

tah's iconic landscapes have starred in countless films and captivated audiences in film and television for a century. As the state commemorates 100 years of cinematic history, we're reminded of the legacy of hard work, determination, and economic success that shaped Utah's thriving film industry and drawn visitors and filmmakers alike.

Utah is the backdrop for thousands of movies and television shows, from the red buttes of Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park to the otherworldly sandstone formations in Goblin Valley State Park, the streets of any town USA in Salt Lake City, and the snow-capped mountains of the Wasatch. These breathtaking landscapes, combined with the people working behind the scenes, are why this state is known as Utah. America's Film Set.®

A CENTURY OF FILM IN UTAH

The year 2024 marks the 100th anniversary of the premiere of the first movies filmed in Utah. One century ago, Ogden-born director James Cruze set out to produce a Paramount Pictures film on the rugged landscapes of Utah. Hundreds of cast and crew members, including 750 Native Americans from the Bannock Tribe, were hired to produce "The Covered Wagon". They took the motto "rain or shine" seriously, filming the river crossing scenes in the mud and wetlands of Garrison Reservoir and crossing the desert plains in the sun and heat of southern Utah.

PIONEERS OF FILMMAKING

Hard work and grit are attributes that continue to permeate the Utah film industry. There are several early filmmaking pioneers, but two families shine in Utah film history. The Parry brothers, Gronway, Chauncey, and Whitney, regularly went to Los Angeles to drum up movie business. The trio

brought Tom Mix, the most famous Hollywood cowboy of their time, to Utah in 1924 to film "The Deadwood Coach". The brothers built the Parry Lodge in Kanab, which hosted hundreds of movie icons including Frank Sinatra, Clint Eastwood, and Ronald Reagan. The lodge is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Gouldings were another influential family. Harry and his wife Leone, who was also known as "Mike", created a trading post and later a lodge to entice moviemakers to come film in Monument Valley. Once John Ford filmed "Stagecoach" in Monument Valley in 1939, many Western filmmakers repeatedly returned, iconizing the landscape as the symbol of "The West".

BY THE NUMBERS

The economic success of the early pioneers of film continues today. Utah's film incentive program generated \$669.1 million in economic impact over the last five years. In addition, \$6 billion was spent in Utah in the previous 10 years by tourists, with 37% of the visitors saying that a film or television show has some influence on their decision to visit Utah. Today's film industry and its subsequent economic impact are shaped by the business endeavors of thousands of men and women who came before. Their drive and determination to capture the state's landscapes in film created a long-lasting filmmaking legacy in Utah.

Celebrate with us this year by visiting our exhibit at the Utah State Capitol and attending events throughout 2024. Visit our website film.utah.gov/100years for more information.

Contributed by:

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CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

OF UTAH FILM & TELEVISION

