

ACTRA

SUMMER 2015

magazine

CAST YOUR VOTE,
CAST YOUR FUTURE

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Grace Gordon at the 2014 CLC Montreal convention. Photo: Anna Scollan

President's Message

Canadian Content: Fighting for that Happy Ending

In 1999, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) scrapped Canadian drama exhibition requirements at the behest of private broadcasters that claimed the same Canadian content could be delivered if they were unencumbered by regulatory fences.

That same year there were 12 one-hour dramas on our private networks (186 hours of Canadian content!), yet by 2007 there wasn't a single one-hour drama left on either Global or CTV. So much for market forces.

That's the way things go in the regulatory world sometimes; it's by glancing into the rear-view mirror that we're able to tell if a single decision was good or bad for Canadian programming.

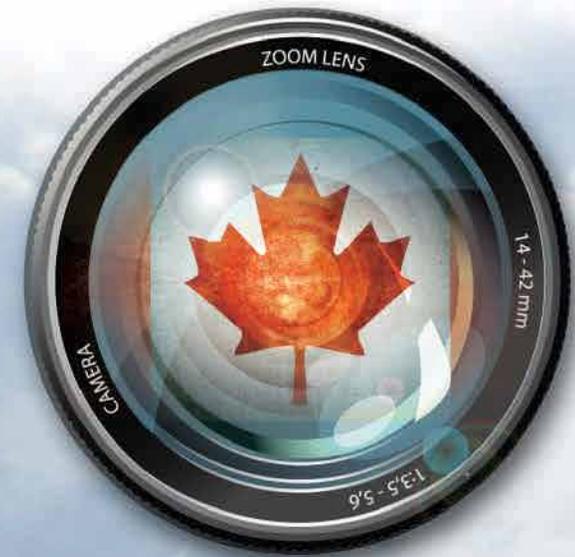
Back in 1999, the CRTC placed too much trust in a handful of broadcast executives without bothering to create a regulatory safety net in case they failed to live up to their word. The CRTC should have known better – it was a disastrous policy. For the better part of a decade, ACTRA and our creative industry partners hammered the Commission about its failure to protect Canadian programming. It wasn't until 2010, when the CRTC announced the group license policy that we started to turn this dreadful situation around.

continued

“Today, technology has changed the way Canadians consume content. ‘Anytime, anywhere, any device’ is the motto now. Destabilizing agents, like Netflix, that have no responsibility to the Canadian broadcast ecosystem threaten to turn the whole industry on its head.”



ACTRA National President
Ferne Downey



Canadian Content

... continued



“The 2010 TV Policy was a much needed shot in the arm for Canadian programming and helped kick-start the beginning of a new ‘Golden Age’ of Canadian television.”

Now, thanks to the CRTC’s Canadian Programming Expenditures (CPE) and Programs of National Interest (PNI) requirements implemented as a result of the 2010 TV Policy decision, broadcasters must spend a percentage of their revenues on the creation of Canadian programming.

The 2010 TV Policy was a much needed shot in the arm for Canadian programming and helped kick-start the beginning of a new “Golden Age” of Canadian television. Now Canadian programming is everywhere – *Rookie Blue*, *Orphan Black*, *Lost Girl*, *19-2*, *Motive*, *Saving Hope*, *Continuum*, *Remedy*, *X Company* – and the list goes on and on. The leading edge of an underutilized vein of Canadian talent eager to create powerful and compelling television, not just for us, but for audiences around the world.

But nothing lasts forever.

Today, technology has changed the way Canadians consume content. “Anytime, anywhere, any device” is the motto now. Destabilizing agents, like Netflix, that have no responsibility to the Canadian broadcast ecosystem threaten to turn the whole industry on its head.



In reaction to this rapidly-changing state of affairs, the CRTC crafted its Let’s Talk TV consultation, which was billed to place the broadcast sector in the best position possible to take on the challenges posed by these revolutionary technological changes. Over the last year, industry stakeholders as well as the Canadian public had an opportunity to speak directly to the Commission and offer their input on the future of the industry. Unfortunately for the creative community, the policies the CRTC crafted as a result of that consultation have been a major disappointment.

In the short term, thanks to “pick-and-pay” and the elimination of genre protection, it’s almost certain that some specialty channels will fail. That means job losses and less Canadian programming.

We were also unhappy the CRTC is removing its support for Terms of Trade and failed to require Over-the-Top (OTT) broadcasting services, like Netflix, to play on an even field with the rest of the Canadian broadcast sector.

Over the long term, things get hazier. There are simply too many changes concerning too many facets of the broadcast system to accurately predict how everything is going to come together in the end.





So we stand at a precipice. Will the policies crafted by the CRTC have the outcome it desires; to foster and promote quality Canadian programming in an increasingly changing marketplace? I am not encouraged by the CRTC's decision to eliminate CanCon requirements in daytime. As well, no change in the Digital Media Exemption Order means no new money will flow to the dedicated creation of Canadian content. The banning of simultaneous substitution for future Super Bowl commercials removes millions of dollars of advertising money from the broadcast ecosystem. And an unanticipated "pilot project" for productions with budgets over \$2 million with greatly weakened CanCon requirements is an ill-considered experiment that will hopefully never come to fruition.

Let's Talk TV was a watershed moment for the Canadian broadcast sector. It is absolutely critical the regulatory policies generated by this process serve the needs of Canadians and Canadian programming, and not rely on the capricious whims of broadcasters whose only concern is the bottom line. We can ill-afford another re-run of the disastrous 1999 TV Policy and the lost decade of Canadian programming that resulted.

While the CRTC's policy decisions won't take effect until each broadcaster's license review is

completed, the roadmap needs some course correction. ACTRA will continue to work with industry partners to oppose the erosion of our shared cultural future. We can only hope that a possible change in government in the next federal election will result in a shift to a more culture-friendly environment that will encourage the CRTC to strengthen, not weaken, Canadian content; bolster, not hobble, the Canadian industry; and help, not hurt, Canadian creators. ●

GREAT CANADIAN CONTENT!

1. Hélène Joy and Yannick Bisson in *The Murdoch Mysteries*. Courtesy of CBC.
2. *Mohawk Girls* stars Jenny Pudavick, Brittany LeBorgne, Heather White and Maika Harper. Photo courtesy of APTN.
3. Aunjanue Ellis and Sandra Caldwell in *The Book of Negroes*. Photo courtesy of CBC.
4. *Remedy* stars Enrico Colantoni, Sarah Allen, Dillon Casey and Sara Canning. Photo courtesy of Showcase.
5. Jared Keeso and Adrian Holmes star on *19-2*, the Québécois cop series airing on Bravo and CTV. Photo courtesy of CTV.
6. Gerry Dee plays Gerry Duncan in *Mr D*. Photo courtesy of CBC.
7. *X Company* stars Dustin Milligan, Evelyne Brochu, Jack Laskey, Warren Brown and Connor Price. Photo courtesy of CBC.
8. *Bitten* stars Laura Vandervoort and Greyston Holt. Photo courtesy of Space.



TELEVISION:



OUR DRAMATIC HISTORY

March 22, 2010: After ACTRA's decade-long fight for Canadian drama, the CRTC released a group-based television regulatory policy. This new TV Policy acknowledged the reality of the Canadian broadcast system: that industry consolidation had reduced the number of broadcasters in Canada to a handful. The new TV Policy required broadcasters to spend 30 per cent of gross revenue in their broadcast group on Canadian Programming Expenditures (CPE), and a minimum of 5 per cent of their revenue on Programs of National Interest (PNI) (scripted drama, comedy and awards shows).

April 1, 2010: Federal Industry Committee hearings on foreign ownership and telecommunications. ACTRA argued that any relaxation of telecom ownership regulations would impact broadcasting and threaten Canadian cultural sovereignty as telecommunications and broadcasting companies were integrated. Despite wide-spread concerns, the government overruled the CRTC and allowed the purchase of wireless telecom Globealive (now Wind Mobile) by foreign interests. This would become an ongoing legal and policy battle.

January 11, 2011: ACTRA supported Bell Canada Enterprises' (BCE) purchase of CTV, but only if the process would result in a greater contribution to the production of independently-produced Canadian television drama than was initially proposed by BCE. ACTRA flat-out rejected BCE's claims that it should not have to pay tangible benefits to support program production.

March 7, 2011: The CRTC approved BCE's purchase of CTV, but – at ACTRA's urging – stuck to its Policy and ordered BCE to pay 10 per cent of the value of the transaction to tangible benefits, amounting to \$140 million in new programming.

April 8, 2011: At the CRTC license renewal hearings, ACTRA members Tyrone Benskin and Wendy Crewson made the pitch that more Canadian content be required of broadcasters. These were vital hearings and an important test of the new TV Policy rules.

July 27, 2011: The CRTC announced new license requirements for Bell, Corus and Shaw consistent with its new TV Policy – that 30 per cent of their gross revenue be allocated towards Canadian Programming Expenditures (CPE). Rogers was given a lower CPE of 23 per cent. The license renewals were a win; but, unfortunately, there were no requirements to air programming in primetime.

September 21, 2011: The CRTC released a new Code of Conduct for vertically-integrated companies, but left out online broadcasting. ACTRA had argued for symmetrical regulations between broadcasters' online and conventional arms. Broadcasting online continues to be completely unregulated as a result of the CRTC's Digital Media Exemption Order (DMEO), so Over the Top (OTT) services, like Netflix, are not subject to Canadian content regulation, nor are they required to make any contribution to support the broadcast system.

President's Message... continued

March 16, 2012: BCE announced a merger deal with Astral Media, Quebec's largest media company. The merger was supported by ACTRA as long as the decision reflected its concerns about fair valuation, media consolidation and the structure of the benefits packages for Canadian programming.

June 18, 2012: Appointment of new CRTC Chair Jean-Pierre Blais comes into effect. Blais will serve for a five-year term.

October 18, 2012: The CRTC rejects sale of Astral Media's broadcast assets to BCE in a decision that reflected ACTRA's reservations in hearings on the takeover.

November 26, 2012: The CBC license renewal hearings at the CRTC. ACTRA urged the CBC to devote more time to Canadian TV drama and children's and youth programming, and to revive radio drama. ACTRA also asked the CRTC to reject the CBC's proposal to allow commercial messages on Radio 2.

February 27, 2013: ACTRA intervened at the CRTC's independent license hearings in support of a broadcasting license for Starlight: The Canadian Movie Channel. The CRTC did not approve Starlight's application.

May 6, 2013: ACTRA appeared before the CRTC to provide an opinion on a revised application to transfer control of Astral Media television and radio services to BCE. ACTRA offered provisional support for the application, albeit with several key conditions.

June 27, 2013: The CRTC approved the sale of Astral Media services to BCE. As a condition of the transaction, BCE is required to spend \$246.9 million in tangible benefits over the next seven years on proposals that will provide Canadians with a greater range of Canadian programming choices, and Canadian creators with more opportunities to showcase their talent.

November 5, 2013: ACTRA intervened at the CRTC in support of Corus Entertainment's purchase of TELETOON programming services provided that TELETOON maintain its CanCon requirements.

December 5, 2013: ACTRA submitted comments regarding the Commission's review of its tangible benefits policy. ACTRA encouraged the CRTC to maintain oversight of tangible benefits monies, better communicate with industry stakeholders, and ensure tangible benefits are spent on initiatives that improve and support the Canadian broadcast system.

February 18, 2014: Canadians were invited to complete the interactive Choicebook questionnaire as part of the Let's Talk TV consultation. The questionnaire asked for feedback on seven core issues: basic subscription services; local news; pick-and-pay; sports programming; American and international programming; signal substitution; and online programming. Disappointingly, the survey failed to identify Canadian content creation as an overarching issue.



May 6, 2014: ACTRA intervened in support of an application by DHX Media to purchase the Family group of broadcast services from BCE. Bell was forced to sell these services as a result of its purchase of Astral Media. ACTRA's view was that this sale would generate competition and diversity within the Canadian broadcasting sector, and DHX's expertise in creating family programming would make the company a good fit for the group of Family channels.

June 27, 2014: ACTRA submitted its intervention for the Commission's Let's Talk TV consultation. The sheer scope of the consultation and the number of regulatory changes being considered made it challenging to anticipate what it could mean for Canada's broadcasting sector. As part of its submission, ACTRA reminded the Commission about the need to support and develop Canadian programming and how Over-the-Top (OTT) broadcast services, like Netflix, needed to start contributing to the Canadian broadcast sector.

January 29, 2015: The CRTC released its first policy decision as a result of its Let's Talk TV consultation. The Commission decided to keep Canada's simultaneous substitution regime largely intact but ruled that after the 2016/17 NFL season, CTV will no longer be allowed to substitute American commercials aired during the Super Bowl with Canadian commercials. This policy will deprive the broadcast system of millions of dollars in revenue generated by Canadian advertising aired during the game.

March 12, 2015: The CRTC released its second Let's Talk TV policy decision. This new policy was a multi-faceted decision that focused on the development of compelling and diverse Canadian programming. In the policy, the Commission once again decided not to revoke the Digital Media Exemption Order (DMEO). One of the positive results that would flow from the CRTC finally revoking the DMEO would be that OTT players would begin contributing to the Canadian broadcast system.

ACTRA advocated strongly during the Let's Talk TV hearing that it was time OTT services meet minimum Canadian programming requirements. ACTRA encouraged the Commission to require a fixed percentage of OTT services' libraries be dedicated to Canadian programming and that providers also begin contributing to independent production funds.

The new regulatory policy also eliminated genre exclusivity; distanced the Commission from Terms of Trade; eliminated Canadian content exhibition requirements for traditional channels (except in primetime); adopted CPE requirements for all Canadian programming services; and proposed the creation of pilot projects that would be exempt from the standard Canadian content certification process.

March 19, 2015: The final Let's Talk TV policy was released by the CRTC. This policy required broadcasters to offer Canadians 'skinny' basic cable packages and individual television stations on a "pick-and-pay" basis by 2016, fulfilling a federal Conservative directive laid out in the 2013 throne speech. ACTRA and others believe that job losses will result, a consequence that the throne speech directive opposed.

TBA: The Commission will conduct a consultation to create children's and youth programming subcategories of Programs of National Interest (PNI) to ensure this genre of programming continues to be an integral part of the Canadian broadcast system. ●

ACTRA's annual lobby trips to the Hill focus on the importance of federal support to Canadian TV production. Pictured here during the 2013 MP meetings blitz are Alvin Sanders, Maria del Mar and Peter Keleghan. Photo: Fred Chartrand



Ferne Downey, Stephen Waddell and Katie Boland presenting at the 2014 CRTC Let's Talk TV consultations in Gatineau, Quebec. Photo: Fred Chartrand



ACTRA member embrace Canadian TV showrunners Adam Pettle (*Saving Hope*) Jackson Davies (panel moderator), Hart Hanson (*Bones*) and Sheri Elwood (*Call me Fitz*) at the 2015 ACTRA member conference in Los Angeles.



#NSFilmJobs

By Ferne Downey

“The rally itself was the most impressive and inspiring public event I have ever attended and a great tribute to the organizational and creative skills of this tightly-knit family of artists.”



If we value our own economic survival, like that huge crowd surrounding the Nova Scotia legislature, we must commit to political engagement aimed at replacing governments whose policies are hurting us all.

This past April, I stood on stage in front of the Nova Scotia legislature in front of a huge crowd of nearly 5,000 people gathered to express their anger, incomprehension and fear over the sudden and **totally unexpected actions** of the newly elected Liberal government. Without consultation, the McNeil government closed Creative Industries Nova Scotia virtually overnight, and announced changes to the film tax credit program that would gut the vibrant Nova Scotia film and television industry. Projects scheduled for production in Nova Scotia announced cancellations. Films in production were now unable to find out who was responsible for issuing location permits. Members of the province’s creative community saw the work opportunities they had counted on evaporate before their very eyes.

An industry that had grown from \$6 million in economic activity in 1995 to more than \$140 million in 2014 was on the verge of collapse. The industry was a victim of a government that seemed to have no idea of how it worked and no interest in finding out. The response within the creative and business communities that had flourished when the film industry came to town was immediate – and executed brilliantly and effectively. The rally was the most impressive and inspiring public event I have ever attended, and a great tribute to the organizational and creative skills of this tightly-knit family of artists.

The government had been forced into consultation with the industry, but in fact the rally marked the beginning of what may be a long struggle to rebuild an industry this

inept bunch of rookie politicians had already grievously damaged. In the weeks ahead their willful ignorance would continue to shine through and continue to disrupt the lives of thousands of the province’s brightest and best, many of them young people who were now, like so many before them, contemplating “going down the road” in search of work.

What’s happening in Nova Scotia has great national resonance. As a cultural industry, we need strong, informed government support to grow and prosper. Indeed the growth of not only our industry, but the country itself since Confederation, has been driven by visionary government action. ●



Patrick Roach, Robb Wells and Mike Smith



The Dunsworth family of ACTRA members
Geoff Dunsworth, Zoë Dunsworth,
Sarah Dunsworth, Molly Dunsworth and
John Dunsworth



David Whalley, Randy Boliver and
ACTRA Maritimes President
Jamie Bradley



Jeff Schwager, Ferne Downey
and Jeremy Webb

WE WORK ACTRA

By Stephen Waddell, National Executive Director

As the video game world continues to grow in this country, we look forward to securing and improving performers' Use rights and compensation in video games.

One of ACTRA's most important functions is to re-negotiate its national agreements with Canadian producers and U.S. studios. ACTRA National works closely with its branches, who are responsible for reaching out to branch membership for their views on possible improvements to ACTRA's agreements. Branch front-line staff also help us prepare and strategize our proposals. **Working together with our branches over the years has meant that we have been able to achieve significant and continual improvement in compensation and contract language in successive rounds of bargaining.** We will once again use this process to re-negotiate the Independent Production Agreement (IPA), which governs all English-language film, television and New Media production in Canada outside of British Columbia. In 2014, ACTRA performers earned \$157 million under the IPA, representing over half of all performer earnings across the country.

ACTRA and industry producer associations - including the Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA); Association Québécoise de la Production Médiatique (APQM); and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers

(AMPTP) - have selected dates within the weeks of October 19 and November 16, 2015, to sit down and renew the IPA in advance of its December 31, 2015, expiry date. The list of proposals for the next contract will be finalized by the members who constitute ACTRA's National bargaining committee at a **Wages and Working Conditions** meeting to be held in Toronto from September 17-18, 2015. **We expect once again that New Media will be a key issue in IPA bargaining.** ACTRA will likely seek improvements in the way members are compensated for projects produced for, and used in, this fast expanding and evolving area of production and distribution. **For more information please visit actra.ca and keep an eye on your email for ACTRA news updates.**

As chief negotiator for UBCP/ACTRA, I am very pleased to report that re-negotiation of the British Columbia Master Production Agreement (BCMPA) in February of this year produced an excellent result. The BCMPA generates the second-largest amount of performer earnings, accounting for nearly one-quarter of all ACTRA member earnings. Ahead of the March 31, 2015, expiry date, the excellent

UBCP/ACTRA negotiating committee agreed on new terms that included a 6 per cent increase over the life of a three-year contract. Improvements were obtained for the dance and background communities, and working conditions were made safer for performers on set. Eligible UBCP/ACTRA members voted 90 per cent in favour of ratifying the settlement reached with the U.S. studios and CMPA BC.

Another key win for ACTRA came with the re-negotiation of a local video game agreement. In April, I was pleased to lead negotiations with Montreal-based video game producer **Game On Audio**. Negotiations produced terms of settlement that, in addition to a three-year deal featuring a 6 per cent increase in compensation, established a Use period limitation replacing the former in-perpetuity buy-out of performers' work. **The principle of performers' intellectual property rights, compensation for and limitation on Use of product has long been a cornerstone of our agreements in film, television, commercials, audio recordings, and New Media in Canada.** As the video game world continues

to grow in this country, we look forward to securing and improving performers' Use rights and compensation in video games. ACTRA is a world leader in negotiating agreements with video game producers, generating significant growth in work opportunities and earnings for ACTRA performers. ●



Production still from 19-2, the Québécois cop series airing on Bravo and CTV. Photo courtesy of CTV.



a) Michelle Langlois-Fequet, Carlo Mestroni (crouching), Scott Humphrey
b) Michelle Langlois-Fequet
c) Scott Humphrey
d) Michelle Langlois-Fequet
Photos by Anna Scollan & Randy Duniz

Your Chance to Cast Your Next Government

By Jacob Leibovitch, Director, Public Policy, Research and Communications

“Culture is not a frill, it is a major industry based on renewable resources.”

It may be the dog days of summer when you read this, but the next federal election is just around the corner and politics in this country are sure to heat up ahead of the October 19, 2015, election date. After four years of majority Conservative party rule under Prime Minister Stephen Harper, more and more creators in this country are ready for change. Harper, in spite of his pro-business rhetoric, has systematically attacked and threatened our cultural industry, despite the clear benefits it brings to the economy. Let the numbers speak for themselves: cultural industries in Canada contribute more than \$85 billion – or 7.4 per cent – to our GDP and over 1.1 million jobs to our economy.

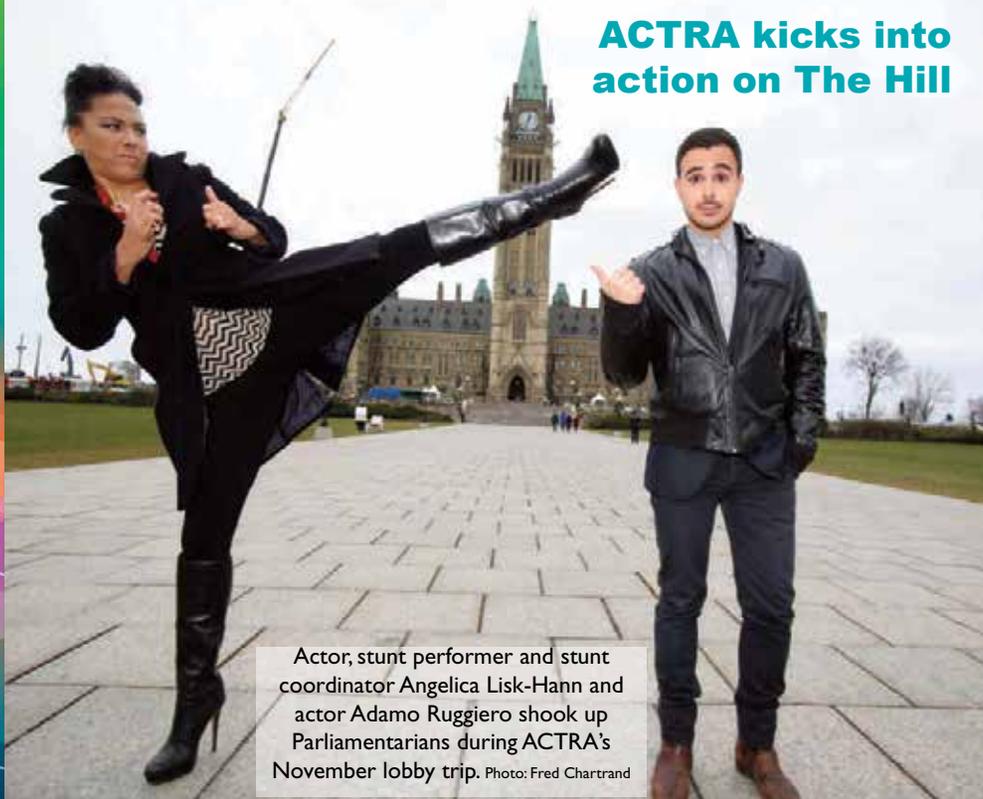
It's clear that culture is not a frill, it is a major industry based on renewable resources. Given the right tools, Canada's content creators and cultural industries will continue to play a leading role in economic innovation and growth, job creation, and the development of new digital technologies. Why, then, do we continue to be ignored by the current government? The conclusion many have drawn is that creators simply don't fit into the Conservative's ideology of putting consumers before citizens.

An increasing number of unions and guilds recognize how important the next election will be. For example, the Directors Guild of Canada (DGC) and the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts (IATSE) have a long history of neutrality during electoral contests. After reviewing the appalling record left by this Conservative majority, the DGC and IATSE are taking a stand and telling their members to vote against Harper. ACTRA's strategic alliance partner, the United Steelworkers, has taken one step further by openly endorsing the NDP as the best choice for its members. And, finally, the Canadian Labour Congress is launching an anti-Harper "Time for a Change" campaign to help move its three million members to vote the Conservatives out without endorsing any one party.

To be clear, ACTRA is non-partisan organization. We are not affiliated with any particular party nor do we tell you, our members, how to vote. We do, however, urge you to consider how critical the decisions being made on Parliament Hill are to the health and survival of our industry and of Canadian culture. More specifically, these decisions also ultimately affect your ability to make a decent living in an industry of storytelling – rich and diverse stories about Canadians, by Canadians, and for Canadians.

The fact is, governments can make or break our industry. Recently, the Nova Scotia Liberal government shocked the local film and television industry when it announced its budget in April of this year. This is a perfect example of how a government's decision can affect our lives – and livelihoods. Major cuts to the film tax credit regime were announced despite the fact that the government, in the lead-up to the budget, had been consulting regularly with the industry and was told exactly what the impact of any reduction to the tax credit system might mean to the health of jobs and local production. Screen Nova Scotia, the industry's coalition, immediately responded by outlining the "disastrous" implications that would result from this tax cut. The entire creative community – producers, performers, writers and directors – joined together and, as one united voice, confronted the government about this potentially devastating error.

ACTRA kicks into action on The Hill



Actor, stunt performer and stunt coordinator Angelica Lisk-Hann and actor Adamo Ruggiero shook up Parliamentarians during ACTRA's November lobby trip. Photo: Fred Chartrand

Your vote matters

"We need more MPs in Ottawa who really understand what Canadian culture contributes to our economy and our national identity," stated **Colin Mochrie** at ACTRA's 2011 Federal Election press conference.



News quickly spread that local productions, such as the iconic *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* (even with its 20-year history of filming in Halifax), were considering pulling out and either moving to another province or out of Canada altogether. As of May 2015, the joint efforts and united voice of our industry has led the government back to the table with industry representatives. Though both sides will likely need to compromise, the brave and effective mobilization of the people who face unemployment and displacement led the government to reconsider its actions. The moral of the story is: **your vote matters**. There is no better time to hold those competing for your vote accountable than in an election year.

From a federal perspective, when we look at the impact and damage the government can exert on our industry, we have to consider the outcome of the recent CRTC's Let's Talk TV policy review as another example. Harper's government has exerted a considerable amount of direct political pressure on this arm's length government organization – not only does Prime Minister Stephen Harper have the power to appoint board members and the chair to the CRTC (he appointed Jean Pierre Blais chair), but, in the government's October 2013 throne speech, the Conservative party stated it wanted a "pick and pay" system of cable purchasing

brought to Canada's broadcast regime. This was considered a direct attempt to influence the outcome of the CRTC's television policy review, and sure enough, a "pick and pay" system was part of the reforms announced at the conclusion of the consultation.

This new system will not only threaten commercial revenue streams for all Canadian broadcasters but the entire existence of smaller channels. In an even more audacious example of direct political interference, the Conservatives practically sabotaged the CRTC's pressure on Netflix to produce data on Canadian subscribers after announcing, in bellicose terms, the party's opposition to any future "Netflix tax." Not surprisingly, the CRTC leadership abdicated any attempt to have Netflix contribute to Canadian production funds, let alone any regulation to ensure it included a minimum amount of Canadian content in its catalogue. For a full break down of the potential harm included in the CRTC's announced policy changes, see President **Ferne Downey's** excellent Canadian content feature story in this issue.

At perhaps the height of cynical political manoeuvring, the Harper government recently brought back from the dead the

deeply flawed, anti-union Bill C-377. Even former Conservative Senator Hugh Segal called the union-targeted private member's bill "immature, ill-conceived and small-minded" as he led the Senate to successfully block the original legislation in 2013. Undaunted by the assertions of constitutional lawyers and experts or the Canadian Bar Association, the current government continues to push for this same bill that would seriously hamper all unions' abilities to advocate on behalf of their members. Whether we consider the attack on unions represented in Bill C-377 or the profoundly sweeping and vague "anti-terrorism" Bill C-51, it's clear our government is making it a priority to stifle civil societies' ability to organize and speak out for the citizens of this country.

"Governments can make or break our industry."

ACTRA has a long tradition of advocating for its members at the federal political level.

Typically, this is done in the interim election period with lobby efforts on Parliament Hill. However, during the election season, we urge members to get involved and vote on election day. In the lead up to the October 19, 2015 federal election, we took a step back to think about how we could best serve you, our members. We started by sending out a membership survey asking you to share your thoughts on politics and ACTRA's role in them. We were happy to hear that you like the way we're conducting our government relations efforts and the issues we champion on your behalf. Additionally, we're happy to know (and are up to the task!) that you want us to do more to inform you about these efforts.

We were also interested to learn what issues were most important to you and have shared these findings here:

Healthcare 36.3%

Employment 35.8%

Canadian culture 15.8%

Childcare 6.1%

Pensions 6.1%

ACTRA, rather than endorsing a single party, asks you to join the broad consensus-forming Canadians across the industry and in the houses of labour by agreeing that the **Conservatives have to go**. To help you make an informed choice, we will be launching a **federal pre-election campaign** webpage on our main website – actra.ca – with the information you need to help you decide how to cast your vote. We will ask the parties to commit to our industry and we'll provide you with a copy of their record on the issues you outlined were most important to you in our membership survey.

So, when a Conservative, Liberal, NDP or Green Party candidate comes looking for your vote, ask them directly if they will commit to keeping an industry worth \$85 billion in revenue and 1.1 million jobs to our economy healthy and thriving. This is your chance to cast your next government. Cast your vote for our jobs and our culture.

One last word to get you on the street – if you can make it out to your local Labour Day (September 7) parade this year, you'll receive your very own ACTRA T-shirt with our slogan, "Cast your vote, cast your government!"

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HISTORY

Behind the Scenes

Are you happy with your government's performance history?



1.6
2009

START
HERE

June 2, 2010:

Parliament tabled Bill C-32, new copyright legislation that would legalize for-profit shifting and private copying without building on existing artist royalty systems. ACTRA accused the government of leaving creators out of the discussion.



July 11, 2010:

The Federal Court ruled that Internet Service Providers (ISPs) could not be classified as broadcasters because they did not actually create content, only provided access to it. Unlike private broadcasters, ISPs did not pay a "content levy" on profits because their services were considered "content neutral."



This was a big loss for Canadian performers and producers, but a win for large integrated media conglomerates that own both commercial TV outlets and ISPs. Since the ruling, integrated media conglomerates have started producing content that is only available online.

April 20, 2011:

ACTRA members urged Canadians to vote for culture and jobs on the eve of the federal election. Conservative candidates refused to attend debates on cultural issues.



September 29, 2011:

The Conservatives tabled Bill C-11, a reiteration of its flawed copyright legislation.



Despite months of testimony from creators arguing for improvements that would benefit all Canadians, the bill passed in the Commons without significant amendment.

November 17, 2011:

ACTRA delegation met with Prime Minister Stephen Harper and urged him to make Canada's content creation industry a central part of his government's digital strategy.

Prime Minister Harper implied he might be open to income tax averaging for artists.



December 5, 2011:

Conservative MP Russ Heibert introduced Private Members Bill C-377. If passed, the bill would inflict onerous administrative costs on unions in the guise of 'transparency'.

February 9, 2012:

The Supreme Court of Canada upheld ruling that ISPs could not be considered 'broadcasting conduits.'



June 1, 2012:

NDP MP Tyrone Benskin introduced The Income Tax Averaging Bill for Artists, bringing one of ACTRA's major policy objectives to the floor of the House of Commons. ACTRA and the Canadian Producers Association (CMPA) released a joint statement in support of Bill C-427.

June 29, 2012:

The Conservatives' copyright Bill C-11 passed unamended in the Senate to become law despite extensive efforts by ACTRA to recommend amendments to protect creators' rights.



March 29, 2012:

Announcement of federal "austerity" budget was full of mixed messages.



Funding for Canada Council for the Arts was maintained but cuts were made to Canada's public cultural institutions, including Telefilm Canada, the National Film Board and the CBC.

November 7, 2012:

Despite Prime Minister Harper's positive comments at his November 17, 2011, meeting with ACTRA, Bill C-427 on income averaging for cultural workers was defeated.



October 30, 2012:

Canadian Conference of the Arts closed its doors after 67 years as a result of a funding cut by the Conservatives.



April 29, 2013:

The Conservative government announced changes to and a national consultation on the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. ACTRA prepared to offer recommendations to improve and streamline rules for facilitating service productions in Canada.



Introduction of new Conservative government budget bill included surprising changes in traditional arm's length relationships with Crown corporations, including the CBC. The changes would allow the government to directly participate in management decisions at the CBC, including collective bargaining. ACTRA quickly condemned the government's decision, citing an intervention in collective bargaining at the CBC could threaten journalistic independence and content decisions.

June 26, 2013:

The Senate blocked anti-union Bill C-377 legislation; Conservative Senator Hugh Segal led the block, calling the private member's bill "immature, ill-conceived and small-minded."



September 22, 2014:

The Conservative government revived debate in House of Commons of Bill C-377.



April 21, 2015:

The Conservatives announced 2015 budget; included extension of the term of copyright for sound recordings from 50 to 70 years under the Budget Implementation Act.



Monday

OCTOBER

19

VOTE!

The bill imposed numerous red-tape requirements on unions and would cost millions of dollars to implement. This aggressive anti-union bill was sent to the Senate.

OUR KIDS, OUR FUTURE

By Theresa Tova



After 10 years, it has finally happened! Many of the safeguards we have fought for and implemented on ACTRA sets will soon become law in Ontario. I hope other provinces will be convinced to follow. The passing of Bill 17, an Act to protect child performers, means that even non-union producers will have to pay special attention to the needs of minors. All kids working on sets will now have the same protections of education, regulated work hours, income and the required presence of a guardian in an adult work place.

IN CONVERSATION WITH FIONA FORSYTHE AND CHRISTIAN DISTEFANO

Perhaps, someday, I'll write a book about our collective history but today I want to introduce you to two young actors who are our future. Even though they are busy working on sets, they are still just kids having **fun**.



Meet **Fiona Forsythe**, a 10-year-old performer based in Halifax. Fiona attends every ACTRA Maritimes meeting, has marched with her union in Labour Day parades and, as a passionate activist, rallied with her industry to save Film Nova Scotia's future. Fiona is a smart, engaged young woman with a lovely spirit and big dreams.



Meet **Christian Distefano**, a 10-year-old performer from Toronto. We caught up with him as he was heading to an audition and before his flight back to Los Angeles to finish filming a pilot. Hats off to his parents, who are determined to keep their young actor happy, well rested and secure, all while balancing a demanding shooting schedule.

It is extremely gratifying to meet young actors like Fiona and Christian in the same week that Bill-17 was passed into law. The protections they take for granted represent decades of effort by many at ACTRA. The first time I fought three grievances on behalf of my own children was in 1992. Through 1995-1996 I was part of a team that negotiated much needed improvements to the minor's section of the Independent Production Agreement (IPA). ACTRA agreements provide the appropriate language and detailed guidelines for our working children, and we've continued to advance the rules and regulations with every subsequent agreement.



Nova Scotia's film and television industry rallied outside the provincial legislature on April 15, 2015, to protest the proposed cut to the province's film tax credit. Pictured here are Cole Moore, Danielle Moore, Nadia Tonen, agent Ciel Crosby, Joseph Tonen, Fiona Forsythe and Haeleigh Moore. These children, except for Nadia, are all ACTRA members.

Photo: Stoo Metz

Sarah Polley, who had suffered many indignities as a child performer, was a huge help, as was **Shirley Douglas**, who was fearless in shining a light on the treatment of kids on our sets. MPP Paul Miller brought the bill forward twice and, with the efforts of Canadian Actors' Equity, the Canadian Media Production Association, the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres, ACTRA National and, of course, everyone at ACTRA Toronto, we won! And now these protections are extended to all children working in this high-pressured showbiz 'time is money' industry.

Remember, **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** Providing a safe environment in which our working kids can be happy on set is shared equally by parents, ACTRA and producers. I often get calls for help after the fact. Please contact your local ACTRA branch, get involved and know your rights. Download ACTRA's *Stage Parent Survival Guide*. Get out to ACTRA conferences, minors' sessions and Parent Training courses. As Christian and Fiona say, "It's got to be fun"! ●

OUR
KIDS
KNOW...

ACTING
HAS
GOT TO
BE FUN!

Fiona at the Halifax Labour Day parade.
Photo: Tia Forsythe



Question:

How did you start acting and what do you love about it?

Fiona: I started acting with my whole family in background but later on I got a part in a short film and I realized that's what I wanted to do. I don't want to do anything else. Everything about it is so much fun, but my favourite thing is I get to play different people. Each part is different, each day on set is different and the stories we get to tell are amazing! ...I was in *Bag of Bones* as one of the people who got drowned. That was fun! It wasn't a big part but I really liked it because I got to meet one of my best friends, Caitlin, who lives in California. She's an actress too, who's also my age.

Christian: I signed with my first agent and started modelling. When I was six I did *Teletoon*. I really liked it because it was so much fun! Then I booked *Clown*, a horror movie... now that's an interesting story. I was so scared when my dad told me I booked the job that I had second thoughts on auditioning. The scene I had to prepare for scared me but then I knew it was just fake. Acting is mostly fun. See I'm a kid and so I audition for a lot of kid's shows that have lots of other kids in them and it's fun to hang out with other kids while you're filming. So it's not just business.

Question:

You're both ACTRA members. How much do you know about the rules and regulations that protect you?

Christian: I think maybe I know a little bit too much! Sometimes when I'm really close to getting my full eight hours of work, I'll say to my parents, "I only have 10 minutes left!" I get stressed, but then I always get out on time.

And in America, the minimum is three hours of tutoring and the maximum is four hours, but in Canada, the minimum is just two hours. I get enough school work done in both... but I really prefer to act.

Fiona: There are a minimum number of union members that have to be on set and that has helped me to do the stuff that I love. And I like to show that I am part of the union and it's not really all about when the union's doing something for me; I have to give back to the union every now and then.

Once I was on *Seed*. They were going to give the kids a break, do a different scene, and then come back to the kids with another scene. But I was on set before the other kids so I checked the clock and told them I wouldn't be able to stay because it was close to my "pumpkin" time. I know they can't keep me over eight hours until I'm older. My mom would always tell me that, so that's just in my brain now.



Sam Humphreys and Fiona on the set of the CityTV show, *Seed*.

Photo: Tia Forsythe

Question:

How do you balance being a kid with all of this work that you do? What advice would you give other kids?

Fiona: A lot of my life goes into acting, but I make friends on set, so I'm still being a kid. Thanks to my mom, who helps make it happen, I still have a lot of time to do my homework and go to school. Some of the best advice I was given was from **Jonathan Torrens**, "If you're not having fun, you're doing it wrong." I say, never give up and always be yourself.

Christian: You mean, like going to school and being a normal person? I keep the two lives separate. I don't really talk about it at school except with my two best friends. The best advice I could give is to just be yourself in the room or at an audition. That's what they want to see... but also know your lines too. Don't worry about booking a role, when the role is right for you it will come. Guardians, let your kids be themselves. My parents help me with scripts but never direct me. I would also strongly recommend attending the minor's meetings. We learn so much from them. ●

"The best advice I could give is to just be yourself in the room or at an audition... but know your lines too."

Ten-year-old **Fiona Forsythe** has been acting professionally since the age of six. Aside from acting, she is a Girl Guide and plays basketball for the Fairview Clayton Park Warriors. She loves playing, acting and hanging out with her friends. Her credits include *Bag of Bones*, *Mr. D* and *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, and she plays Chloe in the Hallmark movie, *Christmas With Holly*.

Christian Distefano first caught the attention of the industry at age six as series lead in *Ronnie Realist* for the Teletoon cartoon network. He won a Young Artist Award for his role on *Murdoch Mysteries*. Other TV credits include *The Strain*, *Odd Squad* and *Satisfaction*; voice work includes *Paw Patrol*, *Super Why*, *Peg-Cat* and *Creative Galaxy*; and the horror film, *Clown*. Christian enjoys boxing, basketball, swimming and singing. He is currently working on his debut CD scheduled for release next year.



Christian at a *Peg+Cat* recording session. Christian voices the alien character Richard. Season two of *Peg+Cat* is currently in production.

Photo: Mike Distefano

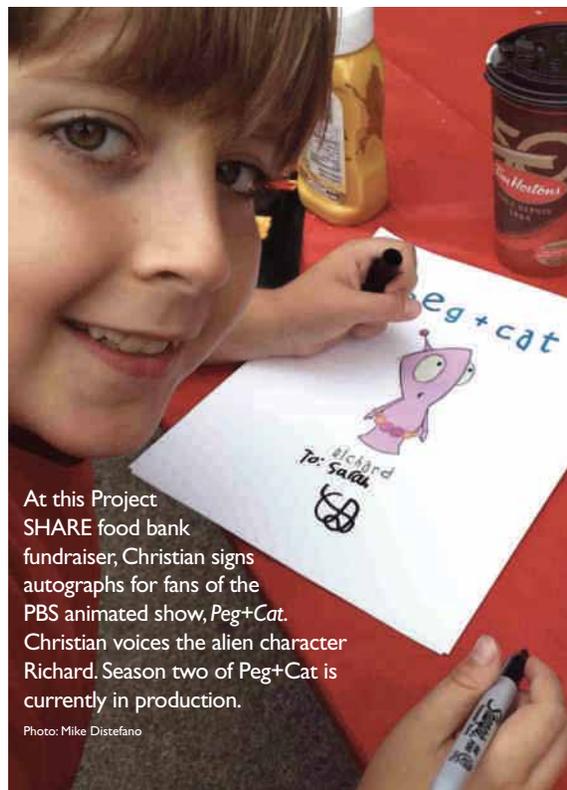


Fiona and Haeleigh Moore at a *Lizzy Borden Chronicles* audition.

Photo: Tia Forsythe

“Acting is mostly fun... so it’s not just business.”

Gemini-nominated for her role on the hit series *ENG*, actor, writer and singer **Theresa Tova**’s starring roles include *National Broadway Tour* to the Stratford and Shaw Festivals. Her musical *Still The Night* garnered four Dora Awards and a Governor General’s Award nomination. Tova’s *Bella: The Colour of Love* sold out houses in Philadelphia, Warsaw (Poland), Belgium, Halifax, New York and Toronto. Tova released three CDs and headlines international festivals as the Yiddish Diva. Tova is ACTRA National Treasurer and National Children’s Advocate.



At this Project SHARE food bank fundraiser, Christian signs autographs for fans of the PBS animated show, *Peg+Cat*. Christian voices the alien character Richard. Season two of *Peg+Cat* is currently in production.

Photo: Mike Distefano



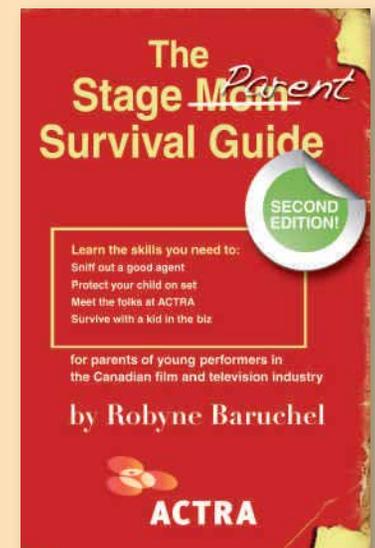
Christian with Tricia Helfer on the set of the *Finding Christmas* Hallmark movie.

Photo: Mike Distefano



A MUST-READ!

The Stage Parent Survival Guide is a valuable tool for parents who are new to the business. Download the book for FREE at www.actra.ca or contact your local branch for a hardcopy.



ACTRA's Young Emerging Actors Assembly (across Canada)



— A POLITICAL ACT!

YEAA Montreal committee members at the ACTRA Montreal Awards,
Nominee Wyatt Bowen, Adam Alberts, YEAA Montreal Co-Chair Alison Louder and Adam Bennett.

Photo: Derek Dugas

“I am thrilled to Co-Chair YEAA Montreal and to be involved with this innovative and spirited group.” – Holly Gauthier-Frankel, YEAA Montreal Co-Chair

YEAA Montreal

The sophomore chapter of YEAA is a dynamic committee comprised of ACTRA Montreal performers and council reps – together we are YEAA Montreal! We are uniting young actors with each other and the local screen-based entertainment industry by forging a strong community network for Apprentice members who play ages 18-30.

For two spring seasons in a row, we’ve hosted an exclusive casting opportunity for YEAA Montreal members: FilmGen is a general audition that gives Apprentices the opportunity to go in for a large principal role. Not only is this unique experience often the first time many are seen by key players in Montreal’s casting community but they also have an opportunity to receive direction and coaching from the industry’s seasoned professionals. A third FilmGen audition is currently being brewed and we cannot wait to unleash it!

Keeping young emerging actors engaged with ACTRA is so important! By empowering them with the knowledge of how Canada’s political climate impacts our industry, our union, our jobs and our lives, we hope to deeply enrich their future! All those under our wing are encouraged to raise their voices, get involved and take charge of their careers. ●

-Alison Louder,
YEAA Montreal Co-Chair &
Grace Gordon,
YEAA Montreal Committee Member



Sign up for our monthly newsletter at
yeaa@actramontreal.ca to become part of a powerful new force of Montreal’s freshest talent: a vibrant young community that stands strong together!

Send an email to
yeaaml@actra.ca to be added to the mailing list.
Facebook: www.facebook.com/yeaaml
Twitter: @YEAAmontreal

YEAA Montreal member Grace Gordon at the CLC convention held in Montreal last summer.

Photo: Anna Scollan



YEAA is about supporting young actors to become the empowered, capable Canadian artists we need out there telling our stories. Actors are artists and artists are, by their nature, political. Artists stay relevant by commenting on the time that they live in. This is a political act! And a vital one.
 -Bryn McAuley, YEAA Toronto Co-Chair

At left: YEAA Toronto members Marie-Claire Marcotte, Rachel Witzman, Clara Pasioka, Koumbie, Karen Knox and Kristina Esposito. Photo: Ryan Singh

YEAA Toronto

YEAA Toronto is composed of award-winning performers and filmmakers – members who just landed their very first commercial and are setting foot in the industry for the first time as well as members who fall somewhere in between. As ACTRA is “the house we built for ourselves,” YEAA Toronto is too. In fact, YEAA Toronto is a house we just keep renovating. Building houses is hard work, but the great thing about YEAA is it’s there if you want to be a lead carpenter and build a whole new layer or a brand new initiative. For example, YEAA Minis, a new member-led short film initiative that is in the works.

YEAA Toronto is also here if you want to hold up the support wall we built a while ago by becoming involved in a long-standing initiative like YEAA at ReelWorld, an annual film festival that takes YEAA films from conception to screening. Now heading into its fifth year, YEAA Shorts at ReelWorld recently announced a call for new pitch submissions.

Maybe you want to come to our monthly general meetings to meet others and make a suggestion or two that could bring a little more excitement or make us a little more efficient. Maybe you want to be involved in some of our political initiatives (we’re adding a whole wing right now and there is a rumoured pool!). We have room at our continuously-being-renovated house for you!

If you play 17-30 and are an ACTRA Toronto member, come by our house, keep coming for a while, and leave nothing but footprints or grab a hard hat and start building a new layer right away. Our monthly general meetings are a great place to start. You’ll meet a bunch of people all at once and you can find out about everything going on and pick what’s most interesting to you. We aren’t building a door, so you might as well come by! ●

-Clara Pasioka,
 YEAA Toronto Co-Chair

Send an email to yeaa@actratoronto.com to be added to the mailing list.
Facebook: www.facebook.com/yeaa
Twitter: at @yeaatoronto or @yeaashorts



Director Slater Jewell-Kemker and actor Emily Piggford celebrate their short film, *Still*, at TIFF 2014.



YEAA Vancouver members from left to right, **front row:** Anesha Bailey, Andy Yu (pink shirt), Courtney Richter (Chair of YEAA Vancouver); **back row:** Justin Stone, Katie Stuart (Vice Chair of YEAA Vancouver), Katherine Ramdeen, Tyler Johnston, Laura Mitchell (grey toque), Andrea Stefancikova, Aaron Joseph, Evan Rein, Quynh Mi, Ava Vanderstarren, Jesse Hutch, Kristin Kowalski, Eric Banerd, Nadeem Khitub and Adil Zaidi, Administrator of YEAA Vancouver. Missing from photo are YEAA Vancouver administrators Jake Foy and Harrison Houde. Photo: Sue Brouse

YEAA VANCOUVER

Exceptional work. Professional development. Integrity and respect.

Our Young Emerging Actors Assembly of UBCP/ACTRA is the newest YEAA committee, established this past December in Vancouver. We are a passionate group of professional artists leading the way for those who play ages 18-30.

Our ambition is to produce exceptional work with other union performers and industry creators.

YEAA Vancouver creates a forum for members to write, direct and produce projects within the YEAA community alongside emerging filmmaking professionals. Our script and producer workshops have been very successful. Next up will be our director workshop. Keep your eyes and ears open as to who will be joining us.

Mentorship is an important part of our community as well and we strive to provide a link between established professionals and promising newcomers. We encourage new ideas and initiatives, such as our exciting new partnership with Project Limelight to bring back Monday Night Live to the Vancouver community. And check out YEAA Shorts Vancouver, our new platform for our young voices on the West Coast.

We encourage UBCP/ACTRA members to join our monthly meetings, which are held at our union offices in Vancouver. All union members in good standing who play 18-30 are welcome. Our meeting dates and times are announced through our YEAA social media outlets. ●

-Courtney Richter,
YEAA Vancouver Chair

Send an email to

yeaavancouver@gmail.com.

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/YEAAVancouver>

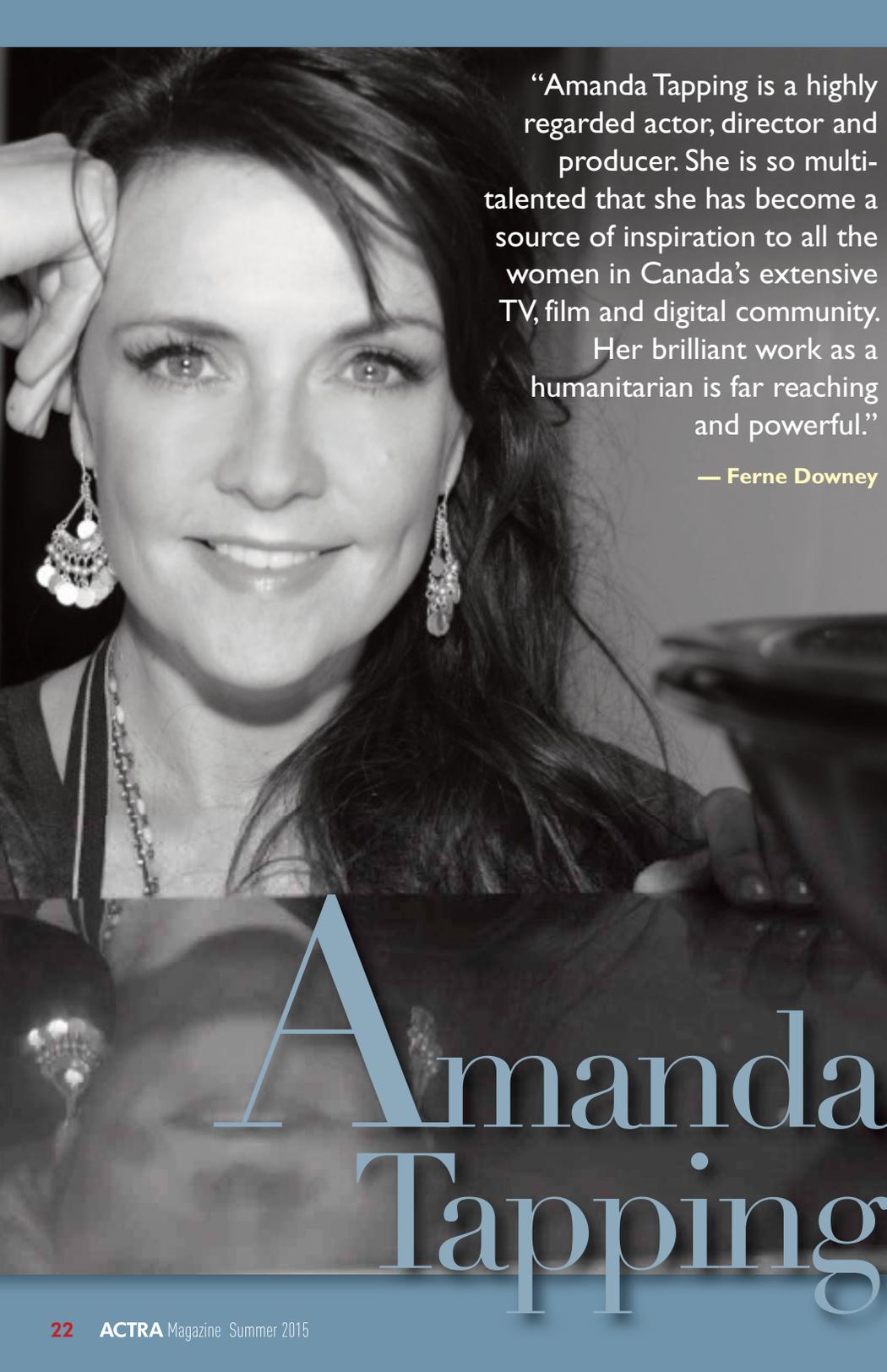
Twitter: @YEAAVancouver



Photo: Gordon Clark

"Our votes count more than ever in a time where a lot of young people aren't voting. Participating in UBCP/ACTRA and groups such as YEAA not only make a more active community of young voters but is the perfect platform for young people to have their voices heard in an industry that affects us directly."

-Harrison Houde, YEAA Vancouver Administrator



“Amanda Tapping is a highly regarded actor, director and producer. She is so multi-talented that she has become a source of inspiration to all the women in Canada’s extensive TV, film and digital community. Her brilliant work as a humanitarian is far reaching and powerful.”

— Ferne Downey

Amanda Tapping

ACTRA’s Woman of the Year

This year ACTRA shines the spotlight on **Amanda Tapping**, our Woman of the Year. ACTRA bestows this honour on a member who excels in both her artistic and advocacy achievements. In this exclusive interview, Amanda shares her advice and words of wisdom with us.

Q: On any given day, you can wear many important hats on set, such as an actor, producer and director. Off set, you generously share your time with your fans and perform extensive charity work. What keeps you focused and organized?

A: I am the type of person who thrives in chaos. You want something done... give it to a busy person. As for focus, I have to say that my family really keeps me from losing the plot completely. I have a ten-year-old daughter and I’ve been married for 20 years. Now that requires focus. I also think that if you love what you do and find fulfillment in your chosen path then it’s easier to juggle the demands. I have always told my daughter that I hope she finds as much joy in her chosen path as I have found in mine. Charity work, for me, is about balance. Sanctuary for Kids (of which Amanda is one of the founders) was founded on a firm belief that it is our duty to give back. It is an incredible sense of fulfilment and pure joy based largely on the fandom that keeps us going. I find that I get so much more back than I could ever give.

Q: What is the biggest take away from creating your own work? What has worked for you and what would you change in your next creative project?

A: To have the luxury of autonomy is a rare gift. To forge your own path is equal parts exhilarating and terrifying. It’s like riding a roller-coaster. It’s the best feeling ever until you throw up! The one thing I have learned is to try and hold on to your rights and your “property” as much as you can. There are so many things we would have done differently with *Sanctuary*. Like so many people who create content, you become a slave to the financing. It could be private, network, distribution or a myriad of other sources that ultimately have the power to take away your intellectual property. Often you have to sell your soul just to be able to get it on the air. *Sanctuary* was such a complicated model and we ended up losing control of the property so we could make it. It was incredibly difficult. What worked for us was the production model. It was a set built of mutual respect and admiration, and was such a joy to work on. My next creative project would involve less blind faith and better contracts. But creatively I wouldn’t change a thing.

Q: You are a trailblazer who dove into the digital world early. For *Sanctuary*, you were the first to shoot a series on the RED camera and all green screen. How do you stay on top our continually changing digital landscape?

A: We didn't realize just how many trails we were blazing with *Sanctuary*. If we had, we might not have been so gung-ho about it all. We knew we wanted to create something that was different and we had the very naive idea of creating a multi-platform website with content, merchandise, gaming and social networking. Sadly, we didn't have the budget for what we wanted to do and we ended up putting in a lot of our own money. I wouldn't suggest that anyone do that. When we launched this thing they call the "intraweb" we really didn't know how to monetize the eyeballs that were watching it. The platform has changed since then. The one thing the eyeballs did was bring us to the attention of the networks and it was from there that we were able to make the TV show. We were privately financed and went after international sales country by country. Every year we needed certain people to come to the table to move forward. It was a real Rubik's Cube. We were for all intents and purposes an independent television series without the umbrella or support of a studio. We were a writer, a director and an actor who also became producers. The thing we are all most proud of are the 59 episodes we produced and the stories we were able to collectively tell. It was incredibly gratifying and by far the most work any of us have ever done.

Q: If you could tell another actor new to the business one thing about this business, what would it be?

A: Breathe. This business can fold you up like origami and knot you up like expert macramé. It can be stressful and angst-inducing, and create tear-your-hair-out crazy-making insanity... And I believe that if it can do that to you, then you have the passion, the energy and the spirit to survive it. Breathe. When it brings joy, and it will with such alarming clarity, you will want to fill your lungs up with it. Perhaps, most importantly, be kind. To yourself, to your fellow actors, to the crew, basically to everyone you meet. Kindness is not a word often associated with this industry, but I have found it in the most unexpected places and have always been very grateful when I did.

Q: As ACTRA's Woman of the Year, do you have any additional words of wisdom to share with our members?

A: I don't know what to say really. I'm utterly gobsmacked to be in this position. I've never taken for granted the jobs or

experiences I've been fortunate enough to have. I so clearly remember the thrill of getting my ACTRA card. I was overjoyed. It validated me as a professional and quite honestly made my chosen career more acceptable to my parents. I felt I was a part of something. I have always felt that way. ACTRA has always been there for me and I have watched ACTRA take care of members in need, and of members who are ill and their families. I am so proud to be a part of this union. I am humbled by this incredible honour. ●

Amanda is well known for her role as Samantha Carter on the science fiction TV series *Stargate SG-1*, *Stargate Atlantis* and *Stargate: Universe*. She is the star and executive producer of *Sanctuary*, the first Canadian web series to make the transition to TV. Amanda has earned four Leo Awards for Best Actress, has been nominated for two Gemini Awards and four Saturn Awards, and won the 2005 Saturn Award for Best Supporting Actress. She played Naomi in the TV series *Supernatural* and is a recurring character on *Package Deal*. Her recent film roles include *Taken Back*, *Random Acts of Romance*, *Hell in a Handbag* and *Space Milkshake*. Amanda received a Best Director Leo Award nomination for *Stargate: SG-1* and her directorial TV credits include *Primeval: New World*, *Arctic Air*, *Continuum*, *Strange Empire*, *Olympus* and *Dark Matter*.

Amanda's charitable foundation "Sanctuary for Kids" has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for causes both locally in Vancouver and worldwide. She supports numerous charities such as The Coast Foundation, a support agency for people with mental disabilities, The Canadian Cancer Society and UNICEF. Amanda also supports the charity V-Day by performing in *The Vagina Monologues* to help end worldwide violence against women and girls. Amanda has been honoured with the "Woman of Vision" Award by Women in Film and Television, received the YWCA Women of Distinction Award and was recently awarded the Jules Verne Award in Paris for her humanitarian work.

Amanda Tapping

Woman of the Year



Amanda on set directing *Primeval: New World*.



ACTRA National Women's Committee members
Ellie Harvie, Jodi Sadowsky, Cary Lawrence,
Christine Willes, guest of honour Amanda Tapping,
Jo Bates, Winnie Hung and Ferne Downey.

Photo: Russ Neely

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Vinay Virmani
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Tatiana Maslany
Orphan Black

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APPLAUSE

WE CELEBRATE **YOUR** RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

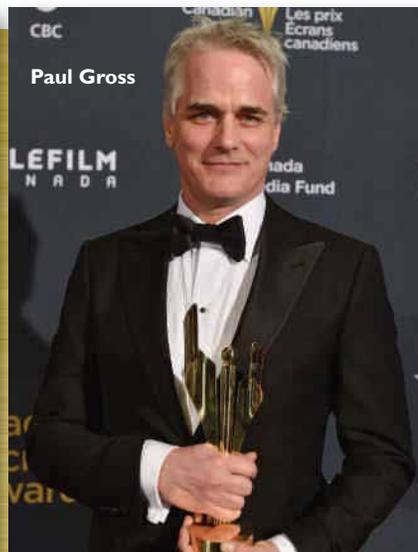
THE ACADEMY'S CANADIAN SCREEN AWARDS

Orphan Black is on a winning streak! For the second year straight, the hot series took home the most TV trophies (10 in total in 2015), including Best Actress for **Tatiana Maslany**, Best Supporting Actor for **Jordan Gavaris** and Best Dramatic Series. Veteran actor **Don McKellar** nabbed Best Actor in a Comedy Series for *Sensitive Skin*. **Jared Keeso** won Best Actor in a TV Drama Series for *19-2*. **Ali Liebert** won Best Actress in a Featured Supporting Role in a Drama Program or Series for *Bomb Girls: Facing the Enemy*. **Supinder Wraich** won Best Performance in a Program or Series Produced for Digital Media for her performance in *Guidestones Sunflower Noir*. This year, the Academy honoured the multi-talented **Paul Gross** with the Earle Grey Award. ACTRA is a proud sponsor of the Canadian Screen Awards. For the full list of winners please visit www.academy.ca. ●

Photos: G. Pimentel Photography courtesy of Academy.ca



Jordan Gavaris



Paul Gross



Ali Liebert



Jared Keeso



Tatiana Maslany



Supinder Wraich

APPLAUSE



Ellen David and Mark Camacho

2015 ACTRA AWARDS IN MONTREAL

The winners of the 2015 ACTRA Awards in Montreal are **Liz MacRae** for Outstanding Voice Performance in *Bounty Hunters*, **Dan Jeannotte** for Outstanding Video Game Performance in *Assassin's Creed: Unity*, **Héléna Laliberté** and **Naomi Frenette** for Outstanding Stunt Performance in *Pompeii*, **Meaghan Rath** for Outstanding Performance in *Being Human* and **Mark Camacho** for Outstanding Performance in *X-Men: Days of Future Past*. Best Short Film was presented to **Helena Marie** for *Crazy Love*. **Ellen David** was presented with the 2015 ACTRA Montreal Award of Excellence, and the Community Builder Award was given posthumously to performer and philanthropist **Geraldine Doucet**. ●

Pictured here are ACTRA Montreal Award Winners Liz MacRae, Mark Camacho, Dan Jeannotte and Meaghan Rath. Bottom left is Mathilde Gingras-Laliberté, daughter of co-winner Helena Laliberté, and bottom right is Anais Frenette, sister of co-winner Naomi Frenette.

Photo: Derek Dugas



Pictured here are Cory Doran, ACTRA Toronto President David Sparrow, Tantoo Cardinal, Gavin Crawford and Jamie Jones.

Photo: Jag Gundu

13TH ANNUAL ACTRA AWARDS IN TORONTO

The winners of the 13th Annual ACTRA Awards in Toronto are **Tatiana Maslany** for Outstanding Performance in *Orphan Black*, **Gavin Crawford** for Outstanding Performance as Adam in *Two 4 One* and **Cory Doran** for Outstanding Voice Performance in Multiple Personality Mike in *Total Drama* for the episode "The Final Wreck-ening." **Tina Keeper** presented ACTRA Toronto's 2015 Award of Excellence to **Tantoo Cardinal** and **Marco Bianco** presented the ACTRA Toronto Stunt Award to **Jamie Jones**. ●

WE CELEBRATE **YOUR** RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS



Jonathan Torrens



Carol Sinclair



Mary-Colin Chisholm

JASON PRIESTLEY RECEIVES THE 2015 ACTRA NATIONAL AWARD OF EXCELLENCE



Photo: Eric Charbonneau

This year Canadian performers honoured **Jason Priestley** with the 2015 ACTRA National Award of Excellence in L.A. The award recognizes an ACTRA member's career achievements, and contribution to fellow performers and the Canadian entertainment industry. **Ferne Downey**, ACTRA National president, presented Jason with the award on January 31 at the Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles: "Jason's commitment to Canada and to Canadian television and film is boundless," said Downey. "He has shot in nearly every province across the country and his high-energy and engaging commitment to telling great stories makes us love him and laud him."

ACTRA National began presenting this award in 2003 to recognize a Canadian performer who has not only demonstrated excellence as an artist, but who has also made an outstanding contribution to Canada's entertainment industry. Past award winners include: **Leslie Nielsen, Lloyd Bochner, Tonya Lee Williams, Kiefer Sutherland, Sandra Oh, Eugene Levy and Bruce Greenwood.** ●

THE SCREEN NOVA SCOTIA AWARDS / ACTRA MARITIMES AWARDS

All Photos: Alex Kronstein.

Jonathan Torrens hosted the inaugural Screen Nova Scotia Awards, and also won Best Male Supporting Actor for his role as the vice-principal in *Mr. D.* **Mary-Colin Chisholm** won Best Female Actor for her role as an eccentric rural woman in the Newfoundland feature film *Cast No Shadow*. **Mike McLeod**, who plays the lead priest in Thom Fitzgerald's TV series *Forgive me*, won Best Male Actor. The award for Best Supporting Female Actor went to **Carol Sinclair** for her role in Fitzgerald's TV series, *Sex and Violence*. Screen Nova Scotia, ACTRA Maritimes and IATSE 667 & 849 presented the awards at Casino Nova Scotia in Halifax. ●

For the full list of winners please visit screennovascotia.com.



Nominee Pasha Ebrahimi and winner Michael MacLeod

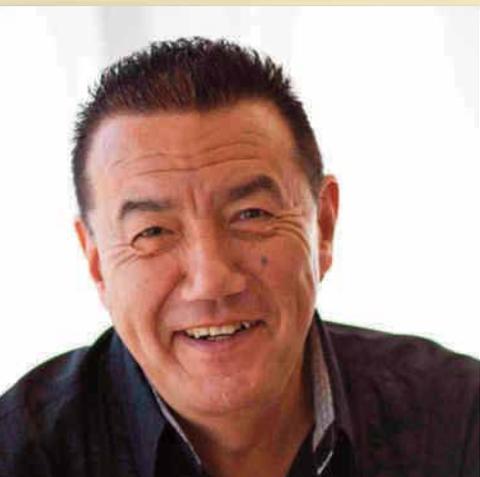
APPLAUSE

WE CELEBRATE **YOUR** RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

TOM JACKSON RECEIVES THE AFBS LESLIE YEO AWARD

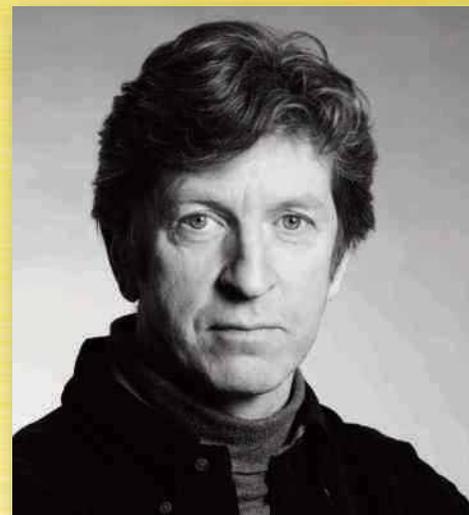
Tom Jackson joins a group of dedicated AFBS members who have made significant, non-financial contributions of time and talent to those in need. Tom is the recipient of the 2015 Leslie Yeo Award for Volunteerism. Appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada for his musical and humanitarian work in 2000, Tom is well-known to Canadians as an accomplished actor and musician dedicated to helping the less fortunate. Last year he was awarded the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement. ●

Photo: Craig Koshyk



R.H. THOMSON HONOURED

R.H. Thomson has been honoured with a Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement. In 2014, ACTRA Toronto presented him with the ACTRA Toronto Award of Excellence. He was made a Member of the Order of Canada in 2010. R.H. has defended Canadian culture numerous times on behalf of our industry, including at ACTRA presentations before the CRTC, and in meetings with ministers and members of Parliament. ●



SAM PAYNE AWARDS

Gabrielle Rose is the 2014 recipient of the Sam Payne Award for Lifetime Achievement. **Veena Sood** received the Sam Payne Award. This celebration marked the 31st annual presentation of the award. Presented by UBCP/ACTRA, recipients of the Sam Payne Award are recognized for their creative talents as well as for their personal attributes that mirror those of Sam Payne, including humanity, artistic integrity and the encouragement of new talent. ●



Our Canada. Our Diversity. Our Stories.

By Jani Lauzon

One very important aspect of our union is our working committees; members volunteering their time not just on behalf of their union but their fellow members. Or in the case of last year's National Diversity Committee initiative: engaging members. As a member-driven organization, the best way to understand how our union works is by getting involved to help shape its future.

Last year the Diversity Committee held a short film competition that was open to ACTRA and UBCP/ACTRA members. The Committee was looking for proposals for short films that tackled the question: What does "Diversity is our Strength" mean to you?

Our plan was to increase member engagement and members from across the country rose to the occasion. The scripts we received were innovative, original and represented a wide perspective in response to the proposed question.

The four winning short films were: *Dressed to Impress* by ACTRA Saskatchewan member **Dawn Bird**; *Hearing Diversity* by Manitoba member **Fernando Dalayoan**; *A Token Asian* by Manitoba member **Alan Wong** and *Diverse World* by Toronto member **Kristina Esposito**.

Besides being showcased on the ACTRA YouTube channel, these advocacy films are also being screened at film festivals and conferences.

Some of you may have already encountered the issues highlighted in these videos while others may be seeing a new perspective for the first time. What is clear is that video messaging is effective and far reaching. Members create strong messages about the issues that concern those of us working in the screen- and audio-based industry.

All four of these great videos can be viewed on actra.ca.

And we have even more great news... we are doing it again! For this year's short film competition, the National Diversity Committee wants to know:

How are diverse Canadian stories important for our screens and our society?

Submissions are now being accepted at actra.ca. This year's initiative will support two short films created by ACTRA members that showcase culturally- or physically-diverse ACTRA members in key creative roles. With the recent CRTC rulings and changes in government policy around tax credits, this is a hot topic, and now more than ever the industry needs to hear our point of view. ●

Canadian Stories on our Canadian Screens

Stories reflect the cultural make up of this beautiful, amazing country we all call home. Stories that are inclusive of the rich mosaic of cultures – stories that helped shape the foundation of our country's identity.

START NOW.

Writing a simple yet catchy one- to two-minute script is the first step. Get involved. Let's get behind the changes we want to see.



In *Hearing Diversity*, Darlene Lee is the actor auditioning, Jenny Ng-Turner plays the assistant director, Brian Kawakami plays the camera man, Robert Kostyra plays the director and Talia Pura plays the casting agent.



In *Hearing Diversity*, Debbie Patterson, Lorraine James, Darlene Lee and Fernando Dalayoan.



Jani Lauzon is joined by ACTRA National President **Ferne Downey** at the 2015 Reelworld Film Festival in Toronto. Jani Lauzon is an ACTRA National and ACTRA Toronto Councillor and Chair of the ACTRA National Diversity Committee. She is an award-winning screen actor, a Gemini Award-winning puppeteer and a Juno-nominated singer/songwriter.

CASTINGACTRA.ca

ONLINE PERFORMER DATABASE

CastingACTRA.ca

In 1975, I printed my first résumé on yellow paper. I wanted my résumé to stand out in a stack. I wanted my résumé to be unique. I struggled with finding a way to get my name out there; finding a way to let people know what I had done. I wanted to say, “I’m here and I’m ready to work.”

The world has changed in so many ways since then. ACTRA, my union, has now given me a simple way to market myself to the world. It doesn’t cost me anything. It is simply one of the many advantages of my ACTRA membership. CastingACTRA.ca is an on-line ACTRA resource every performer will find useful. It’s so easy! All you have to do is log in to CastingACTRA.ca (using your old Face to Face login information) to ensure your profile is up-to-date with the most current information – photos, reels and more!

Like practically all performers, I do work in many disciplines. On CastingACTRA.ca, multiple performing disciplines are represented. This makes it much more useful than a website that just lists all ACTRA members alphabetically. I can make it known that I’m available for background work, while also attaching links to my voice and principal performer reels.

The multiple disciplines on CastingACTRA.ca is what makes it so special. With areas specific to background, diversity and voice, CastingACTRA.ca is a website that will become extremely useful to the production community.

ACTRA has created a cost-free way for performers to connect with the people seeking to employ them.

I’ve already submitted my information. I’m sure every other ACTRA performer will be doing it as well. Do it now! ●

Alvin Sanders

ACTRA National Vice-President, UBCP/ACTRA President

“ACTRA, my union, has now given me a simple way to market myself to the world. It doesn’t cost me anything.”



ACTRA's audited Financial Statements & Treasurer's Report posted online

Check out ACTRA's Audited Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended February 28, 2015, now posted online. States Theresa Tova, ACTRA National Treasurer, in her Treasurer's Report: "It's not just about number crunching, it's about setting ACTRA's priorities. The work of our union is tracked by where we put our resources and ACTRA's operating plans are reflected in our budgets."

For the fiscal year ending February 28, 2015, please go to actra.ca and read our Treasurer's Report and view the audited Financial Statements. ●



Theresa Tova,
ACTRA National Treasurer



STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR UNION. WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

ACTRA NATIONAL

416.489.1311 / 1.800.387.3516
www.actra.ca

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ACTRA Newfoundland/Labrador

709.722.0430 / www.actranewfoundland.ca



ACTRA National



@ACTRANat



www.ACTRA.ca



1.800.387.3516

Fast track your PRS payments!

Sign up for Direct Deposit today.

ACTRA Performers' Rights Society is switching gears! For those still getting cheques in the mail, starting March 1, 2016, ACTRA PRS will begin issuing just one physical cheque per year. So sign up now for PRS Direct Deposit at actra.ca/prs. Save some trees and know that you'll get your money faster and directly into your account.

If you receive your cheques through your agent, don't worry as TAMAC agents are on board.



Photo: Duane Dickinson

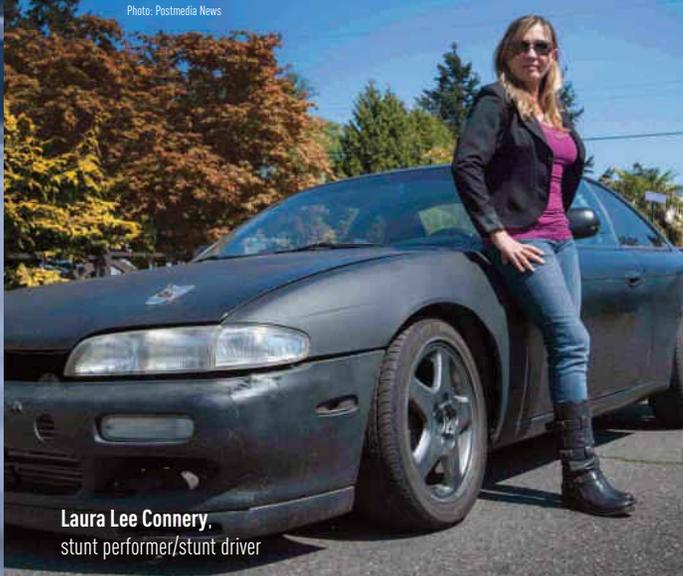


Photo: Postmedia News

Laura Lee Connery,
stunt performer/stunt driver

Questions? Email us at
prs@actra.ca



Performers'
Rights
Society

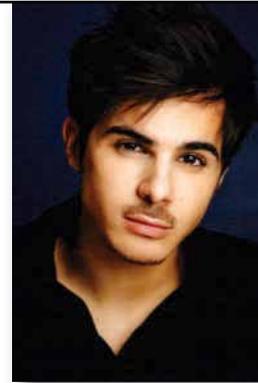
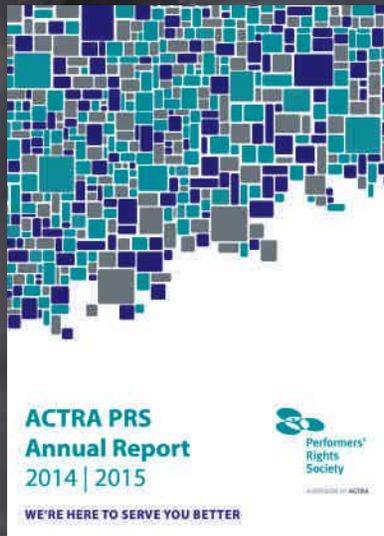
A DIVISION OF ACTRA

ACTRA PRS ANNUAL REPORT POSTED ONLINE!

ACTRA Performers' Rights Society's new annual report covers the 2014-2015 fiscal year. It provides a complete financial overview of ACTRA PRS as well as notable achievements over the past year.

ACTRA Performers' Rights Society collects and disburses Use Fees, royalties, residuals and all other forms of remuneration arising from production under ACTRA's collective agreements. There are two departments at ACTRA PRS with a clear mission to track the exploitation of the finished product and secure monies owing to performers: **ACTRA PRS Claims** collects monies on behalf of audiovisual performers; and **ACTRA Recording Artists' Collecting Society** on works for audio performers.

ACTRA's PRS annual report is available as an easy-to-read flipbook at actra.ca.



"Unlike most conventional banks, Creative Arts truly understands my work, finances and future goals as a Canadian performer."

Adamo Ruggiero

By artists. For artists.

Adamo Ruggiero has been acting professionally for years. A veteran performer, with credits including *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, *Make the Yuletide Gay*, *The Neverending Story* and *The Next Star*, his accomplished career features stage, film, TV and PSA credits.

Adamo was one of the first performers to join Creative Arts. He has his finances with the credit union, as well as a number of other accounts to support his day-to-day banking needs.

"I trust Creative Arts with my finances and thank them for being an ally to the Canadian arts community."

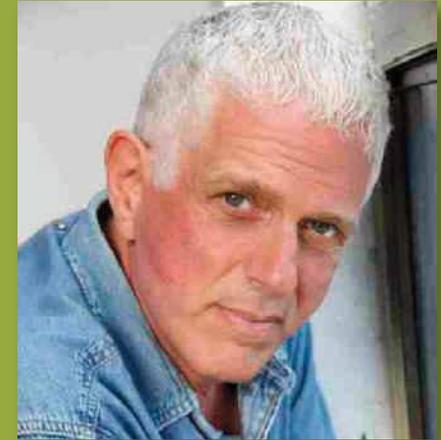


CREATIVE ARTS

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Our Strength Is In Numbers

Farewell



Don Berns

1947 – 2015

Don Berns. Don Berns. Don Berns. One must say Don's name many times to cover the wide expanse of his talents. He was an actor, a voice, a friend and so much more. Don made everyone in a room feel comfortable. And even if you couldn't see him in that room full of people, you could always hear his smile.

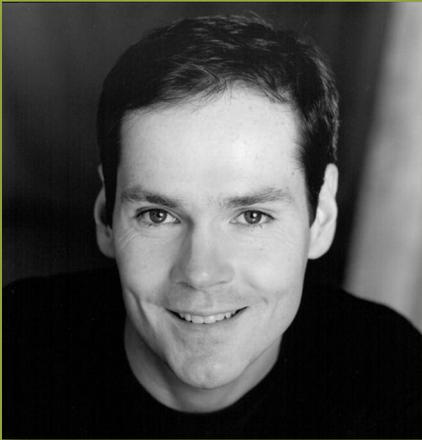
Don loved to be on the stage. Even when there wasn't a stage. He would bring his own, which he kept tucked away in his back-pocket ready for use. Don Berns was always ready to perform.

He had so much more to get done. So many more friends to visit. And so many more funny stories to tell. So many words, which Don needed to put meaning and life to as only his voice could.

Don was an actor, a voice, a friend and so much more. His rave DJ name was Dr. Trance. Don was considered The Godfather of Electronic Dance Music in Canada.

Don Berns lives on through each of us, and in the video and the audio he left behind. ●

David Marsden



Jonathan Crombie

1966 – 2015

“The boy next door” and “every intelligent girl’s crush” died on April 15 at the heartbreaking age of 48. “Jonathan Crombie as Gilbert Blythe was many people’s first love,” wrote Sarah Larson in *The New Yorker*. “A piece of our childhood has died along with him!” cried the online groundswell of mourners around the world. Yet their grief was for onscreen qualities that belied the very core of Jonathan’s approach to his craft: meticulous preparation and a delight in challenging roles; not only sensitive leads but oddball characters and comedy for which he was so gifted. I watched his astute process the day he walked on set and became Gilbert. He had never acted in front of a camera. The preparation and angst were there but he knew exactly what he was doing. As the camera rolled his work was deftly effortless. Looking back it was his talent for letting his soul shine through every frame that made him special. ●

Kevin Sullivan



Lois Lilienstein

1936 - 2015

We had a grand time together. We were three folkies doing our own solo shows through Mariposa in the schools before getting together in 1978, almost on a whim, to make an LP then continue on with our own careers. We raised the money from family and friends to record 'One Elephant, Deux Éléphants' in the spring, released it in the fall, then lost our last names to become Sharon, Lois & Bram. We recorded, toured and were on television – a career that none of us ever dreamed possible. We became family to each other. While Lois stepped back from touring after the death of her husband Ernest in 1998, we remained the closest of friends in all of the years since. We miss her terribly, as we know millions of others do. And the music goes on. ●

With love,
Sharon Hampson and Bram Morrison

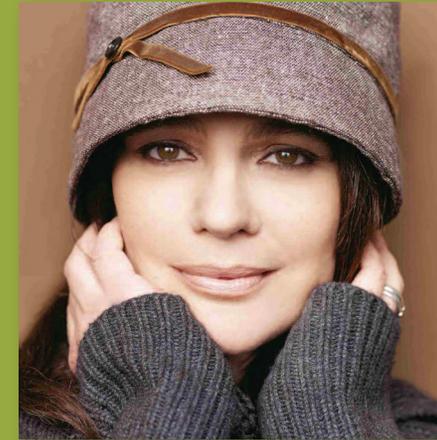


Photo: Tim Leyes

Alberta Watson

1955 – 2015

From the moment I met Alberta Watson at the rehearsal for *Destiny to Order*, I knew I had met both an amazing actor and an impeccable human being. As a leading lady, her ability to put you at ease was remarkable. She was one of the most authentic people I have ever had the honour to know.

Alberta went from *In Praise of Older Women* at the age of 23 to L.A. and New York where she made a name for herself. Following the enormous success for her performance in *Spanking the Monkey*, Alberta came home to Canada to play the formidable Madeline in *La Femme Nikita*.

Alberta supported ACTRA in many ways, including bargaining on behalf of actors for fair agreements. Even though we were only together six or seven times, I remember every moment I spent in her presence. Faith Susan Alberta Watson had a profound effect on us all and will be in our hearts forever. ●

Victoria Snow

Labour Day is September 7 - save the date!



**FREE
ACTRA
T-SHIRTS!**

This Labour Day, ACTRA branches across the country are again participating in parades, picnics and activities.

Bring your ACTRA card and get a free T-shirt.

Check with your branch for meeting times and locations.

Ottawa Labour Day photo by Chris Cornish



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