

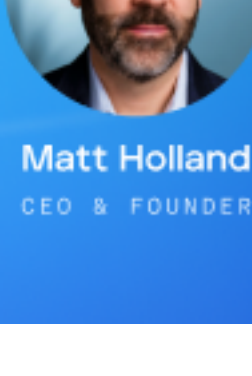
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Mythos and Project Glasswing:

A Practical Look at the Future

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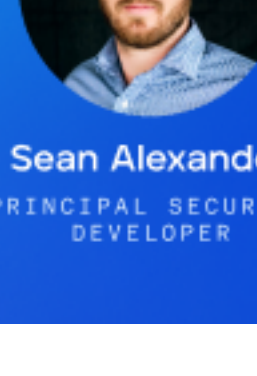
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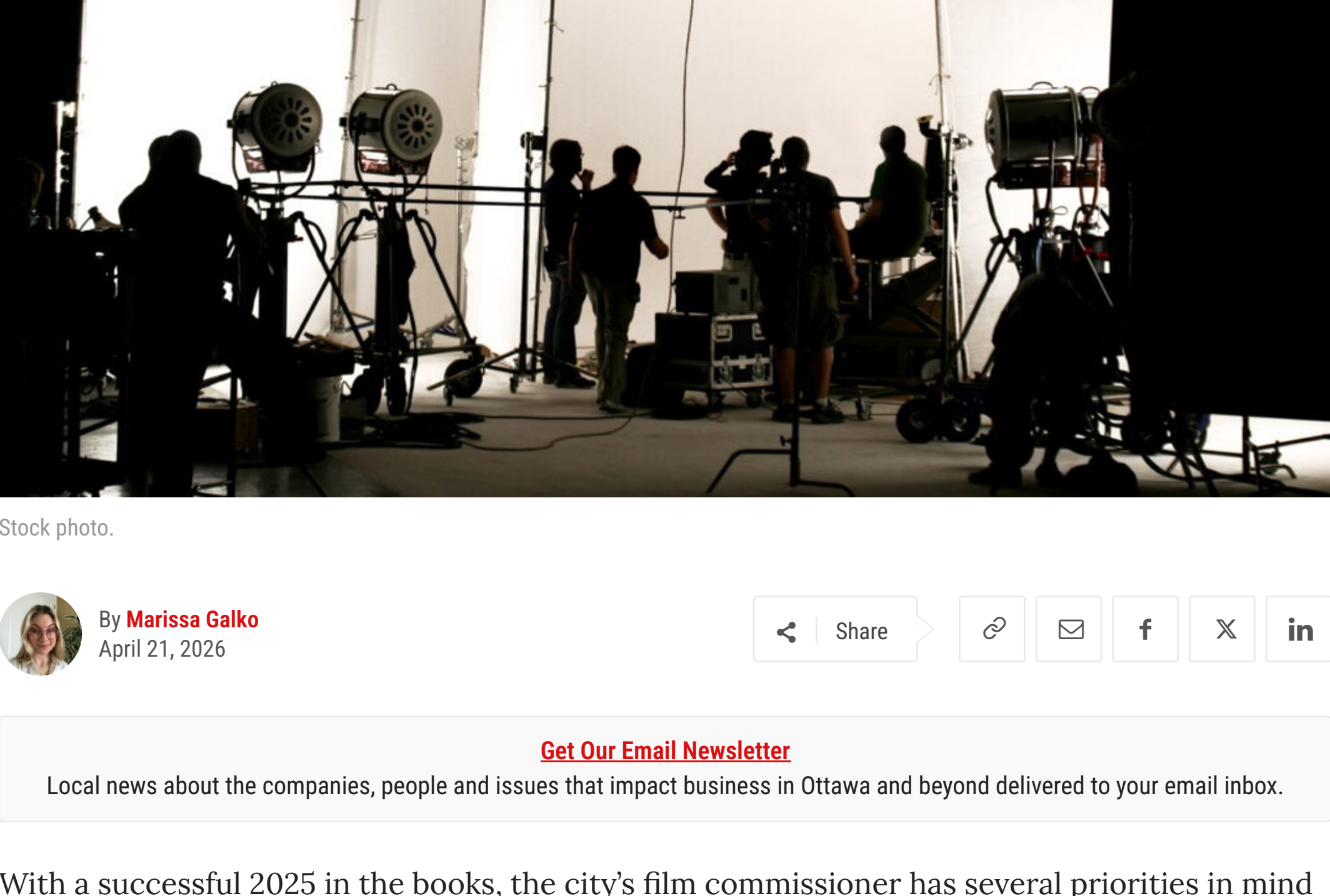
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A soundstage remains a priority as Ottawa’s film commissioner looks to boost economic impact



Stock photo.

By **Marissa Galko**
April 21, 2026

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With a successful 2025 in the books, the city's film commissioner has several priorities in mind that she feels will increase the economic impact of the city's screen industry, including the potential for a soundstage, a project that has been discussed since 2018.

Sandrine Pechels de Saint Sardos told OBJ last week that 2025 was a “record year.” The industry brought in \$62 million in local economic activity in live-action productions, with 30 feature-length, made-for-television films and seven live-action television series filmed in the nation's capital.

Plus, the city is getting noticed on the global stage. Earlier this month, the Ottawa Film Office was shortlisted for “film commission of the year” for a city or region at the Global Production Awards, set to take place during the Cannes Film Festival in May.

“We are extremely proud of our filmmakers, producers, crew and cast actors for the hard work they put in towards this success,” Pechels de Saint Sardos told OBJ.

The shortlist nod is an indication of how hard the local screen industry works and Pechels de Saint Sardos said it helps put Ottawa on the map for future projects.

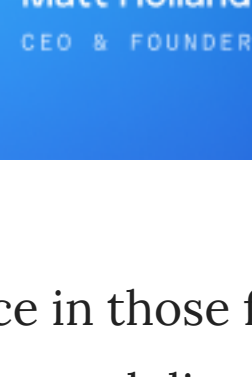
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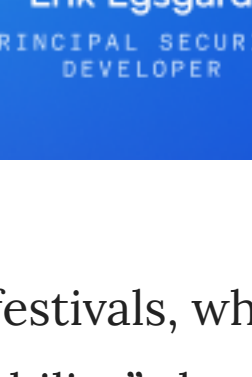
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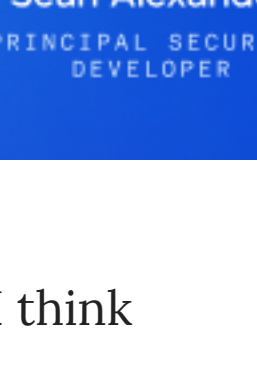
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“We are the capital city of Canada. We need to have a space in those film festivals, which I think is so important for exposure and to achieve more attraction and discoverability,” she said.

Ottawa is a city with enormous potential, she said. “Before I used to have to pitch (intellectual properties) and now I'm pitching a city. We are bilingual. We offer amazing, versatile locations. (We have) great tax incentives with a 10 per cent bonus on top of the 35 per cent against labour expenses. And it's easy to get around Ottawa. You can get from downtown to a farm in 20 minutes.”

Against such a backdrop, Pechels de Saint Sardos said she's ready to bring Ottawa's screen industry to the next level. Here are the four things that are top of mind for her as she looks forward to a new season.

Reviving Ottawa’s animation industry

Around the time of the pandemic, Ottawa's animation industry boomed as people stayed home and watched movies and TV. Production continued, even as stay-at-home mandates kept workplaces shuttered.

Pechels de Saint Sardos said the local industry realized \$60 million in revenue during that time. But demand slowed in the post-pandemic years, with revenue reaching \$15 million in 2024.

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In 2025, Ottawa's animation industry improved, generating \$28 million in revenue. However, Pechels de Saint Sardos said the industry still faces headwinds such as the growing popularity of short-form content apps and declining support from post-secondary institutions.

“There is a big decline in kids watching TV. YouTube is taking that momentum (away). Kids are watching content that is not tailored to (their age groups) ... [Atomic Cartoons](#) closed in Ottawa last December. This is a huge disaster for the community. Some institutions like [Algonquin College](#) and La Cité Collégiale got rid of some of their (animation and film industry) classes. That's a crisis,” she said.

Now, Pechels de Saint Sardos said she's pushing to bring animation back. “I really want to support our animation studios more than ever. For the first time at the Cannes Film Festival, there is a whole animation angle to the festival. It's not just (anime), it's feature films in animation, which seems to be a format that everybody wants. I'm going to meet with producers there and see if I can bring some projects to the studios in Ottawa.”

Diversifying the production lineup in Ottawa

Ottawa is possibly best known as the place where horror and holiday movies such as Netflix's *Hot Frosty* are made. But while the city will always welcome those productions, Pechels de Saint Sardos said she is striving to attract a wider variety of productions to Ottawa.

“It's great to have Christmas movies, rom-coms and horror movies, but I want more independent feature films like *Et maintenant* and *It Comes In Waves*,” she said.

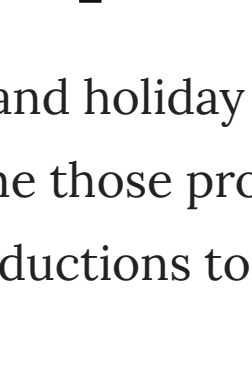
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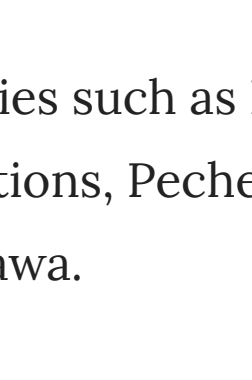
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With many global embassies in the capital, Pechels de Saint Sardos said she has advocated for the next season of Netflix's *The Diplomat* to take place in Ottawa.

“We are home to 130 embassies. It's the perfect playground for a social-political TV series. And those embassies are super-open to be filmed.”

Still, she said that the film office doesn't “want to put (itself) in a box,” and continues to search for diverse productions to take place in Ottawa. But to truly diversify the kinds of productions that are brought to life, the city needs to be open for business longer than a few months a year, Pechels de Saint Sardos said.

Progress on a new soundstage

In 2018, the film office announced its proposal to build a \$40-million soundstage and creative hub on the site of the former Greenbelt Research Farm on Woodroffe Avenue across from the [Nepean Sportsplex](#). The land has been leased from the National Capital Commission.

In March 2024, the film office announced that it would [start accepting expressions of interest for its soundstage project](#) and Pechels de Saint Sardos told OBJ in late 2024 that [such a facility would generate between \\$40 million and \\$100 million in annual economic spinoffs](#).

There have been few updates since then. Last week, Pechels de Saint Sardos said work is slowly progressing.

She added that the film office board completed a business plan last December that is now with the city's economic development team before being presented to council.

“I understand that it's an election year, so I am not sure if something will happen this year, but my hopes are high,” she said of the soundstage project. “I'm the locomotive behind that soundstage. We don't need a big one, just a few stages.”

“From December to March, we are losing those essential months because it's too cold or there is too much snow to go and film outside. Christmas movies are usually filmed from April and into the summer because there is less rain and it's easier to work with props. During those four months, our producers are either working in creative development or trying to get more gigs going. I want to give them more security,” she told OBJ last week.

Meanwhile, she said her team has been scoping out other vacant spaces in the city with the hopes of retrofitting them, but haven't found a good match yet.

“Either the ceilings are too low or there are columns in the way. If it's with the private sector, it becomes very expensive. If it's with the NCC, it's better, but from what I've seen, it's not adequate for the dimensions we need to have.”

The film and TV industry’s impact on the local economy

Pechels de Saint Sardos said the film office's 2025 numbers give her confidence that Ottawa has potential as a production city. “We are very much a part of the economic development (of the city) ... That's why it's essential that we have a soundstage, because it will create even more positions.”

Still, many notable productions have taken place in the city over the past year, including an episode of CBC's *Murdoch Mysteries* and independent film *Love Is Not The Answer*, directed by Micheal Cera and starring Pamela Anderson, Steve Coogan and Jamie Dornan.

Ottawa is even starting to become its own “character” in some productions, Pechels de Saint Sardos added.

“We had [Geek Girl](#) film [here](#). Episodes five and six were filmed in Ottawa, but you see Ottawa as its own character. Usually, Ottawa (stands in for) Dublin, New York, Boston, Philadelphia or someplace else in Europe, but for the first time on a major U.S. platform, you saw Ottawa (as Ottawa),” she said.

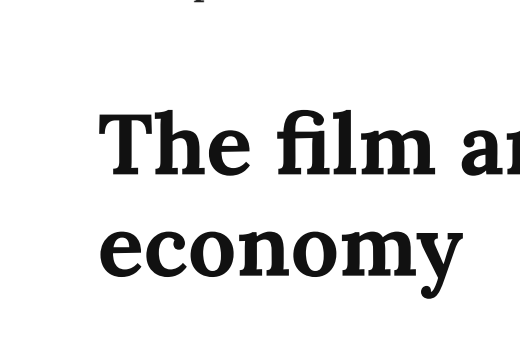
With productions such as *Geek Girl* showcasing the city's historic landmarks and ambience, combined with an increasing number of direct flights to Ottawa from global destinations, it could lead to increased tourism to the capital, she said.

“What I love about those (*Geek Girl*) episodes is that you see the lovely city. You want to go there. It's springtime with the tulips. It's like the White Lotus effect,” she said, adding that *Crave's Heated Rivalry* has also helped put Ottawa on the map.

All in all, Pechels de Saint Sardos said she is optimistic about the city's screen industry.

“Ottawa has a lot of potential. We have a lot of creative people here. I'm in awe of the kindness, professionalism and the time that they give to projects. There is so much potential here so we have to keep going. I'm a big dreamer, but a realistic one and I feel that (the screen industry in) Ottawa is expanding.”

With files from *Mia Jensen and David Sali*



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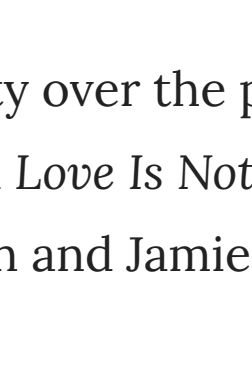
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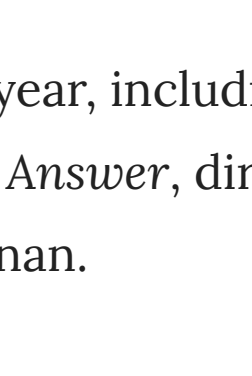
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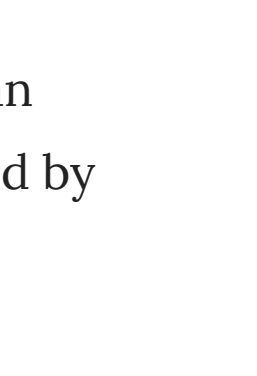
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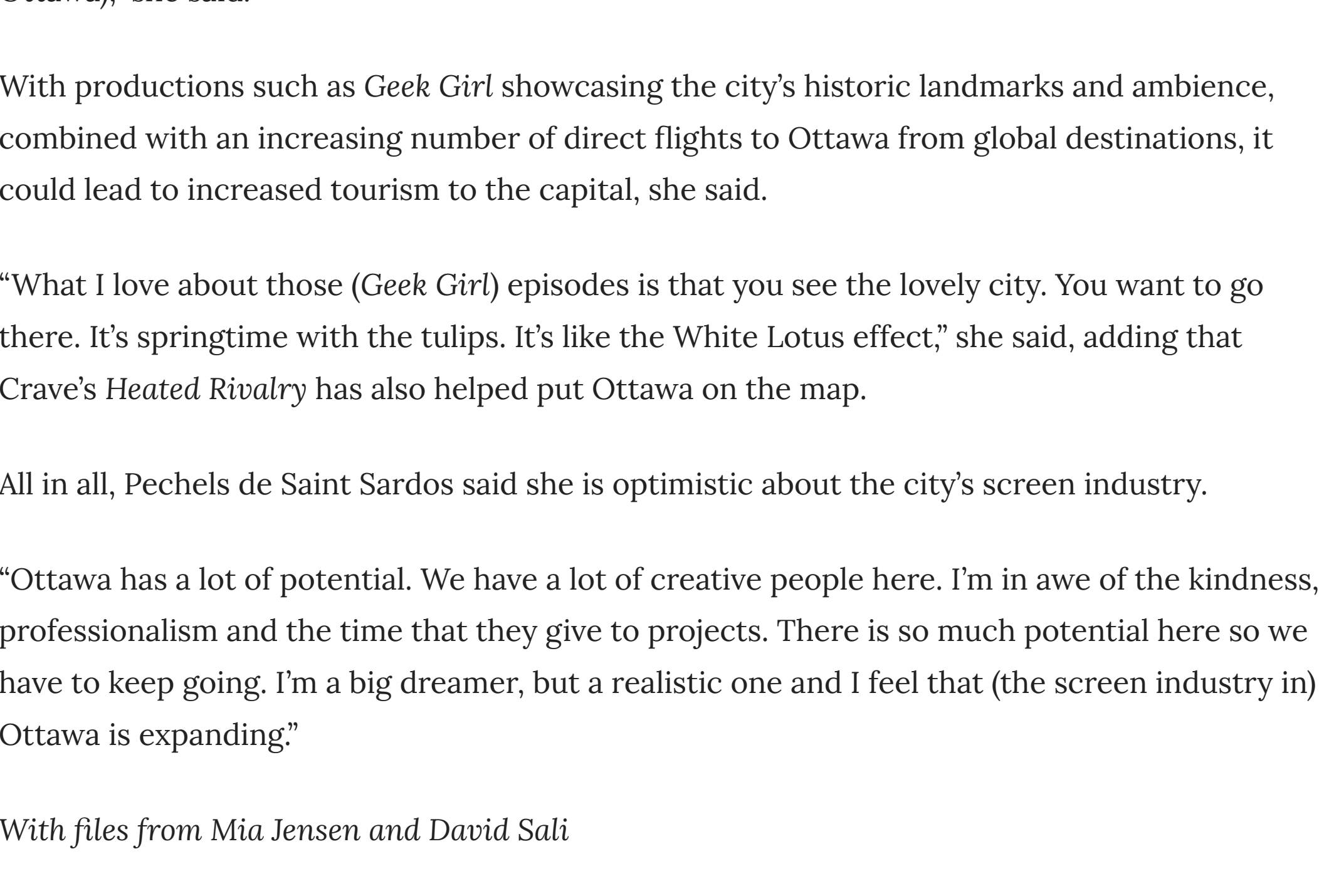
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By **David Sali**
April 21, 2026

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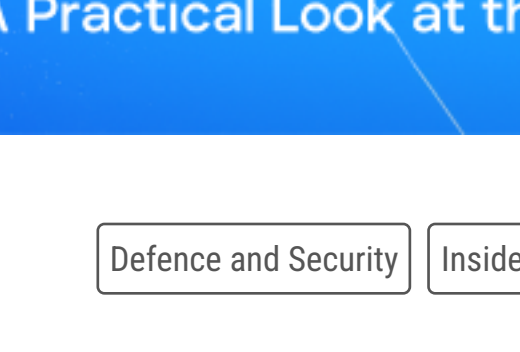
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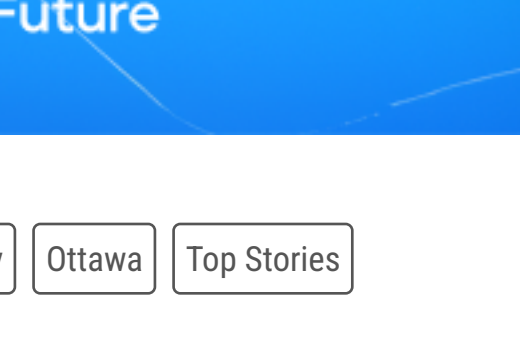
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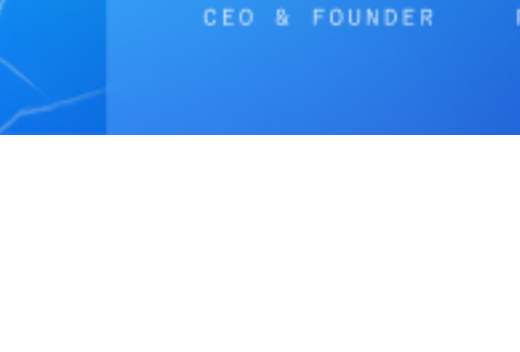
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