

Initiator Michael Mack freute sich gemeinsam mit der Jury, den diesjährigen Gewinnern des AUREA Award zu gratulieren

More than 300 international participants at the fifth AUREA Award in Europa-Park

December 2, 2022

The Europa-Park Resort once again served as the meeting place for innovative entrepreneurs, experts and visionaries from all over the world. On 1st December 2022, the best products for immersive tech and entertainment developments in VR, AR, XR and MR were honoured at the fifth AUREA Awards. The award ceremony took place as part of the industry conference NTR - The Metaverse Summit, in cooperation with the Bundesverband Digitale Wirtschaft (BVDW) e.V. and MACK NeXT, which saw the international participants meeting in Rust from 1st to 2nd December.

More than 300 participants came together at the Europa-Park event to network and exchange views on current developments and opportunities relating to the Metaverse. At the start of the NTR - The Metaverse Summit, Michael Mack, Managing Partner of Europa-Park and founder of MACK NeXT, and BVDW President Dirk Freytag welcomed the participants. “For generations, our family business has

reinvented itself and ventured into uncharted territory. As an example, our developments have seen the combination of virtual reality with a rollercoaster ride to create a completely new experience for visitors. Since 2015, over 40 million riders worldwide have used our Coastiality system in partnership with VR Coaster. Digitisation therefore plays a central role in a wide variety of areas and is largely responsible for the success and not least for the progress of our company," says Michael Mack. BVDW President Dirk Freytag then added: "Europa-Park is perfect for discussing the Metaverse. It's right here on-site that visitors can experience virtual worlds today. The NTR - The Metaverse Summit provides a comprehensive insight into the next generation of the internet, in cooperation with international top speakers. And when we look to the future, and look at all the excellent work shown here at the AUREA Awards, it seems that virtual entertainment and the metaverse will be much more exciting than even we can currently foresee."

Ten finalists prevailed against the competition at the AUREA Award, and were able to present their projects to an international jury of experts. As in previous years, the five-strong panel of experts was chaired by tech star Kathleen Cohen (The Collaboratorium), supported again by Thomas Wagner (co-founder & managing director of VR Coaster) and Frank Govaere (animation director, producer & VFX supervisor, UFA). Dirk Freytag (President BVDW) and AUREA award winner Laura Bücheler (CIO Feelbelt) joined the jury for the first time.

The AUREA Award was given out for the categories of Innovation, Experience, Impact, Immersion and Creative. The jury was particularly impressed by the Canadian development team Re:Naissance, who have created a completely new experience with their combination of virtual reality and classical opera. The project not only received the AUREA Award for Innovation, as founder Debi Wong also accepted the award for the Creative category. This year, the AUREA Award Experience was shared by two winners who managed to impress the jury equally. The Italian start-up WEART was honoured for its innovative glove, which can make VR games an even more immersive experience with the addition of haptics that allow the creation of tangible differences in temperature and textures within the virtual world. The company OWO from Spain is pursuing a similar idea, with their gaming shirt that conveys up to 30 different haptic experiences, individually adapting for the digital events. The Brighter AI team from Germany received the award in the Impact category at the glamorous gala. Brighter AI's artificial intelligence specialises in anonymising people in photo or video images and helping to protect their personal rights, such as in public spaces. The 'Colnaghi Virtual Art Gallery' promises a particularly immersive experience in cooperation with Endava, which gives visitors interested in art a unique insight into the works of old masters.

The award ceremony was hosted once again by Clark Parsons and Emily Olman, and set in the Europa-Park Dinner Show, which features a top-class show program and an exquisite 4-course gala menu.



Initiator Michael Mack, together with the jury, was delighted to congratulate this year's winners of the AUREA Award



Michael Mack, Managing Partner of Europa-Park and founder of MACK NeXT together with Dirk Freytag, President of the BVDW at the NTR - The Metaverse Summit in Europa-Park, Copyright: BVDW / Silvie Kühne



The finalists were able to present their projects to the five jury members