**The Quickdraw Animation Society’s
Chris J. Melnychuk Memorial Scholarship and Production Residency**

***Call For Applications For 2025 – 2027 Intake***

***Application Deadline: September 2nd, 2025 @ 12:00pm (noon)***

### *What is the Chris J. Melnychuk Memorial Scholarship and Production Residency?*

The Chris J. Melnychuk Memorial Scholarship and Production Residency is a production-focused program offered by the Quickdraw Animation Society (or QAS) intended to assist individuals in making their first independent animated short film, and targeted towards emerging animators developing their practice. This is a non-cash award open to Calgary, AB (and area) artists of all disciplines, at all stages in their careers, who are interested in the art of animation. **No previous animation experience is necessary to apply for this program.**

The 2025 CJM Memorial Scholarship and Production Residency will foster the development and training of one emerging animator through classes, mentorship, free production space, free equipment and resource access, technical support, and a modest supply budget to create their first independent animated short film. QAS will publicly screen the completed film, ideally at our annual GIRAF International Animation Festival in November, following the successful completion of the program.

This eighteen-month long program is broken down into two phases: EDUCATION and PRE-PRODUCTION scholarship phase (September 2025 – April 2026) and PRODUCTION/POST-PRODUCTION residency phase (April 2026 – March 2027).

The Successful Applicant will receive from QAS:

* Up to 3 free animation courses at the Quickdraw Animation Society during the 2025 – 2027 scholarship window
* A professional animation mentor to help lead you through the program
* A two-year producing membership at the Quickdraw Animation Society (value of $50/year) granting access to our studios, equipment, and animation library
* Free studio space and computer station for 1 year upon successful completion of classes and acceptance of film pitch
* 1,200 production credits (equivalent to $1,200 in equipment and studio/production desk rental)\* to be used at the Quickdraw Animation Society for the rental of animation equipment
* A $200 supply budget (dependent on project needs) available upon successful completion of classes
* Access to an Animation Mentor for the duration of the scholarship
* Grant writing support
* Public screening of your finished animation
* ***NOTE:*** *1 production credit is worth $1 of studio or equipment rental at Quickdraw Animation Society and holds no cash value.*

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### *Notes on the process and timeline*

This is an 18-month program to allow the participant the necessary time to learn the art of animation and produce their film within a reasonable timeframe. The scholarship portion includes the three classes and mentorship; the residency includes the production phase of the program, where you’re working on your animated film in-studio at QAS.

To make this a quality experience for the participant, we are only able to offer a full scholarship and residency to **one** individual per intake.

The successful applicant is expected to adhere to the timeline laid out below.

**September 2025 – April 2026**

* CJM Scholarship student takes up to 3 free classes at QAS. We require students with no animation experience take Animation Fundamentals in the fall, and recommend taking Advanced Animation in the winter term, but exact courses to be taken will be decided between student, staff, and project mentor depending on the student’s experience and project needs.
* Student explores animation techniques and does homework from QAS classes (This takes up much more time than you would think!)
* Student meets regularly with their mentor to discuss their short film idea.
* Student works on their concept, script, storyboards, technique, experiment with equipment, etc.
* CJM Student does not receive any dedicated studio or production space, or unlock their full production credit allocation, until the successful completion of classes and finishing their pre-production.
* QAS will support equipment or short-term studio requests from the CJM Scholarship student by request if it is in the interests of the education of the CJM student or to complete their pre-production materials.
* QAS will support the CJM Scholarship student with grant applications to obtain further production resources for their film, ideally for the Alberta Foundation For The Art’s winter submission deadline.

**April 2026**

* CJM Student and their mentor meet with QAS staff to PITCH their final film.
* It is totally cool if the film pitched at this meeting is different from the one you pitch when applying for the program. We expect your idea to change and grow as you study with us.
* This is the point where you are locking in what you will be spending the next year animating. Of course things change as you go, but this is where you, the filmmaker, and QAS, the producer, commit to bringing your idea to life.
* QAS may come back saying the film is too ambitious, too long, the technique is something we do not have the resources to support, etc. That is OK! We want you to make the film you dream of! But there are practical considerations as well. We may ask you to change a few things but still accept your pitch.
* Failure to attend classes, meet with your mentor, do your pre-production planning, or missing the pitch deadline will result in the student NOT receiving production space, equipment, rentals, or any production support.

**April 2026 – January 2027**

* Upon successful completion of the educational component and approval of the student’s film pitch, QAS will provide the participant 1 year of production space from April 2026 – March 2027 (inclusive of one permanent desk or studio, production equipment, and studio access as required), 1,200 production credits, and production support from the QAS Production Director.
* CJM filmmaker should aim to complete animation production by December 2026 – most of your main animation, scenes, shots, assets, and VFX should be wrapped up by the end of the year.

**January – April 2027**

* This phase you should be wrapping up your film – doing your compositing, nailing down your sound design, doing final edits, color grading, fixing up sequences, etc.
* Work with the QAS Production Director on post-production and ensuring your animation/sound/final render is up to QAS Production Guidelines.
* **Your finished film is due to the QAS Production Director by the end of April 2027.**

**(Of course, if you finish it earlier, we will be very glad and give you lots of compliments and candy.)**

### *Dang, this timeline is too long!*

Animation takes a long time to learn and create! QAS is making a major investment of time and resources into the program participant, and the 18-month timeline ensures the filmmaker has time to learn, develop their film idea, and have enough time for production without burning out.

By adding these pitch deadlines before making available the production space and equipment resources, we can ensure that **you are still serious about making a film with us, 8 months from now, once you gain some animation experience.** Once you are ready to get into production of your film, you will receive the production resources to make it happen!

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### *Am I eligible for this scholarship?*

Probably! Our major requirement is that you have not yet made an animated film of significance that has been screened on the festival circuit – you need to be new (or new-ish) to the art of animation.

If you’ve taken courses at QAS, Alberta University of the Arts, or other educational institutions before, but haven’t yet made your own animated film, you’re totally eligible! Never animated before? You’re eligible too! We have had first-year AUArts students, established visual artists, sculptors, illustrators, experimental filmmakers, musicians, total newbies and more go through this program.

This scholarship and residency program is only available to artists based in or around Calgary, Alberta, Canada. This is not a remote opportunity – the program takes advantage of our in-house resources, so being able to come down to QAS for classes, meetings, supplies, books, studio space, etc. is essential.

This application is open to individuals of all races, genders, sexualities, backgrounds and abilities. Our studios are mostly accessible to those with mobility issues but not entirely – our main facility is accessible to wheelchair-users but our upstairs space and library is unfortunately not. **Please let us know if accessibility would be of concern in your application and we will work to make sure you can access our resources --**especially as this year will begin with the residency operating remotely, we still want to ensure that applicants have access to the resources need to learn and work from home.

Applicants are judged by the strength and feasibility of their project proposal (more information below), their portfolio and/or previous artistic work (animation or otherwise), their resume/CV (their experience), the benefit of the scholarship to the applicant, and our assessment of the applicant’s ability to realistically complete a film within the project timeline.

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### *Sounds Sweet! What do I need to apply?*

To be eligible for this scholarship, applications must include the following:

* Cover letter
* One page project proposal (see below)
* Resume or CV
* Artistic portfolio
* Completed application form

The project proposal is meant to give us an idea of the concept behind your project as well as the techniques you might want to use. This should include a two-to-three-sentence summary of your project, a description of the ideas behind it and what you are hoping to achieve, and information about what animation techniques you would like to explore. Feel free to include any images or materials in with the application if it will give us a sense of what you are proposing, but please keep it concise.

We understand that the project is likely to change and evolve, especially as one takes classes and learns more about the art of animation, but the project proposal allows us to get a sense of your interests and approach.

**NOTE:** All animation techniques proposed will be considered for the scholarship, including (but not limited to): hand-drawn, stop-motion, collage, cut-out, cameraless, mixed media, digital, 3D, experimental, virtual reality, etc.

**TIPS FOR YOUR PROJECT PROPOSAL AND APPLICATION:**

* Keep your project proposal short, sweet, and concise.
* Visual examples, concept art, storyboards, or scripts help us but please keep it to the essential items to convey your project idea.
* Include select items from your portfolio in the application, we want to get a sense of your current artistic practice. Stills, paintings, prints, performance documentation, and film links are all valid. If you have a portfolio website do include that in your application, but please provide examples of your work with the application as part of your portfolio.
* Your proposed film can be experimental, non-narrative, weird, etc. or traditional, narrative, cute, etc. We don’t discriminate, but we will not support projects that are racist, sexist, ableist, homophobic, transphobic, or hateful towards marginalized communities.
* The goal of the program is to support you making your first short animated film. **Aim to create a self-contained film 3 minutes in length or less** – the shorter the better, we have found films over the 3-minute mark tend to run into production problems. Please note that this is **not** an opportunity to develop a pitch for a feature, TV series, or larger project outside the scope of this program.
* We love all forms of animation at QAS! Feel free to propose whatever methods you wish to explore, but try to focus on only one or two of them for your project. Do not include everything and the kitchen sink in your proposal unless you have a very clear reason for it – for example, “I want to create a short using 3D CGI, stop-motion clay puppets, projection mapping, cameraless animation, 2D hand-drawn, and pixilation…” That’s a lot of techniques to first learn, then use, in a short time-frame. Focus on a few that interest you right now, you can change your mind later.

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### *How Do I Submit My Completed Application?*

***Please submit all required documents in a zipped folder, PDF Format. Each file and your folder should be labeled in the following format: Yourname\_filename.pdf***

**Submissions are accepted by email only, labeled with the subject line: Chris J. Melnychuk Memorial Scholarship 2025-27: YourName**

***DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR 2025 - 2027 INTAKE  IS SEPT 2nd 2025 at 12 pm noon MST***

Send submissions and/or questions about the program or application process to Quickdraw’s Programming Director, Ryan Von Hagen: programming@quickdrawanimation.ca**.**

***About Chris J. Melnychuk***

Chris J. Melnychuk was an active contributor to the arts community in Calgary, an award-winning animator, and a much-loved member of the Quickdraw Animation Society. While his animated films toured worldwide, Chris never wavered in his long-standing commitment to mentoring young artists and animators. His films include *Alien*, *Zap Girl Makes Toast*, and the posthumously released *C’est La Vie: The Chris J. Melnychuk Story*, documenting his battle with tongue cancer.