



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

The 17th Edition of Animae Caribe Festival 2018

REMARKS

SENATOR THE HONOURABLE PAULA GOPEE-SCOON
MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

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Good evening.

It is a pleasure to join you at the 17th instalment of the Anima Caribbean Animation and Digital Media Festival. Let me welcome all visitors to Trinidad and Tobago, including those young persons from Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Suriname who, together with their TT counterparts, will participate in the “Caribbean Digital Youth Forum”.

Allow me to congratulate the Festival’s founder and visionary, Ms Camille Selvon Abrahams, and the entire team for the creation and continuation of what is now the Caribbean and Latin America’s largest animation film network. Your commitment has successfully created a platform to illustrate, with pride, indigenous heroes, stories and values for local, regional and global consumption.

For young creatives, animation is an untapped career option rife with opportunities. Consider that the global animation industry was estimated at US\$244 billion in 2015;¹ and the iconic creations of the late Stan Lee, who the Festival will honour specially, set the US\$4.24 billion sale price of Marvel Entertainment in 2009. I am confident that the innovators among you can bring to life Trinbagonian or Caribbean characters to rival Spiderman, the X-men and the Incredible Hulk in years to come.

The Government, guided by Vision 2030, is committed to developing the film industry and helping you to become globally competitive businesses.

Through training facilitated at the University of Trinidad and Tobago in digital media and animation, knowledge, skills and entrepreneurial capabilities are being developed.

FilmTT- an agency under the Ministry of Trade and Industry and a Festival sponsor- is your partner to bolster economic growth and skills development. Last month, ExporTT, also an agency under the Ministry, facilitated the attendance of local animators at the ALES 2018 Animation - a Gaming Services Convention. ExporTT will also assist in building the capacity of select projects to become export ready.

ExporTT also administers the revised Research and Development Facility which provides tiered funding for innovative, technology driven business ideas up to a maximum of \$1 million per beneficiary.

¹ Sectoral Innovation Mapping of the ICT Sector Case Study: The Animation Industry of Trinidad and Tobago, conducted by the National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST) (2018)

The Film Rebate Programme, managed by FilmTT, is also attractive. Local film producers can get back 35% of their expenditure from TT\$100,000 up. Foreign film producers can be eligible for a rebate of 12.5% to 35% on a minimum expenditure of TT\$630,000. The maximum spend for both local and foreign films is TT\$51,200,000. An additional rebate of 20% can be obtained for cost incurred in the hiring of local labour.

The Government sees a strong future for the industry, including animation and digital media as generators of employment, revenue and export earnings; using skills to compete meaningfully in the 4th Industrial Revolution.

It is noteworthy that three animation firms out of six companies were awarded grants under the Ministry of Planning and Development's Skills for Global Services – part of the Global Services Promotion Programme in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

The success of Full Circle Animation Studio highlights unbridled potential of animation in Trinidad and Tobago, with their work for Universal Studios, Disney and HBO. It is not unnoticed that a substantial percentage of their revenue comes from foreign clients.

In closing I would like to commend once more the event organizers for activities scheduled over the next few days. Having reviewed the festival programme I am convinced that the wide-ranging topics covered will only add value to the industry and festival participants. Anima Caribe continues to facilitate partnerships and more importantly promote, Trinidad and Tobago as an animation hub. Recent collaborations with international animation production giant Toon Boom have assisted with the promotion of Trinidad and Tobago, and by extension the Caribbean, as an animation destination.

Partnerships and linkages are vital in driving our economy forward. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, through the Ministry of Trade and Industry and FilmTT, remains committed. We are here to provide support and work with you to further the development of the industry and our country. I take this opportunity to wish you a successful festival and rewarding future endeavours.

I look forward this evening's screening.

I thank you.