



spyhop
productions

empowering youth through multimedia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Spy Hop Productions Launches Queer Filmmaking ::
A 2009-10 Documenting Communities Project for Local Teens

Salt Lake City, UT – Spy Hop Productions will launch a new, non-fiction film program entitled **Queer Filmmaking :: A 2009-10 Documenting Communities Project**, beginning September 15, 2009. The program will be held in the LS Peery Studios at Spy Hop's downtown location (511 W 200 S, Suite 100), Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 4-6 PM. The class is free, and open to anyone 14-19 years old. No prior filmmaking experience is required, and applications are being accepted now until September 8, 2009.

This program intends to actively engage local teens with issues relating specifically to the Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual Transgender (LGBT) community through documentary filmmaking. Taught by Spy Hop's Documentary Arts Instructor, Frank Feldman (Director, *Vapid Lovelies*), the four month program features a curriculum based on documentary fundamentals such as hands-on camera and equipment training, filmmaking, and film editing using Final Cut Pro. Unique to this year's program will include a critical overview of queer theory and a history of how gay and lesbian characters have been represented in mainstream media.

"Spy Hop decided to go with Queer Filmmaking after initial conversations with social activist, Chloe Noble, and several discussions with the Utah Pride Center. Specifically, I wanted to create a class that could empower youth in the LGBT community through the creation of a series of short films," said Feldman.

From the Program Description:

Queer filmmaking is inherently political. It is an act of defiance, activism, inspiration, and should prompt dialogue and discourse either within or outside of the LGBT community. Queer filmmakers exist outside the mainstream and must find unique ways to fund and distribute their films. As such, students will learn to create advocacy and activist films that discuss the issues the LGBT community faces. Students will learn to create queer-centered media with the end goal of appealing to a larger, non-queer audience.

Though this program will be unique in that it is devoted exclusively to queer filmmaking, this is not the first time Spy Hop Productions has engaged youth in learning and creating media about the LGBT community. *Two Loves*, a twenty-five minute documentary exploring the stories of gay and lesbian Mormons, was produced as part of the 2006-07 PitchNic Film Intensive Program, a yearlong film program enabling experienced student filmmakers to create professional caliber films with the guidance of professional mentors.

About Spy Hop's Documentary Arts Program (DAP)

DAP introduces students to the art and craft of documentary filmmaking. Spy Hop's documentary program empowers youth to find their voice, realize their stories, and become critical producers by providing them mentorship, instruction, equipment, and an outlet to share their voices.

Spy Hop's documentary programs provide a safe space for students to explore their creativity while initiating community dialogue about a variety of intriguing topics. Introduced to the storytelling process, as well as digital cameras, recording equipment, and editing systems, students explore important life issues alongside their mentors—professionally trained and experienced filmmakers.

Major funding for DAP provided by **Salt Lake County Substance Abuse Prevention Services, Morgan Stanley Bank, UBS Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts**, and individual donors.

About Spy Hop Productions

Spy Hop Productions is a not-for-profit youth media arts and education center whose purpose is to empower youth to express their voice and with it create positive change in their lives, their community, and the world. Our mission is to encourage free expression, self-discovery, critical and inventive thinking, and skilled participation via the big screen, the airwaves, and the world-wide-web. Spy Hop is committed to the following organizational objectives:

- Providing safe after-school and summer time mentoring programs for diverse youth (K-12) in emerging digital technologies and the media arts
- Developing 21st century skills in youth: community and global awareness, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and media literacy
- Promoting positive youth development thru individuality, leadership, creativity and intellectual curiosity
- Increasing higher education and/or vocational opportunities

For more information, please call John Boyack at (801) 532-7500 or john@spyhop.org.

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Spy Hop Productions :: Empowering *Youth Through Multimedia*

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