

ACTRA

ACTRA MAGAZINE WINTER 2017



ACTRA.75

**We're celebrating ACTRA's 75th
year anniversary in 2018!**

We're
celebrating!

"I was on the CBC negotiating team for ACTRA in the early seventies—facing my bosses across the table—it was enjoyable. I was in a position to argue for things that the cast in my show couldn't—they were left out in the beginning. Someone needs to be there from every facet of the business—from the stars to the actors, singers—from all of ACTRA".

—Juliette Cavazzi

Juliette Cavazzi greeted Canadians live on *The Juliette Show* every Saturday night from 1956 to 1966. Fondly introduced as, "your pet Juliette," she was one of CBC TV's bona fide stars. Juliette was born in Winnipeg and raised in Vancouver where she had her own show on CBC radio by age 15. In 1955 she worked as a vocalist on *The Billy O'Connor Show* in Toronto and soon took over the same time slot with *Juliette*. She was appointed as a Companion of the Order of Canada in 1975 and in 1999 given a star on Canada's Walk of Fame in Toronto.



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Clockwise from left: Kim Coates (photo: Benjo Arwas),
Paul Sun-Hyung Lee, Samreen Aziz with Catherine
Joell MacKinnon and Theresa Tova at podium.

Cover photo: ACTRA members Paul Sun-Hyung Lee,
Jean Yoon and Yannick Bisson outside the CRTC
Hearings in Gatineau, PQ. Photo: Fred Chartrand

Acting in Unity: Diversity, Inclusion & Gender Equality

By Ferne Downey
ACTRA National President

Something good happened in São Paulo, Brazil, in late September. The International Federation of Actors (FIA) held its 21st World Congress under the banner of “acting for diversity.” More than 150 union delegates from over 50 countries overcame their concerns about the Zika virus and Brazil’s political instability to gather and plan our global future as performers. And it was awesome. The vigour, intelligence, compassion, shared stories, co-operation and communication, and commitment to improving opportunities and conditions for performers all over the world were inspiring. And, we had one of our largest

attendance turn-outs. We were hungry to be face-to-face together in the same room sharing our struggles and our successes. Congress only happens once every four years so no one wanted to miss this opportunity.

Hosted by FIA affiliate SATED/SP (Sindicato dos Artistas e Técnicos em Espetáculos de Diversão de São Paulo), it was the second time in the history of the Federation that a Congress was held in Latin America. A truly cosmopolitan, melting-pot of a city, and home to some of the largest diasporas in the world, São Paulo was the perfect place to celebrate diversity. The extraordinary variety of FIA Congress delegates was

a true reflection of what the Federation stands for when we speak, with one voice, on behalf of all performers.

Our brothers and sisters from SAG-AFTRA were there right beside us having sent a delegation of nine—including three Officers (all women): President Gabrielle Carteris, Treasurer Jane Austin and EVP Rebecca Damon. Their presence was a bold statement of their commitment to our international work.

As mentioned, diversity was the theme of this year’s Congress.

And we certainly had a diverse group of artists.

It was important for us to remember, especially as artists, that diversity is our strength.

We are here to represent the world, embody the world. And how boring and inaccurate would it be if all artists looked the same.

If we all performed the same.

Not only is it important that we tell diverse stories on screen, but we must also ensure we celebrate and protect artists’ diversity off screen.

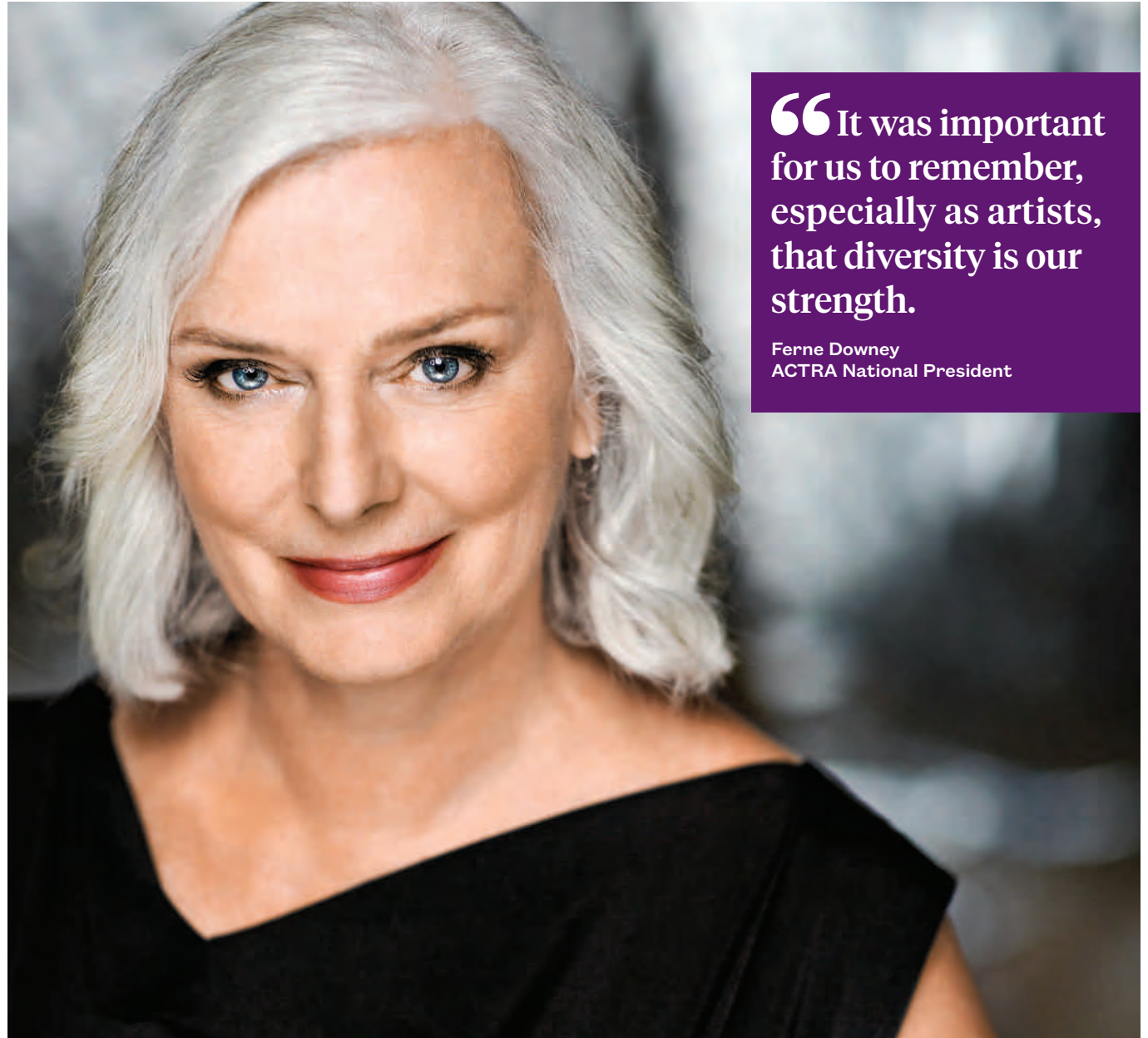
We passed important motions about advancing non-discrimination, equal opportunity and diversity. We presented the results of our LGBTQ survey, which clearly shows there is a consistent and significant frequency of discrimination against individuals based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation or expression, or gender identity. (see photo with Brazilian actor Lisa Crazy and other panelists). Globally, there is not one country free of discrimination—which is saddening/concerning/distressing but not surprising. But there is something we can do about it: unions and countries can actively promote diversity and non-discrimination in the workplace. And that’s where the rubber hits the road. What are we all going to DO about it?! After announcing the results, FIA’s next step was to create a FIA Global Diversity Working Group! We wanted to create something broad and permanent to make the work of this group a core priority in everything we do. Danish Actors’ Association (DSF) President and new Presidium member Katja Holm will co-chair with SAG-AFTRA’s Duncan Crabtree-Ireland.

The possibilities are thrilling to contemplate: research, education and the creation of practical toolkits all to make meaningful change.

We also passed a motion to target any multi-national media companies that show patent disregard for core labour rights, shun collective bargaining, and prevent trade unions from collectively representing the fair and legitimate interests of professional performers. As such, we are expanding the work of our International Production Working Group to better combat the ever-swelling role of powerful media corporations in the world.

At Congress, SAG-AFTRA proudly announced it has won one battle against the prevalence of age discrimination by changing a law in California to allow performers to choose whether or not their age is displayed in their IMDB profile. IMDB had been very uncooperative in working with the industry to solve this problem. IMDB owner, Amazon, has decided to challenge the new law and we know it has deep pockets (in the last issue of ACTRA Magazine I wrote about the dominance of the five FAANG billionaire companies that rule the online world, and Amazon is one).

Another key motion included our ongoing push for the ratification of the WIPO Beijing Treaty, which will extend the same copyright protections currently enjoyed by audio performers to us audiovisual performers. In 2017, Canada's Copyright Act will go under review and this will be our opportunity to change our domestic legislation. I also wanted to mention a glaring example of life without performer



“It was important for us to remember, especially as artists, that diversity is our strength.”

Ferne Downey
ACTRA National President



Women Presidents
in attendance at
2016 FIA Congress:
Seated L to R:
Ferne Downey (Canada),
Ana Marija Vrdoljak (Croatia),
Katja Holm (Denmark),
Elisabeth Graf (Switzerland),
Lila Garcia (Uruguay),
Catherine Almeras (France),
Sophie Prigent (Canada),
Andrea Gutiérrez (Chile),
Gabrielle Carteris (USA),
Maria Verónica
Nascimento Gomes (Brazil),
Ligia de Paula Souza (Brazil),
Birna Hafstein (Iceland);
Second row L to R:
Chloe Dallimore (Australia),
Helena Rytty (Finland),
Jennifer Ward-Lealand
(New Zealand),
Paige Price (USA),
Maria Eugenia Penagos
(Colombia),
Magdalena Rodrigues
da Silva (Brazil).

copyright protection that was made by the Japanese delegation. Japan is currently dealing with a situation where senior artists are retiring in extreme poverty. A significant contributing factor is the lack of royalty or residual income for the secondary use of performers' TV and film work. It was heart-wrenching to hear. ACTRA is now looking for any opportunity in which we can provide assistance to improve the lives of our brothers and sisters in Japan.

Offering assistance to and helping fledgling or new unions build their capacity has been a long tradition of more mature unions. In recent years, Canada, the U.S. and Spain have all generously given our experience and expertise to assist South

Africa and SAGA (South African Guild of Actors) achieve the next level of stability in their region. A wonderful development at this Congress was, for the first time, having actor Amit Behl from India's Cine & TV Artists Association (CINTAA) take part as one of five participants on the panel: "Tackling Double Standards for Performers in International Production," chaired by Stephen Waddell. FIA has been investing in health and safety workshops in Mumbai where minimum H&S standards do not yet exist and accidents are all too commonplace. To put it bluntly, working conditions are appalling and a high casualty rate has become an everyday occurrence.

One last motion I wanted to touch on relates to diversity, non-discrimination and the respect of refugee artists. In Europe, in particular, it was reported that this level of chaos and suffering has not been seen since the Second World War. There are many refugee artists and their families among those displaced, and all unions are encouraged to find ways to seek them out and welcome them into their home communities. Some countries are doing way better than others on this file. I know Canada can do better.

FIA is as strong as our weakest link and in this era of globalization, our global leadership will be tested every day. But that's to be expected. We are cultural

workers who have banded together over the past nearly 65 years to become the leading voice of performers worldwide.

We must also all do better to mentor the next generation of leaders, and embrace diverse and emerging voices in our unions. It will make a world of difference in the vigour and relevance of our union. I am honoured to now be serving my second term as FIA President with such a magnificent group of activist leaders.

Putting out the welcome mat

While something good happened in Brazil, closer to home, something good also happened when the industry gathered for the second meeting of Telefilm Canada's Diversity Working Group in Montreal, Quebec, this past November. Members of ACTRA were at the table armed with the second CUES (Canadian Unions for Equality Onscreen) report—*What's Wrong With This Picture? : Directors and Gender Inequality in the screen-based production industry* by Dr. Amanda Coles. This report had the numbers to confirm women are all too often overlooked for key creative roles. And these numbers are not changing. This is why we were there to push for action now, not more study. And action we got. Finally, after decades of making and ultimately proving the case, we got a strong commitment from Telefilm that the current state of employment inequity was unacceptable. Forthwith, Telefilm will now favour feature film projects with a woman tapped as director and/or writer. Based on industry recommendations that these two roles require critical attention, gender parity amongst directors and screenwriters was formally identified as a priority for Telefilm. The goal? Using multiple levers, and dynamically assessing and re-calibrating over the next four years, Telefilm is aiming to make a significant shift in the number of women engaged in key creative roles in feature film production in Canada. 50/50 gender equity by 2020 has a nice ring to it. That is, more inclusive and diverse participation in our publicly-funded films. If you don't take action and only passively hope adjustments will just "happen" along the way—nothing will change. Tough love is needed. We need to get to work right away to bring culturally-diverse creators to the table—we have a ways to go yet. Thank you, Amanda Coles, for helping accelerate this change. We still have to play catch-up with the rest of the world, but we have finally shifted a significant public policy priority that should provide for a brighter and more inclusive future.



Above L to R: Jack Devnarain (South Africa), Lisa Crazy (Brazil) and Arden Ryshpan (Canada) on the Diversity and Inclusion panel. As transgender performer Lisa Crazy said: "When LGBT people carry the torch and are at the forefront of the fight for inclusion and equality, the societal change they engender is for the benefit of all."

Left L to R: Amit Behl (India) and Ferne Downey (Canada). Through Cine and TV Artists Association (CINTA), representing leading performers in the Bollywood industry, Amit illuminated the many challenges in India, including health and sanitation and safety problems. The top 5% of performers earn decent money and are treated well, but the other 95%? Dangerous working conditions where performers are considered expendable.

#DigiCanCon: Let's put Netflix on the table too

By Stephen Waddell

In April of last year, Canadian Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly announced a sweeping review of government cultural policy. The minister proclaimed the Canadian Content in the Digital World (or #DigiCanCon) consultation would be comprehensive—‘everything’ would be on the table. For ACTRA, this was an opportunity to address a serious concern. Internet broadcasters like Netflix have been exempted from any of the rules and regulations that govern Canada’s TV industry. This system of balanced regulation has created a world-class industry, but if new Internet-based broadcasters don’t have to play by the same rules this system won’t work in the future.

A few days later, Minister Joly walked back on those words by clarifying the ‘everything’ on the table does not include Netflix. Given that none of the political parties in the 2015 federal election wanted to talk about a “Netflix tax” for fear of consumer/electorate backlash, one shouldn’t be surprised our new Canadian Heritage Minister doesn’t want to touch such a hot-button issue requiring Internet broadcasters, like Netflix, to contribute to Canadian production as traditional cable and satellite broadcasters are required to do. Netflix doesn’t even pay retail sales tax on the monthly fee charged to your credit card, taxes that Canadian subscription services like Crave and Shomi pay. Given the unfair competition, it’s little wonder

Shomi went out of business this past November. Meanwhile, Netflix is hauling \$620 million out of the country every year and not paying a dime in retail sales tax nor making a commitment to contribute to our country’s production ecosystem.

Canada should take lessons from other jurisdictions that are dealing with Netflix. In May of last year, the European Commission announced its intention to update EU audiovisual rules to “create a fairer environment for all players and promote European films.” The Commission noted that European TV broadcasters invest around 20 per cent of their revenues in original content yet on-demand providers invest less than 1 per cent. The Commission will require Internet broadcasters to ensure at least a 20 per cent share of European content is available in their catalogues. The Commission’s plan will also allow EU countries to ensure on-demand services available in their country contribute financially to Europeans’ works. Meanwhile, New Zealand recently closed the loophole in its tax laws that allowed services like Netflix to avoid paying sales tax. This new law came into effect on October 1 of last year and similar changes will soon take effect in Australia. When asked whether Netflix or other Internet broadcasters will continue to avoid paying taxes, New Zealand’s non-partisan Specialist Tax Adviser dismissed the concerns: “for many of these suppliers, failure to comply

with their obligations would pose a significant risk to their reputation.” In other words, when forced, Netflix will pay.

Netflix is currently paying substantial license fees to help finance productions in Canada, normally in partnership with Canadian broadcasters so it can access Canadian production funds. While Netflix gets world-wide exclusivity, Canadian broadcasters only get a Canadian broadcast window. For now, Netflix is investing heavily in original production in Canada as it has done in other countries to secure a foothold in them. However, international investors are already complaining that the cost of original productions is high. Investment advisors like Macquarie Group have even downgraded Netflix, urging their clients not to buy. Once Netflix is established in a country and the local competition is eliminated, Netflix shareholders will insist that spending in that country be scaled back. In Canada, Netflix has more subscribers per capita than any country in the world outside the U.S. Domestic competitors like Shomi have been driven out of business and the current climate has created an uneven playing field that will allow Netflix to drive other Canadian competitors out of business. Once this happens, what assurances are there that Netflix will continue to make original product in Canada?

The Canadian public has also been clear. Canadians want to see Internet

broadcasters contributing their fair share. The popular Quebec talk show “Tout le Monde en Parle” recently commissioned a poll from Leger Research. It found that 61 per cent of Canadians want multinational cultural distribution companies (like Netflix, iTunes, Spotify, etc.) to contribute directly to the financing of the Quebec and Canadian culture.

Canadians understand that if we want to see Canadian culture on our screens everyone has to contribute. As traditional broadcasters lose viewers, there are a

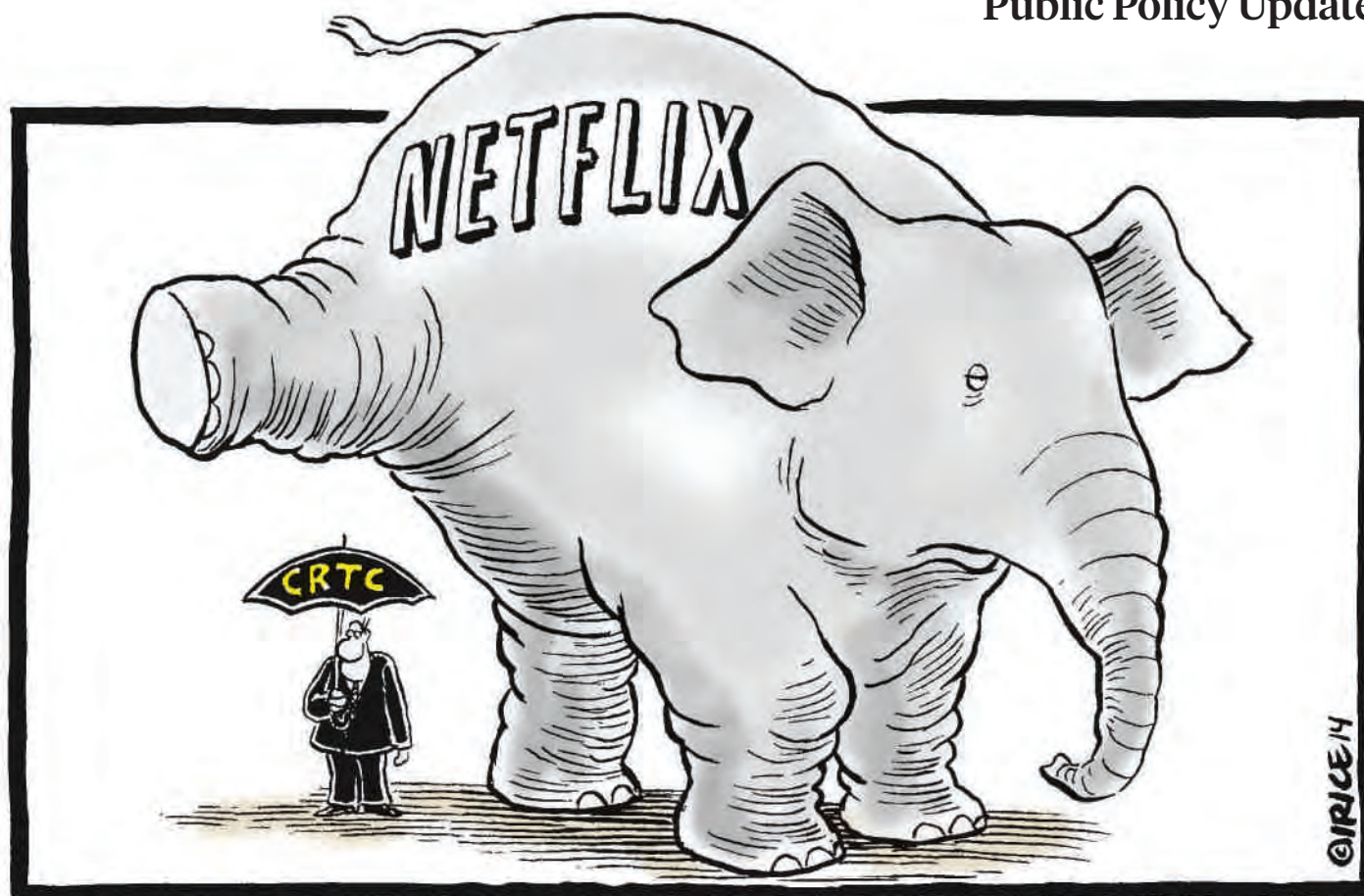
number of ways to tackle this challenge: requiring Netflix to contribute to production funds, which the government is in the position to do; a contribution from Internet Service Providers, which are seeing increased revenue as more and more Canadians watch their TV via Internet connection instead of cable; or increased government contributions.

Minister Joly’s “everything is on the table” consultation process cannot be comprehensive unless the effect of having an elephant—Netflix—in the room is addressed. And

in addressing Netflix, we urge the government to have the courage to say that all broadcasters—Internet or conventional—benefitting from Canadian audiences and subscribers need to contribute to the production of original Canadian content.

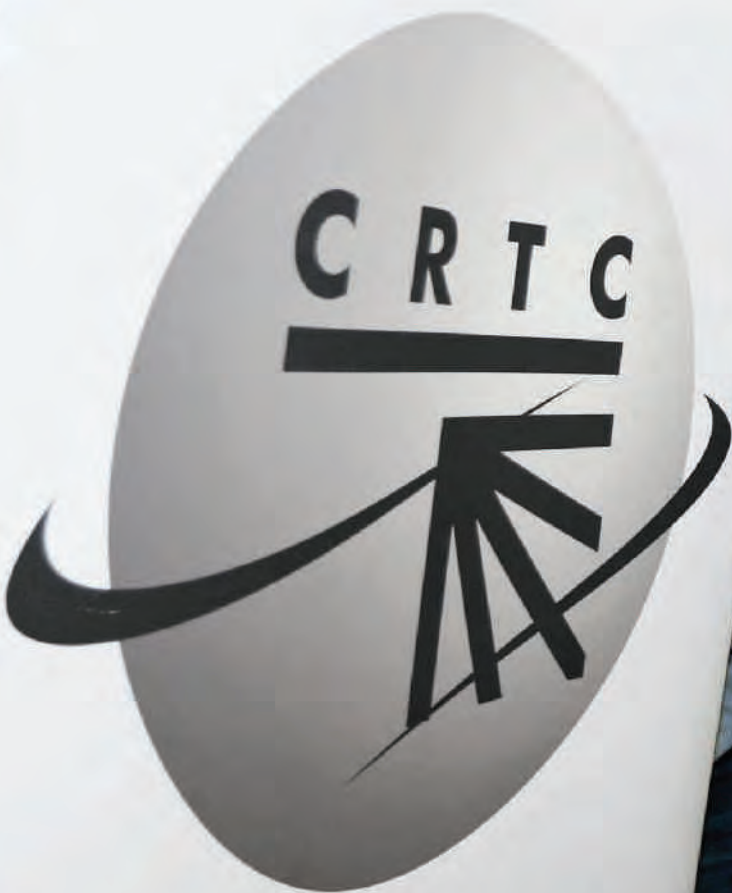


Stephen Waddell, ACTRA
National Executive Director
and Chief Negotiator.



**PUBLIC
HEARING**

C R T C



Travail public et
services gouvernementaux
Canada

Gestion
d'événements
et de conférences

Canada

Photo: Les Michelson/REUTERS

Paul Sun-Hyung Lee, Yannick Bisson and Jean Yoon make the case for continued investment in Canadian programming at the CRTC broadcaster licence renewal hearings.

W(h)ither the CRTC?

“Canadians have shown us, time and time again, that they want Canadian programs made by Canadian talent, but they need to have the opportunity to see them. And that is a role we believe this Commission has to play.”

By Elliott Anderson

ACTRA performer Yannick Bisson spoke these words while presenting on behalf of ACTRA at a CRTC licence renewal hearing for private broadcasters this past November. His point about the role of the CRTC, however, is a far larger one—one the new Liberal government needs to seriously think about if it wants to live up to its promise of building and supporting Canada’s creative talent.

Yannick, joined by fellow ACTRA performers Paul Sun-Hyung Lee and Jean Yoon, trekked to Gatineau in late November to make the case that the CRTC should make strong and substantial investment in Canadian programming a condition of getting a broadcast licence. All three performers are a testament to how incredible creative talent can flourish in Canada if given the opportunity.

Bisson is known to millions inside and outside of Canada as the star of *Murdoch Mysteries*. *Murdoch* is an example of the success that can come when Canadian-created programs are given a chance to find an audience. It is broadcast in over 110 countries but remains purely Canadian. Of course, Bisson’s talent transcends the show that has made him a household name. As ACTRA Toronto noted when announcing him as this year’s recipient of its Award of Excellence, Yannick has been a champion of Canadian performers with over 60 credits to his name.

Jean and Paul are currently starring in an equally Canadian—but very different—new show: *Kim’s Convenience*. *Kim’s Convenience* focuses on the Kims, a Korean-Canadian family, running a convenience store in downtown Toronto. It’s a uniquely Canadian

story and one that has taken too long to tell—and one that could only be told in Canada. Yet this success didn’t come out of nowhere. Both Jean and Paul worked for many years in Canadian film and television. If you spend time with them, they can tell you how much time and effort has gone into making *Kim’s Convenience* an “overnight” success.

As Jean noted in her presentation to the CRTC, “quality Canadian programs don’t make it on our screens by accident... So many more Canadian stories are bursting to be told, but only if the Commission fulfills its role as set out in the Broadcasting Act. Successful and compelling Canadian television is the result of the public policy vision laid out in the Act, a vision the Commission has an obligation to uphold.”

Like Yannick’s comment, this gets to the heart of what the CRTC should be—and what it’s been failing to do in recent years. If you were one of the millions of Canadians who watched The Tragically Hip’s final concert, if you cheered when ACTRA member Tatiana Maslany won the Emmy Award for best actress for the Canadian series *Orphan Black*, a show where the stars, writers and directors are all Canadian, you’ve seen evidence of the success of the Broadcasting Act. You’ve also seen proof that when the CRTC focuses on ensuring spaces on our radios and televisions are for Canadian stories by Canadian creative talent—amazing things can happen. However, under the leadership of current Chair Jean-Pierre Blais, the Commission has been working under a very different mandate.

The Canadian Radio-television and



CRTC flashback photos: Ferne Downey, Wendy Crewson and Nicholas Campbell holding Canadian prime-time TV schedules (full of American programming) used during ACTRA's November 25, 2009 CRTC Hearings presentation.

ACTRA members were front-row-centre on day one of the November 16, 2009 TV Hearings: Front Row L to R: Mark McKinney, Tonya Williams, Zaib Shaikh, Carlo Rota, James McGowan; Second row L to R: Nicholas Campbell, R.H. Thomson, Ferne Downey, Tyrone Benskin, Jackson Davies and Charlotte Arnold.



It's time for a CRTC that embraces its mandate of encouraging the development of Canadian expression.

Telecommunications Commission was born in the late '60s as part of Canada's drive to promote and foster our country's unique cultural voice. After decades of struggling to be seen and heard, Canada's creative talent convinced the politicians of the day that Canadian culture couldn't survive and flourish unless government played its part. The Broadcasting Act established the CRTC (originally the Canadian Radio-television Commission) and laid out a vision for the CRTC's future. The CRTC would grant broadcasters the right to broadcast on Canadian airwaves, but in return broadcasters would have responsibilities—including the obligation to “safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada” as well as “encourage the development of Canadian expression.”

This approach has led to incredible success. Yet almost as soon as it was founded, different interest groups have tried to steer the CRTC away from that mandate. Some broadcasters have resisted the obligation to tell Canadian stories. Some politicians have argued that broadcasters (who were sometimes generous donors to their campaigns) shouldn't be burdened with so-called “red tape.”

Under Stephen Harper, the Conservative government decided to re-define the role of the CRTC. In 2012, then-Conservative Heritage Minister James Moore appointed bureaucrat Jean-Pierre Blais to head the Commission. Moore also drafted a “mandate letter” for Blais informing the new Chair the CRTC's job would now be defined by “consumer affordability,” “reducing expenses,” “promoting competition” and

tisers. The CRTC made this rash and damaging move in response to less than 100—or 0.00001%—out of the 9.23 million viewers who watched Super Bowl XLIX on Canadian television in 2015.

Independent producers were also under attack when “terms of trade” requirements were scrapped by the Blais-led CRTC. Terms of trade had been created in 2011 to balance the bargaining power between independent producers and the large media and communications conglomerates that own broadcasters. The terms dictated which company retains which rights before a negotiation begins, such as who gets to sell the show internationally. It was one small way to level the playing field but the CRTC scrapped it with little notice. Michael Hennessy, president and CEO of the Canadian Media Producers Association, noted at the time that the decision seemed to come out of nowhere: “[The CRTC] never asked us a question on the matter.”

Despite the fact that millions of Canadians now watch their television via Internet broadcasters, the CRTC has maintained the same Internet policy it introduced in 1999. The Digital Media Exemption Order enables Internet broadcasters to be exempted from regulations that apply to traditional broadcasters under the Broadcasting Act. The need for change was made especially obvious when representatives from Netflix appeared at the “Let’s Talk TV” hearings and refused to answer basic questions from the Commission regarding their operations. Blais and the Commission seemed adamant that Netflix and other U.S. tech giants couldn’t simply ignore the

exploring “alternatives to regulation.” The words “creative” and “culture” did not appear in the letter at all.

Under Blais’s leadership, the CRTC has taken this new mandate to heart. Through its “Let’s Talk TV” consultations, the Commission has pushed a series of decisions that have put Canada’s creative community in jeopardy. To cite just some examples:

Simultaneous substitution, a longstanding and successful CRTC policy that ensures Canadian advertising dollars stay in Canada, was scrapped for the U.S. Super Bowl. This is the single most important day for advertising in North America. This decision alone will take millions of dollars out of Canada’s economy—millions that will not be available to hire Canadian performers making programs for Canadian broadcasters or advertisements for Canadian adver-



Canada’s most successful TV exports have been “ten- out- of- ten” productions—written by, directed by and starring Canadians.

Commission or the need to follow any sort of rules when operating in Canada. Yet, when the dust settled, that’s exactly what happened. As one pundit noted, “Now, with the charade over, we can get on with reality, which is that Netflix simply isn’t going to be regulated. And everyone knows that.”

All told, the CRTC’s “Let’s Talk TV” decisions will have a potentially devastating impact on Canada’s film and television industry. An independent study commissioned by ACTRA and other creative sector groups found these decisions could lead to the loss of more than 15,000 Canadian jobs and take \$1.4 billion from the Canadian economy annually by 2020.

And the changes have kept coming. This summer, just days before an August long weekend, the CRTC quietly announced it would be lowering the minimum CAVCO point requirements from eight to six for

producers to qualify for funding from Certified Independent Production Funds.

Ever since this decision was announced, Blais has been scrambling to convince concerned Canadians this was just a minor decision. For Canadian creative talent, however, it was anything but. Part of the CRTC’s mandate is to set rules for Certified Independent Production Funds. Broadcasters are mandated to put some of their revenue into these funds, which are then used to finance Canadian film and television production. A simple 10-point system is used to determine what makes a production “Canadian.” Points are awarded based on the Canadian creative talent working on a project—for example, two points for a Canadian director, two points for a Canadian writer, one point each for the first and second lead performers—up to a maximum of ten points. The largest



Kim's Convenience stars Simu Liu, Jean Yoon, Paul Sun-Hyung Lee and Andrea Bang.

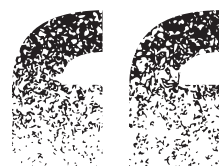
production fund, the Canada Media Fund, dedicates funding only to ten-out-of-ten productions. Smaller Independent Production Funds, however, had a lower threshold. Now the CRTC was putting the bar even lower.

The CRTC said this decision was made without any public hearings to provide more “flexibility” for producers. It further backed its ruling by stating it could “facilitate the hiring by production companies of non-Canadian actors or creators, who may increase a project’s attractiveness and visibility in international markets.” In other words, the CRTC was declaring that Canada lacked the creative talent to make successful Canadian film and television.

While Blais seemed surprised by the subsequent outcry, he shouldn’t have

been. Canada’s most successful TV exports have been “ten-out-of-ten” productions—written by, directed by and starring Canadians. After ACTRA member Tatiana Maslany won her Best Actress Emmy Award in September, the show’s creator noted that Maslany would likely not have been chosen as the lead without the current “points” system for Canadian content: “The points system would have opened up the show to American casting—far more than we were. The network-sould have pushed for a name.”

The concern about the decision extended far beyond the creative community. When Blais appeared before Parliament’s Heritage Committee in October, he found himself facing harsh questions from Members of Parliament. “This is a decision I’ve been



“Successful and compelling Canadian television is the result of the public policy vision laid out in the Broadcasting Act, a vision the Commission has an obligation to uphold.” —Jean Yoon

hearing about almost daily since its release,” said Toronto-Danforth MP Julie Dabrusin. “I’m getting emails, calls, meetings; people stop me on the street to ask about this... How do I explain your CanCon points decision to my constituents, people working in the industry, who are afraid of losing their jobs?” she asked. St John’s MP Seamus O’ Regan noted the homegrown success of *Republic of Doyle* was due, in part, to Canadian content rules, “I fail to see how lowering it is better. Six out of 10 was a D when I went to St. Bon’s school in St. John’s. It was barely a pass.”

In response, Blais noted that, “The Act, which this House, this place has adopted, provides a way for the minister to speak to the commissioner.”

He could have also noted, but didn’t,

that the minister also has the power to appoint a new Commissioner.

Blais’s term is up on June 17, 2017. The Liberal government, currently in the midst of a year-long consultation on how to support Canadian creative talent in a digital world, has an opportunity to set a new direction. It’s time for a CRTC that embraces its mandate of encouraging the development of Canadian expression.



Elliott Anderson, Director
Public Policy, Research &
Communication

To Do Or Not To Do: Plan Ahead

In an industry filled with risks, we Canadian creators have built some of the best safety nets in the world. As such, I encourage you to use some of these safety nets as you sit down to do your 2017 financial planning.

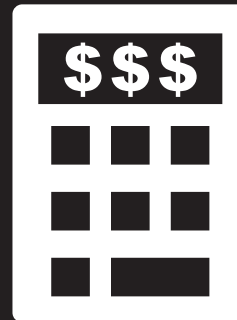
By Theresa Tova, ACTRA National Trea\$urer

DO make sure you are signed up for Direct Deposit to receive your money from ACTRA PRS. What's the advantage? When you sign up for Direct Deposit, your Use fees go directly into your account without any delay, but physical cheques are only issued once per year. Register for Direct Deposit at actra.ca/prs.



DON'T cash-in your RRSPs in hard times. Some performers have been known to make this expensive choice, which will cost you more in the long-run. Consider applying for a line of credit at Creative Arts Savings and Credit Union. Unlike big banks, CASCUS is member-owned and democratically-run, and its financial successes are shared with all credit union members.

DO keep an eye on key Actra Fraternal Benefit Society (AFBS) deadlines for: voluntary RRSP contributions; voluntary health & dental insurance maintenance payments; and expense claim submissions. AFBS is another concrete example of how the creative community takes care of its own.



UPCOMING 2017
AFBS DEADLINES

RRSP Contribution Top-up
February 28

RRSP Tax Receipts Issued
February 28

Insurance Program Selection
March 31

Claims Submissions
for Prior Benefit Year
May 31



INDIE FOCUS

Making Burned

By Daniel Libman

Emma Ross in *Burned*.

Lights, Camera... *Direction?*

"Jack of all trades, master of none." That's the first (snarky) thing that comes to mind when looking at many of our ACTRA members' resumes, and certainly my own. We've all had to: do it to survive; do it to explore; do it for fun. Many hats make... well... a person with many hats.

Hat 1: I've written produced plays. Hat 2: I've directed plays. Hat 3A, B & C: I've acted; in theatre, film and TV—the last two 'splain' the ACTRA thang.

But two new and very recent hats: Screenwriter & Film Director...

... of a 20-minute short film under the AIP. All good. Just not exactly in my plans.

"How?" Somebody asked. Someone asked *me*. Like any story, begin at the beginning:

One of my students—an emerging producer/director—comes to me (knowing I've written a lot of plays that have been produced) and asks me to read a script for a short film. Not one of my writing students though, one of my *acting* students. Vera Neverkevich Hill. "Sure," says me.

I read it. It needs some work to some of the structure, some of the dialogue (her first language is Russian). But all fixable, and the core of the story is... good. Really good. I like it.

So I tell her what I think it needs, and offer to try a redraft so she can see what I'm thinking. She agrees.

I write a new draft, an expansion and refining of her first draft. She loves it. She asks me to co-write. We start going back and forth, redrafting, tweaking... well, *writing*.

But... who is she, and what has she done? She's been a cinematographer on three drama shorts. She points me to a short she directed for *Beakerhead*, Calgary's Art/Science/Engineering Festival, and to her documentary, *Ela's Worlds* (an Official Selection at the St. Louis International Film Festival). Her work is wonderful; I love it. There is the real possibility of collaboration. And that's exciting. We will learn from each other, and learn by doing.

She has the money. And/or, is ready to put herself into extreme financial peril to get it made, so I sign on to help however I can. It's not a *someday* project; it's going to get made.

First problem: the story involves an extreme second-degree burn to a teenage girl from a malfunctioning (old) UV lamp. Who ya gonna call?

In Alberta, first choice: make-up artist (and friend) Gail Kennedy, five-time Emmy-nominated for make-up and special effects make-up, and Emmy award-winner for HBO's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*. I take her for lunch.

I warn her: it's an AIP; it's low budget; it involves incredibly complex prosthetic burn make-ups, diminishing in severity over several days. Hard, hard work. She says "yes" (I must be one hell of a lunch date). I am flat-out astounded by her generosity and support. Still am.

Next up, my partner Vera—who is also serving as producer (yup: it's a real Indie film)—starts putting together the required team. Even at this low end of the economic



scale, it still takes an army to make this film. Then she asks if I would consider co-directing. Why? She is experienced behind the camera, making documentaries, being cinematographer, but less experienced talking acting to actors. I say "yes" (well, who wouldn't?). So I start helping her access ACTRA talent in southern Alberta.

I pull a favour from another friend and colleague—casting director Rhonda Fisecki (because we can't afford her)—and ask her to review the script and give me any casting ideas. She does. I am grateful, but Vera still has to get to work setting up auditions.

Because of my schedule, we have to have round one of auditions almost four months before we are going to camera. This is nerve-wracking, because at our pay scale, we are totally at the mercy of actors booking something more lucrative/high-profile before our first day of shooting.

We see a lot of actors, but need to start with our main teenage girl. I have one

acting student who stands out, Emma Ross. We have seen all the teenage female ACTRA members, but no one nails it like Emma.

We start October 6, and Emma proves me right. We go five very long exhausting days, but get it all shot. Next up: editing. I'll keep you posted (pun intended).

Because this article is for ACTRA, a big thanks to our cast: Emma Ross, Haylee Turner, Megan Tracz, Erika Walter, Patrick Creery, ACTRA Alberta Secretary and Chantal Perron, ACTRA Alberta Member at Large (and to me! Typecast again... playing only the 6th doctor of my career).



Daniel Libman is a Calgary-based actor and playwright, with more than 50 productions of his plays across Canada and the U.S. (including three in NYC). He also writes corporate and political speeches, magazine features and teaches writing at Mount Royal University.

Kristin Lehman during production on *Women Seen*.

Photo: Betina Strauss



Celebrating our gender message

By Theresa Tova

As I look back at my life through the lens of a “liberated” woman of the ‘70s, I am grateful for all we have accomplished. Suffragettes won women the vote, and legal and property rights. Second wave feminists revelled in sexual liberation and claimed a rightful place for women in the workforce. Third wave feminists led the charge for women to be seen and heard in all our diversity by focusing on queer and non-white women. One can easily draw a direct line from those struggles to today when we are finally seeing more wide-spread acceptance and inclusion of LGBTQ communities in the main stream.

My older sister’s generation burned their bras as a statement that women’s bodies and voices could no longer be constricted. I benefited from their actions when, as a young woman, I felt unencumbered and literally had no bra to burn. I thought the struggle was won. So why after decades are women still struggling for respect and for gender equality?

Why are we still struggling to break the glass ceiling and be properly represented in boardrooms and the halls of power? Why do women still represent the face of the working poor? We face systemic discrimination, and violent domestic and workplace abuse.

In our industry, we too struggle with a stereotypical, misrepresentation of women in the media and, yes, we female actors are still undervalued and paid only 70 cents on every dollar paid to our male counterparts.

As an Officer of our national union, I have been invited to address gender issues at two separate International Women of Steel conferences. At these emotional gatherings, I’ve heard women from around the world report on modern slavery, rape culture and the horrors of child labour. I have struggled with how our First World issues of equal pay, gender imbalance and misrepresentation within the cultural industries pales in comparison to the life and death struggles our sisters face daily. And yet in these moments, I know exactly *why* we ACTRA sisters are invited to be part of this dialogue. Along with our allies, we are methodically working to change the way women are portrayed in front of and behind the camera.

This year we have seen public figures speak openly and freely about predatory behaviour with very little consequence. Parts of society continue to excuse this disrespect of women as, “boys will be boys” or simply “locker room talk.” We cannot stay quiet. When women are not seen as fully realized characters in popular culture, we continue to normalize the dehumanization of half our society.

THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

We know the power of storytelling. We know how important it is for our daughters and other women, who are not as blessed as we are, to see ourselves portrayed in roles other than nameless girlfriends, victims or hookers. To that end, ACTRA became a founding member of the Canadian Unions for Equality on Screen (CUES). Working in collaboration with academics and entertainment industry organizations, CUES collected and analyzed data to better understand the opportunities and challenges women face in the screen-based production industry—both in front of and behind the camera—including production coordinators, grips, camera technicians, hairstylists, writers, directors and actors. In 2013, CUES and researcher Dr. Amanda Coles published this data in their first report, *Focus on Women*.

WHAT’S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

This past September, CUES released its second report by Dr. Amanda Coles entitled, “What’s wrong with this picture? Directors and gender inequality in the Canadian screen-based production industry.” Sadly,

“Why after decades are women still struggling for respect and for gender equality?”

the new report confirms that the number of decision makers in key creative roles has not budged over the last three years. Male directors continue to be engaged in upwards of 84 per cent of available work. Says Dr. Coles: “The under-representation of women in the director’s chair is not a consequence of women not wanting to direct, or a lack of training or talent. It’s a result of everyday and institutional sexism, and that’s a problem female directors can’t solve on their own.”

From the report we’ve learned that industry gatekeepers and decision makers have the ability to create an industry built on diversity, inclusivity and representation. The lack of diversity on our screens is a missed opportunity—one in which we fail to capitalize on the diversity of the Canadian population’s stories and experiences. And on top of that, a diversity of storytellers serves the commercial interests of various investors for growing international audiences. This is an issue of major economic and socio-cultural importance that requires swift and meaningful industry-wide action.

The future does not, however, have to be bleak. The report provides solutions for change, but notes these solutions require an industry-wide effort:

- Adopt gender equality as a core principle in policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation for the Canadian screen-based production industry;
- Recognize that the implementation of equality and diversity practice is good for business;
- Address implicit bias across the Canadian screen-based production industry by prioritizing inclusivity and diversity as core industry values;
- Stakeholders from across the industry, including regulatory and funding bodies and public institutions, record diversity metrics and report annually on the degree to which public funds support storytelling by under-represented communities.

For an overview of the report, please visit cueonscreen.ca.

Why does this report matter to us? Because it is only when women are in key creative decision-making positions that more stories can be told by and about strong and

capable women. I am proud of our ACTRA sisters who have stepped up to coach, mentor and take leadership roles in the broader labour movement. Together, we are helping to bring gender issues onto the international stage.

Allow me to shine a light on the following exceptional ACTRA women who are making a difference:

Our inspirational union leader **Ferne Downey** is the first ACTRA National President to serve four terms. On a global level, Ferne is serving her second term as President of the International Federation of Actors (FIA) and is the first North American to serve as FIA President. She is a VP of the Canadian Labour Congress and in 2016 joined the CLC’s delegation to attend the United Nations’ Commission on the Status of Women in New York City. During her leadership, Ferne has made gender equality one of her missions. ACTRA National Council is half women and our local branch councils must now report yearly on initiatives they use to attract women to leadership positions.

Our 2011 ACTRA Woman of the Year **Tantoo Cardinal** is a multi-award-winning actor whose ground-breaking performances fight for a more fully-realized portrayal of Aboriginal people. Her many accolades include Member of the Order of Canada, the National Aboriginal Achievement Award and the ACTRA Toronto Award of Excellence. A passionate activist, Tantoo lends her voice to Missing and Murdered

Aboriginal Women, Occupy Wall Street and a myriad of environmental causes, including being arrested for protesting the Keystone Pipeline.

Our 2010 ACTRA Woman of the Year **Shirley Douglas** is a leading actor who uses her fierce skill as an orator to speak up for collective causes for world peace. She is a spokesperson for both the Canadian Health Coalition and Friends of Medicare. In her distinguished role as ambassador for Canadian performers, Shirley advocates for the rights and respect of performers and the dire need for a Canadian star system in English Canada.

Our 2012 ACTRA Woman of the Year **Sandi Ross** was the first black president of ACTRA Toronto. She was an inspiring advocate for the arts, performers unions, visible and audible minorities, and disabled performers. Sandi produced the first “Into the Mainstream” catalogue, which showcased the diversity of Canadian actors. Sadly, we lost Sandi last fall. Sandi pushed us to realize that “Diversity is Our Strength” and her call for inclusion has inspired Diversity committees initiatives like #ShareTheScreen.

ACTRA’s 2015 Woman of the Year **Amanda Tapping** supports numerous charities such as The Canadian Cancer Society, UNICEF and V-Day, which works to help end violence against women and girls. Her charitable foundation, “Sanctuary for Kids,” has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for children’s charities around the world.



Amanda Coles and Ferne Downey at the inaugural 2013 launch of the Canadian Unions for Equality on Screens (CUES) report, "Focus on Women".



Candy Palmater and Jani Lauzon.



Theresa Tova with ACTRA's 2013 Women Of The Year Mary Walsh, alongside previous recipients Tantoo Cardinal, Shirley Douglas, and the late Sandi Ross, and then ACTRA Women's Committee co-chair Shannon Jardine. Photo: Jag Gundu



Jocelyne Zucco, Jani Lauzon, Theresa Tova, ACTRA's 2016 Woman Of the Year Catherine Joell MacKinnon, Ferne Downey, Amanda Joy, Clara Pasieka and Angelica Lisk-Hann. Photo Tony Walsh

Carmen Moore, Amanda Tapping and Kristin Lehman on the *Women Seen* set in Vancouver. Photo: Bettina Strauss.

ACTRA national stunt liason Tania Cardwell with national stunt liason, stunt performer and coordinator Lori Stewart. Photo: Tony Walsh.



Cary Lawrence, Kim Hume, Tabby Johnson and Theresa Tova at the 2014 Canadian Labour Congress. Photo: Jeremy Webb.

Anne Wheeler with Joy Coghill, recipient of UBCP/ACTRA's 2016 Lorena Gale Woman of Distinction Award. Photo Geoff Howe.

“We are methodically working to change the way women are portrayed in front of and behind the camera.”

Amanda, one of too few women directors working in Canada, has lent her strong vision to directing our *Women Seen* short film, a nation-wide collaborative effort of the ACTRA National Women’s Committee.

Mary Walsh, ACTRA National’s 2013 Woman of the Year, is a dramatic and comedic national treasure. She is a passionate spokesperson for Oxfam and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. She is an advocate for people with mental health disorders and addiction. For over 20 years, Mary has used her razor-sharp wit embodied in her fearless character Marg Delahunty Princess Warrior character to—in Mary’s words—“Cut through all of the BS that politicians love to sling.”

Our 2005 ACTRA National Award of Excellence recipient **Tonya Williams** is a relentless activist with a deep commitment to building a stronger, more independent film and television industry that reflects Canada’s rich diversity. While being based in Los Angeles and enjoying a successful career internationally, here at home Tonya is the founder and president of the Toronto Reelworld Film Festival and Foundation.

Under Tonya’s leadership, Reelworld has become a beehive for young and diverse filmmakers who understand the power of film as a force for social good.

Ellen Page is a Canadian child performer who blossomed into an A-list Hollywood actor. Page has made it a priority in her work to speak honestly and publicly about domestic violence, trans rights, gay suicides and gender inequality. An active LGBT activist on social media, Page developed the idea for *Gaycation*, a documentary series where she and co-star Ian Daniel travel to parts of the world to expose the dangerous and sometimes deadly attacks on the Gay community.

Tina Keeper is a Cree activist, producer, actor and former member of the Canadian House of Commons. Tina is a dedicated voice on a variety of social issues such as suicide prevention and violence against women. She has produced initiatives in public education to build bridges between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the province of Manitoba. In 2006, Tina was elected as the Liberal Party representative in Churchill, Manitoba, where she

served as the Official Opposition’s Critic for Public Health and Canadian Heritage, and as Special Advisor for Aboriginal Outreach in the Parliament that followed.

There are many ACTRA women activists who also deserve shout-outs. They include: our 2016 ACTRA Woman of the Year **Catherine Joell MacKinnon** promotes equal opportunities for Deaf Performers; our 2014 ACTRA Woman of the Year **Jean Freeman** is one of our film and television industry pioneers in Saskatchewan; **Jani Lauzon** is a leading voice on diversity issues; **Cary Lawrence** created the invaluable “Nudity Survival Guide;” **Christine Willes** spearheads initiatives of gender inequality among camera operators, writers, directors, technicians and actors in B.C.; **Spirit Synott** and **Leesa Levinson** are disability rights activists; **Angelica Lisk-Hann**, our National diversity advocate and first black female stunt performer and coordinator in Canada; stunt performer and coordinator **Lori Stewart** is our stunt liaison and a leading voice of Actsafe in B.C.; and there’s **Mary-Colin Chisholm**, **Ruth Lawrence**, **Carol Whiteman**, **Tabby Johnson**, **Candy Palmater**, **Clara Pasioka**, **Paula Costain**, **Alison Louder**... and the list continues to grow...and grow and grow!

Come join us sisters... there is much more work to be done.



Theresa Tova is ACTRA National Treasurer, ACTRA National Children’s Advocate and the newly elected President of ACTRA Toronto.

THE FACTS



Male directors are engaged in upwards of

84%

of the available work.

“What’s wrong with this picture? Directors and gender equality in the Canadian screen-based industry,” by Dr. Amanda Coles, September 2016.
cueonscreen.ca

**Catching
up
with
Kim
Coates**

**2017 ACTRA
National Award
of Excellence**

“The arts are paramount—we take them for granted at times; movies, concerts, theatres, they’re all around us—but if we don’t nurture them, continue to nurture them and be smart about them [the arts], our communities will be left with nothing. And I mean that. Nothing.”

Said this year’s ACTRA National Award of Excellence recipient Kim Coates. Kim joins ACTRA’s prestigious list of recipients—Lloyd Bochner, Neve Campbell, Bruce Greenwood, Eugene Levy, Leslie Nielsen, Sandra Oh, Jason Priestley, Kiefer Sutherland and Tonya Williams. In this exclusive interview Kim credits theatre, his first agent, his Saskatchewan friends, his home country and getting the crap scared out of him as the major influencers behind his successful career.

Landing a role on a successful long-running TV series is like striking gold for today’s working actor. In hindsight, were you ready for *Sons of Anarchy*?

I think *Sons of Anarchy* (SOA) came at a perfect time for me. I started out always wanting to do theatre, to learn my craft beginning there, which I think is so important. Then film came to me in the early ‘90s when the timing was right. I said “no” to a few television series over the years, not wanting to play the same guy week in and week out, for years, but when *Sons* came along in 2008, it was like lightning in a bottle. It was the perfect show for me to say YES to. Certainly, a series these days can be quite (monetarily) rewarding for actors. None of us had any idea it would become to be as popular as it did. We could have gone on for another seven

years, but I’m glad we stopped when Kurt Sutter said we were done. I will never forget playing that guy. FX only does 13 episodes a year [for a show], not 22. Because of that, we had six months on, six months off, so I was still able to do a movie or two during my hiatus. It (SOA) was an amazing thing and it’s an amazing experience for actors to have a show like that. A show that was so crazily well-written and different, esoteric in a way—the “biker world” had never been seen before. So, it really was like doing a mini film every week to me. A successful TV show is intense. It’s rewarding, but there’s no fucking around. It’s 16-hour days. Eight days to shoot an episode. You’ve got to come prepared. And we all did. And we all got along. I think it really prepared [me] for the next stage of [my] career.

You’ve performed in numerous theatre productions on stages including the Neptune (Halifax) and Stratford, and on Broadway. What do you love about live theatre?

Being Canadian, it makes me so proud that we take the craft [acting] seriously, and we take classes seriously. Me being from Saskatoon and taking an acting class as an elective in my first year of university changed the course of my life. I was going to be a history teacher. But I fell into it [acting] and by my third year [in university], I was majoring in drama. I ended up doing 25 plays in over four years at the U of S, which included Summer stock [theatre]. Then Tom Kerr, my mentor, took me to the Neptune Theatre after graduation. I think I did 11 or 12 plays there. I remember meeting my first agent in Toronto, Gary Goddard—who’s gone now, he was an amazing man—I remember him looking at me when I first walked into his office. Here I was, 23, graduated, a bit of tough guy, with maybe a twinkle of Tennessee Williams in my eye. He said to me, “So, we’re going to get you into film right away.” To which I replied, “No, we’re not, actually. I need more stage. I need more stage.” And so that’s what we did. I performed regional theatre across the country. In 1985/1986, I was invited to Stratford. John Neville directed me as the youngest *Macbeth* ever. That production then toured parts of the U.S., where American agents saw my work. At that moment in my career, I had realized that I just wanted to go where the best work was, whether it was Thunder Bay or Broadway. And speaking of Broadway, I played Stanley Kowalski in *A Streetcar*

Named Desire at the Circle in the Square Theatre in 1989. Stage was, is, a huge part of me as an actor. Then Hollywood discovered me, a green card, 25 years of film and television, and it all happened so fast. It's now time for me to go back to the stage. It's been way too long. I've been offered a play in Toronto in early 2018. The part scares the crap out of me, but I've always liked that challenge. If I do it, it's exactly what I need to go to get back to the boards. (*We know there's a glint in those baby blues that says this is EXACTLY what he wants to do.*)

In 2012, you took part in the Saskatchewan film and television workers' 'Culture Cruise and Rally.' Why was it so important for you to return to your home province to support our industry?

I'm very proud to have many charities that mean the world to me. It's really important to me to continue to give back, which I do so happily. In Saskatchewan, where I'm from, Brad Wall and the Conservative government there—they're doing a lot of good things, but, unfortunately, they've completely killed the tax incentives for the film industry. It's so disturbing and wasn't thought out. When you actually look at how the tax incentives work, and every province is different, they give money to productions in order to have people work, then these artists pay taxes, buy gaffers tape, rent cars, stay in hotels, all to increase the local economy in their area, and then the local government will get a considerably larger return on its investment. My pals, Kelly Boland and Anand

Ramayan, two producers from Saskatchewan, were forced to leave the province to find work elsewhere. And many other committed artists had to do the same. The arts are paramount—we take them for granted at times; movies, concerts, theatres, they're all around us—but if we don't nurture them, continue to nurture them and be smart about them [the arts], our communities will be left with nothing. And I mean that. Nothing. Without art, you have nothing. You could feel the energy at that culture rally, 200 motorcycles, 1,000 people, handing 10,000 signatures to the government on the steps of the parliament building in Regina. It partially worked. The Conservative government gave back a little bit the next year, opening a different kind of tax credit, albeit much smaller. It's not enough. It's never enough, but I will continue to fight for actors, writers, directors, et al, until I'm not around anymore, because it means that much to me.

What unique quality makes Canadian actors attractive to Hollywood producers?

Noses. It's all about the nose. It's all about, "we're tough." It's all about, "we're from Saskatchewan and we know how cold it is." No, I'm a complete pussy now. My blood's changed from living in L.A. for over 20 years. I don't know—Canadian actors, right? We're funny. We're flat out, fucking funny. That's for sure. The climate is colder, there're not as many people, and the communities are so vibrant. From Alberta to Quebec to Ontario to the Mari-

We all know this industry can be really, really tough—but if you follow your bliss, stay true to who you are, work together with your peers, then you can succeed.

times to BC, I mean seriously, every community is different, but we're all Canadian. I do think, and I've mentioned this before, we take the art [of acting] seriously. We come from the stage. We take classes in improv, Shakespeare, sonnets, seriously. That can only help. You become an actor. Hopefully a really good actor, and then, a really good actor who works. In the ideal world, you get into commercials or TV or film, and everything should just overlap like that. We all know this industry can be really, really tough—but if you follow your bliss, stay true to who you are, work together with your peers, then you can succeed. You can have the greatest life. I think Canadians know that, and we don't take anything for granted. Honestly, we're sorry pretty much 100% of the time because we're so fucking good. There you go.

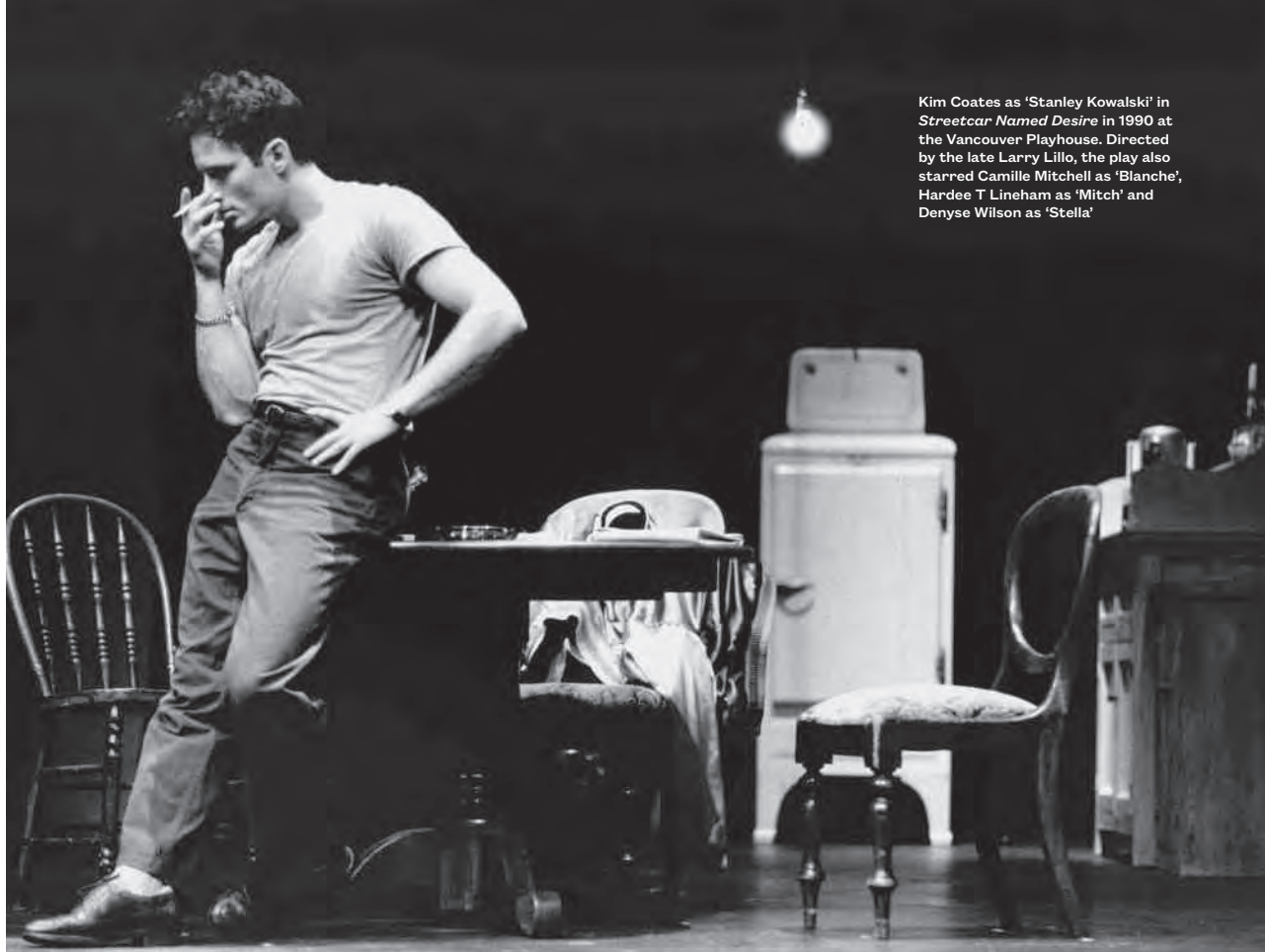
You built your career in Canada and fly the flag proudly—what piece of advice would you have for a Canadian performer trying to emulate your success?

Well that's true. I am not kidding, you can take the boy out of Canada but you can't take Canada out of the boy. My SOA boys, Tommy Flanagan, Charlie Hunnam and Ron Perlman, all had Canadian jokes flying around because my character Tig wore, you know, a Canadian flag on his underwear. In my heart, I know where I come from. I love coming back to Canada to work and to live. I've got a couple of places there, now, and even though I am in L.A., I'm Canadian proud.

It's so humbling to be asked to speak to young theatre students, and the only advice I give is this: do not be in a rush to get to Toronto, or Vancouver, or New York,

or L.A. Stay in Seattle. Stay in Edmonton. Stay in Baltimore. Stay wherever you are to work on YOUR craft. FIND people your age. DO improv. We all have iPhones now, right? You can make a little movie. “Film” acting is different than the stage. There’s no “acting” in film. Once you start “acting,” it’s over. The camera will pick that up. You have to just BE. You have to feel it. You have to KNOW your lines and then you must forget them. I don’t know what I’m going to say to you right now. You don’t know what you’re going to say to me right now. And then we LISTEN. As all great actors know, it’s all about listening and responding. Film acting is tough. It’s not shot in order, it’s out of continuity. But, if you work at it, you know it, you take direction, you know where you came from and where you’re going, you know how to

walk, dress, feel like that character, only then do you have IT. It’s all about feeling. It’s all about “not” acting. I’m not saying you shouldn’t scream, yell or cry, if it’s part of the scene, but, you can’t “act.” And never be afraid to fail. So, I’ve taken it seriously. I’m always learning. I think these young kids don’t need to rush to get to the “big lights.” Stay where you are. Take your time. Take the classes. Get involved in theatre. Read books. Tape yourself. Before you know it, Edmonton will be Vancouver.



Kim Coates as ‘Stanley Kowalski’ in *Streetcar Named Desire* in 1990 at the Vancouver Playhouse. Directed by the late Larry Lillo, the play also starred Camille Mitchell as ‘Blanche’, Hardee T Lineham as ‘Mitch’ and Denyse Wilson as ‘Stella’

Thunder Bay will be Toronto. Baltimore will be New York. Seattle to L.A., where everything is happening—theatre, film, TV. It’s incredibly tough, but if you follow your bliss, like Joseph Campbell taught me, you’ve got a shot. That’s all you want in this business, is to have a shot. Because if you get it, like I did—it leads to an incredible life and this incredible honour by ACTRA. I’m humbled beyond words and I’m not going anywhere.

Kim Coates’s film career began in 1991 with *The Last Boy Scout*. He has since performed in over 50 films, including *Waterworld*, *Resident Evil: Afterlife*, *Silent Hill* and the Academy Award-winners *Black Hawk Down* and *Pearl Harbor*. TV series roles include *Sons of Anarchy*, *Entourage*, *CSI*, *Cold Case* and *Prison Break*. Additionally, Kim has appeared in over 50 plays in North America. At 27, he was the youngest actor to play *Macbeth* on the Stratford stage and two years later he replaced Aidan Quinn as Stanley Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire* on Broadway. Award accolades include Gemini nominations for his role in the TV movie *Dead Silence* and the TV series *The Outer Limits*, and a best performance Canadian Screen Award nomination for the first *Goon* movie. Kim’s recent roles include playing President Cueto in *True Memoirs of an International Assassin*; the title L.A. supercop character in *Officer Downe*; Ed Logan in the six-part Netflix western *Godless*; and he reprises his role as Coach Ronnie Hortense in the Jay Baruchel-directed Canadian comedy sequel *Goon: Last of the Enforcers*.

**imagineNATIVE presents
Tom Jackson with the
August Schellenberg Award
of Excellence**

Accomplished actor and musician Tom Jackson is dedicated to helping the less fortunate. Recognized for roles on *North of 60*, *Star Trek* and *Law & Order*, Tom has also recorded 16 albums. His latest, "Ballads Not Bullets," was in support of the Canadian Red Cross. Tom has been appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada and awarded the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards for Lifetime Artistic Achievement. ACTRA is a proud sponsor of imagineNATIVE's August Schellenberg Award of Excellence.

Photo: Rafal Wegiel



Camille Sullivan
won the Best
Actress Award for
The Birdwatcher

Lee Tockar

John Wardlow

UBCP/ACTRA Awards

Performers from across British Columbia were honoured in Vancouver on November 12 at the 5th annual UBCP/ACTRA Awards gala. Camille Sullivan won the Best Actress Award for her work in *The Birdwatcher* and the Best Actor Award went to Aleks Paunovic for his role in *Numb*. The Best Emerging Performer Award went to Jacob Tremblay for his work in *Room* and the Best Voice Award went to Lee Tockar for *Slug*. Adrian Hein took home the Best Stunt Award for his performance in *Arrow*. The John Juliani Award of Excellence was presented to John Wardlow and Joy Coghill was the recipient of the Lorena Gale Woman of Distinction Award.

Award Photos: Geoff Howeel



Celebration of Cinema

ACTRA and SAG-AFTRA's TIFF '16 event

L to R: ACTRA National Treasurer Theresa Tova, ACTRA Toronto President David Sparrow, ACTRA NED Stephen Waddell, SAG-AFTRA EVP Rebecca Damon, ACTRA President Ferne Downey, ACTRA member Shailyn Pierre-Dixon, SAG-AFTRA President Gabrielle Carteris, SAG-AFTRA NED David White, ACTRA member Grace Lynn Kung, SAG-AFTRA Secretary-Treasurer Jane Austin, SAG-AFTRA Board Member & CPC Co-Chair Sue-Anne Morrow, and ACTRA Diversity Chair Angelica Lisk-Hann.

Photo: Jag Gundu



ACTRA Manitoba Awards

The MET was packed for the 2016 ACTRA Manitoba Awards Gala. In the television category, David Brown and Rebecca Gibson both won the Outstanding Performance Awards for *The Pinkertons*; Melissa Marie Elias and Ernesto Griffith both won the Outstanding Performance Awards in the theatrical category for *A Warden's Ransom*; and for the short category Darcy Fehr won the Outstanding Performance Award for *Black Rainbow*. Stunt Performance Awards were presented to Sean Skene and BJ Verot, both for *The Pinkertons*. The Wayne Nicklas Award for Outstanding Contribution to ACTRA and to the Film and TV Industry was presented to Film Training Manitoba.

L to R: Sean Skene, David Brown, Rebecca Gibson, Darcy Fehr and BJ Verot. Photo: Leif Norman

A full-page photograph of actress Tatiana Maslany smiling and holding her Emmy Award. She is wearing a red dress and large earrings. The background is a blurred red carpet event with other people and lights.

Canadians thrilled by Tatiana Maslany's Emmy Award win!

"When people say we need to import talent to succeed, Tatiana's win is proof that the talent is here," said Ferne Downey. "*Orphan Black* is an entirely Canadian success story and we should celebrate that."

Photo: Lucy Nicholson/REUTERS



John Drainie Awards

John Drainie was an early advocate for building Canadian talent and a great believer in Canadian storytelling—all traits we see in the careers and contributions of our 2016 award recipients: Mark Starowicz, Ann-Marie MacDonald and Rick Mercer. These three individuals who, with a bred-in-the-bone Canadian independence and feistiness, have insisted that the story of Canada be told by and about the people of Canada.

It is also because of John and his contemporaries—and the CBC—that ACTRA developed into what it is today. And here we are just a year away from celebrating ACTRA's 75th anniversary.

CBC/Radio-Canada co-hosted the event in the CBC Atrium named after the late Barbara Frum who also happens to be a past John Drainie Award recipient. Our merry and wonderful host, Wendy Mesley, was herself a Drainie Award recipient in 2006.

Orson Welles called Drainie, “The greatest radio actor in the world.” John began his radio career in Vancouver and, before World War II broke out in 1939, pioneering talents, including John, Bud Knapp, Jane Mallett, Tommy Tweed, Lorne Greene and Ruth Springford, to name a few, were household names. John later moved to Toronto and became part of the CBC’s “Golden Age of Radio.” Canadian voices were welcomed into living rooms across the country with live, daily episodes of locally-written, -acted and -produced radio drama.

In the 1950s, the invention of the television brought even more opportunities for actors. Canada was at the centre of the action—a world leader both technically and artistically. John Drainie’s face was one of the first to flicker across our airwaves where he brought us the character of the much beloved Matthew Cuthbert in the 1956 original CBC television production of *Anne of Green Gables*. Later, he co-anchored the current affairs show, *This Hour Has Seven Days*, with Laurier Lapierre.

These final three John Drainie Awards were bestowed in the year when John would have celebrated his 100th birthday. AFBS stepped in as our event sponsor. It was a poetical and inspiring tribute to three of Canada’s trailblazers—thank you Mark, Ann-Marie and Rick for being our CanCon rock stars.

Ferne Downey, ACTRA President

Left to right: Ferne Downey with John Drainie Award recipients Rick Mercer, Ann-Marie MacDonald, Mark Starowicz and host/past Award recipient Wendy Mesley in the Barbara Frum CBC Atrium in Toronto.
Photo: Jag Gundu





Sandi Ross
1949–2016

I first met Sandi in 1991 when I was a green young thing at Theatre Ontario. She was my mentor and colleague in cultural equity advocacy for almost 10 years of meetings and committees. She was also my hero and my friend. I adored her expansive energy, her booming laugh and her indefatigable efforts to secure equal opportunity for culturally-diverse and differently-abled artists. I loved her New Year's Day spread; the ambition and generosity of this tradition is well-known and somehow a perfect metaphor for the life's work of this woman. Every day was a new day, and celebration and sharing was the only option. She gave me courage as an arts advocate and space to practice as an artist. I had given up acting when I met Sandi and was happy to stay behind the scenes, but Sandi was the kind of person who made you believe the improbable wasn't only possible but right there in front of you. Sandi's accomplishments are too numerous for me to recount here, but I can tell you that there isn't an actor of colour working today that doesn't owe Sandi Ross a debt and that includes me. Proud, loud and laughing. I will forever miss her 360-degree hugs.

Jean Yoon



Janet Wright
1945–2016

Janet's career spanned 50 years as a theatre director, and actor in stage, film and in television. Janet was also co-founder with her sister Susan of the Persephone Theatre in Saskatoon. She played a number of characters on screen and stage, from Emma Leroy on *Corner Gas* to King Lear with Canadian Stage (the first woman in Canada to play the role). Janet won multiple awards for her brilliant and passionate work. She brought laughter to millions of people with her portrayal of Emma on *Corner Gas*. Her contribution to the theatre in Canada was monumental. She was an absolute force in our country for the arts. I met Janet for the first time in the early '90s when we acted together in an episode of *Neon Rider*. I was awestruck (and dorky about it, I'm sure) to be working with the great Janet Wright. Years later, we became close on *Corner Gas*. Janet expressed herself in a way that woke up my heart because she was raw, and brave and hilarious. She was, more than anything, loving. So loving. Her words were unfettered by the weighted need to placate so what was left was only truth. The way Janet did truth. With humour and kick ass, unbridled love. She will always be my hero. Janet will be deeply missed and loved by her husband, Bruce Davis, and her children, Celine and Jacob Richmond, as well as her family, friends and the millions of Canadians for whom she played. Thank you, Janet, for your brilliance and for using your gorgeous voice to tell us stories, in the way only you could.

Gabrielle Miller



Dave Broadfoot
1925–2016

The word "icon" can scarcely do justice to the range of Dave Broadfoot's accomplishments and the impact he had on Canadians during his long, laughter-filled career. He made his first television appearance the week that CBC Television went on the air in September 1952 and was a member of ACTRA since its inception. Dave joined the cast of the *Royal Canadian Air Farce* in 1973 but I first met him in 1971 when he joined *Air Farce*'s precursor stage show, *The Jest Society*. Luba Goy met him even earlier when she was in grade 10 and working as a server at an Ottawa coffee house. In 2003, when Dave was presented with the Governor General's Performing Arts Award, John Morgan came out of retirement to join Luba, Roger Abbott and me at the National Arts Centre for a performance in his honour. We all realized what a great sign of respect this was—John was an avowed anti-showbizzer and this was the only public performance he gave after he retired. The four of us loved Dave, as did the millions of Canadians to whom he brought the great gift of laughter. But we were luckiest of all—we got to share not just hours, but decades, of hard-working, happy, laugh-filled time with him.

Don Ferguson

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**ACTRA MAGAZINE
WINTER 2017
VOL. 24, ISSUE 1**

ACTRA Magazine is the official publication of ACTRA (Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists), a Canadian union of performers affiliated to the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and the International Federation of Actors (FIA). ACTRA Magazine is free of charge to ACTRA members.

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Cover photo: Paul Sun-Hyung Lee, Jean Yoon and Yannick Bisson at the CRTC Broadcaster Hearings in Gatineau, PQ.
Photo: Fred Chartrand

Printed in Canada by union labour at Thistle Printing.

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Publication mail agreement #40069134 ISSN19262590



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Clara Pasioka

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Clara Pasioka's film and television work has traveled the world. She can be recognized for her roles in *Reign*, *Inhuman Condition*, Cronenberg's *Maps to the Stars* and many others. Clara is also an ACTRA Toronto Council Vice-President, an ACTRA National Councillor, Co-Chair of ACTRA Toronto's Young Emerging Actors Assembly (YEAA), and the newest and youngest member of the Creative Arts Savings & Credit Union board of directors!

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