

*Embargoed until December 7, 2023 at 7:30 a.m. PT*

**More than 17% of Entertainment Workers Lost Jobs During Strikes, with a 26% Total Contraction in Hollywood Employment since the Height of 'Peak TV' in 2022**

*2023 Declines are still less than 2016, 2020, and 2022*

*Otis College releases first in a series of industry studies as part of forthcoming Otis College Report on the Creative Economy*

**LOS ANGELES, Calif** – Dec. 7, 2023 – Otis College of Art and Design today released a [new study](#) that sheds light on the state of L.A.'s entertainment labor force, following the WGA and SAG/AFTRA strikes and the decline of Peak TV. The first of two studies to focus on the entertainment industry—with the second arriving in early 2024—includes key findings that illuminate an industry in contraction:

- **More than 1.5 in 10 entertainment workers in L.A. lost their jobs since the start of the WGA and SAG/AFTRA strikes.** Hollywood is 17% smaller now than it was in April 2023, with 24,799 workers losing their jobs.
- **The strikes are best understood as part of a longer-term decline in Hollywood employment.** Since the industry's post-pandemic employment high in August 2022, it has shrunk by 26%.
- While the strikes have not been nearly as significant as the pandemic from an overall employment loss standpoint, **the entertainment industry has lost nearly half of its post-pandemic gains as a result of the strikes.**
- **Did Peak TV create a valley of unemployment? The L.A. entertainment industry was already losing employment before the strikes.** The strikes accelerated an industry contraction already underway following its post-pandemic high point.
- There is a quartet of larger challenges to Hollywood's model: Oversupply, a weaker investment environment, technological disruption, and foreign competition.
- As expected, Actors and Writers saw the most rapid declines, along with Camera Operators and Editors, and Other Media Occupations—a group that includes Broadcast, sound, and lighting technicians.

In producing this study, Westwood Economics and Planning Associates conducted a detailed labor force analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and California Employment Development Department (EDD) data, covering the strike period; an analysis of job postings published by Lightcast; and interviews with industry officials, including above-the-line and below-the-line talent, producers, talent agents, and policymakers. They analyzed 11,186 job listings in entertainment (film and television) over 15 months, ending on October 31, 2023.

The study is the first to be released in connection with the 17th annual [Otis College Report on the Creative Economy](#). Launched in 2007, the *Report* is an authoritative assessment of the influence and economic impact of creative sectors on the overall

economy of California. In 2024, the scope of the *Report* will expand, in part to support strategic research projects that address pressing issues.

“This study confirms what we have all seen and heard anecdotally over the last year: a notable contraction in the Hollywood economy,” said Dr. Patrick Adler, Principal at Westwood Economics and Planning Associates and Assistant Professor at The University of Hong Kong. “The decrease in entertainment employment predates the strikes, so despite relief that they have resolved, widespread challenges remain.”

“The entertainment industry is a key economic driver for California, with impact felt across the world. Analyzing the health of that industry is important for both our state and our students at Otis College of Art and Design, a diverse community of artists and designers planning careers across creative sectors,” said Charles Hirschhorn, President of Otis College. “We’ve developed the *Otis College Report on the Creative Economy* as an essential resource to give our creative students and citizens the information they need to best plan for their futures.”

[Download images and figures](#)

#### **ABOUT OTIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN**

Established in 1918 as Los Angeles’s first professional school of the arts, Otis College of Art and Design is a non-profit 501(c)3 institution and a national leader in art and design education. The College educates a diverse community of 1,300 creative students to become highly skilled, well-informed, and responsible professionals—empowering them to shape the world. Alumni and faculty are Fulbright, MacArthur, and Guggenheim grant recipients, Oscar winners, legendary costume designers, leaders of contemporary art movements, entrepreneurs, and design stars at influential companies including Apple, Abercrombie & Fitch, Pixar, DreamWorks, Mattel, Nike, and Netflix.

#### **ABOUT WESTWOOD ECONOMICS AND PLANNING ASSOCIATES**

Westwood Economics and Planning Associates is a Los Angeles-based economic consultancy specializing in local economic development, sustainable transitions, and the creative economy. They develop analytical tools and strategic plans on behalf of communities and leading-edge organizations.

###

#### **Media Contacts:**

Otis College: Anna Raya, Editorial Director, [araya@otis.edu](mailto:araya@otis.edu)

On behalf of Otis College: Don Halcombe, Doncomm, [doncommpr@gmail.com](mailto:doncommpr@gmail.com)