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For Immediate Release

The Film School at SFUAD Announces Latest Tenant: The High-End Animation Firm Cosmic Forces

Film students will be able to intern with the company and gain an entry into the industry

Santa Fe, N.M.—November 20, 2013—The Film School at [Santa Fe University of Art and Design](http://santafeuniversity.edu) (SFUAD) welcomes [Cosmic Forces](#)—a firm specializing in high-end animation, motion graphics and new media for feature films and television—as the latest tenant to open an office in the school's building. Also with a presence in Los Angeles and an office at I-25 Studios in Albuquerque, Cosmic Forces chose to open a branch at The Film School at SFUAD because of the school's location, access to student interns and proximity to the professional media industry through Garson Studios. The firm joins [Midthunder Casting](#), the first industry firm to set up shop on campus. Midthunder cast Hollywood actors Jordana Spiro and Richmond Arquette to work with students during [Shoot the Stars](#).

Boasting talented employees who have received multiple Oscar® and Emmy awards for animation and visual effects, Cosmic Forces recently finished work on *Baggage Claim* (2013) for Fox Searchlight, starring Paula Patton, Adam Brody and Taye Diggs. The team is currently engaged with the U.S. Department of Energy on a visualization project for training purposes.

Ziad Seirafi, CEO of Cosmic Forces, said that having an office on a university campus with close proximity to Garson Studios puts the company in the advantageous position of having instant access to the media industry and new talent. Cosmic Forces plans to work with SFUAD film students by offering internships and serving as an entry for them to further engage with the film industry. Its employees will also occasionally teach classes.

"We're very pleased to welcome Cosmic Forces to our campus," said Paula Amanda, associate chair of the Film School and director of Garson Studios. "Having an award-winning animation and visual effects firm open an office in the Film School is a huge advantage for SFUAD film students, who will be able to interact with these professionals inside and outside the classroom. Their impressive team credits include work with Disney, New Line, Sony Pictures, Crayola, Chobani, PBS and YouTube. Forging these types of industry connections is critically important for any filmmaker today, and our students are getting a head start while they're still in film school."

While Cosmic Forces continues to work in film and television, Seirafi said they're also broadening the scope of animation and visual effects by entering the mobile interactive entertainment market. They have recently licensed [Poppy Cat](#)—a popular children's book series and Nick Jr. television show—to develop an educational game app in collaboration with [Coolabi](#), the brand owners. The app, *Poppy Cat Goes to the Market*, teaches basic Spanish language to English-speaking toddlers ages 2 to 5.

Seirafi added that being based in New Mexico offers Cosmic Forces a substantial cost savings that they can pass along to clients such as Coolabi. This was a main reason why they chose to work in this state and open a second New Mexico office in The Film School at SFUAD.



“This area is very competitive compared to other film cities such as Vancouver and Toronto, and offers substantially lower operating costs compared to L.A.,” he said. “Plus, New Mexico has a great quality of life. We’ve been seeing a desire from more and more animators and other artists to get away from L.A. I think Santa Fe University of Art and Design is a great campus, with a beautiful location in Santa Fe. There’s a lot of creativity here that we want to be involved with, and through collaboration we can be a benefit to each other. Having Garson Studios, a university and the film industry all together is very unique, and I don’t know if there is another university like that. We look forward to having that creative synergy with each other.”

The Film School at SFUAD will welcome other industry-related tenants on campus before the end of the year.

About Cosmic Forces

Cosmic Forces provides services in animation, visual effects, motion graphics and visualization. It incorporated in May 2012 with team members formerly of Sony Pictures Imageworks, Sony Pictures Animation, Sony Pictures Mobile, Nick Jr. and Big Spaceship, with credits such as *Oz the Great and Powerful*, *Hotel Transylvania*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Olivia* and many other blockbuster films and TV shows. Collectively, the team has worked on mobile, advertising and gaming projects for clients such as Starburst, Microsoft, Epsom and Crayola and has won multiple Oscar and Emmy awards. The company operates in New Mexico and Los Angeles to access the benefits of both locations.

About The Film School at SFUAD

The Film School at Santa Fe University of Art and Design offers a relevant, hands-on BFA curriculum that emphasizes production skills, business savvy, and storytelling across multiple film and video platforms. Films such as *True Grit* and *Cowboys & Aliens* and TV dramas such as *Longmire* have been shot at the university’s Garson Studios, where students have the opportunity to intern on professional productions on two motion picture soundstages—at 14,000 and 7,500 square feet. The Film School also has its own 2,200-square-foot soundstage and green screen, as well as a professional set from *The Sunset Limited*. The Screen, a popular destination within the Garson Communications Center, shows some of the greatest works of world cinema daily for students and the public.

About Santa Fe University of Art and Design

Santa Fe University of Art and Design is an accredited institution located in Santa Fe, New Mexico, one of the world’s leading centers for art and design. The university offers degrees in arts management, contemporary music, creative writing, digital arts, graphic design, film, performing arts, photography and studio art. Faculty members are practicing artists who teach students in small groups, following a unique interdisciplinary curriculum that combines hands-on experience with core theory and prepares graduates to become well-rounded, creative, problem-solving professionals. As a *Laureate International Universities* Center of Excellence in Art, Architecture and Design, the university boasts an international student body and opportunities to study abroad, encouraging students to develop a global perspective on the arts. Santa Fe University of Art and Design is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association, www.ncahlc.org.