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Salt Lake Film Society Launches Media Accelerator Studio with Goal of Keeping Top Artists in Utah

MAST to offer fellowship program, labs, contests, and mentoring for post-graduate animators, game designers, and content creators



Jake Wyatt

SALT LAKE CITY (Dec. 17, 2018) — In pursuit of its vision to inspire artists, achieve high cultural impact, and add to the quality of life in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake Film Society announces the creation of MAST, a forward-thinking content development program for post-graduate animators, game designers, and content creators that will harness the power of tech-enabled and animation storytelling. MAST will significantly grow the SLFS Film Fostering & Education Initiative, which has fostered 150 screenwriters, 4 digital directors, and produced cultural film tours. The program is made possible by an endowment from the Robin M. Woods Legacy Fund for Future Initiatives.



MAST will offer a fellowship program, on-site and online labs, and contests, alongside mentoring, networking, and collaboration opportunities, empowering artists to create art *where they are*, and shift Utah and Salt Lake City from exporting *artists* to exporting *art*. There will be a special emphasis on supporting artists and projects that highlight diversity and social conscience.

MAST programs, labs, and events will be complementary to other available curricula and workshops, and will put special focus on forward-thinking approaches to producing, distributing, and monetizing content, on artist brand and platform building, and on thriving as an artist entrepreneur. Industry subject matter experts are being tapped as mentors and instructors.

An exclusive cohort of 2019 MAST fellows will be selected by invitation, and from among the winners of three initial contests: [People of Earth](#), for writers; [Micro-docs](#), for documentarians; and [Voices Seen](#) for animators. Additionally, all winners will receive cash awards, and the *Voices Seen* winners will go on to animate a scene in a MAST short produced and directed by (to-be-announced) marquee industry talent.

MAST is founded by Tori A. Baker (CEO of SLFS) and Miles Romney. Mr. Romney will lead the program under Ms. Baker's direction. Mr. Romney is an entertainment and tech entrepreneur (co-inventor of DigiClay Animation, co-founder of Radiate Media, former CEO of the film distributor Yekra), Broadway fundraiser and co-producer (*Anastasia*, *Waitress*, *Be More Chill*, *Once On This Island*), and award-winning writer.

A program advisory board has been recruited from among industry and local influencers, and includes (alphabetically):

Jon Beutler (Alumni Manager Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Business Program, Director of Park City Business Resource Center);

John Dahlstrom (Executive VP and General Counsel of Wasatch Properties, Executive Board and Board of Governors of the Salt Lake Area Chamber of Commerce);

Kelly Loosli (Animation Program Director at Brigham Young University);

Richard Scott (Dean of Salt Lake Community College's School of Arts, Communication & Media);

Sterling Van Wagenen (Co-founder of the Sundance Film Festival, Founding Executive Director of the Sundance Institute, Partner in Pearl Farm Entertainment, Professor of Film & Media Arts at the University of Utah);

Additional advisory board members have been selected, and will be announced as the details of their involvement are finalized.

More information on contests and the program's mission is available at www.MastStudio.org. More details about the 2019 fellowship and event schedule will be announced as they become available.



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About Salt Lake Film Society

Salt Lake Film Society (SLFS), Utah's home of independent cinema, is a nonprofit (501 C-3) founded in 2001 with a mission to educate, advocate and inform about, and through, cinema. As the premier film establishment in Salt Lake County, SLFS presents a diversity of film exhibition and related cultural events 365 days a year at their two art cinemas; Broadway Centre Cinemas (300 S. 111 E., SLC), and Historic Tower Theatre (900 S. 876 E., SLC). SLFS fosters local film talent and strengthens film appreciation and participation under two initiatives. SLFS programs and venues ensure that potent ideas and voices in film are accessible to everyone in our community. SLFS is a Salt Lake County Zoo Arts & Parks funded organization. For more information about how you can be a part of Salt Lake Film Society, its programming and events please visit www.slfs.org.



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Left to right: SLFS's MAST Advisory Board members Sterling Van Wagenen and Kelly Loosli, SLFS Board Chair Brian Rivette, SLFS President/CEO Tori A. Baker, Head/Founder of MAST Miles Romney, and MAST Advisory Board members Jon Beutler and John Dahlstrom. (Photo: Austen Diamond)



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Miles Romney, Head/Founder of MAST (Photo: Austen Diamond)