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(Photo: Chris Battaglia)

The Colonial Theatre and Hawthorne Arts Collaborative Announce New Leadership Team

Meg Fournier Named Executive Director

(Belfast, Maine) - The Colonial Theatre, owned and operated by the nonprofit organization Hawthorne Arts Collaborative, announced that Meg Fournier has been appointed as the organization's new Executive Director.

Born and raised in Louisiana, Meg has made Belfast and greater Waldo County her home for nearly 20 years. She brings years of experience driving community-focused, multi-disciplinary arts programs across Maine and beyond. Most recently, she served as

Operations Director and Producer for Points North Institute, whose programs include the Camden International Film Festival and Points North Forum. Meg's career has spanned a wide range of arts and cultural institutions including the Maine Arts Commission, Waterfall Arts, the Maine International Film Festival, Unity College Center for the Arts, and the Renzi Education & Art Center in Shreveport, Louisiana. Locally, Meg also co-founded and directed two former Belfast-based projects: Roots & Tendrils and the Free Range Music Festival.

"We're thrilled to welcome Meg to the Colonial," said Board Member, Libby Catania. "Meg's deep experience in arts management, her longstanding commitment to the community, her wisdom and her compassion make Meg the perfect person to lead the Colonial Theatre. We are eager to work with her in guiding the Hawthorne Arts Collaborative into its next chapter."

In addition to Meg's appointment, the organization announced the formation of a new leadership team:

- Kyle Walton is taking on a new role as Program Director, focusing his curatorial vision to lead year-round film and event programming.
- Crew Members Kyle Parrish, Kathryn Rowley, and Jon Tibbetts will step into the roles of Theater Manager, Front of House Manager, and Facilities Manager, respectively.
- Kate Fletcher is joining the team as Development Director. Kate is a Maine-based arts administration and development professional with a deep commitment to community-centered cultural programming. She served as the Executive Director of the historic Waldo Theatre in Waldoboro through its recent renovation and reopening, where she played a pivotal role in revitalizing the venue and expanding its reach as a space for local arts and performance.

This core team will lead both the Colonial Theatre's day-to-day operations and programming, as well as the broader goals of its parent nonprofit organization, Hawthorne Arts Collaborative. Upcoming projects include new website and ticketing platforms, expanded partnerships with area organizations and businesses, and new programming opportunities for artists and audience members of all ages.

"As someone who deeply loves the history of the Colonial Theatre and the creative vibrancy of the Belfast community, it's an incredible honor to step into this role," said Meg Fournier. "I'm inspired by the dedication of Kyle Walton and the team that took on the herculean

effort to reopen and revitalize the theater as a nonprofit over the past two years. I look forward to working together to continue to build a vibrant future for the Colonial Theatre and Hawthorne Arts Collaborative as both a historic cinema and a dynamic creative hub for Midcoast Maine and beyond.”

To learn more about upcoming events, film schedules, and collaborative opportunities, visit colonialtheatre.com.

About the Colonial Theatre

The Colonial Theatre is a historic and vibrant arts venue located at 163 High Street in downtown Belfast, Maine. It has played a central role in the community, offering films, live performances, and neighborhood gatherings for over a century.

The Colonial Theatre was first built for stage performance. It first opened its doors in 1912, coinciding with the day the Titanic set sail. Its original building burned to the ground in the Phoenix Row fire in the early 1920s. It was rebuilt shortly after with the addition of film projection. Over the years, the Colonial Theatre has evolved into a three-screen cinema, including the audience favorite “Dreamland” theater, which also features a vaudevillian-style stage and Art Deco decor. The eye-catching fiberglass elephant “Hawthorne” that tops the marquee became an iconic part of the theatre’s identity beginning in the late 1990s.

After decades of continuous operation, the Colonial Theatre closed temporarily in September 2022 when its longtime owners retired. The theatre reopened shortly after in fall of 2023 under the newly formed non-profit, Hawthorne Arts Collaborative. The Colonial Theatre continues to offer a curated mix of film programming ranging from first-run blockbusters, to foreign and art house titles, to classic films. “Indie Night” screenings often feature Q&As with filmmakers and other guest speakers. Additional programming includes live music, stage performances, comedy, and a wide variety of community events.

About the Hawthorne Arts Collaborative

The Hawthorne Arts Collaborative, formerly known as Belfast Theatre Arts Company, is a 501(c)3 non-profit rooted in the legacy of the Colonial Theatre and its continued operation. Hawthorne Arts Collaborative aims to broaden access to the arts in Midcoast Maine by fostering partnerships, curating diverse programming, and nurturing creative community engagement across disciplines.