildscreen as part of the festival programme of nominated films.

The Wildscreen Festival this year celebrated its 30th anniversary, marking it as the longest established festival in the world celebrating wildlife film-making. The festival draws broadcasters and producers from around the globe to Bristol, a thriving hub of natural history film production. The Panda Awards ceremony brought the extremely successful 2012 festival to a close.

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For any further details:-

Contact: Beth Lintern  
Telephone: +44 117 933500  
Email: [bethlintern@tigressproductions.co.uk](mailto:bethlintern@tigressproductions.co.uk)