



I N T E R

Summer 2002

# ACTRA

The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists



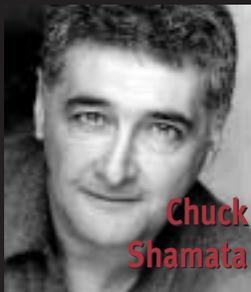
## Action on policy

**Shirley Douglas**

News from ACTRA's National Policy Conference  
with guest speakers p 6



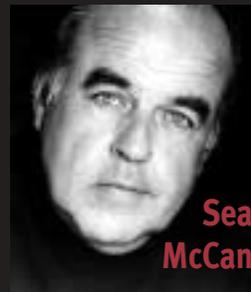
**Fiona Reid**



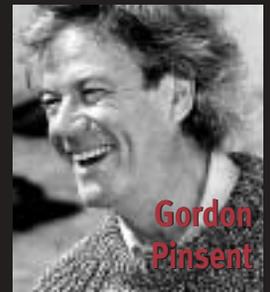
**Chuck Shamata**



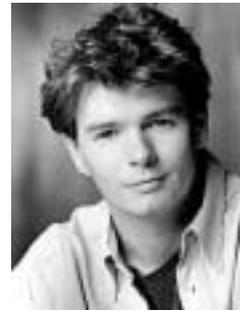
**Nick Mancuso**



**Sean McCann**



**Gordon Pinsent**



Thor Bishopric

## Standing up for Canadian Culture

After a two-day National Policy Conference in early June, **ACTRA's National Council** emerged unanimous in its commitment to two policy objectives: strengthening **Canadian content** and **income security** for performers. The goal of the two-day conference was to develop an action plan for our union's advocacy work for the next year.

**Jamie Bradley's** article on our policy conference relates the views of well-known Canadian performers **Sean McCann, Gordon Pinsent, Shirley Douglas, Fiona Reid, Chuck Shamata** and **Nick Mancuso** who opened the policy conference. They recalled the pride and opportunity of building careers based on Canadian drama – an opportunity that

is significantly diminished today. They also mourned the loss of dignity in retirement for many performers who work entire careers, and retire destitute.

Immediately following our policy conference, ACTRA took action – we filed our submission with the **Department of Canadian Heritage** that is reviewing the definition of Canadian content. The current point system for Canadian content encourages the creation of generic (read: pseudo-Hollywood) programs by permitting significant non-Canadian involvement. ACTRA wants regulatory systems and public programs to be amended to recognize that a Canadian program is one that is created, written, directed, performed and produced entirely by Canadians.

Since its earliest days, we at ACTRA have been active in the public policy process, working for the adoption of legislation and programs that support professional artists and the industries in which we work. Canada has the artists and the resources to create exciting programs that will attract Canadian viewers and provide a real

choice for global audiences. ACTRA believes that the changes to public policies and programs that we advocate are in the broader public interest. A strong domestic production, distribution and exhibition system is absolutely vital to Canadian culture and our sovereignty as a nation.

Hard on the heels of our National Policy Conference, ACTRA brought our concerns about the substantial decline in Canadian drama production to the Minister of Canadian Heritage **Sheila Copps** while attending the **Banff Television Festival** in early June. In July, Canadian star **Paul Gross** joined ACTRA Toronto Performers Executive Director **Brian Topp** and me for a meeting at **CRTC** headquarters in Ottawa where we began to search for solutions to the declining drama crisis. **CRTC** Chair **Charles Dalfen** was fascinated with Paul's views on this issue and asked that ACTRA prepare a written submission and follow-up with future meetings.

Building on our momentum on the policy front, ACTRA is organizing local meetings with our Members of Parliament this summer and early fall. We have achieved our goal of involving many of our high-profile performers as spokespeople for ACTRA. Now it's up to the rest of our members to get involved and stand up for Canadian culture. You can help today by joining our national letter-writing campaign (see page 8). You should also contact your ACTRA branch and find out what you can do on a local level to help preserve our jobs, our culture and our country.



ACTRA's National President Thor Bishopric with distinguished actor, writer and activist R.H. Thomson on Parliament Hill to make ACTRA's presentation to the committee reviewing Canada's broadcasting system.



### Got a computer? Want to receive *InterACTRA* by email?

**We have the technology!** If you'd like to receive *InterACTRA* in your e-mailbox instead of your snail-mailbox, let us know. Email us at [interactra@actra.ca](mailto:interactra@actra.ca) with your membership number. We'll send you a pdf file of *InterACTRA* and you'll help ACTRA save on postage and printing.

### Write to InterACTRA

Have a story idea? Want to get involved? Send us an email at [interactra@actra.ca](mailto:interactra@actra.ca) or write to us c/o ACTRA's National Office, 625 Church Street, Suite 300, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2G1



Since 1958, the **Actors' Fund of Canada** has helped thousands of performers and other entertainment industry professionals in financial crisis to get back on their feet after a major setback. When artists in need have nowhere else to turn, the Fund can intervene at a critical moment with a rent cheque, grocery money, a subsidy for prescription drugs or other assistance.

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The Actors' Fund of Canada is a registered charity sustained by members of the entertainment industry professions. For more information or to make a tax-deductible donation, contact the Fund at:

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e-mail: [contact@actorsfund.ca](mailto:contact@actorsfund.ca)  
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**Editorial Advisory Committee:**

Thor Bishopric, Stephen Waddell, Brian Gromoff, David Macniven, Kim Hume

**Contributors:**

Lorraine Ansell, Randy Birch, Jamie Bradley, Don Dudar, Randy Duniz, Russ Germain, Jack Gray, Richard Hardacre, Matt Holland, Sharon Killey, Steve Lucescu, Dan Mackenzie, Garry Neil, Wayne Nicklas, Jacob Rupp, Gary Saxe, Anne Marie Scheffler, Chris Scott, Thomas Tapley, Carol Taverner, Joy Corion, Gary Vermeir, Heidi von Pallese

**Cover photo:** Carol Racicot

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Please return any undelivered mail to:  
ACTRA, 625 Church Street, Suite 300,  
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2G1  
PHONE 1-800-387-3516 OR (416) 489-1311  
FAX (416) 489-8076

[www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca) [interactra@actra.ca](mailto:interactra@actra.ca)

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# In this issue of InterACTRA...

**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

by *Thor Bishopric* ..... 2

**BARGAINING SAG's Rule One; National Commercial Agreement ratified**

by *Stephen Waddell* ..... 4

**COVER STORY ACTRA's National Policy Conference with guest speakers Shirley Douglas, Fiona Reid, Chuck Shamata, Nick Mancuso, Sean McCann and Gordon Pinsent**

by *Jamie Bradley* ..... 5



**BRANCH NEWS** ..... 10

**FEATURE Stunt performers:**

**ACTRA members in action**

by *Jacob Rupp and Steve Lucescu* .... 14

**ACTRA member profiles**

*Vincent Gale and Jodie Resther* ..... 18

**WHO'S WHO AT ACTRA** ..... 19

**DISCOUNTS FOR ACTRA MEMBERS** ..... 19



**FEATURE Digital Media:**

**New media challenges not so new**

by *Thomas Tapley* ..... 20

**ORGANIZING Updates from ACTRA's**

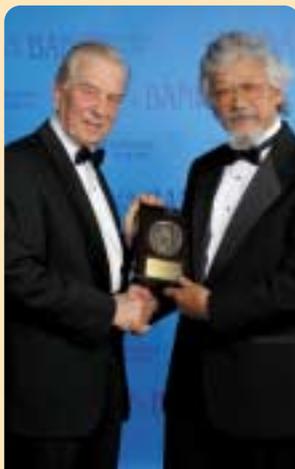
**national and digital media organizers** ..... 22

**APPLAUSE ACTRA members scoop awards at the 2002 Canadian Comedy Awards, the Writers Guild**

**Top Ten Awards and the Young Artist Awards** ..... 24

**FAREWELL Goodbye to Henry Comor, Harry Brown, Otto Lowy,**

**Rhonda Payne and Denis Forest** ..... 25



**Banff Television Festival**

**ACTRA's John Drainie Award is presented to David Suzuki; meeting with Heritage Minister Sheila Copps; Scott Thompson wins "the world's richest pitch"** ..... 27

**ACTRA National Financial Statements**

**Year ended February 28, 2002** ..... 28

**The Canadian Comedy Awards 2002**

by *Anne Marie Scheffler* ..... 32



Photo by Andre Leclerc

Stephen Waddell  
National Executive Director

# ACTRA puts Canadian performers first, asserts jurisdiction as SAG's Rule One comes into force

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002, the **Screen Actors Guild's (SAG)** global enforcement of **Rule One** came into effect. SAG's Rule One is the extension of a provision in their national constitution requiring SAG members to work on SAG contracts wherever they go in the world to work.

Rule One has been in the news in Canada, as many in the media and the industry interpret SAG's enforcement of Rule One as an effort to curb so-called 'runaway production.'

ACTRA has been firm and consistent in our stance on Rule One – we have been asserting our jurisdiction over performers working in the English language in Canada, and continue to claim that dual SAG-ACTRA members have the right to work in Canada on ACTRA contracts.

Before SAG's Rule One came into force, one of our producer associations, the **Canadian Film and Television Production Association (CFTPA)** attacked our position and threatened to take us to court.

Things seem to have calmed down a bit since May 1<sup>st</sup> has come and gone. ACTRA will continue to monitor the situation, answer questions about specific projects and assert our jurisdiction in Canada.

ACTRA is proud of our long-standing

positive and mutually supportive relationship with SAG. ACTRA and SAG have enjoyed the benefits of solidarity in collective bargaining over the years. SAG has a right to implement their membership rules and enforce them. Likewise, ACTRA members, even if they live in the U.S. and happen to be members of SAG, have the right to work under ACTRA contracts when working in Canada.

We continue to believe that SAG's enforcement of Rule One will not have any appreciable effect on the level of production activity in Canada. Most of our members aren't affected by Rule One.

ACTRA's statement on Rule One, a Q&A for ACTRA members and any breaking news on this issue are on our website at [www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca).

## Commercial Agreement ratified

On May 7, ACTRA members ratified the new **National Commercial Agreement** Terms of Settlement by 95.69%. The new two-year agreement with the Canadian ad

industry is now in effect, with new rates effective July 1, 2002.

In March, ACTRA reached new terms for the National Commercial Agreement with the Canadian ad industry represented by the **Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA)** and the **Institute of Communications and Advertising (ICA)**.

Highlights of the agreement include:

- a 5% increase for union performers in television and radio commercials over two years, effective July 1, 2002 (2.5% increase per year),
- substantially improved language to protect children in commercials, and
- incentives to produce commercials in Canada for global audiences and for the internet.

The new National Commercial Agreement will be in effect until June 30, 2004. The agreement covers all the terms and conditions of engagement of professional performers in all English-language radio and television commercials produced in Canada.



ACTRA NATIONAL PERFORMERS COMMERCIAL RATE CARD											
Year 1 = July 1, 2002 - June 30, 2003 / Year 2 = July 1, 2003 - June 30, 2004											
TELEVISION SESSION FEES Category	Included Work Time*	Minimum Fee		Hourly Fee		Additional Work Time 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> hours		11 <sup>th</sup> hour and over		Overtime	
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2
Principal/SOC/Demo	9 hours	\$571.00	\$585.50	\$72.50	\$74.50	\$94.00	\$96.50	\$106.50	\$109.00		
Voiceover/Solo Singer	4 hours	\$436.50	\$427.00	\$60.00	\$65.50	\$76.00	\$78.00	\$94.00	\$96.50		
Group Singer	1 hour	\$100.00	\$184.50	\$60.00	\$41.50	\$76.00	\$78.00	\$94.00	\$96.50		
Background	9 hours	\$349.00	\$317.50	\$44.50	\$45.50	\$54.00	\$55.50	\$67.00	\$68.50		
Group Background**											
1:30-2:5 - July 1, 2002	9 hours	\$227.50	\$219.00	\$26.50	\$28.50	\$35.50	\$37.50	\$43.50	\$45.50		
1:30-2:5 - Sept. 1, 2002	9 hours	\$233.00	n/A	\$29.00	n/A	\$36.50	n/A	\$44.50	n/A		
Stunt Performer	9 hours	\$571.00	\$585.50	\$72.50	\$74.50	\$94.00	\$96.50	\$106.50	\$109.00		
Stunt Coordinator	9 hours	\$761.00	\$780.00	\$95.00	\$97.50	\$115.00	\$118.00	\$141.50	\$145.00		
RADIO SESSION FEES											
RADIO SESSION FEES Category	Included Work Time*	Session Rate (Min.)		Per. Cot. Rate		Additional Work Time		TAG Rate		Recall Rates	
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2
Single Voice/ Solo Singer	2 hours	\$444.75	\$455.75	\$222.25	\$227.75	\$22.25	\$22.75	\$89.25	\$91.50	\$222.25	\$227.75
Multiple Voice/ Group Singer	2 hours	\$334.00	\$342.25	\$166.75	\$171.00	\$22.25	\$22.75	\$89.25	\$91.50	\$166.75	\$171.00
<small>* Minimum under 90 have an 8 hour work day (Section 16)  ** See Agreement when doing more than 20 Group Background Performers - Rate listed in Article 12.  * Wardrobe Call: Minimum 1 hour at the hourly Rate (Section 14).  * Travel Time: Beyond a 25 km radius, hourly rate is paid for 1/2 hour units - when not part of the work day (Section 13). </small>											
<b>ACTRA National</b> 625 Church Street, Suite 300, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2G1 TEL (416) 489-1311 or TOLL FREE 1-800-387-3516 FAX (416) 489-8076 EMAIL <a href="mailto:national@actra.ca">national@actra.ca</a> <a href="http://www.actra.ca">www.actra.ca</a>											

# Action on policy

ACTRA's National Council gets fired up to act on public policy issues affecting performers: **Canadian content and income security.** **Jamie Bradley**, patriotic lacrosse stick in hand, reports on ACTRA's two-day policy conference.

I am becoming a rabid Canadian. I know there are people like me out there across this fair Dominion; those ready to pick up a lacrosse stick (our national sport) and go into identity battle.

I was looking forward to the ACTRA Public Policy Conference. National Councillors, guests and staff clumped in to the boardroom for two days in early June to talk about ACTRA, its members and Canada. The goal of the two-day conference was to develop an action plan for our union's advocacy work for the next year.

"It's time to stop the hollowing out of Canadian culture," **Thor Bishopric**, our National President said. "After half a century of government support measures for Canadian television and an even longer

period of support for movies, it is virtually impossible for me to find a Canadian story on either the big screen or small. It's time for a change, and we're going to do our part to change it," he added.

He's right, you know. For instance in 1913, the **Canadian Biograph Company of Nova Scotia** made the first Canadian feature based on the story of **Evangeline**. Eighty-nine years later, 0.2% of our movie screens show English Canadian films. Eighty-nine years later, we still have a fledgling industry.

Okay, back to the National Policy Conference. On the morning of Day One we were joined by some of the most famous Canadian faces and voices; **Sean McCann, Gordon Pinsent, Shirley Douglas, Fiona Reid, Chuck Shamata** and **Nick Mancuso**. All of

them spoke so eloquently and passionately on their subjects, I wish you could have been there to hear them. Unfortunately, I couldn't possibly print every word – here are some highlights:

Sean McCann and Gordon Pinsent addressed the **Promotion of Canadian Jobs**. Sean admitted the curse of the Canadian industry, "Before the breakdowns even arrive in Canada, major casting decisions have been made in Los Angeles." He suggested that ACTRA have a resource in L.A. so decision-makers there know us. *(continued on page 6)*

Guest speakers at ACTRA's Policy Conference *(left to right)*: Gordon Pinsent, Chuck Shamata, Nick Mancuso, Shirley Douglas, Sean McCann and Fiona Reid.



## Why we work on policy initiatives

ACTRA strives to increase work opportunities for our members and advocates for performer-friendly public policies at the municipal, provincial and federal levels. Here's why.

- public policies and programs affect performers' income and work opportunities
- only performers can speak for performers – other industry players aren't interested in the welfare of artists and performers – some producers are more concerned about 'shareholder value'
- ACTRA members want to do our part to build a revitalized independent production sector – so we can tell our stories, see Canadian movies on our screens, and work on Canadian-made dramas for television
- activism on policy issues helps ensure continued work opportunities and fair payment for work in an increasingly technological, globalized industry

As with any industry, left to their own devices, employers will hire for the least pay. The benefits and working conditions that performers enjoy come as the result of collective action and years of hard work. Maintaining and improving wages and working conditions for performers is an ongoing struggle – and not just at the negotiating table every few years.

## Action on policy

– continued from page 5

"Let's be above the title. Aside from great performers, we have great stories and we're not even represented on our own screens."

Gordon Pinsent thought back to when he decided to create his own projects, "You write for yourself. If you have to become your own audience, that's fine." He talked about the talent out there that we haven't even touched. "We must recognize the importance of our own voice," he said. "Find it, use it. Lift it up as high as we possibly can so they can hear it."

**Increasing Respect for the Performer as an Artist** was Shirley Douglas' subject. She said that, "Artists should be respected for what they do, for their performance, but also for their influence in a country."

Shirley told the story of the great African-American actor and singer **Paul Robeson** who, in the 1950s, was barred from exiting the U.S. to speak to unions in B.C. Instead he stood on the American side of the border and sang and addressed his audience as they sat on blankets on the Canadian side. "We can't stand idly by," she asserted. "We must make ACTRA become what we need it to be."

At the end of a powerful speech, Shirley quoted her father Tommy Douglas: "Man can now fly in the air like a bird, can swim under the ocean like a fish, and burrow under the ground like a mole. Now, if only he would walk on the earth like a man. This would be paradise."

Right on! If only we could tell stories like Canadians! Oops, went rabid there.

Fiona Reid stood on ACTRA and the Acting Profession in Canada. She reflected on the need to 'find a new path,' and that

we can only discover ourselves through our own stories. She lamented the fact that we are a franchised industry. "It's time for all of us to get on board. We are asking to be actors in our own country."

On **Improving the Economic Circumstances of Canadian Performers**, Chuck Shamata summed up the Canadian performer's way of life, "Seeing a long-awaited, sizeable earnings cheque quickly disappear – paying the bills that accumulated during the last work drought – then feeling desperation mount as the red ink process begins yet again, is a way of life for too many of us... Does Canadian government policy indicate it cares about how difficult it is to make a career in the arts in this country?"

Within the same subject, Nick Mancuso spoke of the performer's ability to mobilize people. He observed that great nations of earth have always had great actors. Nick stated that if actors are going to improve their lot in this country's industry, they are going to have to demand and fight for what's right and fair. "For too long, we've accepted crumbs," he said.

The common theme seemed to be self-sufficiency. We, the performers were the ones who had to tell our own stories; good or bad, it was up to us.

Added into the mix of fired-up performers were speeches from **Robert Pilon** representing the **Coalition for Cultural Diversity**, and **Megan Williams**, Executive Director of the **Canadian Conference of the Arts**. They spoke about **Cultural Diversity**, which not only means the right and ability of everyone within a country to practice their culture but also the right of a nation to sup-

National Councillor Maria Bircher (Montreal) and Lorraine Ansell (Ottawa Branch President) in discussion during a break at the policy conference.





Fiona Reid joined the conference to speak about Respect for the Performer as an Artist.

port and fund its culture without being accused of unfair subsidies by its international trading partners.

So, with all this inspiration, the National Councillors broke into four groups, each group taking on one of the four subjects.

All the groups debated heavily and most debated with a zeal that could be heard through the walls.

It all made me think, Canadian producers continue to justify the hiring of non-Canadian performers by saying they must 'compete globally', even though the Canadian supporting performers tend to out-act the non-Canadians. Now, what 'globally' really means is to compete against Hollywood at its own game... There's an exercise in futility ("Let's create a mouse who'll be more popular than Mickey!"). We can't even get our movies on our own screens, let alone anywhere the predatory Hollywood machine's tentacles reach. We have never given ourselves a chance in our own country.

So, what do we have to do?

We have to convince the Canadian public that homegrown productions are good enough to watch and enjoy.

We have to convince the Canadian government to make more money available for everything – writing it, making it and (critically), marketing it.

We have to convince the producers not to produce projects that look 'global' (really, that means a pale imitation of Hollywood productions) and convince the producers and broadcasters that the hiring of Canadian performers should not be the exception but the norm.

Fiona Reid said, "Somehow we've atrophied – as a culture, as a profession. I feel a whittling away happening around me."

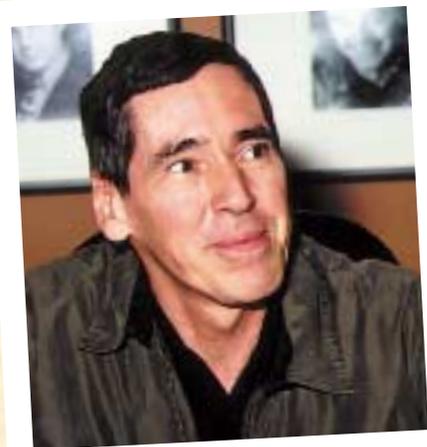
We have to convince everyone, including ourselves, that it's not 'culture' that has to be saved but 'Canada'. If we don't practice it, it will atrophy – and that means us, the performers who are the faces and voices of Canadian culture.

So what do we do? The rabid Canadian that is foaming just under my skin wants to take an equally infected beaver and shove it in the faces of Canadian producers. I would force these people to make Canadian movies and TV shows with Canadian stories and Canadian faces. Then my *Castor Canadensis* would leap at the throats of the broadcasters and exhibitors and would not relent until they showed us these truly Canadian products. Well, a boy can dream, can't he?

At the end of day two, we emerged from the building, blinking in the sunlight, unanimous in our commitment to two policy (continued on page 8)



ACTRA's National President Thor Bishopric chaired the policy conference.



Robert Pilon, Executive Director of the Coalition for Cultural Diversity.

## ACTRA's advocacy work is about:

- work opportunities for our members
- keeping performers' earnings in performers' pockets
- developing and supporting a strong domestic industry
- strong Canadian content requirements

## Public policy issues ACTRA is involved in:

- campaign to increase Canadian dramatic television production
- federal review of Canada's broadcasting system
- federal review of the definition of Canadian content
- federal government's consultation on copyright reform
- provincial Status of the Artist legislation in Saskatchewan
- Canadian Customs and Revenue Agency's rash of auditing performers in British Columbia
- federal government consultation on digital issues
- Telefilm's new feature film fund rules

## ACTRA successes

- federal Status of the Artist legislation
- immigration rules limit use of foreign performers
- tax treatment of performers as independent contractors
- a role in developing funding models for Canadian programming including the Canadian Television Fund and Telefilm
- tax credits for productions
- participation in drafting original Canadian Content rules
- changes to the Copyright Act for A/V performers that attach performers' residual rights to the copyright in the production, and give neighbouring rights to performers in audio recordings

## Government review of Canadian content

The federal government's Department of Canadian Heritage is currently reviewing the definition of Canadian content that applies through various government departments for funding of cultural initiatives. Heritage released a discussion paper in March, and ACTRA delivered a written submission to the review in early June, following our policy conference.

In our submission to the review, **Canadian Artists = Canadian Programs**, we argue that "A Canadian program is one conceived, written, performed, directed and produced entirely by Canadians – such a program will look and feel Canadian, regardless of what the story is about, or where it is set."

ACTRA's position is about bringing more and better quality Canadian programs to our audiences through a comprehensive series of reforms including film distribution levies, strong CRTC regulations to stimulate dramatic production, a radically new public broadcaster and a revitalized independent production sector.

ACTRA has participated at several roundtable discussions hosted by former Telefilm Executive Director Francois Macerola, who is compiling the review. The discussion paper and all written submissions can be viewed at [www.pch.gc.ca](http://www.pch.gc.ca). ACTRA's submission is available at [www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca).

## ACTRA's Campaign for Canadian Programming

Canadian dramatic television production is in decline. Where we used to have 12 drama series on TV, now we have five. That kind of decline has major consequences for our culture, our industry and our jobs.

Follow the links and simple instructions from [www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca) to email a letter to your MP expressing your concerns about

the decline in Canadian dramatic television production.

For more info: **1-800-387-3516** or email [tv drama@actra.ca](mailto:tv drama@actra.ca).

**You can help make a difference!**  
Send a letter to your MP.  
Here's how...

## Action on policy

– continued from page 7



Megan Williams, Executive Director of the Canadian Conference of the Arts, spoke on cultural diversity.



Alvin Sanders attending the conference representing UBCP.



ACTRA member Christopher MacCabe with National Councillor (Toronto) Aidan Devine.

fronts: Canadian Content and Income Security for Performers. These two objectives were condensed from about 80 recommendations from our four groups.

The two objectives have a few subsets: distribution and exhibition; immigration and the government department, **Human Resources Development Canada** (HRDC); international trade issues; funding – **Telefilm** etc.; public broadcasting; **Status of the Artist** laws; and promotion – including community building and a star system.

Dizzy yet? All this is to develop our industry to the extent that instead of working on a small handful of foreign productions per year, the average Canadian performer will have the chance to work on a dump truck full of Canadian projects; practising our craft here in our own country. Then we can compete globally with our own faces and voices instead of playing second and sometimes third fiddle in projects that seem to be poor imitations of American shows.

It's a huge, complicated task we have set for ourselves and the new ACTRA **Political Action Committee** is coming up with ways we can fight the good fight.

Our Hollywood 'pal' **Jack Valenti** once said, "Canada is infected with cultural policy."

Actually, cultural policy isn't an infection, it's an antibiotic. Canada is the most culturally dominated country in the world. Let's win our independence.

Chuck Shamata ended his speech by encouraging everyone in the room to go to the nearest window, open it, and emulate Peter Finch in *Network*, by shouting "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore."

Come on, pick up your lacrosse sticks and let's take the Hill!

*Jamie Bradley is ACTRA's National Treasurer. He lives in Halifax.*

# Active Performers

How do people become activists? What was their first activist activity? What issues do they get active on? How does being a performer relate to their activism? InterACTRA talked to some performer activists to find out what motivates them.



## Sandi Ross

Actor and activist Sandi Ross first got active at the **University of Minnesota** when she was a model for life drawing, and she started a union for the models. "We were 12 models, predominantly women, and we'd not had a pay raise. We formed a union and got a 6% raise."

Since she joined ACTRA in the 1980s, Sandi has been drawn into ever-increasing involvement on diversity issues, most

Actor and activist Sandi Ross, who was a panelist on the Diversity Forum at the Banff Television Festival.

recently as a panelist on **Drama and Diversity** at the **Banff Television Festival**.

"Politics is a process. As a black performer, you have to be politically astute. Many people assume it's going to change tomorrow or with the next election. You can't force swift change on people," Sandi says. "I now have access to politicians. I've worked with political issues long enough and hard enough that I get asked to sit on committees, and I'm now being included in a community of activists that I enjoy. I believe you can't complain if you're not willing to get involved."

## Shirley Douglas

Shirley Douglas was born to **Irma** and **Tommy Douglas** in 1934 in Weyburn, Saskatchewan. It was there that Shirley witnessed the birth of **Medicare** and has since been determined that Canadians not lose what was so ferociously fought for.

After graduating from the **Royal Academy of Dramatic Art** and performing in London for ten years, Shirley moved to Los Angeles where she was politically active in the anti-war and civil rights movements. Returning to Toronto in 1977 with her three children, Shirley resumed working as an actress in theatre, film and television.

Today, Shirley is an internationally acclaimed health care activist, the founder of the **Toronto Health Coalition** and a national spokesperson for the **Canadian Health Coalition**.

"You need never have a sense of futility. I've long believed that if you have an idea, and you work at it, you can accomplish it.

"We are perilously close to losing the public health system of Canada. This is the last stage of the battle to save health care. Only we, together, can change that. Write the Prime Minister, your Premiers and Health Ministers, and insist they stop fund-

ing private-for-profit health care with public dollars." Shirley urges all ACTRA members to **Join the campaign to save Medicare!**

Insist Prime Minister Chrétien save our Canadian public health system. Write, email or call your elected officials:

- Demand that they
- maintain and enforce the principles of the Canada Health Act
  - expand medicare to include national home care and pharmacare
  - significantly increase federal funding for public health care; and
  - exclude health care from all trade agreements

For more info: [www.healthcoalition.ca](http://www.healthcoalition.ca)

**No postage required! Write to:**

The Prime Minister,  
Right Honourable  
Jean Chrétien  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Tel.: (613) 992-4211  
Fax: (613) 941-6900  
email: [pm@pm.gc.ca](mailto:pm@pm.gc.ca)



Photo by Carol Racicot

Shirley Douglas, ACTRA member and national spokesperson for the Canadian Health Coalition, speaking at ACTRA's National Policy Conference.



Above: ACTRA's National President Thor Bishopric with Angela Vermeir and Louise Renault at ACTRA Maritimes' 2002 AGM.



Left: Members Gary Levert, David Renton and Stacy Smith outside Province House in Halifax protesting the provincial government's dismantling of the Nova Scotia Arts Council.

MARITIMES

It has been a turbulent few months for ACTRA Maritimes. The surprising announcement that **Cochran Entertainment** had gone into receivership was a tremendous blow to the industry. Cochran was a much-respected member of the original 'Big Five' – the companies that created the Nova Scotian film industry. Cochran series like **Pit Pony** and **Theodore Tugboat** have showcased Maritimes creativity all over the planet.

Add to this the news that one of the local soundstages has been sold to a courier company and the Nova Scotian Provincial government's hamm-fisted demolition of the **Nova Scotia Arts Council** and you can be excused for considering an application to barber college.

However, not all is bleak. We are pleased to welcome **Pam Stevenson** of PEI to Branch Council. For the first time in recent memory, our council has representatives from all three Maritimes provinces. Another first is the election of our

National Councillor **Jamie Bradley** to the post of National Treasurer. It has been a very long time since a resident Maritimer sat as an officer of ACTRA and we wish Jamie the very best with his daunting task.

And we have been blessed with some very exciting projects of late – made all the more exciting because they're Canadian. **Tom Fitzgerald's** powerful **The Event** and **Marion Bridge** – written by national treasure **Daniel MacIvor** – wrapped earlier this year. Strong performances by our local members anchor both of these wonderful scripts.

And so we gird our loins for the busy season. While it appears that we won't be playing host to the likes of **Harrison Ford** this year, we're thrilled to see our old friends from **Made In Canada** returning, as well as the gang from **Trailer Park Boys** and Her Excellency **Bette MacDonald** in her new series **Rideau Hall**. We've been to the valley this year... it's time for the peaks!

– Gary Vermeir  
Branch Representative, ACTRA Maritimes

MONTREAL

The big news at ACTRA Montreal is that our offices have been renovated and office space expanded to make room for our previously cramped staff. While it was painful to get there, it was a necessary transition, and the new boardroom and

ACTRA staff Carmy Renda at our newly renovated offices in Montreal.



reception area look great! Members will soon be able to take advantage of a performer's gym, currently under construction in the former **Access-Cash** space next door to ACTRA. The space should be available for use sometime soon. It will feature a sizeable space for workshops as well as audio-visual equipment for making demos and audition tapes.

We're thrilled at the publication of ACTRA's **Stage Mom Survival Guide** by **Robyne Ropell-Baruchel**, an ACTRA-Montreal initiative which was a long time in the making. The guide offers practical advice to stage parents in the film and television industry in Canada. The little red book with the big ideas looks fantastic and does us proud. Our staff has also recently completed an informative pamphlet concerning performers' rights with respect to nudity in film and television production.

Production is returning to Montreal slowly but surely. Our intrepid Branch Rep, **Raymond**, observes that the tendency throughout the year is for a lot of U.S.-based productions to shoot here in the first six months, and then once **Telefilm** hands down their funding decisions, we should see more Canadian projects in the second half of the year. "Should" is the operative word here. We are all becoming painfully aware of the decline of indigenous production in recent years and ACTRA Montreal has taken steps to raise awareness among the membership, as with the recent, well-attended **Spotlight Series on Canadian Culture** with **R.H. Thomson**.

On behalf of Council, staff and all our members, we wish our colleagues across the country a happy and prosperous summer!

– *Matt Holland*  
President, ACTRA Montreal

ACTRA staff Daintry Dalton in our new boardroom.



## MONTREAL

## OTTAWA

I am sad to say that the big news from ACTRA Ottawa is that we have lost our very capable and talented branch representative. **Nanci Morrison's** last day was May 8. The branch will certainly miss Nanci, whose dedication and knowledge helped to further cement the consolidation of the jurisdiction.

ACTRA is pleased to announce that **Chris Cornish** has been chosen as the new Branch Representative. Chris brings a wealth of organizational and communications experience to the job. Having worked for a Member of Parliament for the past five years, Chris' experience will also help support ACTRA's lobbying and public policy work at the federal level. Chris is expected to start his new duties towards the end of the summer.

In the interim, Raymond and **Shannon Joutel** from the Montreal Branch continue to provide us with invaluable assistance.

As to production in Ottawa, the animation industry continues to thrive with the announcement of new seasons for a number of productions, and there has been a rise in

industrial work over the past few months. All of these have provided opportunities for our members.

– *Lorraine Ansell*  
President,  
ACTRA Ottawa



## TORONTO

Our focus on three priority projects has been keeping us very busy. We're building work opportunities, driving to reduce non-union production, and promoting membership involvement in the union.

Our membership involvement initiative



Keynote conference speaker Paul Gross.

is proving to be a huge success. The June 21<sup>st</sup> Members' Conference, **Making Connections With Your Art and Your Industry**, was a full and enjoyable day of professional panels, workshops and a call to action. Panelists included some of our finest actors: **Gordon Pinsent, Wendy Crewson, Sonja Smits, Steve Smith, Harvey Atkin, Tim Progosh** and **Diane Flacks**. In particular, **Paul Gross** gave an inspiring address urging concerted action on Canadian content.

Our political action task force is giving actors a stronger voice by letting politicians know what we want. We are fighting to get more Canadian performers in more Canadian films. In short, Canadianizing the Canadian film industry.

Our new **Toronto Indie Production** project, (TIP) has met with enormous enthusiasm from our members and emerging producers. With TIP, ACTRA Toronto affirms our members' dedication to further the development of Canadian media arts and Canadian culture in general.

Working with other guilds and organizations, we're promoting our diversity initiative. We sponsored the **ReelWorld Film Festival** and the **Innoversity Creative Summit** to promote diversity in the entertainment community.

We are currently focused on organizing non-union commercial production. We have identified the worst offenders and are implementing tactics that will make their non-union work unattractive.



Moderator Philip Akin and panelist Sonja Smits at ACTRA Toronto Performers members' conference.

In June, we held our **Child Advocacy** meeting for parents of child performers to explain how the new **National Commercial Agreement** applies to them. We were pleased to distribute ACTRA's **Stage Mom Survival Guide** at the meeting.

Above all, we remain firm in our advocacy of rights and respect for the working actor in our cultural industries.

– *Richard Hardacre*  
President, ACTRA Toronto Performers

**MANITOBA**

**B**ig bang theory has provided some interesting clues about the nature of our beginning. **Nostradamus** has predicted the end. But who could have foreseen the middle? And yet the “middle” is exactly where ACTRA Manitoba members find themselves. We seem to be in the middle of a steady stream of movie production in our province.

2002 already has six movies in the can and as this is being written one is still shooting, one is casting and two are prepping. ACTRA members both from Manitoba and across Canada are finding work here.

ACTRA Manitoba has once again received funding from the province.

*Right, Forefront to back:* Brian Richardson and B. Pat Burns,

*Below:* Lionel Moore, Brian Richardson, Mariam Bernstein, and Wayne Nicklas.

**MANITOBA**



This funding of more than \$30,000 will allow our branch to present a series of professional development workshops at costs that our members can afford. We plan a series of four workshops and the first of these will see the return of **Roland Parliament** from Toronto. Last year he provided popular voice-over workshops in Winnipeg and this summer he will be returning to help us produce demo CD's. Our plan is to use these demos as tools in our attempt to break into the non-union voice-over market in Winnipeg. There will also be audition, scene-study and master class workshops at later dates in 2002-2003.

Our branch has recently purchased a new colour printer and we will be using this to provide significant savings on the cost of printing our newsletter.

Life is good in our industry in the most central of all Canadian provinces. We are working and the weather is hot.

– *Wayne Nicklas*  
President, ACTRA Manitoba

**SASKATCHEWAN**

**F**rom Saskatchewan's coldest spring has sprung the fruits of our branch's winter initiatives.

The **ACTRA Sask Audition Centre** has been used for casting commercials, dramas and for member auditions. This service for members and members-in-waiting will help Sask performers stand out on the audition tape. We've created a kind of hiring hall that makes joining ACTRA look even more inviting, and our members have a comfortable, nicely equipped space to be their best at auditions.

**The Sask Talent Development Fund**, which receives and administers training fees paid through the tax credit, is likely to raise over \$100,000 this year. This will give us even more resources to sponsor professional development.

Council Members **Kent Allen** and **Sean Hoy** have drawn as many as 50 participants to their Saskatoon **Gym Night** training sessions.



Cal Fehr

Saskatoon-based actor Kenneth Charlette stars as David in the pre-school series **Prairie Berry Pie**, set to broadcast in Saskatchewan on SCN and nationally on APTN.

The evenings usually combine guest talks and acting tips. Councillor **Dan Beavis** is also developing an audition centre at his Saskatoon watering hole **O'Shea's Pub**.

Touring the new **Saskatchewan Soundstage** is awe inspiring. It's quite amazing to stand in the middle of an 18,000-square-foot room that looks like it could stage a battle. There are two other stages almost as large. The fourth smaller stage is already home to the kids' show **Prairie Berry Pie** starring council member **Kenneth Charlette** along with Kent Allen and **Tom Rooney**.

Perhaps the most profound development this year has been the passing of **Status of the Artist** legislation in Saskatchewan. We are the first province to have its own *Status of the Artist* law since the federal legislation was introduced in the early 1990s. (Quebec passed its law in the mid-1980s). Our new 'enabling legislation' will lead to better collective bargaining regulations for freelancers and broader access to government employment programs for all artists.

The only bad news in all this is last year's poor production level. Our branch has been forced to cut our single staff person to a four-day week. Here's hoping production increases and perhaps our branch partners will help.

– *Chris Scott*  
President,  
ACTRA Saskatchewan



## EDMONTON

**Thor Bishopric** attended our AGM April 30th. We can't recall the last time a National President was in Edmonton. Also in attendance were Calgary President **Randy Birch**, National Organizer **Don Dudar** and **Jane Nelson** from **ACTRA Fraternal**. Thanks to one and all for making the trip.

Edmonton is still suffering from the loss of a number of key **IATSE** personnel when the **Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation** (AMPDC) and its funding program ceased to exist. Our reduced IATSE component results in the ability to crew only one major production at a time. Add to that the fact that **CanWest Global** has the soundstage up for sale... well... The good news, however, is that the government has renewed its commitment to the **Alberta Film Development Program** and increased the ceiling for individual projects. **The Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association** (AMPIA) organized a reception at the **Royal Glenora** in Edmonton on May 8th that set the stage for the Alberta unions and 19 MLAs to meet and discuss the state of the film industry in this province – in particular the service sector. It was a very positive evening and we thank the organizers for the opportunity to attend.

In the meantime, we are busy with the usual smaller productions and **Mentors** (the series) began principal in July. We look forward to positive results from the efforts of Don Dudar and his initiative to educate and introduce Alberta labour organizations to ACTRA.

– Sharon Killey  
Branch Representative,  
ACTRA Edmonton

## CALGARY

Our Annual General Meeting was held on April 29th with a fantastic turnout of 110 Full members, Apprentices and ACTRA Extras. I would like to thank National President **Thor Bishopric**, National Executive Director **Stephen Waddell**, and **Robert Underwood** and **Jane Nelson** from **ACTRA Fraternal** for taking the time to impart their important messages to our branch, as well as for entertaining our questions.

Calgary Branch Council recently held an intense weekend meeting in order to prepare our branch for the upcoming



Janet Kidder is Marina DiLuzio, Chris William Martin is Tom Stone, and Stuart Margolin is Jack Welsh in *Tom Stone*.

production season. We have come up with a plan that calls upon our local members to get involved in committees. These committees will devise and recommend strategies to the Branch Council to improve and solidify ACTRA's position within the film industry and the community in general. This strategy was shared with our members at the AGM – we have already witnessed much support as indicated by the number of members signing up for committees and contributing ideas.

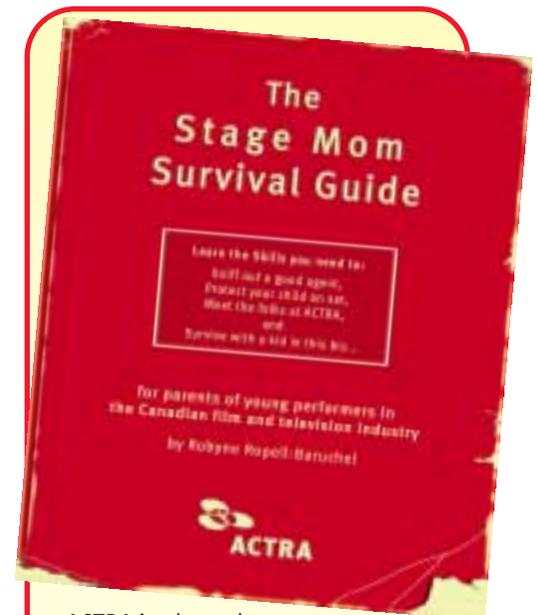
Already, considerable work has been done by the **Bylaws Committee**, which has laboured for months to modernize our branch bylaws to bring them more into line with the national bylaws and constitution. Also, the **Professional Development Committee** organized a master class with director **Randy Bradshaw** and will have many more exciting programs to offer in the future.

After relatively unimpressive production levels last year, we are excited to see that production in Calgary has picked up over the past couple months. Although El Niño is certainly doing its best to impede our progress, Calgary production has been steady throughout the summer and hopefully into the fall.

The television series, **Tom Stone**, is shooting in Calgary this summer. We look forward to another entertaining season of the CBC series starring some of our homegrown talent.



– Randy Birch,  
President,  
ACTRA Calgary



ACTRA is pleased to announce the publication of **The Stage Mom Survival Guide** for parents of young performers in the Canadian film and television industry, by **Robyne Ropell-Baruchel**.

This 100-page book is filled with information for young performers and their parents, including:

- the basics of the audition process
- the intricacies of the Independent Production Agreement
- special rules for minors and The Minor's Trust

The guide is free to ACTRA members (under 18), and is \$15 (incl. GST) for non-members.

The **Stage Mom Survival Guide** is available at ACTRA branches across Canada or call 1-800-387-3516 for more info.

# ACTRA MEMBERS

# Stunt



Steve Lucescu performing a rehearsal fire burn in Pit Row for *Driven*.

Being in stunts is like being a magician. You're working with illusion, and you learn your craft by doing it, and by watching and learning from others, rather than by going to a school or course to learn these skills. As with magic, it's about practice.

— Jacob Rupp

# IN ACTION: Performers



by Jacob Rupp

There have been a multitude of changes in the B.C. film industry since I got started. Years ago, we had maybe one feature, a series, and a few **CBC** productions each year. Now we're a very strong industry, and we need to work even harder to further develop it to maintain this growth.

I knew in high school that I wanted to do stunts. I've always been athletic, and I started training in grade 11, working with a stunt guy, learning to create the illusion of fighting, make things look like punches, blocks and kicks.

Then I got the chance to work on a film. My first stunts were falling off a roof and tackling someone off a horse. I had the chance to work on **Beachcombers**. Through these experiences and my training, I began to build some contacts in the industry. I guess I was in the right place at the right time.

Being in stunts is like being a magician. You're working with illusion, and you learn your craft by doing it, and by watching and learning from others, rather than by going to a school or course to learn these skills. As with magic, it's about practice.

I don't have one particular stunt that's a favourite – I have a great interest in most stunts. I do enjoy stunt driving, and film fighting, and I like working with horses.

*What's the most dangerous stunt?* It's actually the simplest stunts that hurt people, because they're not paying attention. Don't make assumptions, or think that because you've done something many times, it's easy. You have to be sharp to stay safe.

*What's popular?* Lately, we've been seeing more of the type of stunts that amazed audiences in films such as **Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon** – wire work and running off walls.

*Has technology reduced the need for stunt performers?* I don't think so. Some of the computer-generated images have expanded the capability for illusions. Technology complements stunt work, I feel. In reality, technological advances have made stunts safer. The work can be transported digitally – so we can do the actual stunts in a safer environment.

Jacob Rupp has built his stunt career in British Columbia over 20 years. He was nominated for the **Stunt Awards** in 2001 and 2002. A stunt performer and stunt coordinator, some recent credits include **Dreamcatcher** and **Snow Dogs**.

## How to get started in stunts

- learn practical skills (martial arts, gymnastics)
- work as an actor – you have to be an ACTRA member to be a stunt performer; you'll need acting skills
- get to know stunt performers and coordinators
- introduce yourself: send out your headshot and résumé to stunt coordinators
- be patient – it takes time to gain respect and trust

Once you have the respect and trust of other stunt performers and coordinators, you'll find you also have their support: doors will open for you.

## Are you a Stunt Coordinator?

**When you start a shoot, call your union rep.** Staying in touch with ACTRA is important. Open communication with our union reps can help avoid unnecessary problems, and helps us over the hurdles faster. It also helps build our union.

**Help build the ACTRA database of stunt performers.** Get in touch with your ACTRA branch. Find out if there's a stunt committee, and get involved. Submit stunt performer names to build a national list.

## The Stunt Performer 'list'

Stunt coordinators are working with ACTRA to build a database of stunt performers, to serve the needs of our film and television industry, and to continue building our stunt community. Building an ACTRA database of stunt performers will help us get to know each other, and ensure that producers can find performers with special skills quickly when they are required.

To get on the 'list', you need six stunt credits, just as you need six ACTRA credits to become an ACTRA member. If you have six or more stunt credits, you should contact your ACTRA branch to get on the list of stunt performers.

# ACTRA MEMBERS IN ACTION:



by Steve Lucescu

I was introduced to what would become my stunt career just shy of my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. I had started studying martial arts at age 10. It was eight years later, and I concluded a Martial Arts demonstration in Fort Erie by disarming three armed assailants, when a Buffalo-based producer approached me. He stated that my demonstration was the exact end-sequence that he envisioned for his movie.

I didn't believe that he was a producer, but my initiation into the stunt business transpired when he contacted me a few weeks later and subsequently hired me to choreograph and perform in his movie.

My job as a stunt coordinator is to make the director's vision a reality. I am responsible for the creation and engineering of all stunts on the project. First and foremost, the scripted action must be accomplished safely. This includes hiring properly qualified stunt performers, stunt riggers and safety personnel. It also includes determining

and implementing safety precautions and utilizing any equipment necessary to achieve the 'final shot'.

Some of the best footage that I can achieve is incorporating the actor's face on screen performing as much of the scripted action as is safely possible. However, the actor's safety must never be compromised for the sake of the shot. If I determine the scripted action is within the ability of the actor, then I'll let them perform their own action. And if the scripted action is indeed a true, *bona fide* stunt, then they'll receive a stunt contract. However, if the producer is paying for a stunt contract, I want to ensure that they get a true, genuine stunt performance.

*When is 'scripted action' a stunt?*

This is a big area of concern: adding a stunt contract to the initial actor contract. For the most part, actors are professionals. They want to utilize their skill – performing. Occasionally though, the actor is simply



## Launching WIDC 2003

CREATIVE WOMEN WORKSHOPS



### WOMEN DIRECTORS:

**APPLICATION DEADLINE SEPT. 30**

**EACH YEAR**, eight Canadian women screen directors hone their directing skills in this critically acclaimed program that takes director participants through all the components of a professional dramatic media production with professional (ACTRA) actors and (DGC, IATSE) crews. The 2003 mentor director is award-winning Canadian writer/director Patricia Rozema.

If you are an experienced performer crossing over to directing, WIDC will build on your transferable skills, release creativity, increase your confidence, and take your career to the next level.

The 2003 Women in the Director's Chair Workshop: **Where transformations happen!**

### WHEN, WHERE, HOW

January 23 to February 9, 2003

The Banff Centre, Alberta, CANADA  
Application forms and more information are available at the following websites:

[www.creativewomenworkshops.com](http://www.creativewomenworkshops.com)

[www.banffcentre.ca/bnmi](http://www.banffcentre.ca/bnmi)

[www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca)

#### APPLICATION DEADLINES:

Director Participants: September 30, 2002

Actors: October 31, 2002

Professional Crew: November 30, 2002

Work Study Crew: November 30, 2002



photos by Don Lee



# The Stunt Performer perspective

looking for a monetary upgrade or additional permit.

For instance, let's say the scripted action calls for the actor to fall out of a chair as a stunt performer is thrown against the desk where the actor is sitting. If the actor believes they can perform this simple action and the stunt coordinator determines the actor can safely perform this scripted action, then the stunt coordinator will authorize production to allow the actor to include this action as part of his or her role.

However, this authorization by the stunt coordinator doesn't automatically constitute a stunt contract. We can't expect an actor to simply fall out of a chair and instantly receive an additional contract for stunt performing. If the producer is paying a stunt contract, the producer is entitled to a *bona fide* stunt.

So in our scenario, we may now have the stunt performer thrown from across the desk and slam into the actor sitting in the chair, striking them mid-chest, and continuing over backwards. It will look spectacular and the producers and performers will feel justified in the stunt contracts,

something that the performers can be proud of incorporating into their performance just as they were proud of earning their role initially.

Steve Lucescu has been a Stunt Coordinator or Stunt Performer in excess of 250 films and more than 500 episodes of TV. Some of his credits include **Driven, Hannibal, The Corruptor, Undercover Brother, and Murder at 1600**. He is based in Toronto.

Steve in one of his stunts for *The Corruptor*.



## Vincent Gale



**Vincent Gale** is forthcoming and easily conversational. Not at all like Shane, the role he won a Genie Award for in **Last Wedding**. Vince found Shane's non-communicative character a challenging one to play. "When you're in a scene

with another actor, the instinct is to stir it up – you fill up the space with words," he explains. "As an actor, I'm there, but I'm not doing anything... It's a real challenge to communicate the inner life without saying it."

A B.C.-based performer, Vince has enjoyed his roles in independent film. "The best directors allow you to feel that it's your project too." In **Punch**, he plays Irwin, a complete departure from Shane. "He's a loudmouth, a misogynist. He says too much when he should keep his mouth shut. I think that's what attracted me to that part – the strength of voice."

Vince began acting in

Glasgow, Scotland. His mother taught at the **Royal Academy of Music and Drama**. Drawn in by the esprit of the Academy, he began taking acting classes, and landed his first role in the BBC television series **The Lost Tribe** at age 11. His acting didn't stop with the family's move to Edmonton. "I continued to work – all through junior high and high school – any productions that came through town."

Upcoming, Vince is in **Breaking News**, a TV series that Vince was told would never see airtime, until Bravo! bought it. Then, he's on stage in **Proof** with his wife, ACTRA member **Jennifer Clement**. He's also shooting a pilot for a series **Monk**. "I've been so lucky, acting in Canada in the last five years," he says.

– Staff



James Dintiger

Vincent Gale as Shane in *Last Wedding*.

## Jodie Resther



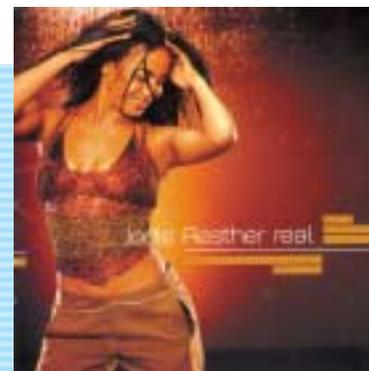
**Jodie Lynn Resther** is reinventing herself. With her breakout role coming at the age of 14 on the widely popular **Are You Afraid of the Dark?** and the Emmy award-winning **Arthur** series, Jodie was already a veteran of the screen when she chose to leave the bustling, high-pressure business of film and television behind for the bustling, high-pressure business of music. "My singing career was really taking off and it was a time of personal growth – a time for a change."

Now, at 24, three years and one successful album later, Jodie is ready to make the leap back into acting. With a role in the **MTV** series **Undressed**, her recurring role in **Vampire High** (a cult

hit in the U.K. with its own fan base), and some work in feature films, the Montreal native has made the transition look easy. But as she says, "Nothing was easy. I had to work hard every step of the way. But I never had to ask myself, 'is this really what you want to do?' I always knew."

Still, much has changed for Jodie. For the young woman who first debuted on screen in the Canadian production of **Sesame Street**, the evolution from child actor into mature performer has provided the most challenging, yet interesting, element of her work.

"It's the energy level. As a child actor, you're candid. As an adult, you have



Jodie Resther's CD *Real*.

to appreciate the art of acting in order to make your character come alive."

Jodie's time away from acting has given her perspective and growth. "Don't be afraid to take a step back. Let life come first. Your creativity comes from inside. If you don't nurture the person, nothing else works."

– Randy Duniz



### Jamie Bradley, National Treasurer (Maritimes)

You can tell Jamie's a Maritimer – he tastes salty. He has been a National Councillor since 1997, serves on the **National Communications Committee** and now has ACTRA's financial books firmly clenched in his sweaty little hands. Jamie was one of the original hosts of CBC's **Street Cents**, has written and performed in numerous **CBC** radio comedy series, is a fairly decent stage and television puppeteer, was CBC TV's movie reviewer for six years, played Robespierre on Global's **Blackfly** and is a regular on the Comedy Network's **Just For Laughs Improv Championships**. Also a writer, Jamie is creating television series, writing a feature film and developing a performing arts special for **Bravo!**



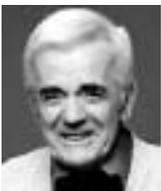
### Colin MacLean (Edmonton)

Colin MacLean began his career in broadcasting at **CFBC** radio in Saint John, New Brunswick. After three years at **Ryerson**, he moved west to work as a technician, audio operator, cameraman and commercial announcer at **CFQC** in Saskatoon, before moving to Edmonton with the **CBC**, where he has worked for 40 years. Colin wrote and assisted in the production of **The Tommy Banks Show** and **Stomping Tom's Canada**. He was anchor of the current affairs program **Edmonton AM** on CBC radio for eight years and host of the high school quiz program **Reach for the Top** for 20 years. Currently Colin is the arts reporter for the CBC News in Edmonton. His film reviews are syndicated to television stations all over the country. Colin is a founding member of ACTRA in Edmonton. He reviews theatre for the **Edmonton Sun**. He is married to Halia and has four daughters and four grandchildren.



### Anne Marie Scheffler (Toronto)

Anne Marie Scheffler is a Toronto-based actor with numerous film and television credits to her name. She started her career with a regular role on **Street Legal** as Nicole Hebert, the French-Canadian nanny. Currently she is a regular on **Real Men** and is in the upcoming feature film **The Company Man**. Other credits include **Leap Years**, **Queer as Folk**, **Exhibit "A"**, **The City**, **Due South**, **Supertown Challenge** and **She's So Funny**, to name a few. Anne Marie is a **Second City** alumna and has performed her four one-woman shows (**Situation: Norma**, **Watch... Norma's Back!**, **Leaving Norma** and **Dating Myself**) across North America to sold-out crowds and critical acclaim. This is Anne Marie's first term as a National Councillor, her second term as a Toronto Councillor. She also enjoys her role as an intrepid reporter at industry events for **InterACTRA**.



### Seán Mulcahy (Toronto)

In addition to his distinguished acting career on stage, screen and radio, Seán has been a drama teacher, lecturer and artistic director across Canada, including at the **Banff School of Fine Arts**, **The Citadel Theatre**, **The Shaw Festival**, **Instant Theatre** in Montreal and **Beaverbrook Playhouse** in Fredericton. Seán won an ACTRA **Andrew Allan Award** for his role as H.G. Wells in CBC's **The Panther and the Jaguar** (1983). He won ACTRA's **Nellie Award** in 1986 for his performance in CBC's **Philadelphia, Here I Come!** Seán has been active with ACTRA for many years as Vice-President (1960-61), Chair of ACTRA **Performers' Guild** (1978), and Vice-President again in 1988-89. He served as Acting National President in 1989 and has served on ACTRA Fraternal's **Board of Governors** since 1990.

## Show your card and save your money:

All **ACTRA Members** (Full, Apprentice and ACTRA Extras) are entitled to a number of **discounts** when you show your ACTRA member card. For a full list of discounts, pick up a copy of the discounts brochure at your ACTRA branch, or download the discounts brochure from the members' section or the Siteseer stream of **www.actra.ca**.

#### Biz Books – 10% off

302 West Cordova, Vancouver (604) 669-6431  
EMAIL: bizbooks@telus.net

#### Lush Handmade Cosmetics – 15% off

22 locations across Canada. **www.lushcanada.com**



#### Great rates on Hotels

See the discounts brochure in the members' section of **www.actra.ca** for more details – participating hotels across Canada, and two locations in Hollywood.

#### National Car Rental



When you reserve a car at any National location, you get their **BEST** rate, even if it's lower than our group rate, plus 500 Air Canada Aeroplan miles with every rental. Quote our ID#3711009.  
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No discounts in your area? Want to expand discounts for ACTRA members? Ideas for other discounts? Contact us at **interactra@actra.ca** or call Kim Hume at 1-800-387-3516 x 4045.



# new

by Thomas Tapley

Every day, I am reminded that the technological changes that are taking place in our industry aren't so much technological as techno-socio-eco-political (whew!). After all, if these changes were merely technological, would we, and just about everyone else, be talking about them at all?

In the digital world, the last few years have been challenging and full of uncertainty. When things are uncertain, people get defensive. This explains why my day is often full of not so much *discussions*, but *debates* with others in our industry – performers, agents, producers and even other unions – about how best to address the changes that are taking place.

As always, history teaches us valuable lessons. A recent article in the U.S. magazine **Business 2.0** highlighted that technological (er... techno-socio-eco-political) changes have occurred in our industry before, reminding us that technologies that we take for granted today were strongly resisted when they were new. Despite alarmist predictions, the industry didn't self-destruct. When it comes to audio-visual media, it seems technological change is the only constant.

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## technophobia and media

### > 1931

#### Music Industry vs. Radios

In 1931, a group of composers contended that the **LaSalle Hotel** in Kansas City violated their copyright by re-playing a recording of their songs on the radio in the hotel. The court disagreed, saying that while the hotel couldn't perform their music without permission, it could play it on the radio. Some 70 years later the debate has begun anew, only this time it is the internet (and **Napster**) instead of radio.

# media challenges not so new

## > 1968

### Book Publishers vs. Photocopiers

A book publisher sued a library for copying pages from its journal for use by researchers. On appeal, the **U.S. Supreme Court** ruled that copying a portion of the book for a small number of people was 'fair use' of the journal and not a violation. Unlike in Canada, 'fair use' has been used in the U.S. as a guiding principle for media copying. Today, the device has changed from a photocopier to the personal computer, but the issue is the same. When is it fair to copy content, whether it's music or a movie, and when is it piracy?

## > 1968 and 1974

### Broadcast Television vs. Cable Industry

In two important cases that occurred six years apart, U.S. courts determined that community antenna television stations (the predecessor to cable TV) could retransmit broadcasts without violating any copyrights. The court reasoned that community antenna television station distribution widened a broadcaster's audience, raising its value to advertisers. These decisions paved the way for the modern cable industry. Recently, a similar controversy occurred in Canada with **JumpTV**, which is a service that allows for the retransmission of television over the internet.

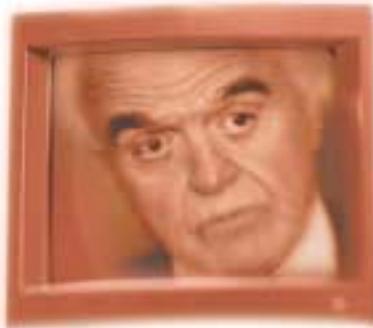
**Jack Valenti, chairman of the (MPAA), stated, "... the VCR is to the American film producer and the American public as the Boston strangler is to a woman home alone."**

## > 1984

### Movie Industry vs. VCRs

In the first suit brought against a company whose technology might be used to violate copyrights, the **Supreme Court of the United States** ruled that taping TV programs at home was 'fair use.' While recognizing that VCRs could be used illegally, the court refused to outlaw a device that had plenty of uses that didn't infringe on copyrights. The new personal video recorders **TiVo** and **Replay** present a similar controversy. It's still too early to know with certainty how TiVo and Replay will be worked into the market.

In addition to an important case precedent, the proceedings yielded one of the most memorable lines in the history of technophobia. **Jack Valenti**, the then and present chairman of the **Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA)**, stated, "... the VCR is to the American film producer and the American public as the Boston strangler is to a woman home alone." Although this statement is absurd in retrospect... okay, it's absurd, period... it's useful in indicating the level of heightened emotion involved when the introduction of new technology has the potential not only to change the way we experience media but also to change the power base of those that exercise considerable control within the arena. Mr. Valenti has used similarly charged language when speaking about today's technology from internet distribution, to peer-to-peer networks,



to digital technology in general. The generalization seems to be that technology is bad unless it can be easily understood and its benefits immediately tangible to the interested party. Note that home video on VHS (and now DVD) accounts for nearly one-third of Hollywood's revenues.

**A**s the above examples illustrate, the introduction of technology in the industry has often been contentious. They also show that often, even after considerable resistance, the new technology becomes ubiquitous and an important part of the industry – and our lives. It's hard to imagine not being able to listen to a song on the radio in a hotel, or copying material for a research project or other personal uses, or taping an episode of **Friends** that you have to miss because you have a night shoot.

Of course the Canadian context is not identical to the U.S. experience. However, national borders have been somewhat blurred by free trade and the global economy. As a result, it's likely that the changes taking place in the U.S. will spill over the border and influence the Canadian industry.

The reality is that these changes have the potential to dramatically affect how much control is exercised over the media that we watch, purchase, and more importantly, that performers help to create. Technological changes threaten the rates performers receive for their work, and the extent to which performer interests can be protected.

The question is not whether these changes will have an impact – that's a certainty. ACTRA's challenge is to stay well informed, be proactive, to educate performers, and to make sure we're at the table where the discussions and decisions take place.

Stay tuned.

Thom Tapley is ACTRA's National Policy Advisor, Digital Media. [tapley@actra.ca](mailto:tapley@actra.ca)



NATIONAL

### The Fast and the Furious

The headline pretty well sums up a busy week for **Jefferson Mappin**, ACTRA's National Vice-President, and **Don Dudar**, National Organizer, ACTRA's two delegates attending the **Canadian Labour Congress's (CLC) 23<sup>rd</sup> Convention**, held in early June. Jefferson and Don went to hear, discuss and vote on issues affecting working families across Canada, and to launch phase two of ACTRA's national awareness campaign aimed at Canadian unions. They distributed an ACTRA bulletin titled **Make sure you're Going Union with Your Advertising and Videos** to 3,300 delegates representing unions from across Canada.

Don also attended the **Union Labels Conference** to raise ACTRA's concerns for inclusion in the Union Label's report to convention. These efforts will create more work opportunities for ACTRA members within the labour community.

The Union Labels Conference encourages unions to support union-manufactured products. The 8,000 affiliated unions of the CLC produce TV and radio ads, public service announcements and videos. In monitoring the production activity of Alberta unions over the past year, ACTRA's **Organizing Dept.** has found that some unions were inadvertently producing non-union, simply because these unions didn't know about ACTRA's jurisdiction and our collective agreements – a price we pay for having a low profile within the labour movement.

This problem is not isolated to Alberta, so ACTRA has committed to create greater awareness within the Canadian labour community to generate more work for our members. We're pleased to announce that the unions in Alberta that were contacted about producing non-union have apologized and pledged their commitment to use ACTRA performers in future productions.

In fact, ACTRA Calgary and Edmonton have already benefited from phase one of the campaign, which was directed at Alberta unions in April 2002. Several local union productions – including TV and radio ads, public service announcements and internet – have been produced under ACTRA's jurisdiction. The value of increasing ACTRA's profile within the labour community is more than just about networking; it's about jobs!

– *Don Dudar*  
ACTRA National Organizer  
ddudar@actra.ca

### Shame On Mattel

**Mattel**, the world's largest toy maker, had sales of \$4.8 billion last year but they can't afford to pay child performers industry standard rates. This is becoming a disturbing trend in our commercial industry, as companies such as **Mattel, Hasbro, Fisher Price** and others, who target children with their products, don't want to pay child performers according to Canadian commercial industry standards. **Footnote Belding** of Chicago, the ad agency for Mattel on a recent **Barbie** commercial shoot in Toronto,

told ACTRA that they needed "flexibility" making the commercial and did not like how our residuals worked.

The information ACTRA received on the Barbie shoot indicated that the children would receive \$2,500 for the shoot and a three year buyout. Under an ACTRA contract the same commercial for the

U.S. market would pay the performers over \$20,000. Parents should keep in mind that the exposure for their child on a big U.S. commercial can make the performer undesirable for any other toy or child-oriented product shoots.

Children should not be treated as second-class performers. They deserve the same terms and conditions of the **National Commercial Agreement (NCA)** that are available to the majority of performers. The NCA sets commercial industry standards for wages and working conditions and is negotiated between ACTRA and the **Institute of Communications and Advertising (ICA)** and the **Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA)**.

ACTRA will not stand by and see children exploited by advertisers, ad agencies, producers, casting directors or agents. ACTRA is determined to protect child performers, and in the recently renegotiated NCA, 10 of the 22 new pages cover provisions for children. This is an area where ACTRA will take whatever actions it deems necessary, including potentially lobbying government for tough legislation to protect children on sets not covered by ACTRA agreements.

Shame on Mattel and any other advertisers who don't treat children fairly.

– *Dan Mackenzie*  
ACTRA National Organizer  
dmackenzie@actratoronto.com

MONTREAL

### 90 Minutes of Organizing Creates 35 Jobs for Members

A tip from a talent agent and a lucky bus trip resulted in 35 jobs for ACTRA members in Montreal. The agent heard that a commercial – originally a union shoot – was going non-union and hiring background performers for cash. The production company, which happens to be signatory to the **National Commercial Agreement**, insisted that all was correct. They informed ACTRA that the commercial was union. They even hired a member to provide a voice-over. The company claimed, however, that a second spot for the same sponsor had been cancelled.



Don Dudar, ACTRA National Organizer; Ken Georgetti, President of the Canadian Labour Congress; and Jefferson Mappin, National Vice-President of ACTRA at the CLC's June Convention in Vancouver.

ACTRA Montreal was certainly suspicious, but without additional information the union would have difficulty pursuing the matter. On the bus ride into the office the next morning, I was considering how I could further investigate the commercial. To my surprise, the bus passed a yellow production sign with the name of the commercial spot. **Daintry Dalton**, Assistant Branch Rep – Commercials, and I showed up on set. Only one performer was present; a musician on a legitimate **AF of M** contract. However, we were able to confirm the location of a larger shoot the next day. The producer assured us that any performers, except the musicians on guild contracts, would be engaged under the ACTRA collective agreement.

This was definitely the easiest organizing effort so far. Converting non-union to union production usually takes weeks or months of investigation and pressure. This time we showed up on set with a smile and a few questions.

An hour-and-a-half of ACTRA staff time resulted in 35 members being hired as background performers on the commercial. That's about \$12,000 in the hands of our members.

## SAG's Global Rule One Helps ACTRA Organize a Non-Union Film

In January 2002, industry contacts informed ACTRA Montreal about a non-union horror film called **Samhain**. A Montreal-based company is producing this project, which features several SAG members. Originally, the film was to be shot on location in Lithuania.

After I dropped by one of the Montreal auditions, production decided to audition in Toronto. Both ACTRA Montreal and ACTRA Toronto Performers sent notices to talent agents warning them about the film. The notices informed agents that ACTRA members will be disciplined if they work on the film. A warning to members also appeared in the ACTRA Montreal newsletter, **The Grapevine**.

By mid-March, 2002, we found out that **Samhain** was again slated for the Montreal area. I approached the producer about signing on to the **IPA**. After several fruitless conversations, no agreement was reached. At about that time, we also found out the names of the six U.S. performers hired for the film. After researching these performers and discovering that four of them were **SAG**

members, I called SAG's **Global Rule One** department.

The SAG staff was very cooperative in helping us bring this non-union film under ACTRA's jurisdiction. They contacted the agents of their members to solicit support. The agent of one of the SAG members sent a letter to the production demanding a confirmation that the project was ACTRA-signatory. On the same day that we received a copy of that letter, the producer called to say that he wanted to produce *Samhain* under the IPA. Our condition was that he cast most of the roles with ACTRA members, who all get paid as Principal Performers, regardless of the size of their role.



– Gary Saxe  
ACTRA National Organizer  
gsaxe@actra.ca

Thirteen ACTRA members were hired to work on *Samhain*.

## DIGITAL MEDIA

### Digital Performers: aisforapple

Digital media provides great creative opportunities, work and revenue for performers. So, what are ACTRA members up to in digital media? *InterACTRA* provides an opportunity to highlight digital media projects that are made by and/or with ACTRA members.

**A Is For Apple** is an interactive digital installation at [www.aisforapple.net](http://www.aisforapple.net) by Halifax-based web artist **David Clark**. The installation explores what he calls “a hermeneutics or cryptography of the apple.” The site includes extensive flash animation exploring different anecdotes

and links between apple-related images. From Adam and Eve and the Beatles, to Apple computers and Isaac Newton, David has built a digital collage of the apple using animation, images and sound.

The voice behind the project is by ACTRA member **Neil Thompson**.

“I enjoyed it very much – it was the first voice-only work that I’ve done. I found it intriguing,” Neil said. “And it fit with my own fascination with delivery of auditory information,” he added. Neil says he has received recognition from [aisforapple](http://aisforapple.net). “People have said to me ‘you did the voice for that? That was a good match.’”

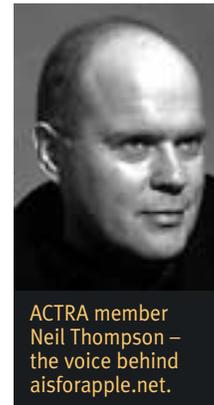
The site has done well for David who has since attended a web conference in England and has been invited to a festival in Brazil later this summer. Perhaps this success is due to David’s commitment to use professional talent in an environment where amateurish performances currently prevail.

Next issue, we’ll take a look at **The Seen**, a hilarious interactive flash animation feature produced by Toronto-based **Smiley Guys Studios** and starring **Don McKellar**.

If you have a cool project (big or small) to be considered for this space, contact me at [tmapley@actra.ca](mailto:tmapley@actra.ca).



– Thom Tapley  
ACTRA National Policy  
Advisor, Digital Media



ACTRA member  
Neil Thompson –  
the voice behind  
[aisforapple.net](http://aisforapple.net).



One of the interfaces from [www.aisforapple.net](http://www.aisforapple.net) by artist David Clark. The site’s voiceover is performed by ACTRA member Neil Thompson.

# applause

## Oops! We neglected to mention...

In the Spring 2002 issue of *InterACTRA*, we missed two ACTRA members and their honours.

Life Member **Gerald Pratley** received a special **Genie Award** at the **Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television's Genie Awards**. Mr. Pratley has devoted his life to **Canadian Cinema and Television** as a film critic, broadcaster, and as the founder and director of the **Ontario Film Institute**.

ACTRA member **Albert Millaire** has been promoted to a Companion within the **Order of Canada**. An actor and director, he has worked in French and English in theatre, opera, film and television in Canada and around the world.

*Belated congratulations to you both.*



Bluma Appel with Seán Cullen, host of the WGC Top Ten Awards.



(Left to right): Bob Martin – winner of two Canadian Comedy Awards in 2002.

Janet Van De Graaff, also a double award winner at the Canadian Comedy Awards.

Shaun Majumder is pretty funny.

## Eleven ACTRA Members win Comedy Awards

Congratulations to all ACTRA-member nominees and winners of **2002 Canadian Comedy Awards**. Pretty funny ACTRA members are: **Seán Cullen, Mark Farrell, Cathy Jones, Eugene Levy, Shaun Majumder, Bob Martin (2 awards), Rick Mercer (2 awards), Greg Thomey, Janet van de Graaff (2 awards), Mary Walsh (2 awards) and Kevin White**.

ACTRA is a proud sponsor of the 2002 Canadian Comedy Awards.

[www.canadiancomedyawards.com](http://www.canadiancomedyawards.com)



(Left to right): Former ACTRA National President Jack Gray received the Writer's Block Award from the WGC.

Sugith Varughese took home a Top Ten Award for his work *Talespinners Collection I*.

## Eight ACTRA members among WGC Top Ten winners

In April the **Writers Guild of Canada** handed out its **2002 Top Ten Awards** celebrating the best in Canadian screenwriting. This year, ACTRA member **Seán Cullen** hosted the gala evening that's touted as the "fastest awards show ever." Congratulations to all ACTRA-member winners and finalists.

Eight ACTRA members are among the winners, and the WGC honoured ACTRA's former president **Jack Gray** with the **Writers Block Award** for service to Canadian screenwriters.

ACTRA member winners are: **Sugith Varughese** *Talespinners Collection I*; **Cathy Jones, Colin Mochrie, Greg Thomey, Mary Walsh, Mark Farrell, Kevin White** and **Paul Mather** *This Hour has 22 Minutes*, episode 5, season IX. [www.writersguildofcanada.com](http://www.writersguildofcanada.com)



## Louise Pitre nominated for Tony Award

Canadian actor and ACTRA member **Louise Pitre** was a **Tony Award** nominee for her performance in the Broadway version of the musical **Mamma Mia!** Although Ms. Pitre didn't win a Tony this year, her **Mamma Mia!** performance has already garnered her numerous

awards including a **Dora Award**, the **National Broadway Touring Award**, and a special award from the **San Francisco Theatre Critics' Circle**. Ms. Pitre is also known for her portrayal of the legendary French singer **Edith Piaf** in three different productions of **Piaf**.



Hayley Lochner

## Ten ACTRA members win Young Artist Awards

ACTRA congratulates our members who won awards at the **23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Young Artist Awards** held in April in Studio City, California: **Sarah Barrable-Tishaure, Daniel Clark, Lauren Collins, Ryan Cooley, Aubrey Graham, Hayley Lochner, Miriam McDonald, Melissa McIntyre, Christina Schmidt** and **Cassie Steele**.

The Young Artist Awards honour performers under age 18 for their accomplishments in film, television, music and all areas of entertainment. [www.youngartistawards.org](http://www.youngartistawards.org)

## HENRY COMOR 1931-2002

ACTRA's National President, 1964-1968



**H**enry Comor died on March 9. When he was first elected President in 1964, ACTRA was in a state of chaos, and when he left office in 1968, the union was on the road to achieving outstanding success. Henry's presidency served ACTRA well, but by 1968 he and some of his colleagues had so aggressively parted company that after departing he never again, with one exception,

participated in union affairs. When we talked a couple of years ago he remained hurt and bitter at the rejection he had experienced.

The problem seems to have been Henry's style. He was committed, emotional, energetic, hardworking, and fiercely opinionated. New to ACTRA in 1970, I was puzzled by the degree of unrest Henry continued to stir among some of the colleagues. "Perhaps," he perceptively remarked in one of our talks, "I had too much hubris." An immigrant (from England) he believed passionately in Canada, in the arts, in creators, and suffered from a curious delusion, that Canadian productions should be Canadian. With a new federal **Broadcasting Act** in the works in the sixties he led a vigorous ACTRA **Do You Care** campaign to make Canadian broadcasting, including the **CBC**, much more Canadian. This campaign was well organized, noisy, made waves, and many, including then **Secretary of State Judy LaMarsh**, thought it helped to get the job done. It certainly helped put ACTRA on the map.

The more I learned about how much Henry had done for ACTRA, and pondered his subsequent total alienation from the union, the more I felt an effort should be made to heal this breach. But a decade later several of those serving on ACTRA's board and executive remained among his least enthusiastic fans. In 1979, after a lot of argument, the executive finally agreed to host a dinner honouring and thanking *all* past presidents, though until he actually walked through the door no one was certain Past President Comor would turn up. The evening was very moving. Some tasty food and a little wine soon had Past Presidents **Dennis Sweeting, Henry, Victor Knight, Reg Gibson** and **Don Parrish** happily insulting one another, swapping yarns, reliving former glories, and at least partly dissolving some of their uneasy past. As Don Parrish later noted: "It was a great evening and we buried a lot of hatchets – in each other's heads!"

Henry Comor deserves to be remembered in ACTRA as a president who cared, perhaps too much, and because he cared, he fought hard and effectively for the members of the union he presided over for four creative years. And if, as in so many of our institutions, his idiosyncrasies resulted in his not getting a lot of thanks, this sad fault is ours, not his.

– Jack Gray



## Farewell to HARRY BROWN

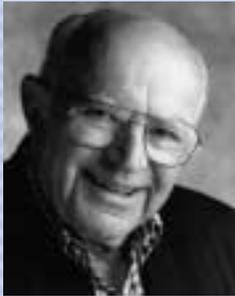
**F**amily, friends and colleagues were saddened by the death of long-time **CBC** broadcaster and ACTRA member **Harry Brown**. He died in Newfoundland on March 30<sup>th</sup> after a short illness. He had undergone heart surgery two days before his death at age 72.

Harry was a native of St. John's and hosted some of Canada's most popular radio and TV programs during a career of nearly five decades. He began broadcasting in Newfoundland in 1951 as a **VOCM** staff announcer. In his early days he was known as Uncle Harry on **VOCM** radio's **Junior Jamboree**. His sharp wit and critical insight carried him through a 30-year career with the **CBC**. He moved to Toronto in 1968 and hosted or co-hosted **As it Happens** (1974-76), **Morningside** (1976), and **Marketplace** and **Take 30** in 1978. Harry received an ACTRA Award in 1976 for best public affairs broadcaster for **Metro Morning**. He retired from the **CBC** in 1986, but continued on with **TV Ontario** hosting **Speaking Out**.

Harry moved to Holyrood, Newfoundland in 1992 where he remained active in charity work and indulged his hobbies, including golf. In his memory, three former **CBC** announcers – **George Maclean, George Finstad** and **John Rae** – are donating a trophy to be awarded at the annual **CBC** staff association golf tournament. Harry is survived by his wife, sons **Harold, Murray, Keith** and **Chris** and daughter **Robin**. **Robin Brown** is the host of **CBC** Radio's **The Inside Track**.

– Russ Germain

## OTTO LOWY



**O**tto Lowy, a life member of ACTRA and beloved host of CBC radio's long-running musical series **The Transcontinental**, has died. He was 81.

Otto was born in Prague in 1921. He survived the Holocaust, though many members of his family did not. His mother had sent him to England before the

German invasion of Czechoslovakia. He came to Vancouver in 1948, beginning his career with CBC radio as a bit-player in radio drama. Over the next five decades, he wrote radio plays and television scripts, produced documentaries and played a wide range of dramatic and comedic roles.

He is best known as the host of *The Transcontinental*, a musical afternoon on CBC radio that "traveled" through Europe with Otto's musical choices.

A public musical memorial of Otto Lowy is planned for the fall.

– Staff

## DENIS FOREST 1960-2002



**T**he first day of spring, it snowed this year. It was an unexpected and untimely snowfall. And it was on the first day of spring that Denis suddenly died of heart failure. Those who really knew Denis understood that he took on the sorrows of the world. His acts of kindness and generosity were not limited to friends and loved ones, but rather something

he offered magnanimously and without thought. And so he left when his over-worked heart could take no more.

I first met Denis when he was in theatre school at **Ryerson**. He was one of those few actors who began a career before graduation. He was an original member of **Necessary Angel Theatre Company**, and his many film and television credits include **Cliffhanger**, **The Mask**, **Against the Wall** and a series lead in the TV show **War of the Worlds**.

But Denis was more than an actor – he was an intellectual. He loved language and reading – Oupenski and Camus – and would easily discuss alchemy or philosophy over coffee. He walked a spiritual path and was a visionary – something that was evident in his painting and writing: his painting has had successful showings in Los Angeles; his beautiful and articulate writing is still undiscovered.

He would sometimes phone me and read something he had written and I would sit back amazed, just a little jealous of his genius. The last time we spoke, he said that he missed home. He said he missed hearing his mother tongue and that he had grown tired of Los Angeles.

I have known Denis all my adult life. My life has been made richer for having him in it. I miss him and will go on missing him just as I will go on loving him. I just hope, with what little faith I have, that he has finally gone home and that whatever dreams he has now are sweeter than the ones he had here on earth.

*Good night sweet friend and God bless.*

– Heidi von Palleske

## RHONDA PAYNE



**A**CTRA mourns the loss of our member **Rhonda Payne**, who passed away in early June after a short illness. She was 52.

Rhonda had long been energetically active in the popular theatre scene in Newfoundland and Ontario and used theatre as an instrument of education and social change during her travels in Africa. A relatively

recent transplant to Nova Scotia, Rhonda quickly made many friends with her enthusiasm and her talent. All her friends at ACTRA extend deepest sympathies to her family.

And, true to her instruction, we'll continue to tell the stories of our people and our community so that they may not be forgotten.

– Staff

We share our sadness at the passing of the following members and ACTRA colleagues

Abbott Anderson  
Denny Arnold  
Peter Bryant  
Dalton Camp  
Brad Corr  
Christopher Coyle  
Dorothy Davies  
Chester Duncan

Mitchell Freeman  
Marvin Goldhar  
Donald Jones  
Urjo Kareda  
Harvey Kirck  
Emma Levine  
Arch McDonell  
Douglas Millwood

James Morris  
David Spooner  
Gene Taylor  
David R. Tyerman  
Gina Vasic  
Bob Wilde  
Patricia Williams  
Edie Yolles

# ACTRA in Banff: a report from the Banff Television Festival

## ACTRA plugs new definition of Canadian Content

ACTRA was pleased to attend the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual **Banff Television Festival** – with all the producers, broadcasters and government staffers gathered at Banff, it was a good venue to raise our concerns about Canadian content and the decline of Canadian drama.

ACTRA joined together with **Paul Gross** and members from our industry's guilds and associations to meet with the Honourable **Sheila Copps**, Minister of Canadian Heritage, in her only appearance at the festival. We were happy to discover such common ground with our sister unions in pressing for regulatory change to address the decline in Canadian dramatic television series production. We were also heartened that the Minister is listening to our concerns.

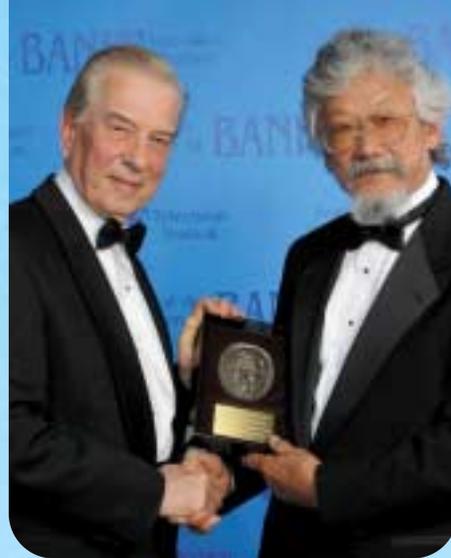
The need for public government support for our Canadian television industry seemed to be a common thread in this festival. **Robert MacNeil**, who began his broadcasting career with the CBC, gave a stirring address on the growing importance of public broadcasting. The next morning, **Charles Dalfen**, the new Chair of the CRTC, challenged the audience to come up with models that will result in more Canadian drama on television. He noted that none of our top 10 dramas are Canadian. "News,

variety, documentaries – none have the impact on our imagination of drama," he said. "The challenge is to make Canadian drama of a calibre that Canadians want to watch. We have the talent in this room to do it," he added. At the end of Mr. Dalfen's address, **Brian Topp**, Executive Director of ACTRA Toronto Performers, applauded Dalfen's speech, and indicated our willingness to work with him on the challenge of producing more Canadian drama for television.

## David Suzuki receives ACTRA's John Drainie Award

On June 10, **David Suzuki** received **ACTRA's John Drainie Award** for distinguished contribution to broadcasting. CTV's chief news anchor and ACTRA member **Lloyd Robertson** presented the award. David Suzuki is an award-winning scientist, environmentalist and broadcaster. He has received consistently high acclaim for his 30 years of work in broadcasting, explaining the complexities of science in a compelling, easily understood way. He is well known to millions as the host of CBC's popular science television series, **The Nature of Things**. ACTRA's John Drainie award has been awarded since 1968. Radio actor John Drainie was the voice of CBC's radio drama in its heyday 50 years ago.

Unions and guilds meeting with The Honourable Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage at the Banff Television Festival. (Front row:) Maureen Parker, Writers Guild of Canada; The Honourable Sheila Copps; Ross Leslie, NABET 700. (Back row:) Yves Légaré, SARTeC; Pamela Brand, Directors Guild of Canada; Brian Topp, ACTRA; Paul Gross, Whizbang Films; Arden Ryshtan, STCVQ; Peter Murdoch, CEP.



Lloyd Robertson, CTV's chief news anchor and ACTRA member, presenting ACTRA's John Drainie Award to David Suzuki at the Banff Television Festival.



Hilary Jones-Farrow and Scott Thompson pitching their documentary *Do you know where we can get a Donkey?* at the Banff Television Festival.

## Scott Thompson wins "the world's richest pitch" in the CTV Canadian Documart

ACTRA member **Scott Thompson**, well known from his years in **Kids in the Hall**, won the coveted grand prize in the **CTV Documart**, known as "the world's richest pitch." From over 120 finalists, six teams were chosen to pitch their documentary projects to an international panel of judges. Scott and **Hilary Jones-Farrow** pitched their project **Do you know where we can get a donkey?** – a documentary that will explore humour around the world, starting with a haircut in a barbershop in each country they visit. Scott and Hilary's winning pitch is worth \$50,000 in development funding.



Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists

# ACTRA NATIONAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2002

Auditors' Report ..... 28  
 Balance Sheet..... 28  
 Statement of Operations  
 and Surplus (Deficit) ..... 29  
 Statement of Cash Flows ..... 30  
 Notes to the Financial  
 Statements..... 30  
 Schedule of Operating  
 Expenses ..... 31

## AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ACTRA

We have audited the balance sheet of ACTRA National as at February 28, 2002 and the statements of operations and surplus and cash flows for the year then ended.

These financial statements are the responsibility of the organization's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the organization as at February 28, 2002 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

*Clarke Henning LLP*

Clarke Henning LLP  
 CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS  
 Toronto, Ontario  
 May 10, 2002

## ACTRA NATIONAL BALANCE SHEET AS AT FEBRUARY 28, 2002

	2002	2001
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 53,826	\$528,770
Accounts receivable	471,061	450,786
Lease inducement receivable	-	175,150
Investments (note 3)	200,000	900,000
Prepaid expenses and deposits	54,296	57,302
Loan receivable – Face to Face with Talent Inc.	3,369	5,000
Loan receivable – ACTRAWORKS Incorporated	-	25,000
Due from ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch	-	1,414
Due from Face to Face with Talent Inc.	-	6
Due from ACTRA Performers' Rights Society	412	10,803
	<b>782,964</b>	<b>2,154,231</b>
Capital assets (note 4)	<b>550,264</b>	<b>200,731</b>
	<b>1,333,228</b>	<b>2,354,962</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	518,091	449,593
Accrued vacation pay	67,374	70,404
Due to Branches	171,175	986,000
Due to ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch	13	-
Due to Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists	-	2,291
Due to U.B.C.P.	-	260
	<b>756,653</b>	<b>1,508,548</b>
<b>SURPLUS ( DEFICIT )</b>		
Extraordinary contingency fund (note 2)	2,383	161,218
Operations	574,192	685,196
	<b>576,575</b>	<b>846,414</b>
	<b>\$ 1,333,228</b>	<b>\$ 2,354,962</b>

Approved on behalf of the Board:

*Jeanette Brubaker*, Director

*John R. ...*, Director

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN SURPLUS (DEFICIT)

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2002

	Extraordinary		Total	
	Contingency Fund	Operations	2002	2001
<b>Income</b>				
Per capita	\$ –	\$ 2,965,828	\$ 2,965,828	\$ 2,177,468
Information services	–	403,490	403,490	383,210
Equalization income	–	1,236,270	1,236,270	1,289,514
Interest income	4,345	14,661	19,006	21,608
Voluntary contributions	–	75,000	75,000	632,691
	<b>4,345</b>	<b>4,695,249</b>	<b>4,699,594</b>	<b>4,504,491</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Salaries and benefits (Schedule A)	–	1,396,403	1,396,403	973,138
Collective agreements (Schedule B)	163,180	190,931	354,111	143,534
National council (Schedule C)	–	120,641	120,641	117,747
Directors' expenses (Schedule D)	–	36,117	36,117	38,981
Office expenses (Schedule E)	–	285,804	285,804	231,043
Printing	–	252,910	252,910	181,768
Furniture, fixtures and equipment (Schedule F)	–	54,380	54,380	58,587
Computer services (Schedule G)	–	1,330,318	1,330,318	632,501
Communication and public relations (Schedule H)	–	364,689	364,689	144,834
Lobbying and legislative (Schedule I)	–	86,089	86,089	82,344
ACTRAWORKS contribution	–	70,000	70,000	70,000
External relations	–	87,266	87,266	82,952
Referenda	–	41,755	41,755	21,003
Staff training and recruitment	–	14,789	14,789	38,155
Staff conference	–	23,559	23,559	–
Legal fees	–	30,999	30,999	17,775
Audit fees	–	8,240	8,240	8,000
Professional fees	–	21,648	21,648	6,818
Bank charges and GST expense	–	110,055	110,055	75,024
Alliance debt reduction	–	75,000	75,000	75,000
Face to Face loan repayment	–	–	–	52,280
Face to Face loan write-off	–	1,631	1,631	–
ACTRA plan organizing	–	–	–	156,968
ACTRA plan special meeting	–	–	–	26,270
ACTRA plan	–	–	–	58,299
ACTRA plan other	–	–	–	58,252
	<b>163,180</b>	<b>4,603,224</b>	<b>4,766,404</b>	<b>3,351,273</b>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of income over expenses before</b>				
transfer payments	(158,835)	92,025	(66,810)	1,153,218
Transfer payments to branches	–	(203,028)	(203,028)	(222,120)
<b>Deficiency of income over expenses (expenses</b>				
over income)	(158,835)	(111,003)	(269,838)	931,098
Surplus (deficit) – at beginning of year	161,218	685,195	846,413	(84,685)
Surplus (deficit) – at end of year	\$ 2,383	\$ 574,192	\$ 576,575	\$ 846,413

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2002

	2002	2001
Cash flows from operating activities		
Cash receipts from members, non-members and producers	\$ 4,660,313	\$ 4,431,600
Cash paid for expenses	(4,547,406)	(3,597,192)
Interest received	19,006	21,608
	<b>131,913</b>	856,016
Cash flows from financing activity		
Advances from (repayments to) related organizations	(778,921)	(174,714)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of furniture and equipment	(527,936)	(201,358)
Purchase of investments	-	(150,000)
Proceeds from investments	700,000	-
	<b>172,064</b>	(351,358)
Change in cash during the year	(474,944)	329,944
Cash – at beginning of year	528,770	198,826
Cash – at end of year	\$ 53,826	\$ 528,770

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2002

**1. ORGANIZATION**

ACTRA National is a not for profit organization. The organization is a federation of branches and local unions, national in scope, representing performers in the live transmission and recorded media.

**2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES***Basis of Presentation*

These financial statements include only the operations carried on by ACTRA National. They do not include the assets, liabilities, income and expenses of the autonomous branches, including those administered by ACTRA National in trust for those branches. Separate financial statements have been prepared for the branches.

*Capital Assets*

Capital assets are recorded at cost and amortized over their estimated useful lives on a straight line basis as follows:

Computer equipment	– 3 years
Computer software	– 5 years
Furniture and fixtures	– 5 years

*Extraordinary Contingency Fund*

In 1998 an extraordinary contingency fund was established to provide for organizing, bargaining and negotiations, extraordinary meetings of ACTRA National, and legal counsel. The fund is financed through voluntary contributions of 5% of non-member work permit income from the branches/local unions.

*Use of Estimates*

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires the Company's management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements and related notes to the financial statements. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

**3. INVESTMENTS**

Investments are carried at cost and consist of the following:

	2002	2001
\$208,000 Government of Canada Treasury Bill due December 5, 2002, 2.0% annual yield	\$ 200,000	\$ -
\$400,000 Bank of Montreal Mortgage Corporation Term Investment, due June 21, 2001, 5.2% annual yield	-	400,000
\$500,000 Bank of Montreal Mortgage Corporation Term Investment, due December 6, 2001, 5.25% annual yield	-	500,000
	<b>200,000</b>	900,000
Accrued interest on term investment (recorded in accounts receivable)	\$ 4,000	\$ 20,273

**4. CAPITAL ASSETS**

Details of capital assets are as follows:

	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value 2002	2001
Computer equipment	\$ 614,408	\$ 227,414	\$ 386,994	\$ 91,827
Computer software	69,916	5,883	64,033	-
Furniture and fixtures	141,045	41,808	99,237	108,904
	<b>\$ 825,369</b>	<b>\$ 275,105</b>	<b>\$ 550,264</b>	<b>\$ 200,731</b>

Computer system development costs that relate to new functions are capitalized and amortized over five years.

**5. LEASE COMMITMENTS**

The Association has commitments under operating leases for premises. The leases expire on July 31, 2010 and the minimum annual payments under the leases are as follows:

<i>Fiscal year</i>	2003	\$ 78,816
	2004	78,816
	2005	78,816
	2006	97,045
	2007	97,045
	2008-2010	393,630

In addition to the minimum rent, the Company is obligated to pay operating costs for its office space. The operating costs paid were approximately \$130,000 (2001 - \$56,000).

**6. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

The organization's financial instruments consist of cash, accounts receivable, accounts payable and advances to/from related companies. It is management's opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant interest, currency or credit risks arising from these financial instruments.

## SCHEDULES OF OPERATING EXPENSES

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2002

	2002	2001
<i>Schedule A</i>		
Salaries and benefits		
Total basic salaries	\$ 1,095,731	\$ 779,025
Staff benefits – general	175,670	108,385
– RRSP	105,574	71,347
Maternity benefits	18,482	–
Vacation pay	946	14,381
	<b>1,396,403</b>	<b>973,138</b>

	2002	2001
<i>Schedule B</i>		
Collective agreements		
CBC	5,876	24,305
Commercials – negotiation and administration	26,207	23,207
– legal	24,965	6,191
IPA – negotiation and administration	169,460	10,615
– legal	18,720	20,214
Other	1,435	11,329
Bargaining Conference	25,587	–
Organizing	81,861	47,673
	<b>354,111</b>	<b>143,534</b>

	2002	2001
<i>Schedule C</i>		
National Council		
National Council expenses	52,223	61,345
National Executive expenses	18,133	26,258
Committee expenses	12,237	8,979
Honoraria	29,229	19,500
Officer expenses	8,819	1,665
	<b>120,641</b>	<b>117,747</b>

	2002	2001
<i>Schedule D</i>		
Directors' expenses		
National Executive	8,921	10,466
Director of Finance and Administration	4,801	8,783
Eastern Regional Executive	6,180	5,470
Western Regional Executive	7,648	7,430
Western Regional office expenses	8,567	6,832
	<b>36,117</b>	<b>38,981</b>

	2002	2001
<i>Schedule E</i>		
Office expenses		
Rent, moving and design costs	209,313	152,314
Telecommunication	24,717	31,009
Insurance	8,179	3,939
Supplies and miscellaneous	12,911	16,576
Postage	9,728	11,156
Courier	20,956	16,049
	<b>\$ 285,804</b>	<b>\$ 231,043</b>

	2002	2001
<i>Schedule F</i>		
Furniture, fixtures and equipment		
Capital purchases under \$500	\$ 3,329	\$ 10,714
Amortization	27,364	19,753
Repairs	2,177	178
Maintenance	5,443	11,278
Leases, rental	16,067	16,664
	<b>54,380</b>	<b>58,587</b>

	2002	2001
<i>Schedule G</i>		
Computer services		
Maintenance	15,998	13,899
Software	24,319	15,795
Hardware	16,792	22,078
Amortization	50,317	44,660
Supplies	7,568	8,659
Network costs	105,410	123,486
Consulting fees	124,139	–
Training	513	16,009
Computer systems development		
Current membership maintenance	77,695	76,630
New membership system	289,405	133,272
Face to Face	377,129	–
Webtrust audit	10,000	–
Other consulting	44,043	9,658
Amortization of membership system	100,723	–
IPA template	–	67,424
Revenue receiving module	–	13,763
Commercial template	–	56,559
IT administration	86,267	30,609
	<b>1,330,318</b>	<b>632,501</b>

	2002	2001
<i>Schedule H</i>		
Communications and public relations		
Advisor fees	9,190	44,372
Promotion and publication expenses	34,579	24,884
InterACTRA News	74,237	38,457
Public relations	79,913	27,661
ACTRA website	166,770	9,460
	<b>364,689</b>	<b>144,834</b>

	2002	2001
<i>Schedule I</i>		
Lobbying and legislative		
Policy advisor fee	63,510	61,525
Expenses	22,579	20,819
	<b>\$ 86,089</b>	<b>\$ 82,344</b>



# Canadian Comedy Awards

by  
Anne Marie  
Scheffler

It's a well-known fact that Canadians are funny. I'm talking really funny. Funny-ha-ha. Internationally funny. Globally hilarious. Then isn't it funny-peculiar that the average Canadian doesn't know how great the comedians are in his or her own backyard? **Tim Progosh** didn't think that was much of a laughing matter when he started the **Canadian Comedy Awards** three years ago. And here's another knee-slapper – no Canadian broadcaster was willing to air the awards this year, although **Star!** did show a digest of the awards. So, Tim, and the rest of the gang at **Higher Ground Productions** decided to do them anyway! Live! The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Canadian Comedy Awards were held at **The Docks** April 4<sup>th</sup>, and not only were they funny, they were a heck of a lot of fun.

Written by the talented **Harry Doupe** and hosted by last year's **Pretty Funny Stand-up** winner, **Brent Butt**, the show was funny-ha-ha. Our fabulously Canadian celebrity **Dave Foley** opened the awards with some local humour, really making me understand the concept 'comedy community'. The **Doo Wops** entertained with their killer songs and there was plenty of funny footage sprinkled throughout.

Sure, there wasn't any this-is-going-to-be-on-TV tension, but there still were cameras. And, yeah, The Docks dance floor was a sea of plastic chairs, but it still was one of the classiest awards shows anyway – what with **Kristeen Von Hagen** in her elegant track

suit and gold chains. **Kristeen** won the **Pretty Funny Female Stand-up** award by the way. Maybe the show wasn't exactly the most technically smooth, but who doesn't appreciate the thrill of improv? And if an award winner wasn't there to pick up their **Beaver** (that's right, the award is a beaver – funny-ha-ha), then **Laurie Elliot** would grab your Beaver for you! **Laurie** won a Beaver last year and can be seen on **Real Men** on **The Men's Channel** for those of you who have digital. I think it would be funny-peculiar to miss the chance to mention that I am also on Real Men. Other Real Men cast members at the Comedy Awards included **Kate Ashby**, **Ryan Belleville** and **John Paul**.

The Pauls (**Paul Constable** and **Paul Bates**) made it to the awards after doing their funny-ha-ha show **Psychedelicatessen** at **Second City**, joining other Second City faces like **Steve Morel** and **Jenny Parsons**. And the stand-ups were represented well throughout, including one of my favourites, **Darren Frost**, a.k.a. 'Frosty'.

I hope that one day The Canadian Comedy Awards will be as big a deal for our country as, say, hockey, but until then, the respect and adoration from a small but talented group might just be enough. After all, we partied until the wee hours of the morning. And it would be funny-peculiar to do that unless you love the company you're with.



ACTRA member and Canadian Comedy Awards producer **Tim Progosh** with **Rick Wharton**.



**Steve Morel** and **Jenny Parsons** having a laugh after the awards.



**Paul Tedeschini** and **Kevin MacDonald** before the show.

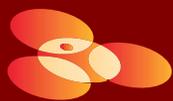


**Peter Keleghan**, enjoying the awards.



Funnymen **Pat McKenna** and **Rick Green**.

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