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## **SoCal Production Company to Host Inaugural Female Filmmaker Meetup**

*IE-based Women-helmed production company seeks to build a community of women-identifying and gender nonbinary filmmakers with focus outside of the LA area*

INLAND EMPIRE, CA - Footlight Studios, a women-helmed production company based out of the Inland Empire, announced yesterday its first Female Filmmaker Meetup (FFM) set for 7pm on February 22, 2023 at Luke's On Front in Old Town Temecula. The FFM seeks to build a community of women-identifying and gender nonbinary filmmakers with focus outside of the LA area. The Footlights - the female filmmakers behind Footlight Studios - believe that all of Southern California is rich with female talent in all areas of storytelling and aim to make a positive change in the creative industry.

While resources for filmmakers are more widely available in the LA area, it dwindles the further ventured outside of the 30-mile studio zone - an area defined by a 30-mile (48 km) radius of "Hollywood" used by the American entertainment industry to determine employee benefits for film-work done within the zone. This generally leaves filmmakers outside of the zone just out of arms reach from resources, opportunities, and mentorship. Female Filmmakers often feel this the most as despite desire and talent, only 25% of behind-the-scenes roles on big US movies are held by women, and just 17% of directors and writers are female, according to a 2021 study. Footlight Studios aims to grow those numbers by hosting the FFM monthly so women in the entertainment industry in all of Southern California can collaborate, share resources, attend trainings, and create a support system.

**"We know first hand that gender parity is a big problem in the creative industries. And often, inaction is enhanced by an overwhelming feeling of not knowing where to begin."**

**- Footlights**

**"Female filmmakers don't always know where to start, what resources are available, and often lack a community of female filmmakers and opportunities from more established storytellers to truly excel, when outside of the 30-mile zone. All of Southern California is flush with incredible talent from all of its corners and we aim to unify."**

This event comes on the heel of the 48 Hour Film Project's announcement that Footlight Studios made the top 15 internationally of the YES WE CANNES challenge - a best of the best competition for all of the city winners of the 48 Hours Film Project. If chosen on March 18th at the Filmmapalooza 2023 awards ceremony in LA, Footlight Studios' film "Stealing Time" will be screening at the Short Film Corner in Festival de Cannes in May.

**About the Footlights** - Footlight Studios is a women-helmed production company that puts female storytellers at the forefront - in front and behind the camera - in pivotal and essential roles. Its Executive Producers are Vanessa Silva, Heather Hentila, Chelsea Gray & Ainsley Strachan, who have been working together in the scope of film, series, video, and picture production since 2014. The Footlights' goal is to make an inclusive, safe, and professional space for storytellers, regardless of experience, with a focus on female creatives.

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