



City of Seattle
Office of the Mayor

News

For Immediate Release
October 31, 2013

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Mayor Mike McGinn recognizes Zombie Orpheus Entertainment for their innovation, audience engagement, commitment to local film community
In Good Company business recognition program

SEATTLE – Mayor Mike McGinn recognized Zombie Orpheus Entertainment for their innovative business model, commitment and engagement of their audience, and their support of Seattle’s local film industry.

Zombie Orpheus Entertainment (ZOE) is a local multimedia production company dedicated to developing and producing fantasy, science fiction, and horror films that are accessible to all audiences. They strive to produce fun and original shows while creating a long-term sustainable film community with monthly production, able to pay cast and crews livable wages.

As an independent production company, ZOE utilizes alternative methods of funding for their productions, opting to crowdfund projects through Kickstarter. In doing so, they have grown their business every year by giving fans control over the direction and success of their shows, such as JourneyQuest and The Gamers Trilogy.

“Creativity and entrepreneurship are two traits that have made Seattle a world leader in innovation,” said Mayor Mike McGinn. “Businesses like ZOE embody this spirit. Through their innovative business model and fan engagement, they are creating new ways for people to enjoy high-quality productions.”

Debuted in 2010, ZOE’s business model was deemed too radical when introduced. However, they proved critics wrong, and has tripled their growth over the course of their first three crowdfunded campaigns. In 2012, they broke the Kickstarter record for most money contributed to a film or video campaign, with over \$400,000 pledged. This unprecedented funding is a direct result of the commitment ZOE has made to their fans.

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“We developed and implemented a new way of creating and distributing independent film—the Creator Distributed, Fan Supported model—which has now been adopted successfully by a number of other indie producers,” said Matt Vancil, co-owner of ZOE. “Our motto is “No Studio, No Network, No Cancellation,” which is our pledge to our fans and supporters that we’ll continue telling stories that they love for as long as they keep us funded.”

ZOE focuses on building and sustaining a fan base, and releases their work using the Creative Commons License, which allows fans to remix, share, and reuse their productions without fear of ensuing legal action.

“From where we started in 2008 until now has been amazing and I think it’s going to keep going because we’re very fan-supported - people love it - and we’ve created a volume of work here in Washington State that I think we couldn’t really have done anywhere else,” said Tony Becerra, assistant director and producer for ZOE.

“I absolutely believe that the more people who adopt this model as a way to tell good stories and connect with the people who want to hear them, the more successful it will be for all of us, because it will become a part of the culture,” said Ben Dobyms, co-owner, ZOE.

Besides their commitment to and active engagement with their fans, ZOE has demonstrated a commitment to the Seattle film and creative community. Their office space is at Jigsaw Renaissance, a local non-profit makerspace in Seattle’s Inscap Arts Building in the Chinatown/International District surrounded by other artists, many of whom end up being collaborators.

They have hired over 60 local actors and crew members when in production, and work in partnership with local artists to create their high quality movies and web series. They consistently increase the pay of their cast and crew with every production, and have a long-term goal of paying their casts and crews ongoing living wages. They are also active in shaping the next generation of Seattle filmmakers through their internship program that gives students meaningful filmmaking experience and connects them to industry professionals who can help them embark on a career after graduation.

“Seattle’s vibrant film, music and arts scene contributes greatly to our local economy and is a testament to our reputation as a city of creativity and innovation,” said Maud Daudon, President and CEO of the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. “The success and innovation at ZOE serves as a model to inspire improvements and growth in our local film and creative industries.”

As part of the Seattle Jobs Plan, the [In Good Company](#) program is an ongoing showcase of businesses that spotlights one locally-owned business every month for being unconventional, transformative, and exemplary.

Businesses recognized in the *In Good Company* program receive several meaningful prizes to help their business grow and celebrate their employees, including a mayoral proclamation; a high-quality video profile featured on the Seattle Channel; a one-year membership or an upgraded tier of membership at the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber; and a special gift basket for employees containing food, drinks and prizes from some of Seattle's most beloved local companies.

The highlighted businesses are chosen by the City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development and the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce by a committee of staff members who meet quarterly to select businesses to recognize. Individuals and businesses may also suggest recommendations via the Office of Economic Development.

For nomination criteria and more information, please visit the [In Good Company website page](#).

In Good Company is brought to you by: Mayor Mike McGinn as part of the [Seattle Jobs Plan](#); [Seattle Office of Economic Development](#); [Seattle Channel](#); [Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce](#); [Flying Spot](#); and [206 inc.](#)

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Seattle Jobs Plan

Mayor Mike McGinn's vision for next generation economic development that creates a sustainable economy with shared prosperity in Seattle was launched in August 2010. It consists of new and existing policies, programs and investments designed to help create quality jobs, protect the environment, and ensure that taxpayers get true value from the city of Seattle's public investments. Visit www.seattle.gov/mayor/jobsplan/

City's Office of Economic Development (OED)

OED supports a healthy business environment and empowers companies to grow and compete. We provide services directly to businesses through advocacy, retention and expansion assistance, and workforce development. Visit www.growseattle.com to access city services for businesses, and for more information about our office, visit www.seattle.gov/economicdevelopment

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Seattle Channel

SEATTLE CHANNEL is the award winning local TV station that puts video to work to build and strengthen community. SEATTLE CHANNEL presents programs on cable television (channel 21 on Comcast and Broadstripe) and via the Internet to help citizens connect with their city. www.seattlechannel.org

Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

The Seattle Metropolitan (Seattle Metro) Chamber of Commerce is the largest and most diverse network of influential business leaders in the Puget Sound region. Founded in 1882 by local business leaders, the Chamber today is an independent organization of 2,200 businesses representing a regional workforce of approximately 700,000 people. Visit www.seattlechamber.com

Zombie Orpheus Entertainment

Zombie Orpheus Entertainment (ZOE) is a Seattle-based, independently owned, production company that produces original and high-quality fantasy, science fiction, and horror films. Utilizing crowdsourced funding and fan interaction, the company has drawn a loyal fan following that supports and sustains all their productions. Through their commitment to Seattle's artist community, they hire local actors and production crews to film all of their projects. ZOE is recognized for their innovative business model, commitment and engagement of their audience, and their support of Seattle's local film industry. Visit <http://zombieorpheus.com/>