

ADDRESS

BY

DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARY

AVA MAHABIR-DASS

(on behalf of

SENATOR THE HONOURABLE PAULA GOPEE-SCOON

MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY)

AT

ANIMAE CARIBE FESTIVAL'S 2024 MEDIA LAUNCH

INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK OFFICE, ST. CLAIR

WEDNESDAY 30TH OCTOBER 2024 | 10:30 AM

Salutations

- Mr. Julien Belgrave - Country Lead for Trinidad and Tobago, Inter-American Development Bank
- Ms. Vashti Dookiesingh - Sector Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank
- Ms. Malene Joseph - Fund Coordinator, Cultural and Creative Industries Innovation Fund (CIIF), Caribbean Development Bank
- Mrs. Camille Selvon-Abrahams - Creative Director, Animaes Caribe Festival
- Mrs. Roxanne Colthrust – Director, Animaes Caribe Festival
- Specially invited guests
- Members of the media
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning.

I am pleased to attend the launch of the 23rd Edition of the Animaes Caribe Festival-*the longest-running festival of its kind in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Since its inception in 2001 the Festival has grown into an impressive platform for showcasing local, regional and international animation talent to buyers, agents and distributors.

Animaes Caribe has evolved into a hub for facilitating collaborations across the Caribbean, fostering unity and artistic exchanges among animators from various countries including Cuba, France, Guyana, Martinique, Suriname, USA, UK and, of course, Trinidad and Tobago all of which will be represented at this year's Festival featuring over 15 Animation films. This rich diversity is a testament

of the Festival's growing influence in bridging talent and creativity in the Animation sector at home and across the globe.

Global Value of Animation

According to the 2024 Animation Global Market Report, the global animation market has been experiencing rapid growth, expanding from US \$355.83 billion in 2023 to US \$379.83 billion in 2024, growing at an impressive 6.9% per annum. This performance is driven by factors such as an increasing preference for visual storytelling, greater use in film and television, and the dynamic expansion of the Gaming industry.

By 2028 the Animation market is expected to further grow to an estimated US \$499.57 billion at a growth rate of 7% due to advancements in technologies like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) paving the way for further innovation. These indicators underscore the significant potential of animation

in income generation, employment creation and foreign exchange earnings from which Trinidad and Tobago can benefit.

Opportunities in the Animation Sector

To better capture these opportunities we have been building capacity to re-position Trinidad and Tobago as a premier destination for animation. While the Sector is still nascent, it has generated over US\$1 million in revenue over the past three years, with 75% of these opportunities being foreign-based. This demonstrates our ability to tap into the global market and highlights the potential for even greater growth.

Locally, many exciting animation projects are currently in progress including the animated short “Irie Island”, which has garnered significant international attention and is valued at US\$50,000. The pilot for “PB & The Buck”, pitched at last year’s festival, is now in production with the UK firm Big Thinkers, valued at US\$200,000.

Another notable project, “Tobago Trek”, won a pitch competition and received US\$25,000 from the Caribbean Development Bank to advance to the pilot stage, seeking international investment. We’re also excited about “The Making of a Baroness: The Floella Benjamin Story”, which will have production elements in Trinidad and Tobago and is currently being discussed for distribution with Children’s BBC and Big Thinkers, in the UK.

Capacity is also being ramped up locally with the establishment of the Animaë Caribe House, as well as through collaborations between Animaë Caribe, the University of Trinidad and Tobago and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in establishing the Tamana Technology and Animation Production (TTAP) Factory which serves as an Animation Incubator to support our talented animators. The Government commends these initiatives and looks forward to their continued impact on the Creative industries.

Impact of AI and Technology on Animation

Today new developments and exciting advancements in technology—like AI, virtual reality (VR), and real-time rendering are transforming how we create and consume animated content. These tools open up new possibilities for storytelling, allowing us to engage audiences like never before. Amid these emerging global trends our local animators must adapt and respond. We must harness these new technologies while staying true to ourselves and our tradition of storytelling. It's about connecting with our audience on an emotional level, regardless of the medium we use.

Government's Support for Animation

The Government is key in developing an animation ecosystem in Trinidad and Tobago through the implementation of an attractive incentive framework. These programmes offer critical support to entrepreneurs and increase access to financing for projects. One

such initiative is the Research and Development Facility (RDF), which provides funding for innovative, technology-driven business ideas in the Creative industries.

Additionally, our Production Expenditure Rebate Programme offers attractive rebates up to 35% on expenditure for local and foreign film producers filming in Trinidad and Tobago, including labour costs incurred in the hiring of local talent. These programmes and others, will be administered under our new Trinidad and Tobago Trade and Investment Promotion Agency, which will further promote our country as a nucleus of growth in the animation sector.

23rd Animae Caribe

The Government, through the Ministry of Trade and Industry, is pleased to be associated with the 23rd Edition of the Animae Caribe Festival. This year's Festival promises to be quite a spectacle and we are delighted to welcome to our shores a distinguished panel of renowned animators and animation companies such as Disney,

Pixar and Nickelodeon along with coverage from leading media outlets like Animation Magazine and Kidscreen Magazine. Your presence underscores the importance of Animaë Caribe within the global animation arena and will better position Trinidad and Tobago as a preferred destination for content creators in the Region.

Events like Animaë Caribe also enhance our visibility and reputation on the global stage and help us forge new collaborations, such as those already established with YAPPI – *Nigeria’s premier 3D Animation Training Academy* and the Annecy Film Festival in France. The Festival also serves as a springboard for distribution opportunities, leveraging platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+.

These noteworthy developments coupled with inspiring local productions like “The Adventures of Spin & Scratch” by popular soca artiste Anslem Douglas, as well as lucrative pipeline projects

including “Boy Boy and the Magic Drum” by soca star Machel Montano and “Champions of the Galaxy” by cricket icon Dwyane Bravo, will amplify Trinidad and Tobago’s position as a recognized animation producer.

Conclusion

In closing, I extend my sincere gratitude to the organizers of Anima Caribbean for hosting another instalment of this engaging Festival and their steadfast commitment to nurturing our local talent. I wish you a successful and rewarding Festival and look forward to the creative and insightful screenings over the next few days.

I thank you.