

Annual Report

FY2025

Dear Friends of MSP Film,

I am delighted to bring you this update on our ongoing success and progress at The Main, thanks to the support and engagement of our community (that's you!), and to our Board and Team's exceptional creativity and just plain hard work.

In early 2022 we embarked on an ambitious journey to reimagine our beloved Film Society of Minneapolis St. Paul, or MSP Film, as a Cultural Cinema Center in the heart of downtown Minneapolis' Historic St. Anthony Main neighborhood. An essential piece of this reimagining was to take over all operations and programming of the five auditoriums at our hub, revamped and rebranded as The Main Cinema aka The Main, to reflect our vision and new purpose.

Today, The Main stands as a vibrant and bustling destination, offering the very best in cinematic experiences from around the world.

In FY25, attendance surpassed 150,000.

We are thrilled to see such an enthusiastic response from our audiences, and proud to play an integral role in the vitality of our community, both culturally and socially.

Looking ahead to FY26, when we celebrate the 45th Anniversary of MSPIFF, we will continue to welcome an ever greater diversity of audiences and artists into our fold and, together, create a space where the magic of cinema can thrive.

Thank you for your interest, trust and partnership. It matters.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'S' followed by a horizontal line.

SUSAN SMOLUCHOWSKI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MSP FILM

Founded in 1962, MSP Film remains Minnesota's premier home for international and independent cinema—an engine for cultural connection, community engagement, and cinematic excellence.

Today, we stand as a trusted cinematic arts institution, operating from five theaters at The Main Cinema. Guided by our “Three-Legged Stool” philosophy, we fulfill a unique role as a cinematic arts authority, a cultural convener, and a community-centered cinema—each leg essential to our mission of enriching lives through the power of film.

Our constituents include our community neighbors, artists, filmmakers, film buffs, arts patrons, travelers, transplants, the curious, students, teachers, and industry professionals, all interested in how they fit into the global film ecosystem.

We serve to inspire all communities whether new or established.
Everyone is welcome here.

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| 600+ FILMS | GLOBAL PROGRAMMING | 200+ PARTNERSHIPS | LOCAL FILMMAKERS |
| 100+ COUNTRIES AND CULTURES | From first-run commercial films to international independent films to cornerstone festivals such as Cine Latino, Images of Africa, and MSPIFF | Across the arts, education, and cultural organizations, with international advisors fostering authentic engagement and broad representation | Championing Minnesotan talent year-round through MN Made |
| 150,000+ SEATS FILLED IN FY2025 | | | |

“I have come to believe that the Film Society's annual schedule of global cinema is among the most important cultural activities in the Cities. These remarkable films—typically representing over a hundred cultural traditions—open our eyes to a world beyond us like nothing else.”

— Former MSP Film Board Member John Schott



Our Mission & Vision

MSP Film's mission is to advance the art of film and to unite, inform, and transform individuals and communities through the power of cinema.

We are a dynamic, cross-cultural destination where underrepresented stories are amplified, film becomes a shared language, and the next generation of filmmakers finds inspiration. Collaboration is our strength.

The Future of MSP Film

Through the power of film, we envision a more connected, inspired, and equitable world—where every story has a place, and every voice can be heard.

Our long-term initiatives include:

- Continuing to bring the best of cinema from across the globe to our audiences
- Increasing both local and national awareness of our work
- Enhancing and modernizing the audience experience
- Contributing with meaning to the revitalization of downtown Minneapolis
- Expanding our presence in St. Paul and the western suburbs



FY2025 by the Numbers

Q1 JULY-SEPTEMBER 2024

120+ FILMS
1,450+ SCREENINGS
30,000+ ADMISSIONS
\$250K+ GROSS RECEIPTS

Q3 JANUARY-MARCH 2025

100+ FILMS
1,400+ SCREENINGS
34,000+ ADMISSIONS
\$280K+ GROSS RECEIPTS

Q2 OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2024

95+ FILMS
1,500+ SCREENINGS
40,000+ ADMISSIONS
\$340K+ GROSS RECEIPTS

Q4 APRIL-JUNE 2025

300+ FILMS
1,500+ SCREENINGS
52,000+ ADMISSIONS
\$440K+ GROSS RECEIPTS



Creating memorable events is our stock-in-trade at MSP Film.

We won't soon forget the night Timothée Chalamet walked the red carpet at The Main Cinema ahead of the area premiere of the Bob Dylan biopic *A COMPLETE UNKNOWN*, or the magnanimous Ang Lee accepting the Milgrom Tribute at MSPIFF, or the crowds that kept coming for the captivating Somali drama *THE VILLAGE NEXT TO PARADISE*.



In April of 2025, **The Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival (MSPIFF)** celebrated its 44th edition, debuting 200+ one-of-a-kind, enlightening, surprising, and entertaining works of international cinema.

Event highlights

- 30,000+ attendees and artists to the festival
- Director Ang Lee was presented with the Milgrom Tribute and was the guest of honor for Industry Night talks and screenings
- New grant funding from the Minnesota Humanities Center for MSPIFF Culture Days provided support for on- and off-screen events, including the Opening Night celebration around FREE LEONARD PELTIER and the Midnight Sun Day—spotlighting

the Scandinavian films and cultures that culminated in a late night party

- Festival events expanded to an additional location, The Edina Theatre, and were highly attended by enthusiastic crowds
- Featured award winners and runway hits like THE LAST JOURNEY (Sweden), COME SEE ME IN THE GOOD LIGHT (USA), CHECKPOINT ZOO (Ukraine), BELOVED TROPIC (Panama), DJ AHMET (North Macedonia), THE VILLAGE NEXT TO PARADISE (Somalia), SIMA'S SONG (Afghanistan), FOLKTALES (Norway)

Plus: industry panels, a Georges Méliès movie-concert, standup comedy show, karaoke, live music, tastings, and after-parties every night

CINE LATINO



Cine Latino is the marquee, annual event of MSP Film's fall calendar presenting US Latino, Latin American, and Ibero Cinema. Cine Latino honors the longstanding film traditions across these communities, showcasing a richness of stories, the beauty of place, and vibrant cultures through the power of film.

Event highlights

- In October 2024, the 12th edition opened with Brazilian filmmaker Walter Salles' brilliant historical drama *I'M STILL HERE*, which went on to win the Oscar for Best International film at the Academy Awards

- The festival welcomed 3,000+ attendees across its 5 days
- Featured 14 feature films including rousing screenings of *LA COCINA* by Mexican director Alonso Ruizpalacios; *IGUALADA* from Colombia; *I AM NEVENKA* by prominent Spanish filmmaker Iciar Bollain, to name a few
- Hosted 10 dynamic activities and events like dance demonstrations and wine tastings that were paired with each of the screenings

IMAGES OF AFRICA



In July 2024, MSP Film launched the Images of Africa series. The initiative was made possible by a Cultural Heritage grant from the Minnesota Humanities Center designed to showcase cinema and artists from African regions and the diaspora, particularly those with the most significant representation in Minnesota.

Films featured

- THE VILLAGE NEXT TO PARADISE, a multi-sellout drama and the first-ever film from Somalia to debut at Cannes
- KNOW YOUR PLACE, an Eritrean-American centered story
- DHALINYARO and LAAN by Djibouti-Canadian filmmaker Lula Ali Ismail
- DAHOMEY by acclaimed French-Senagalese filmmaker Mati Diop
- ON BECOMING A GUINEA FOWL by visionary Zambian director Rungano Nyoni

The series also featured visiting artists and receptions catered by several local African restaurateurs.

Signature Series & Specialty Programming



A Monthly Second-Saturday Series

- Features films paired with guest experts
- Conversations are facilitated by Cinema Club moderator Megan Feeney
- Notable highlights for the Cinema Club include
 - Francois Ozon's *WHEN FALL IS COMING* with Dr. Ioana Vartolomei Pribiag (UMN)
 - Walter Salles' *CENTRAL STATION* with Dr. Sophia Beal (UMN)
 - *ASSEMBLY* with Maija Garcia, a theater director, cultural innovator, and advocate for equity in the arts
 - Best Picture Oscar winner *ANORA*



Uniting Community and Conversation at The Capri Theater in North Minneapolis

- Celebrated the 10th season from September 2024 through June 2025
- Led by senior programmer Craig Laurence Rice
- Notable highlights from the 10th season include
 - Yance Ford's urgent essay on the history of policing *POWER*, with conversation leader and Golden Valley Assistant Police Chief Alice White
 - Coleman Domingo in *SING SING*, with Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison
 - Cord Jefferson's Oscar-winning film *AMERICAN FICTION*, with local screenwriter and playwright David Lawrence Grant leading the conversation



A monthly screening series at The Main Cinema

This program celebrates the dynamic range of films made by Minnesota filmmakers and artists.

Notable highlights from MN Made include

- One of the longest-running programs of MSPIFF
- Screenings are followed by conversations between the filmmakers and community members
- Numerous MSPIFF encores like SWAMP DOGG GETS HIS POOL PAINTED and CLAIRE FACING NORTH
- A new restoration of the 1979 Cannes Caméra d'OR Winner NORTHERN LIGHTS with filmmaker John Hanson

Iranian Film Showcase

A curated series presented with the support of the Twin Cities Iranian Culture Collective

In its 5th edition in 2025

This series was anchored by award-winning THE SEED OF THE SACRED FIG by exiled Iranian filmmaker Mohammad Rasoulof

Lumières Françaises

MSP Film's French language film showcase

This annual, summertime event is centered around Bastille Day in July

In its 8th annual showing

The collection included a repertory screening of Ousmane Sembène's BLACK GIRL and a rare showing of his first film, BOROM SARRET

Youth Outreach

The Nextwave Youth Development Program is our commitment to engaging and inspiring the next generation of filmmakers, critics, and media consumers through:

Special screenings to schools

Discounted tickets to special events

Annual showcase of youth-created films that offer youth opportunities and tools to imagine, critique, and appreciate film



Along with our collection of ongoing series, this year featured the return of National Theatre Live programming as well as several specialty and curated repertory series. CatVideoFest, Akira Kurosawa: Summer of Samurai, Classic to Cult - A Month of International Horror Film, and the ongoing monthly Midnight Mayhem series hosted by drive-in movie specialist and The Current on-air personality, Chaz Kangas, were among the most notable.



The cinematic center for MSP Film, and the only movie theater in downtown Minneapolis, The Main Cinema showcases the region's largest and most eclectic lineup of international, independent, and entertainment films.

This past year we brought moviegoers closer to:

Award-Winning Features

- International contenders like Maura Delpero's visionary Italian historical drama VERMIGLIO
- A biblically administrative Ralph Fiennes in CONCLAVE
- The astounding Palestinian doc NO OTHER LAND
- The Latvian animated masterpiece FLOW by Gints Zilbalodis
- Adrien Brody's Oscar-winning performance in Brady Corbet's THE BRUTALIST
- Payal Kapadia's queer Indian breakout ALL WE IMAGINE AS LIGHT
- Angelina Jolie as the diva Maria Callas in MARIA
- Daniel Craig's consumptive rogue in QUEER
- Demi Moore's career-defining performance in THE SUBSTANCE
- Mikey Madison as the titular character in ANORA
- Kieran Culkin as a yin to Jesse Eisenberg's yang in A REAL PAIN
- A Timothée Chalamet experience as a first-rate Bob Dylan in A COMPLETE UNKNOWN

Hosted Series

Our valued relationships are a hallmark of how MSP Film builds a community-centered space at The Main Cinema, hosting more than a dozen film festivals and screening events throughout the year. Collaborations include:

- Mizna (Twin Cities Arab Film Festival)
- Italian Culture Center of Minneapolis St. Paul (Italian Film Festival)
- The Great Northern Festival
- MinnAnimate
- Archives on Screen (Il Cinema Ritrovato On Tour)
- Minnesota Cuba Committee (MN Cuban Film Fest)
- Black Europe Film Festival
- Sound Unseen Film and Music Festival
- Germanic-American Institute (Twin Cities German Film Festival)
- Alliance Française (Festinema)
- Northern Film Alliance (EDU Film Festival)

THE MAIN CINEMA



Food & Beverage

Focused on sourcing locally crafted goodies for moviegoers, The Main partners with La Boulangerie Marguerite gourmet sandwiches and pastries, Pryes Brewing Company, Art & Rev: Canned Cocktails with Premium Spirits, and Earl Giles to curate a selection of snacks, beverages, and food options to enhance the overall theatre experience.

AND THE BEST POPCORN IN THE CITIES!

Technology & Upgrades


With the generous support of Best Buy Foundation, we upgraded several of our spaces to position ourselves at the forefront of cinema technology. These improvements include enhanced audio systems that expand our interactive capabilities, as well as more efficient workflows that increase staff capacity—part of The Main’s ongoing initiative to innovate and grow.

- Upgraded Theaters 1 and 2 to latest server technology, the Dolby IMS3000
- Upgraded Theaters 2 and 3 with new Christie 2K Laser Projectors, enabling high-quality video and positioning us for the future

- Improved Theater 4 using an existing Barco projector with an eye on prioritizing its replacement in the near future
- Upgraded display monitors for theater and box office digital signage
- Added 5 new high-frequency mics and transmitters and 3 new sound board mixers in all 5 theaters, enabling amplified interactive elements

Major projects in process for completion in FY2026 include:

- Replacing 210 seats in our premier Theater 1, including upgrading ADA access and adding 5 new ADA compliant wheelchair spaces
- Upgrading Theater 1 to a new Christie 2K Laser Projector
- Replacing seats and adding ADA compliant wheelchair spaces in Theater 3



MSP Film's geographical reach is all-encompassing, regardless of culture or origin. The generosity of our greater community has enabled us to continue our expansive work across so many communities here in Minnesota.

Our range of partners includes individuals, organizations, academics, curators, and filmmakers from around the world with deep local and global connections, as well as local media production companies, traditional and community press, youth groups, schools, theaters, museums, designers, restaurants, musicians, and more.



All partners are aligned with our strategic vision: to connect communities through the art of film, achieve results we can track, and make what we offer more accessible to everyone. Simply put, the goal is to make sure more people can benefit from what we offer.

Our Partnerships Include*

- Alliance Française
- Amigos de España
- American Swedish Institute
- Boriken Cultural Center
- Brazil Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
- Capri Theater
- Celtic Junction Arts Center
- CLUES / Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio
- Consulates and Embassies across the globe from Afghanistan to Argentina to Switzerland to the UK
- Doors Open Minneapolis
- First Avenue
- Global Minnesota
- Graywolf Press
- HACER / Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research
- Hmong Cultural Center
- India Association of Minnesota
- Indian Cultural Association of Minnesota
- Italian Cultural Center
- Japan America Society of Minnesota
- KFAI Community Radio
- KNOCK, Inc.
- Lake Street Council
- Magers & Quinn Booksellers
- Mia / Minneapolis Institute of Arts
- Milkweed Editions
- Minneapolis American Indian Center
- Minneapolis College of Art & Design
- Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs
- Minneapolis Downtown Council, Mizna
- MN Consular Corps
- MPR / Minnesota Public Radio
- NATIFS / Owamni
- NEMAA / Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association
- Norway House
- Open Book
- Polish American Cultural Institute of MN
- The Qalanjo Project
- Queerspace Collective
- Twin Cities Iranian Cultural Collective
- Twin Cities Youth Media Network (TCYMN)
- TPT / Twin Cities PBS
- United Nations Association of MN
- University of MN Language Departments
- Woman's Club of Minneapolis

**Note this is a partial list of our partnerships*



Organizational Growth & Expansion

In 2022, we set out to take over all operations and programming at The Main. Since then, MSP Film has seen a steady increase in all areas.

MEMBERS + DONORS

▲75% FROM 3,000 TO 5,000

ATTENDANCE

▲90%+ FROM 85,000 YR TO 150,000 YR

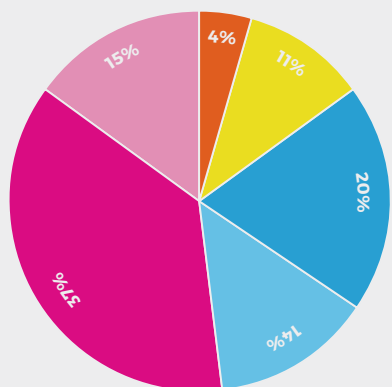
Our annual operating budget has grown from \$1.5 million FY19, to \$2.25 million in FY23, \$2.75 million in FY24, and \$3 million in FY25, 35%-40% of which is met by contributed income each year.

We rely on contributed income to accomplish our goals and acknowledge this is a complicated moment in time. In the coming year, our plan is to be conservative in our funding expectations. This said, we remain optimistic that the philanthropic world will step in to fill corporate and government funding gaps. We will continue to make every effort to secure private and public funds to ensure a vibrant future for our organization.



FY2025 Financial Summary

Income



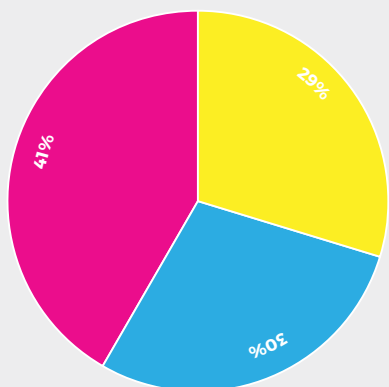
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|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Donations | \$ 144,987.81 |
| Membership | \$ 338,920.00 |
| Grants & Sponsorships | \$ 634,770.00 |
| Festivals | \$ 436,862.47 |
| The Main Cinema Tickets | \$ 1,188,436.75 |
| The Main Cinema Concessions | \$ 480,085.41 |

Total Income\$ 3,224,062.44

Assets

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Current Assets | \$ 598,845 |
| Equipment & Theater Leasehold | |
| Improvements, net depreciation | \$ 377,340 |
| Total Assets | \$ 976,185 |

Expenses



| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| The Main Cinema + Festival Operations | \$ 877,882.90 |
| Management & Administration | \$ 847,629.23 |
| Programming | \$ 1,220,476.44 |
| Total Expenses | \$2,945,988.56 |

Liabilities

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Current Liabilities | \$ 140,775 |
| Net Assets with Donor Restrictions | \$ 448,435 |
| Net Assets without Donor Restrictions | \$ 386,975 |
| Total Net Assets | \$ 835,410 |

Total Liabilities and Net Assets\$ 976,185

MSP Film is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible. EIN: 41-1802905.



Valued Donors Since 2022

MSP Film gratefully acknowledges the individuals, families, foundations, and partners whose generosity makes our work possible.

Our top Institutional supporters

KNOCK inc.

POHLAD
family foundation

NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT for the ARTS
arts.gov

CLEAN
WATER
LAND &
LEGACY
AMENDMENT

MINNESOTA
STATE ARTS BOARD



Minnesota
Humanities
Center

BEST BUY
Foundation

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MINNESOTA
HISTORICAL
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JEROME
FOUNDATION

GEORGE FAMILY
FOUNDATION

us bank



AMC NETWORKS

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Our Valued Members

Visionaries \$25,000

- Jim Gerlich
- Lili Hall
- Nor Hall & Roger Hale
- Bill & Michelle Pohlاد
- Mary & Paul Reyelts

Icons \$10,000

- Connie & Mark Andrew
- Karla Ekdahl & Peter Hutchinson
- Nancy & Rolf Engh
- Megan Feeney & John Geelan
- Penny & Bill George
- Jim Olson
- Frances and Frank Wilkinson
- Julie & Charlie Zelle

Auteurs \$5,000

- Margot & Chris Barry
- Anne Carayon & Dan Pennie
- Lisa Fredrikson & Todd Paulson
- Mary Ingebrand-Pohlاد
- The Lightning Fund
- Leni & David Moore
- Paola Nuñez-Obetz & Christopher Obetz
- Silvia Perez & Marcelo Valdes
- Kiki Pohlاد & Zach McMillan
- Christopher Schout & Wayne Zink
- Susan Smoluchowski
- Rob Silberman
- Gretchen & Marshall Toman
- Christine K. & Bryan Walker
- Sue & Jim Westerman

MSP Film Memberships start at \$75/year (\$20/year for students) and go up to \$25,000/year. All levels help support our ever-expanding programming and operations at The Main Cinema. **In FY25 our members totaled 4000+, contributing \$340,000 to our annual budget.** We are deeply grateful to each and every one.

Benefits at all levels include deeply discounted tickets year-round to films on our five screens at The Main, deep discounts on Festival passes, advanced purchase windows for special events including MSPIFF, no online ticketing fees, invitations to our monthly Cinema Club and other member-only events, added benefits for higher level members, and a unique opportunity to be part of an important cultural gem in our community!



MSP Film Staff

Susan Smoluchowski, *Executive Director*

Victoria Aguado, *Events Coordinator*

Jesse Bishop, *Programming Director*

Tony Brown, *Webmaster, Digital and Print Creative*

Tanner Deml, *Ticketing & Membership Manager*

Megan Feeney, *Moderator, Cinema Club Coordinator*

Deb Girdwood, *Youth Media Showcase
Coordinator, MSPIFF*

Greg Helmstetter, *Technical Director*

Kirk Hokanson, *Cinema Projects*

Melissa Miller, *Bookkeeper*

Anjali Moore, *Community Engagement Coordinator*

Kelly Nathe, *Programmer, Publicity Manager*

Beth Pacunas, *Development Manager*

Craig Laurence Rice, *Senior Programmer*

Jerry Shih, *Development Assistant*

Alissa Simon, *Programmer, MSPIFF*

Kathie Smith, *Programmer, MSPIFF*

Maury Steinman, *Business Manager*

Mira Swartz, *Social Media & Festival Coordinator*

Hebe Tabachnik, *Artistic Director, Cine Latino*

Sean Taubenberger, *Office Coordinator*

Ethan Vander Broek, *Media Manager,
Shorts Programmer, MSPIFF*

Connie White, *Balcony Booking*

MSP Film@The Main Cinema Staff

Andy Windels, *Cinema Manager*

B Bottenfield

Erin Brown

Curtis Craven

Sam Ekren

Gray Gawboy

Nathan Klaers

Max Penzkover

Adarsh Rajaraman

Tori Rehak

Max Ridenour

Aaron Romain

Nelly Smith

Leyden Streed

Jack Svenningsen

Sean Taubenberger

Ing Wendland

Josh Wilson



FY25 Board Members

Paola Núñez-Obetz, Chair, Board of Directors,
Artist/Community Leader

Melodie Bahan, Deputy Director, Explore Film MN

Chris Barry, Senior Dir, Yellow Tag, Best Buy

Dianne Brennan, Writer

François Ecclesiaste, Partner, Lewis Brisbois Law

Jacob Frey, Mayor/City of Minneapolis

Jim Gerlich, Treasurer, Investor/Principal
Cedarwoods Foundation

Zach McMillan, Film/Music Producer

Abdi Mohamed, Journalist

Todd Paulson, CCO/Partner KNOCK Inc.

Christopher Schout, Theatre Producer

Robert Silberman, Secretary, Professor
of Art History - University of Minnesota

Susan Smoluchowski, Executive Director –
MSP Film Society

Roma Calatayud Stocks, Community
Leader/Writer

Marcelo Valdes, Architect/Professor
of Architecture – University of Minnesota

Photo credits

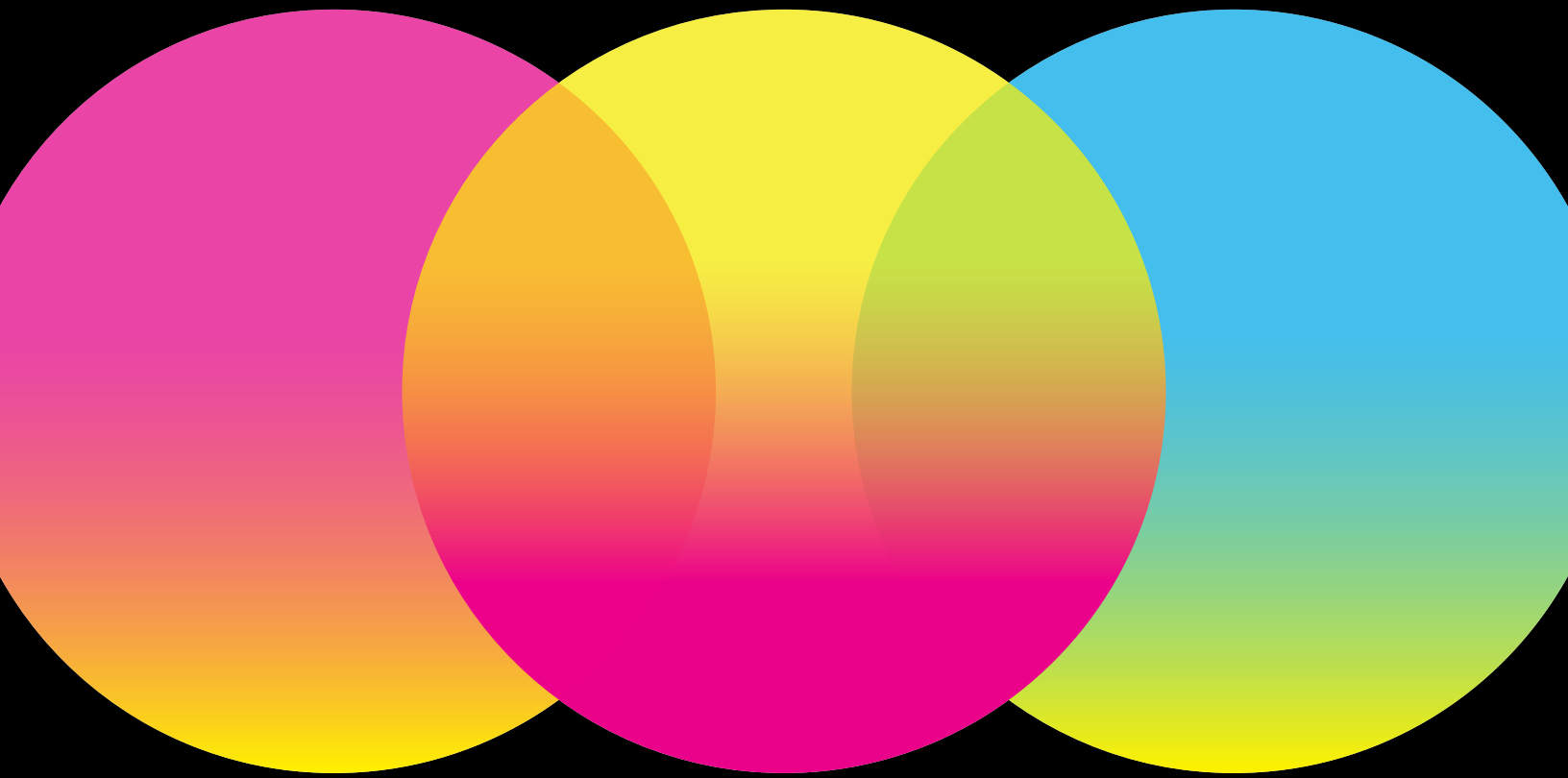
Lisa Venticinque

Ryo Hamasaki

Emmet Kowler

Ethan Vander Broek

MSPFilm.org



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