



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Presenting the Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance

*Former DreamWorks SKG executive hired as director of new organization
created to cultivate, connect, and catalyze Milwaukee area film industry*

MILWAUKEE – Tuesday, August 29, 2017 – Milwaukee Film announced today the launch of the Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance (MFA), an initiative dedicated to supporting all forms of media, television, and filmmaking in Milwaukee. The MFA will be driven by members of the film community and intends to advocate, educate, network, and financially support all aspects of the southeastern Wisconsin film industry, striving to turn the region into a leader in film and media production.

Creator of the research department at DreamWorks SKG and award-winning filmmaker, Suzanne Jurva, has been hired as the director of the Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance. Jurva was a feature film development executive on many Academy Award nominated and winning films, including *Saving Private Ryan*, *Lincoln*, *Gladiator*, and *The Prince of Egypt*. Also an award-winning documentary director and producer in her own right, Jurva's work has been shown at numerous film festivals, including the Milwaukee Film Festival, and seen on The Weather Channel, NBC, PBS, MTV, BBC, Showtime, and at the Library of Congress.

"I'm thrilled to join the MFA and to support the art and business of filmmaking in southeastern Wisconsin," states Jurva. "Milwaukee is a vibrant community of storytellers and the opportunity to take these deep roots in film to the next level is very exciting to me."

The MFA will be chaired by Steve Laughlin, founding partner and executive chairman at Laughlin Constable, Sitora Takanaev, an award-winning filmmaker and business owner, and Milwaukee Film Artistic & Executive Director Jonathan Jackson. In describing this initiative, Laughlin stated, "Film now bridges art and commerce like never before. Filmmakers are in high demand with the explosion of streaming channels and media outlets. Films are finding more niches, there's more demand for episodic scripted television shows, reality shows are hot and documentaries are being used to air issues. Animation, gaming and virtual reality will challenge a new generation of artists and entice new audiences. The digital age is putting art into motion and Milwaukee has an opportunity to be at the leading edge of this movement."

As part of this initiative, a study was commissioned on the film industry of southeastern Wisconsin by global consulting firm ICF International, the full results of which will be released in November. Initial findings revealed that over the past 5 years, the film industry job market in SE Wisconsin has grown by 10% to include nearly 15,000 jobs. In 2014, these jobs contributed \$1.55 billion in annual sales and \$530 million in labor income to the economy in the region.

An initial preview of logo and branding for the Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance, which was designed by Patrick Castro of LP/w Design Studios, is also being shared today. Full previews will be shared at a formal launch in November.

Initial support for the Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance was provided by funding from Milwaukee Film, the Heil Family Foundation, the Herzfeld Foundation and Bader Philanthropies. The Executive Committee of the Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance includes individual directors, producers, film funders, photographers, writers, and community citizens along with leaders from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Marquette University, Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, Milwaukee Public Schools, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee, Milwaukee PBS, and others.

Hi-res and web-friendly photos and the Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance logo can be downloaded here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/j3qdbam6x2dv8r8/AAB9O6krTQOsPBsoNSqEEbRka?dl=0>

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About the Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance

Newly formed, the mission of the Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance is to support all forms of media, television, and filmmaking, both artistic and commercial, from Milwaukee to the world and from the world to Milwaukee. We strive to grow and sustain a diverse and vibrant creative community of storytellers through building an industry infrastructure that advances advocacy, education, and financial support.

Website (Launching September 1, 2017): mkefilmmakeralliance.org

Milwaukee Filmmaker Alliance Executive Committee

Marielle Allschwang, Randy Bobo, Amelia Bursi, Jessica Bursi, Dani Cortes, Gail DeClark, Scott Emmons; Jessica Farrell; Mary Pat Fischer; Robb Fischer; Mark Foote; Timm Gable; James Gavins; Jorie Griesemer; Bill Haberman; Katie Heil; Kristen Heller; Jonathan Jackson; Suzanne Jurva; Susan Kerns; Jason Koehler; Michael Koss Jr.; Jeff Kurz; Steve Laughlin; Brad Lichtenstein; Erik Ljung; Joan Lubar; Steve Mech; Susan Mikulay; David Murphy; Jeffrey Morin; Stacey Nash; Cara Ogburn; Kristin Peterson; Tiff Pua; Steve Roeder; Mark Sabljak; Lashondra Scott; Colin Sytsma; Sitora Takanaev; Chris Thompson; John Torinus; Gail Towers-MacAskill; Rubin Whitmore II; Bohdan Zachary

About Milwaukee Film

Milwaukee Film is a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to entertaining, educating, and engaging our community through cinematic experiences. This year's 15-day film festival takes place September 28 - October 12. Discounted passes and ticket 6-Packs are available now at mkefilm.org/tickets. For more information, visit us online at mkefilm.org.

Facebook: [facebook.com/MilwaukeeFilm](https://www.facebook.com/MilwaukeeFilm) | Twitter: [@mkefilm](https://twitter.com/mkefilm) | Instagram: [@mkefilm](https://www.instagram.com/mkefilm)

About the Milwaukee Film Board of Directors

Milwaukee Film's independent board is made up of the following members: Chris Abele (Past President); John P. Bania; Donna Baumgartner; Karen Ellenbecker; Jeff Fitzsimmons; Alexander P. Fraser (President); Cecelia Gore; Bill Haberman (Past President); Carmen Haberman; Susan Haise; Katie Heil; Patti Keating Kahn; Michael G. Klein; Michael J. Koss Jr.; Tracey L. Klein (Immediate Past President); Kenneth C. Krei; Mary Ann LaBahn; Alexander Lasry; Steve Laughlin (Past President); Emilia Layden; Marianne Lubar; Sara Meaney; Steve Mech; Barry Poltermann; Bob Pothier; John Ridley; Joseph A. Rock; Ramona Rogers-Windsor; Lacey Sadoff; Dave Stamm; Julia Taylor; John Utz. Emeritus members: Tom Barrett, Jacqueline Strayer.