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### **The Ducks & Us Heads To The Movies**

What do Columbia City Cinema, a one-stop, triple-screen neighborhood movie house seated in the most ethnically diverse zip code in America and Far Away Entertainment, a nine-location movie house with over thirty screens in the state of Washington have in common? Come July and August, both are getting behind Emotion Literacy Advocates (ELA)—a local, arts-based non-profit using the arts to promote social-emotional learning—by booking ELA's latest creation: *The Ducks & Us Song Book Movie*.

Slotted as a pre-feature attraction, *The Ducks & Us Song Book Movie* is a children's-style musical story with illustration, animation and video by Art Institute of Seattle interns and background vocals from the Northwest Boychoir. In under seven minutes, the movie wraps reading literacy, environmental literacy and emotion literacy into an empathic message for anyone who thinks bringing left-over bread, seeds and table scraps to the park benefits wildlife.

The big screen version is based on ELA's learning tool, *The Ducks & Us*, an original song CD and study guide by ELA's founding artist Pamela Sackett. The CD was incorporated into Seattle Audubon learning programs in 2008 and distributed through the education and outreach arm of the Graham Visitors Center at Washington Park Arboretum. The concept grew out of Sackett's devotion to healthy urban parks and her frustration, after spending a year trying to convince the city to post signs in strategic places.

"Apparently I have no fond memories of sharing my food with ducks, so I was free to embrace the science. I trusted the facts and wished I could convey their relevance to many park visitors who throw pizza, cookies, crackers, burritos and bread, thinking that wildlife needs it." After her daily walk in the park, Sackett spent several months gently offering Progressive Animal Welfare Society flyers to folks, attempting to substantiate her requests to curtail the activity.

At an early point, a city of Seattle Parks and Recreation employee offered to assist. She approached an older man throwing food from his truck and, later, let Sackett know the man did not comprehend her request to stop. Sackett decided then to delve deeper, observe and converse with a wide range of people throwing food in the park.

"I came to understand how incomplete the science part of the equation can be, especially when it comes to behavior change. Just about every human circumstance has a social-emotional component," said Sackett. "An artfully told story can let people know they are heard and understood, as well as convey new information."

Sackett parlayed quite a bit of good will in support of *The Ducks & Us Song Book Movie* project. A substantial in-kind contribution from Deluxe Entertainment Services Group, a Los Angeles-based company, will enable ELA's digital movie to be projected on a sixty-foot cinema screen. The Seattle Mayor's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs has awarded ELA a *smART ventures* grant for the cinema tour launch.

"I am confident that wherever *The Ducks & Us Song Book Movie* goes, so too will go an opportunity to learn how to engage with more open eyes," said Sackett.

Look for *The Ducks & Us Song Book Movie* at Columbia City Cinema and Far Away Entertainment screens in July and August. For more information, the tour schedule and to see *The Ducks & Us Song Book Movie* trailer, visit [emolit.org](http://emolit.org) and click on the banner.

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