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Visual Effects Society and Autodesk Launch New Initiative to Spotlight Diversity in VFX

Ask Me Anything - VFX Pros Tell All Webcast Series to Feature Top Industry Pros

Los Angeles (September 26, 2019) – Today, the Visual Effects Society (VES), the industry’s professional global honorary society, announced the launch of ***Ask Me Anything: VFX Pros Tell All***, a dynamic new initiative created in partnership with Autodesk, worldwide leaders in 3D design, engineering and entertainment software. The yearlong initiative will shine a light on diversity in visual effects with a lineup of talks with successful visual effects professionals from different backgrounds – and a new platform for inspired storytelling.

The initiative will feature six (6) free and open to the public live webcasts – interactive forums with top pros offering career insights, words of wisdom and tales of triumph and adversity from their VFX journeys – and special content in our award-winning magazine *VFX Voice*. The first event of the series will take place on Tuesday, October 15 on Zoom and Facebook Live and features creative visionary **Karen Dufilho**, Academy- and Emmy Award-winning Executive Producer at Google Spotlight Stories.

Our stellar line-up of VFX pros who will appear in the webcast series also includes: **Sidney Kombo-Kintombo**, award-winning Animation Supervisor at Weta Digital, **Neishaw Ali**, Executive Producer and President at SPINVFX, and **Greg Anderson**, Head of Studio-NY, Senior VFX Supervisor at FuseFX. Stay tuned for more web series guests to be announced.

“For more than 20 years, the VES has worked to raise the profile of VFX artists and innovators at the core of filmed entertainment and foster the next generation of creative talent,” said Mike Chambers, VES Chair. “Autodesk has been an outstanding longtime partner in celebrating emerging international VFX artists with the VES-Autodesk Student Award. Now, we are excited to take our collaboration to the next level and launch this new program to encourage students and aspiring practitioners to explore the dynamic world of visual effects.”

“We are excited to join forces with VES to celebrate the journeys and successes of visual effects professionals from diverse backgrounds,” said Amy Bunszel, Autodesk Senior VP of Design and Creative Products. “Our hope with telling their stories is that it inspires the next generation of talented artists and filmmakers to pursue careers of their own in visual effects and continue to push boundaries.”

For more information on ***Ask Me Anything: VFX Pros Tell All*** and to register for our first Webcast with Karen Dufilho – on Tuesday, October 15 at 2:00 pm PST – Visit: www.visualeffectssociety.com/ama

About Karen Dufilho – October 15 Webcast Guest

Academy- and Emmy award-winning producer, Karen Dufilho has been working in the intersection of story, animation and innovation for almost two decades. As Executive Producer at Google Spotlight Stories, she was instrumental in introducing immersive, narrative content at Google and is responsible for engaging and shepherding talent and content from development through production and multi-platform launch.

Karen and her Spotlight team produced *Back to the Moon* (the first immersive Google Doodle), Emmy Award-winning *Pearl* (the first VR short to receive an Oscar nomination), multi Cannes Gold Lion-winner *Help*, and was recognized with a Peabody Futures of Media Award, several Annies, and the Ub Iwerks Award for Innovation. She is the producer of Academy and Annie Award-winning short films *For the Birds* and *Geri's Game* for Pixar Animation Studios, where she helmed the Shorts Division overseeing its original shorts slate and productions as well as *A Bug's Life*, *Toy Story 2* and *Monsters Inc.* franchise production efforts.

Karen is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Short Films and Feature Animation Branch, where she contributes to A2020, the organization's five-year initiative to bring new, diverse voices to the organization. She is the recipient of a Distinguished Leadership Award from Advanced Imaging Society and on the Executive Board for Women in Animation, Bay Area and on the VES Magazine's Editorial Advisory Board.

About the Visual Effects Society

The Visual Effects Society is a professional global honorary society dedicated to advancing the arts, sciences and applications of visual effects and to upholding the highest standards and procedures for the visual effects profession. It is the entertainment industry's only official organization representing the extended global community of visual effects practitioners, including supervisors, artists, producers, technology developers, educators and studio executives. VES' more than 4,000 members in 40 countries worldwide contribute to all areas of entertainment – film, television, commercials, animation, music videos, games, new media and special venues.

To learn more about the VES, visit www.visualeffectssociety.com and follow us on Twitter: @VFXSociety. Read *VFX Voice*, our signature print and digital publication, at www.vfxvoice.com.

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