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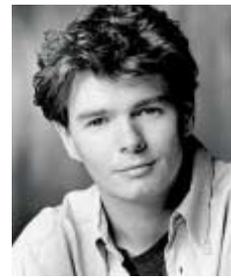
Fall 2004

ACTRA

The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists



H20: Testing the political waters – *story*
page 7



Thor Bishopric

Stepping up our efforts

The summer months were very busy at ACTRA. On one front we were cutting our way through the crowd to get culture on the election agenda and on the other we were battling it out with producers to secure a new **National Commercial Agreement** and winning significant gains for performers.

I am now looking forward to an eventful fall where we'll continue to fight for our industry, both domestically and internationally. ACTRA helped to put culture on the map during the election, now we'll move ahead and make sure it's on the agenda of the next Parliament. A minority Liberal government brings a whole new dynamic to Ottawa, and with it a whole new realm of possibilities. Our efforts have already begun with one-on-one meetings with new cabinet ministers and we're planning for another Lobby Day where some of our biggest stars will carry ACTRA's message directly to decision-makers and Parliamentarians.

ACTRA's top priority continues to be the encouragement and stimulation of more Canadian production. As artists,

and as a nation, it is essential that we are able to tell our own stories. However, building a self-sustaining domestic industry makes sense beyond the cultural imperative. Internationally, film and television production is increasingly unpredictable and we're feeling the effects of fewer service productions locating in Canada.

that is self-sufficient and immune to the fickleness of international trends.

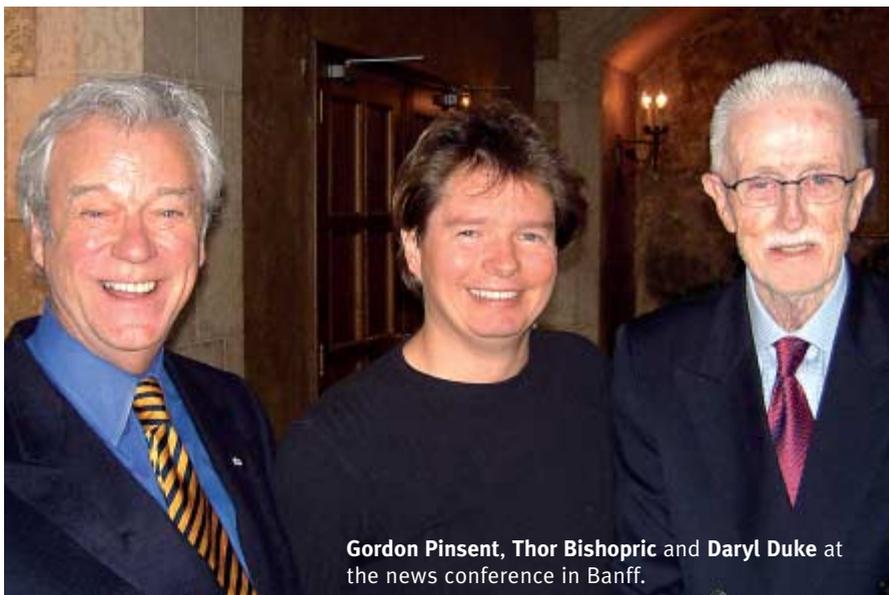
At our June National Council Meeting, preeminent Canadian producer **Laszlo Barna** was invited to bring his perspective on the state of our industry. He iterated the importance of growing our industry from within, and he encouraged ACTRA

A minority Liberal government brings a whole new dynamic to Ottawa, and with it a whole new realm of possibilities.

There's no simple reason for the downturn. Multiple factors, including a higher Canadian dollar, personal and national security concerns, production budget compression as well as aggressive lobbying and tax incentives in U.S. and foreign markets all figure in the current decline and, interestingly, are all beyond our control. What's clear is that now, more than ever, we need to build a stable industry

to keep up the pressure and take the lead in our industry's advocacy. He reminded us that ACTRA has a priceless resource that other organizations don't have: our members. As performers, the public recognizes and relates to us. This isn't the time to be shy. It's time step up.

Internationally, a number of files that directly affect performers' working lives will be advanced this autumn. In September, I represented ACTRA's interests at the 18th World Congress of **FIA**, (the International Federation of Actors) held in Budapest, Hungary. ACTRA will return to **WIPO** (the World Intellectual Property Organization) in Geneva, Switzerland to pursue a copyright treaty for performers. And ACTRA is playing a key role in helping develop a new international instrument on cultural diversity through the auspices of **UNESCO**, (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). If one can survive the acronyms, a deeper understanding of these big-picture international files is fascinating. I encourage all members to find out more by consulting www.actra.ca.



Gordon Pinsent, Thor Bishopric and Daryl Duke at the news conference in Banff.

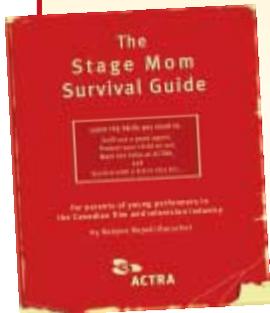


Thor Bishopric, ACTRA President

The Stage Mom Survival Guide

for parents of young performers in the Canadian film and television industry, by **Robyne Ropell-Baruchel**, published by ACTRA.

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



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



Fall 2004 Volume 11, Issue 2

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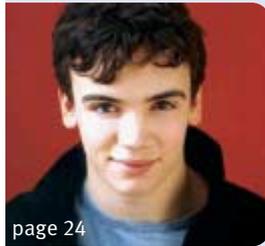
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Want to receive *InterACTRA* by email? If you'd like *InterACTRA* in your e-mailbox instead of by mail, email us at interactra@actra.ca with your membership number.

InterACTRA welcomes letters and feedback. Submissions should be no longer than 200 words, and may be edited for length. Please send submissions to: interactra@actra.ca

Broadcasters on the run

I picked up the Spring 2004 edition of your magazine at the *Banff TV Festival*. While the whole magazine was a pleasure to read, it was the feature *Runaway Broadcasters* that really made an impression. Kudos to **Joanne Deer**, who concisely and economically explained the problems Canadian productions have getting made and shown on Canadian networks.

I photocopied the article and distributed it to the candidates in my riding. As we will have a new parliament very soon, I would encourage all of your readers to send copies to their MPs. We cannot give up this important fight.

– *Barry Abbott*
Penguin Films Ltd.,
Port Coquitlam, B.C.

I read with great interest your article *Runaway Broadcasters* (Spring 2004) by Joanne Deer. I find it interesting when people say that all Canadians share “attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity.” I have always felt that I have much more in common with my brothers and sisters in Washington than I have with the people of Eastern Canada. We listen to the same radio stations, watch the same TV shows, have the same weather, hang out in the same bars on the weekend and often end up dating each other.

Maybe we should worry less about “protecting Canadian identity” and being “passive voyeurs, ingesting another culture” and just make great television that people will enjoy no matter what side of that imaginary line they live on. Do you think any of the 18-34

year-old Canadians that tuned into *Friends* night after night ever said, “hip young people talking about relationships while drinking coffee, wow they sure do things strange in America!” Of course not, they just saw the same things that they and their ‘friends’ were going through.

– *Troy Adamson*,
UBCP/ACTRA Member,
Vancouver, BC

Calling all scribes! Interested in never-ending glory? Want to contribute content to *InterACTRA*? Please contact interactra@actra.ca

Correction: In the Farewell space in the Spring 2004 issue (p. 24): **Peter Brockington** was incorrectly listed as Peter Brocking. We apologize for the error.

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Join the More Than Applause Campaign

The Fund's **More Than Applause** awareness and fundraising campaign celebrates the best of the Canadian entertainment industry. Here are the few of the many ways you can get involved:

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ON SET: meet the fans, give at lunch, hold a 50/50 draw, raise money at your wrap party, have a prop and costume auction

BEHIND THE SCENES: sell some crafts, auction your skills, bake some goodies, host a dinner, throw a party, pass the hat, send a cheque, donate online, spread the word

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Call 1-877-399-8392 or visit www.actorsfund.ca for details or to donate online.

Bargaining Roundup

Hot off the presses!

Hard copies of the recently negotiated IPA, CBC-TV and Radio, and NFB Agreements. have rolled off the presses! Get'em while they're hot by contacting your branch or go to www.actra.ca to download electronic copies.



Casting Directors Committee: Be heard!

The ACTRA-CFTPA Casting Directors Committee was created to address your concerns about casting. ACTRA's delegates to the committee are members **Thor Bishopric** and **Karl Pruner** and agents **Shari Caldwell** and **Pam Winters**. Bring your issues to the table by contacting Karl at kpruner.cdc@actra.ca.



Vision

When ACTRA and **Vision TV** began negotiating a new agreement last February it seemed like business as usual until we received some unexpected good news. It turns out that Vision is going to be producing more original drama since they have been having trouble acquiring the diverse dramatic programming required for their broadcast licence from other sources. As a result, ACTRA and Vision are now negotiating drama terms and conditions for the first time. It is anticipated that an agreement will be concluded by mid-fall and it's expected that more jobs for members will soon follow!



SCN

ACTRA National and ACTRA Saskatchewan have negotiated Terms of Settlement for our first collective agreement with SCN, Saskatchewan's public broadcaster. The agreement currently covers off-camera Network Branding and Promotions, however SCN has agreed to continue talks with an aim to expanding jurisdiction to cover other work categories.



CBC

Performers could soon be seeing more money for their past CBC Radio and TV work. ACTRA is working with the CBC on an agreement to allow the CBC Digital Archives to make more of the CBC's catalogue of programming available online. For performers, this will mean a new and unexpected source of revenue if their past projects are made available.

For details on the new National Commercial Agreement, see page 10.

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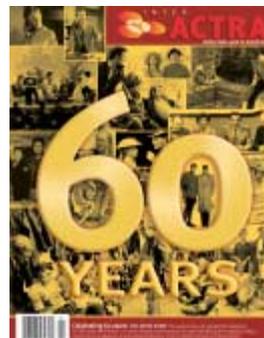
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InterACTRA wins award!

We are honoured to announce that the special 60th Anniversary issue of *InterACTRA* took honours in the Best Overall Publication category in the Canadian Association of Labour Media's 2003 awards.

Worth repeating...

The following letter to the editor by ACTRA Montreal President **Matt Holland** was published in the **Montreal Mirror**, in response to an ill-informed column that among other grievous errors, blamed ACTRA for Montreal's downturn in production. For the original column, see *The Kristian Perspective: Lights, camera, inaction*, June 17, 2004, www.montrealmirror.com/ARCHIVES/2004/061704/kristian.

Dear Mr. Gravenor,

Screenwriter **William Goldman** famously wrote about Hollywood: "Nobody knows anything." I was therefore surprised at your claim of having figured out why there are currently fewer American films being made in Montreal than we've grown accustomed to in recent years. As an actor working in English here, I feel the direct result of this downturn, but as an elected official at ACTRA, I find your reasons for it inaccurate and under-researched.

ACTRA has worked hard to maintain industry stability by always engaging in good-faith negotiations with producers in a timely and professional manner.

First of all, the APFTQ did make waves this winter, but a quick, informal survey of top U.S. studio executives done recently by our staff confirms that their antics haven't been a determining factor in where the

Americans decide to shoot. The rising Canadian dollar is more of a disincentive to locate north of the border because it directly affects the producers' bottom line. It's always about the money. That's why those blockbusters come here in the first place. It's just prohibitively expensive to shoot behemoths like **The Sum Of All Fears** or **The Day After Tomorrow** in L.A.

Second, there was no actors' strike in 2001, unless you're referring to the SAG/AFTRA commercials strike in the U.S., which actually brought more work to Canada. ACTRA has worked hard to maintain industry stability by always engaging in good-faith negotiations with producers in a timely and professional manner.

Also, I object to the term "procedural union hassles" used to describe ACTRA's policies governing the hiring of performers from outside our jurisdiction. Canadian actors are on a par with their peers in any country in the world in terms of talent and professionalism. If we didn't protect our members, their work opportunities would dry up quickly. Besides, if performers here weren't given preference of engagement on U.S. shoots, Canadians would never know that we had fine actors in this country since the only way they get to see them anymore is in Hollywood movies and TV shows, since indigenous films have extremely limited access to U.S.-controlled movie screens in Canada, and our homegrown television prospects have been in a steady decline since 1999, when the CRTC relaxed their Canadian content rules to allow cheaper (read reality) programming to replace fictionalized drama. If this is "asking for too much" then what would you have us do? Should we encourage all our members to move to L.A. and let the crippled, confused, underdeveloped yet still determined Canadian film & TV industry die a natural death?

Finally, anybody who knows anything about the movies knows that a good picture starts with a good script, and a lot of the films you mentioned in your column didn't.

They started as a vehicle for a star, as a genre picture, a special effects concept, a religious conceit, or all of the above combined. The point is, you can't blame Montreal for a bad Hollywood script.

So, while you try to formulate a theory about why Hollywood films made here "consistently suck," I would suggest it might be more helpful and insightful to get another perspective on a complex and volatile industry. I would suggest you give ACTRA Montreal a call.



Sincerely,
Matt Holland
President,
ACTRA Montreal



ACTRA Maritimes President **Jeremy Webb** recently met with Nova Scotia Premier **John Hamm** for an hour-long tête-à-tête. As the pair kicked back in the comfy chairs in the Premier's office, Webb took the opportunity to talk about the film industry, the arts, the plight of performers in the province, and the tax credit system. Webb secured an agreement from the Premier to meet again in the fall with other members of the arts community.

Paul Gross tells a story of the complications of getting permission to film his new mini-series **H2O** in Ottawa. He met with a battery of people from various government departments trying to figure out the logistics of shooting at the Cenotaph. It quickly became apparent that the jurisdictional overlap was rather complicated.

“The question was asked of the battery, what ground am I standing on now? Right now, you’re on National Capital Commission land. And if I moved three feet and stood on the flowerbed?

Ah, then you’d be on Parks Canada. And if I moved forward two feet and stood on the pedestal to the statue? That would be Veteran’s Affairs. And if I moved four feet this way and stood on the sidewalk? That would be the City of Ottawa. The city is a maze, to say the least,” recalls Gross. Sounds like trying to navigate the Canadian film and television industry.

It seems that shooting a mini-series in Ottawa is somewhat analogous to Canadian production in general: there are a lot of obstacles to navigate, but the payoffs in terms of creative and

Testing the political waters by Joanne Deer



professional satisfaction, contributing to a developing industry, and the ability to tell a Canadian story make it all worthwhile – if not downright necessary.

Luckily, creators like Gross are overcoming the obstacles to make it happen. Gross certainly knows his way around, he’s not only an experienced producer, but thanks in part to his lobbying work for Canadian drama, he knows his way around both the Canadian film industry and Canadian politics – a combination that served him well as co-producer, co-writer, and star of the CBC mini-series **H2O**. Beyond its very Canadian setting in Ottawa and Parliament Hill, **H2O** is sublimely Canadian from every angle. It was 100% written, directed, produced and performed by Canadians. Gross and his Whizbang Films partner **Frank Siracusa** were executive producers and **Neil Bregman** of Ottawa’s Sound Venture International co-produced.

Gross reunited with his **Men With Brooms** writing partner **John Krizanc** to explore Canada’s second most popular sport: politics.

“Like most stories this one had a long and circuitous journey,” says Gross. “It bears little relationship to what we started with, with the exception of two elements. First, we wanted to wade around in Canada’s political waters and secondly, we wanted to look at the water we were wading in.

It’s visceral, it’s emotional
(continued on page 8)

H2O – continued from page 7

and it's going to be one of the critical issues in the very near future.”

While we don't want to give too much away, anyone who knows the elements can glean from the film's title what the underlying issue is in the political thriller that is launched with the Prime Minister's death in a suspicious canoeing accident. Gross plays Tom McLaughlin, the Prime Minister's son who is at least initially, an unwilling successor to his father's job. Perhaps borrowing from the riveting real-life image of the grief-stricken, yet eloquent **Justin Trudeau**, Tom's eulogy galvanizes political power wranglers, and he's convinced to run for the top spot. The story unravels the mystery of Tom's father's death while tracking Tom's internal conflicts and the political corruption that follows his rise to power.

Gross is no stranger to the hallways of Parliament. Over the past several years he has spent considerable time in Ottawa, meeting politicians to champion Canadian drama. As one of the leading voices in **ACTRA's Campaign for Canadian Drama**, Gross has joined fellow performers on several lobbying trips to Ottawa, has sat on the board of the Canadian Telefilm Fund, and meets regularly with politicians, broadcasters and CRTC officials. He says these experiences certainly helped him get a feel for the dynamics and tactics of the Hill. However, he credits the script's authenticity to the vast number of advisors he and Krizanc consulted, including politicians

situations which are eerily possible.”

Veteran performer **Martha Henry** plays the Prime Minister's widow and Tom's mother in the film. She says the theme of 'Canada above all' is a constant undercurrent of the script.

“In a sense Paul and John put Canada just a notch above everything else throughout the script and that aspect of the script is personified in the character of Julia McLaughlin. She's tough and she knows about politics. She's been schooled in the philosophy of what makes our country tick. My 'task', it seemed to me, was to defend this notion Julia had of her husband's vision for Canada, thereby defending her husband's life.”

H2O drew on some of Canada's top performers to bring the script to life under the guidance of award-winning Québec director **Charles Binamé**, who told the *Globe and Mail* he has a “five star cast”. Joining Gross, Hope and Henry was a who's who of Canadian talent including **Guy Nadon, Kenneth Welsh, Yves Jacques, Louise Portal, Callum Keith Rennie, Macha Grenon, Michael Murphy, Gordon Pinsent, Jeff Seymour**, and **Tantoo Cardinal**.

Some savvy casting added a dose of authenticity by blending in a few real-life politicians in cameo roles, including Blaikie. While he's no stranger to the camera, *H2O* was Blaikie's first crack at a dramatic role outside of Parliament. Look for him playing a mourner seated behind the widow at the Prime Minister's funeral. The 25-year Parliamentary veteran says the shoot gave him new appreciation for how tedious and draining performing on a film shoot can be after showing up for a 9 a.m. call only to wait for his scene

“The script for *H2O* is provocative, political, challenging, threatening, rich and complicated.” – Leslie Hope

from both sides of the House, people from Federal and Provincial Cabinets as well as members of various security services.

NDP MP **Bill Blaikie** was one of those consulted. A long-time advocate on water protection and expert on trade issues, Blaikie was more than happy to oblige when Gross asked him to read the script and make sure it was politically sound. Blaikie says he was impressed with Gross and Krizanc's knowledge of the issues and accurate reflection of political life. “I did make a few suggestions, but the script was pretty politically tight.”

Blaikie says he was happy to contribute to a project that he thinks has some important real-life ramifications. “More movies about Canadian politics would be a good idea, people need to take an interest in politics and certain issues from my point of view – the water issue – is a dangerous rock lurking beneath the surface. I thought it was pretty timely. If not overdue.”

Nova Scotia-native **Leslie Hope** who plays a forensic investigator and Gross' love interest, has lived in the U.S. since she was 18. Well-known for her role on **24** as Teri Bauer, Hope has built a successful career in the U.S. while coming home to work in Canada at every opportunity. “The worst job in Canada finds me happier than most gigs here,” she says. However, Hope says that *H2O*'s story and that the fact that it is so “unapologetically Canadian,” made it a unique experience.

“I currently live in the States. The equivalent of this kind of show simply wouldn't get made here,” says Hope. “The script for *H2O* is provocative, political, challenging, threatening, rich and complicated. Paul and John posed the tough questions and posed

to be shot after 5 p.m. “It was a real eye-opener just how much waiting is involved,” said Blaikie.

ACTRA member and Liberal MP **Julian Reid** took on a speaking part as the Premier of B.C. Shot on the eve of Reed's retirement from politics, *H2O* served a nice segue back to his performing roots. Reed chose not to run again in the recent election – the stage called. “I was delighted to do it. Performing is my first love. Hopefully it will resume as an important part of my life.”

While he says he enjoyed seeing his two worlds collide, he says they were never actually that far apart. “It's all performing,” he joked. “Although I've often said that in politics the quality of the script declines immeasurably.”

Ottawa also has a starring role – as itself. *H2O* was shot 95% on location in Ottawa, and with a budget of \$8 million was the biggest production the city has ever seen. While the official residence of the British High Commissioner stood in for 24 Sussex, the Prime Minister's residence, many other notable Ottawa landmarks are featured including the Laurentian Club on Metcalfe Street, Notre Dame Basilica, and of course, Parliament Hill.

“My shooting days were spent mostly at the home of the British Ambassador, a lovely man with a beautiful wife and two very poised kids who let us into their house with all the disarray that a film shoot requires for a whole week,” says Henry. “They even gave us lunch one day – the whole sitting down at the table and being waited on.”

Gross was personally involved in the lobbying that resulted in



Guy Nadon



Martha Henry



Leslie Hope

All photos courtesy CBC Television.

“A lot of local people worked on the project and a lot of people got jobs, and gained incredible experience...” – Neil Bregman

the film gaining extensive, if not unprecedented access to Parliament Hill and the House of Commons – a feat especially impressive given the tightening of security on the Hill in recent years. Henry in particular, was impressed with Paul’s tenacity in skill for securing the locations. “As I understand it, we probably wouldn’t have been at most of the locations were it not for him,” she says.

Gross says he would have had it no other way.

“The story takes place in Ottawa and it seems loopy not to shoot there. Particularly since the city is beautiful and has rarely been photographed,” he says. “I know we more often than not shoot stories in locations other than where they’re set and the reasons for that are usually monetary. We were in a position that allowed us to actually make the movie where it was set and I think it gives it a look that is unique but more importantly everyone involved in the show was imbued 24 hours a day with things ‘Ottawa’ and that infuses the entire show with a concentrated understanding of purpose.”

Bregman admits that shooting in the city isn’t without its challenges. “We’re certainly the most bureaucratic town in the country. We have the federal government, the provincial government the National Capital Commission, two municipal governments, and two competing tax credit systems with Ontario and Québec,” says co-producer, Bregman.

Coming on the heels of the opening of the city’s new film commission last year, Bregman says *H2O* served as a major test case, and is big step forward for the burgeoning film community. He anticipates that the film’s impact will leverage even further support from the various levels of government. “It was an incredible demonstration to the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau and the NCC as to what the movie industry could bring to the city. I think when everyone sees it on TV it’s going to really drive home the point of ‘Hey, there’s Ottawa, there’s Gatineau, on National TV.’”

The opportunity to work on the big-budget drama will also

have a lasting impact on Ottawa’s crews and performers. “A lot of local people worked on the project and a lot of people got jobs, and gained incredible experience, and that includes me as a producer,” said Bregman. Already there are two more movies set to shoot in the city this fall.

Hope is quick to tip her hat to Gross and his tenacity for cutting the way through the red tape to tell more Canadian stories. She recalls a few years back when they had a long discussion about the state of Canadian television and what a desperate time he thought we were heading into as budgets were slashed and Canadian programming time shrank.

“Now Paul actually goes and does something about it. He charges the Hill, he writes letters, he passionately pleads and argues his case publicly and then he writes a great script that shows how it can be done. Paul shames me with his dedication.”

Hopefully films like *H2O* will serve to inspire even more storytellers, producers, and performers to fight the obstacles that still, unfortunately, stand in the way of telling Canadian stories. It’s a challenge, but it can be done. Or as Hope says, it *must* be done.

The question she is most frequently asked when she works here: “What’s it like coming back to Canada?”

“The irony to me is this question would never be asked of an American working on an American show. Americans generally feel entitled to be there and the fact that they are working in their country telling their stories is a given. Why don’t we feel the same way? Of course we work in Canada and tell our stories – what else should we be doing?”

It seems safe to say that Gross, for one, will keep working his way through the system. And he’d be happy to go back to Ottawa.

“The ground has been broken, the template has been laid. I think it would be easier next time,” he says.

Watch *H2O* on October 31 and November 1 on CBC.

NEW NATIONAL COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT

Negotiating the deal: A performer gets in on the act



by David Huband

*Over the summer, ACTRA members ratified Terms of Settlement for a renewed National Commercial Agreement by 96.65%. The new three-year agreement with the **Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA)** and the **Institute of Communications and Advertising (ICA)** was concluded before the expiry of the old agreement as a result of a swift resolution of the issues in sidebar negotiations with the support of the parties' respective negotiating committees.*

Full details on the NCA and the Local and Regional Addendum can be found at www.actra.ca/actra/control/feature2 or call your local branch.

*ACTRA member **David Huband** was one of the dedicated members who generously volunteered his time to participate in the negotiations. This is his story:*

The hundreds of television and radio commercials I have appeared in over the last 20 years have represented a large portion of my income as an actor. So needless to say, when ACTRA Toronto Performers President **Richard Hardacre** asked me to serve on the negotiating committee for the new commercial agreement, I had a vested interest in the proceedings.

First, let me explain something. I am not a logically thinking person. Logic does not exist in my persona so I was at a severe disadvantage coming into the process. Fortunately, our committee was well stocked with logical-thinking people sitting beside me.

Secondly, having done all those commercials, have I ever once looked up a clause or an article in the ACTRA Commercial Agreement? Nope. Never even opened it. So imagine my wonder when I actually did crack it open and

saw all these really neat articles and clauses and tables and stuff. This could be helpful, I thought.

“Having done all those commercials, have I ever once looked up a clause or an article in the ACTRA Commercial Agreement? Nope. Never opened it in 20 years.”

Nevertheless, I was ready to get my hands dirty and go face-to-face with those rascally producers. However, starting out, National President **Thor Bishopric**, National Executive Director **Stephen Waddell** and Toronto Performers Executive Director **Brian Topp** explained to the committee that the producers had expressed interest in sidebar negotiations instead of full-blown formal talks. I assumed this to mean lots of heavy drinking. Instead, I discovered that those three gentlemen, having been through the negotiating wars before, would meet privately with several members of the producers associations and report back. Our job, as working performers, was to target the issues that we felt were most important to our fellow members, and to prioritize them. And what issues they were: late payments, overall rate increases, call-back fees, internet use, back-ground issues. The producers even wanted to eliminate the SOC category. My illogical brain began to hurt.

Luckily, each of the 11 performers on the committee had passionate feelings about issues specific to their own experience. As a group, we eventually were able to target six or seven issues that we all

agreed were important to the membership as a whole and put them in an order of importance. In other words, which

issues would we fight to the death on and which issues would we be willing to be flexible on? We then passed our list on to our sidebar team and away they went to meet with the ACA/ICA negotiators.

What impressed me about this process was the level of preparation and knowledge of our ACTRA staff. They were always ready to clarify an issue or find a fact. Brian, **Judy Barefoot** (Manager, Commercial Production, ACTRA Toronto Performers), **Daintry Dalton**, (Assistant Branch Rep Commercials, ACTRA Montreal), and all the rest of the staff were invaluable.

As well, each of our committee members brought a special talent to the table. Thor Bishopric was a great chair for the committee. He cut to the chase and had an amazing ability to explain complex issues in understandable terms.

Insurance

Producers' contributions to insurance and the non-member equalization payments have been increased by 1% to keep pace with the increased cost of insurance.

NEW NATIONAL COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT

What was most amazing about Thor was his ability to carry on eight cell phone conversations, a Blackberry exchange, conference call, and live around-the-table discussions, all at the same time.

when work is already scarce. Still, it's a useful tool in negotiations and one that we can use when we are absolutely backed up against a wall – which we were. We informed the producers that

Money!

Performers are getting a 6% increase over three years.

...and more money!

Members told us they were concerned about the call-back process so we negotiated a doubling of the call-back fee from \$25 to \$50.

In order to address the fact that approximately 30% of session fees and residuals were being paid late, your committee got late fees doubled, from \$3 to \$6 a day for the first 30-day late period. They will increase from \$8 to \$10 a day thereafter.

Have you done commercials for the internet? Maybe you will now!

Advertisers are catching on to the internet as a relatively low cost way to get their messages across to an almost endless audience. ACTRA has negotiated some new provisions in the NCA that will see more money going to performers who appear in ads made specifically for the internet, or in broadcast ads that get carried over.

- If a producer wants to put an ad initially made for broadcast on the internet, they can do so for one year once the minimum session fee has been paid to the performer. They can run it for longer, so long as they re-contract you, and pay you at least the contracted session fee every year after.
- If a commercial is produced to run on television and the internet at the same time, an additional residual payment of at least 25% must be made for each year.

“Basically we got everything that we asked for. That’s pretty damn good.”

Richard Hardacre was a perfect vice-chair because of his quiet but assured diplomacy. He should consider a career in the Foreign Service. **Ian Finlay** from Montreal struck me as a grizzled veteran of the negotiating wars, and he would occasionally lift his head up from whatever document he was reading and say, “You do realize what this means, don’t you?” – prompting us to get into a heated discussion trying to figure out what the heck he meant. **David Sparrow** was always able to see the big picture or to take convoluted language and put it in simple easy to understand terms. **Lynn Mackenzie** asked penetrating technical questions. **Bart Bedford** brought much needed passion to the table. And the producers should be thankful that we didn’t go into full negotiations because if we had, **Angela Asher** would’ve ripped their throats out. Stephen Waddell was like a master chef. He had a fabulous recipe for us to follow. We did all the chopping and assembled all the ingredients, and then he would concoct a mouth-watering dish, which he then would serve to the producers. Sometimes they would choke on it, but eventually they swallowed it. Me, I tried to bring a little levity to the proceedings.

So, back and forth it went. We would submit proposals, the producers would submit their proposals, and we would come back with counter-proposals. At one point, it looked as if the producers would not continue the dialogue and we had to confront the dreaded strike issue. I say dreaded because the climate that our industry is in is currently precarious, and nobody wants to go out on strike

we would have to begin the process of asking our membership for a strike mandate. Miraculously, the producers were soon ready to continue the sidebar talks.

At one point we were very close to making a deal and we hoped that the producers would agree to settle. Unfortunately, they didn’t. Our committee was devastated. We thought for sure we would have to go into full-blown negotiations and sit across from each other, snarling meanly at the person opposite us. But then, lo and behold, the next day our committee was told that a deal was reachable. Our final proposal was submitted to the producers and they agreed to a deal.

I’m happy with the new National Commercial Agreement and I think everyone on our team is too. Heck, even the producers seem happy! We got an increase in engager contributions to insurance and equalization payments, a three-year term for the agreement, a 2% increase in overall rates, with a 2% increase to follow each year for three years, and a doubling of our call-back fees to \$50. There is tons more stuff, but basically we got everything that we asked for. That’s pretty damn good. There are still some issues that need to be addressed, but that’ll be for the next round of negotiations in three years.

I am glad I had the chance to be involved. While I am still not a logical thinker, I know a helluva lot more about NCA. I think every ACTRA member should take the time at some point in his or her career to serve on behalf of our membership and experience the negotiation process. It’s a trip. And a fun one at that.

NEW NATIONAL COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT

Explaining equalization: Big changes to insurance and retirement



by Karl Pruner

In the recent negotiation of the new National Commercial Agreement, ACTRA proposed, as it had successfully done in the IPA negotiations last May, that the engager contribution to insurance be increased by one point, giving members a 33% increase in insurance contributions (from 3% to 4%). The engagers' response was unprecedented, alarming and inappropriate. They attempted to use the NCA negotiation process to gain control over the allocation of equalization payments and to interfere with the long-standing agreement between ACTRA and Actra Fraternal Benefit Society (AFBS) on the use of such monies.

of the equalization payment monies have been and will continue to be allocated to AFBS because ACTRA continues to believe that it is a good use of the money.

In the end, the engagers recognized this and accepted an ACTRA proposal to have all insurance and retirement plan contributions, including the equalization payments, paid directly to ACTRA rather than to AFBS. When this proposal is implemented, AFBS will continue to manage members' insurance and retirement funds, just as they do now, and AFBS will also continue to receive 10 points of the equalization payments, just as they do now. In other words, there is no downside for AFBS.

“All ACTRA members stand to benefit from the improved security, increased administrative efficiency and better stewarding.”

Equalization payments are paid by engagers to ensure that the cost of engaging any non-member is the same as the cost of engaging an ACTRA member hence the term 'equalization payments'. They are monies generated by the union through its collective bargaining efforts and are unrelated to the insurance and retirement monies generated by the work of individual members. Hence the old term for these funds, 'non-member income'. Let's be clear about where these funds come from. The engagers did not wake up one day and volunteer to make equalization payments. Nor were these payments brought into being by any action of the AFBS, which, after all, has no voice at the bargaining table. The only reason equalization payments exist is that ACTRA has negotiated them into existence and 10%

There is a substantial upside, however, for all ACTRA members who stand to benefit from the improved security, increased administrative efficiency and better stewarding as a result. It is a happy ending to a weird episode and ACTRA members should feel good about it. The new National Commercial Agreement contains significant gains for members. We should celebrate.

– *Karl Pruner is the Chair of the ACTRA AFBS Working Group, currently in the research phase of its mandate to find out how AFBS works and report to ACTRA's National Council with recommendations for action where necessary. Members with unresolved questions about AFBS plans, policies and practices and those who have constructive suggestions for AFBS should contact the Working Group at afbsgroup@actra.ca.*

Insurance!

If you appear in an ad that airs in both Canada and the U.S., you'll be paid SAG residuals for the U.S. use. With this new NCA, ALL uses of a commercial in the U.S. (except for Canadian use that spills over to border cities) requires payment of SAG residuals. This is a big improvement over prior agreements that had performers being paid for U.S. use of commercials produced for both Canadian and U.S. use according to old Appendix A, Unit Weighting Table for U.S. Markets that has been deleted from the new NCA.

If you do ads that air in both Canada and the U.S. You'll be paid according to the NCA for ads broadcast in Canada and according to SAG residual rates for U.S. use.

AFBS Update!

ACTRA National Council appointed me to be your representative on the AFBS Board of Governors; I'm looking forward to tackling this challenging and important role. One of my first tasks will be to work with AFBS to help negotiate an agreement that will define how insurance, retirement and equalization payments will be managed and distributed, given the recent changes negotiated in the National Commercial Agreement.

I'll be keeping you updated on the results of these negotiations and other important AFBS news in a regular *InterACTRA* column. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns about AFBS, please don't hesitate to contact me at fdowney@actra.ca or through the National office at (416)489-1311 or 1-800-387-3516.

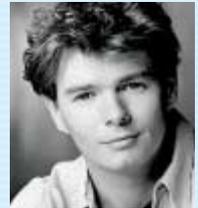
– Ferne Downey,
ACTRA National Treasurer

NEW NATIONAL COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT

Applaud your negotiating teams

The new Agreement would not have been possible without determined action on the part of ACTRA's National Commercial Agreement Negotiating Committee members and alternates: **Thor Bishopric**, Chair, **Richard Hardacre**, Vice-Chair, **Angela Asher**, **Bart Bedford**, **Ian Finlay**, **David Huband**, **Lynn Mackenzie**, **Rob Morton**, **David Sparrow**, **Howard Storey**, **Peggi Tilbenny**.

ACTRA Local and Regional Addendum negotiating team: **Howard Storey**, **Juanita Peters**, **Jeremy Webb**.



Thor Bishopric



Richard Hardacre



Angela Asher



Bart Bedford



Ian Finlay



David Huband



Lynn Mackenzie



Rob Morton



David Sparrow



Howard Storey



Peggi Tilbenny



Juanita Peters



Jeremy Webb

Call for Applications

The Women In the Director's Chair (WIDC) Workshop provides an opportunity for women filmmakers, actors and crew to develop their skills in fictional story-telling for screen in a safe, educational environment that simulates a traditional professional production and encourages exploration and the exchange of new ideas. Held at The Banff Centre, Alberta and led this year by acclaimed New Zealand filmmaker **Gaylene Preston** (*Perfect Strangers* with Sam Neill).



Female ACTRA members and apprentices with some directing experience are encouraged to apply for the Directing Ensemble. Some scholarships are available.

DIRECTOR DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 30, 2004

All ACTRA members and apprentices who are interested in volunteering their talents in scene studies and developing positive ways of working with directors are encouraged to apply for the Acting Ensemble. The 10 Acting Ensemble members each receive a full scholarship to attend plus \$75/workshop day honorarium.

ACTOR & CREW DEADLINE: OCTOBER 31, 2004

For more information and application forms go to:

www.creativewomenworkshops.com • www.banffcentre.ca/bnmi • www.actra.ca

Or contact Carol Whiteman, WIDC Producer, TOLL FREE: **1-877-913-0747** LOCAL T/F: **604-913-0747**
carol@creativewomenworkshops.com

PROGRAM DATES:

DECEMBER 3 to 6, 2004

Story Incubation Module (SIM for directors only)

JANUARY 20 to FEBRUARY 6, 2005

Prep, Production, Post Production Module
(PPPM for SIM participants, actors and crew)



THE BANFF CENTRE



This is the second in a series of articles exploring the Americanization of our airwaves as a result of the two national Canadian private broadcasters' culture-quashing addiction to profits and cheap U.S. programming.

Runaway broadcasters:

Here are your national private network choices for prime-time scripted Canadian drama and comedy this fall. There's not much, leaving you lots of time to pen those letters to the CRTC to demand that they pump up their requirements for broadcasters to invest in and schedule Canadian programming...

	CTV	GLOBAL
60 min. drama	Eleventh Hour (winter) Cold Squad	Diddly
30 min. drama	Robson Arms (winter) Degrassi: TNG Instant Star (winter)	Squat
30 min. comedy	Corner Gas	Zilch



Courtesy CTV

Megan Follows and **Mark McKinney** on the set of *Robson Arms*.



Courtesy CTV

Alexz Johnson in *Instant Star*.

When Canada's jet-lagged private broadcasters stumbled off the red-eye from L.A. to Toronto last May, their suitcases were bursting with \$200 million worth of U.S. programming. That might sound like a lot of money, but it's just spare change in the pockets of private broadcasters who are making more money than ever. Not only did they double their profits in 2003, Statistics Canada recently reported that last year's TV revenues surpassed \$5 billion. This was a leap of 10.6% for conventional commercial broadcasters – attributed to the domination of U.S. programming in prime time. Besides, every dollar spent in L.A. can be written off as an investment to make even more money from their fall schedules.

It does seem rather silly though when you imagine the execs from Global and CTV down in L.A. gleefully outbidding

4% and 9% of their programming budgets on foreign programming while broadcasters in English Canada spend 32% on programs produced outside the country. They're also cheating out on the little Canadian programming that is being made, covering on average, just 18.4% of a program's production costs. Compare that to the U.S. where licence fees typically cover 81% of production costs. Even in the U.K. and Australia broadcasters pay between 70-115% and 30-85% of the costs respectively.

Perhaps this helps to explain the sad state of Canadian drama. In 2000, 16 of the top 20 shows in Australia were produced in Australia, meanwhile in Canada, only six of the top 20 shows in 2002/03 were Canadian. While one of the six was the *Trudeau* mini-series, four were *NHL* hockey games and one was the *Grey Cup*.

Imagine the tremendous impact it would

Canadian broadcasters spend more of their programming budgets on foreign content than any other country surveyed, and the least amount on their own indigenous programming

each other, inflating the prices on U.S. products that would undoubtedly get dumped here anyway. It's not as if the U.S. producers need to make millions from Canadian broadcasters, their costs have already been recouped by their own networks. Indeed, the bigwigs in L.A. must be high-fiving each other when they see the all-too-eager Canadian broadcasters drooling over sitcoms and reality shows.

A recent study revealed that Canadian broadcasters spend more of their programming budgets on foreign content than any other country surveyed, and the least amount on their own indigenous programming. British, American and Australian broadcasters spend between

have on Canadian programming if private broadcasters doubled their licence fees (and with their record profits, they'd have a hard time making the case that they couldn't afford it). Countless hours of original programming to tell more Canadian stories and create thousands of jobs for creators and performers. Heck, with decent budgets, Canadian projects would finally have a fair shake at finding audiences. All this and Canadian broadcasters would be paying some of the lowest licence fees in the world.

So what does \$200 million buy you in U.S. programming? Well in its giddy release, CTV espoused its new plan of 52-week 'seasonless' TV calendar, offering

Canadian (dis)content

by Joanne Deer

fewer repeats and new shows year-round. CTV says its offering you the “deepest, most diverse line-up in television” this fall. A depressing statement considering that every night of the week on CTV you can tune into one of seven flavours of *Law and Orders* or *CSIs*. Great if you’re a fan of the shows. Not so great say, if you’d like some variety. Or some Canadian drama.

and two new 30-minute Canadian dramas, *Robson Arms* and *Instant Star*, the network failed to make space for them in their U.S.-dominated fall line-up. One explanation is that Canada’s convoluted and precarious funding structure, means that the productions won’t be ready for fall. Another – some might say cynical – explanation is that CTV is holding back the Canadian

This fall CTV’s “commitment to Canadian programming” boils down to two hours’ worth of Canadian, scripted programming composed of *Cold Squad*, *Degrassi: TNG* and *Corner Gas*.

In addition to *CSI: New York* and *Law and Order: Trial By Jury*, CTV’s new L.A. purchases this year include dramas like *Dr. Vegas*, *Desperate Housewives*, *Athens*, *Kevin Hill*, *Grey’s Anatomy*, *Medium*, comedies including *Commando Nanny*, *Veronica Mars*, and several reality shows – *The Benefactor* and *Wife Swap*. CTV also picked up a number of other programs including the reality gems *Pimp My Ride* and *The Casino* a few months earlier in time for the summer season.

Remember, these are just the NEW shows that will round out a CTV schedule already bursting with U.S. programming such as the other *Law and Orders*, and *CSI*’s along with *ER*, *The West Wing*, *Nip/Tuck*, *Cold Case*, *Third Watch* and *The O.C.*

In its launch announcement, CTV claimed that the new schedule “re-confirms CTV’s overall commitment to Canadian programming.” This fall that ‘commitment’ boils down to two hours’ worth of Canadian, scripted programming composed of one dramatic series, *Cold Squad*, and two 30-minute series *Degrassi: TNG* and *Corner Gas*. While the network is promising the return of the hour-long series *Eleventh Hour*

shows as winter ‘filler’ when some of their multi-million dollar American purchases inevitably flop. Whatever the case, thanks to CRTC’s 1999 Television Policy, this is all a-okay. Broadcasters don’t need to offer Canadian content throughout the year. Instead they are free to just cram it in wherever it fits in, saving the big-money schedule slots for imported programs.

CTV has made a significant commitment to MOWs and mini-series with a slate of 13 specials including *Lives of the Saints*, *Endgame in Kosovo: The Louise Arbour Story*, *Crazy Canucks* and *Choice: The Henry Morgentaler Story*. Economically speaking, it’s not hard to see why CTV is sinking the bulk of its Canadian commitment into one-offs; they’re low-risk investments that don’t require a long-term scheduling obligation. While MOWs are certainly a great way to share stories of Canadian icons and nationally significant events, it is only through a regular, consistent dramatic series that talent can develop and allow viewers to connect to stories and characters, developing a loyal audience and a cultural consciousness.

While CTV’s L.A. shopping goodies won’t do anything to thwart the Americanization (continued on page 17)

Public Viewing

The CBC’s 2004/2005 schedule is heavy with specials, MOWs and comedy, but light on new and scripted series. While it’s bringing back *This is Wonderland* and the venerable *Da Vinci’s Inquest*, the CBC isn’t offering anything new by way of hour-long dramatic series. Although, in addition to its stable of solid comedies – *The Newsroom*, *The Red Green Show*, *Rick Mercer’s Monday Report*, *Royal Canadian Air Farce*, and *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* – it’s taking a stab at a new sitcom, *Ciao Bella*, a half-hour series about life in Montreal’s Little Italy. It’s also premiering *What’s it Like Being Alone*, a spooky new stop-motion animated series about kids stuck in a creepy orphanage. Canadian MOWs and mini-series include another set of *Beachcombers* and *North of 60* MOWs, and mini series such as *H2O* and *Il Duce Canadese*.

Proving that it is not immune to the lure of cheap-non-scripted programming, CBC is commissioning a number of reality-esque series including *Making the Cut* which blends reality TV with that other Canadian obsession, hockey. And wait, what’s that – *Lord of the Rings*? *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*? The network hasn’t wasted any time in jumping on the CRTC’s recent decision to allow the CBC to air foreign films.

The thin line-up of new and returning dramatic series and the appearance of American blockbusters in the CBC’s schedule are disappointing to say the least. Considering it is mandated to be dominantly and distinctly Canadian – and given that our private broadcasters are letting us down so royally – our national public broadcaster should be doing more.



Courtesy CBC Television

Claudia Ferri, the star of the new CBC series, *Ciao Bella*.

STOOD UP BY STURSBERG!

The tale of a Canadian actor ditched for lunch by Telefilm's Executive Director

ON July 21 I had a scheduled lunch date with **Richard Stursberg**, the alleged 'visionary' director of Telefilm. I planned to spend the meeting telling him his new deal with Hollywood power agent **Creative Artists Agency (CAA)** was offensive to actors. Hair straightened, teeth flossed, I worked on my approach... attempt to sway him through charm or just bite his head off? Then the phone rang. His assistant said 'Richard' had to cancel. I was being ditched. And what pray tell could be more important than lunch with me, I asked? "He's no longer with Telefilm". Wow, that was easy I thought, mission accomplished. But then she delivered more ominous news: in mere hours he was to be named Executive Vice-President, English Television at the CBC. Yikes!

Telefilm Board. According to Stursberg, Telefilm will pay CAA a \$10,000 per month retainer for a trial period of one year while the agency hunts for projects and talent. Funny thing is, producers don't need Telefilm to access Hollywood, and they never have. Stursberg said the overall objective of the new Telefilm policy is to "get more people watching English-Canadian films... more attention will be given to products that appeal to audiences," and as he said recently in Banff, "no more depressed or dead people... fewer artistic or intellectual films." Telefilm now demands producers prove their film can make at least \$1 million at the box office. Thus the first question a producer hears upon presenting a project to Telefilm's adjudicating committee is: who is your American star?



by
Christie
MacFadyen

films and we would never have a star system here and he didn't understand what the

opposition from ACTRA was all about. And off he went to the awards-show.

My next move was to write him a big letter and I handed it to him in person at the **Banff Television Festival**. He remembered me from the Genies (hey – he recognized a Canadian actor!) and said that since I was such a brave girl he would take me out to lunch. Wasn't that... um, nice? Until he bailed on me. I like to think it was the contents of my letter that persuaded him that he had steered Telefilm so wrong, that he had no choice but to flee before

EVERYONE IN OUR INDUSTRY IS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT TELEFILM'S CULTURAL POLICY AND IT'S IMPLICATIONS

Last May, a mysterious leak revealed that Stursberg had made a deal with CAA to package L.A.-based talent for Canadian films. The revelation was a kick in the teeth to many who work in Canada's film and TV industry. Agents were insulted, writers opposed, but more than anyone else actors who live and work in Canada were deeply offended at the implication that producers had to head south to find 'real' talent to tell Canadian stories. This was just one more in a string of insults that had come out of Telefilm since Stursberg took the reigns two years ago and put the agency on a war path to commercialization and increased audiences.

This contract with CAA was made in secret without consulting industry stakeholders (like ACTRA), and without the approval of the Steering Committee for the Canadian Feature Film Fund or the

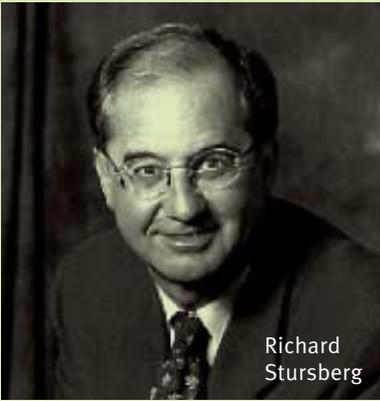
Don't you find that a strange question coming from a Canadian cultural organization supported by public funds?

As luck would have it, I was still fuming from the news of the Telefilm/CAA deal, when I found myself distracted by the gleam of Mr. Stursberg's shiny forehead from across the room at the **Genie Awards** pre-show cocktail party. I wondered how I could get the nerve to ask him why, when it came to actual filmmaking as opposed to party glad-handing, he could ignore all the talent in the room and invite American involvement in our industry when we are already drowning in American cultural product.

"Go on Christie, go get him!" cheered one actor after another. So I did. After listening to me make my case, Stursberg smiled and said that we needed Hollywood star power to get Canadians watching our

doing any more irreparable damage to our country's film policy.

With Stursberg in the driver's seat, Telefilm was heading down the wrong road. At first this CAA deal doesn't sound like such a bad idea – why not bring **Mike Myers** back home for a gig? Didn't someone think of that already? However, dig a little deeper into Telefilm's current policy on film and television – especially their attitude to Canadian actors – and the picture becomes more sinister. This CAA deal isn't about using more talented Canadian ex-pats in our films and co-productions, but more about using American stars. Need proof? **Being Julia**, the new production from Serendipity Point, was given more than \$3 million dollars from Telefilm Canada – a Hungary/England/Canada co-production that stars **Annette Bening** and **Jeremy Irons**. Where is our Canuck headliner?



Richard Stursberg

If Telefilm is so hyped on the notion that a star is imperative to a film's success, then why not invest in the marketability of Canadian actors? The idea of spending taxpayer's money on large foreign star salaries is chokingly grotesque and there is absolutely no economic proof that stars guarantee box office success anyway. Making movies is a crapshoot and always will be. English-Canadian film is enjoyed worldwide and we make great films that are not seen in Canada because the distributors don't distribute them, not because people don't like them.

Directors, producers, writers – everyone in our industry is deeply concerned about Telefilm's cultural policy and its implications. ACTRA has been working internationally with the International Network for Cultural Diversity (INCD) to protect culture in trade at the WTO. It is a stated objective of the Martin government to support this work but its ironic that our own agencies' policies would have the opposite effect. The main goal for the U.S. at those international trade talks is to make sure culture stays on the table because it is their number one export. That's big money. Once we fully open our door to the American Entertainment Empire it will be very difficult, no, it will be impossible, to close it.

By the way, if the CAA deal works out Telefilm is also planning to add this kind of 'flexibility' (a.k.a. 'Operation Big Name U.S. Stars') to Canadian television. Will Stursberg import this kind of thinking to his new position at the CBC?

If he'd like some advice about dramatic programming at the CBC I'm free for lunch next Thursday. Or maybe dinner would be better, then we can really get to know each other.

To read Christie's letter and Stursberg's response, go to www.actra.ca and click on 'Hot News'.

Runaway broadcasters

– continued from page 15

of our airwaves, if you're looking for U.S. sitcoms and reality escapism, 'Global's Got It'. But that's about all it's got.

Last year's lone dramatic series *Blue Murder* was cancelled, and in its place? Nothing, not one original one-hour Canadian scripted dramatic series. Instead, Global is bringing back the 30-minute low budget improvised soap *Train 48*. While that genre of programming has proven useful in generating audiences and driving the industry in other markets, it's just not meant to be the sum total of a network's commitment to indigenous programming. Global's schedule is a stark realization of the fact that CRTC regulations are now so flimsy that a broadcaster can meet the minimum obligations even without airing one original one-hour Canadian dramatic series.

a scientist convinced the end is near. He must have read this schedule!"

Stay tuned for the next installment in this series to see which – if any – of Global and CTV's U.S.-programming gambles pay off, and which will fall into the dustbin full of multi-million dollar losers. If it's anything like last year, when the failure rate for new dramatic series on the major networks was 100 per cent, CTV and Global will be left with some gaping holes in their schedules come mid-November. Just don't get attached to anything – if the U.S. audience doesn't respond to a show, it will get yanked. Remember, you don't matter – not as an artist and not even as a viewer. The only Canadians private broadcasters listen to are their shareholders since the lack of regulatory obligations to produce and schedule Canadian programming means

CRTC regulations are now so flimsy that a broadcaster can meet the minimum obligations even without airing one original one-hour Canadian dramatic series.

Scoring some points for honesty, Global is billing its fall schedule as 'Return to Reality'. That reality will consist of a slate of new shows including: *The Contender*, *Biggest Losers*, *The Good Life*, *The Partner*, *The Insider*, and *The Billionaire*.

There are a few new U.S. dramas including *Blind Justice*, *LAX*, *Hawaii*, *House*, *The Inside*, *Jonny Zero*, *The Jury*, *The Mountain*, and *Revelations*. Comedy-wise, it picked up *American Dad*, *Center of the Universe*, *Joey*, *Arrested Development*, and – wait for it – *Father of the Pride*, an animated comedy based on **Siegfried** and **Roy's** cats.

The *Toronto Star's* **Bill Brioux** summed up Global's schedule: "Revelations is about

that Canadian private broadcasters have no one else to answer to.

Wouldn't it be a better investment to rely on Canadian programming that broadcasters could schedule to suit themselves, programs that aren't shuffled around the schedule, yanked two episodes in or pre-empted for a Presidential address? Don't broadcasters want to control their own airwaves?

Ultimately, investing more in Canadian drama isn't a charity. It's an obligation in return for the privilege of owning a broadcasting licence, which increasingly has become a licence to print money. Investing more in indigenous drama is an investment in Canada's future, its talent and its sovereignty, its self-respect.

Election 2004: ACTRA speaks out for culture

by Ken Thompson, Director of Policy and Communications, ACTRA

ACTRA members were fierce combatants for the arts and culture during the federal election campaign. We led the debate and got in more than a few good punches, forcing political leaders to acknowledge the arts as a critical issue that Canadians care about.

ACTRA members across the country were particularly active throughout the election. Early on in the campaign we mailed a postcard to all members asking you to speak out and to ask your candidates how they stand on each of these crucial issues:

- Will your party keep the current limits to foreign ownership of Canadian airwaves to ensure that our broadcasting industry is controlled by Canadians, for Canadians?
- Will your party issue an order to the CRTC to review its 1999 television policy to impose both content and spending requirements on private broadcasters?
- Will your party restore federal tax laws allowing income averaging for performers and other artists?

Many of you answered the call and confronted politicians in town hall meetings, radio call-in shows, letters to the editor and on your doorsteps, telling them that Canadians are being drowned out by American culture and as a result, we are losing our jobs, our identity and our voices.

A country that doesn't value its culture is a country that in the end will mean nothing.

– Shirley Douglas

ACTRA also issued questionnaires to the political parties' national offices asking for answers to our three questions. Predictably, the NDP and Bloc Québécois were quick to go on the record in support of ACTRA's positions. The Liberals were slow to respond and again, were unclear about their stand on foreign ownership of broadcasting and telecommunications. The Conservatives never got it together to reply despite numerous reminders.



Steve Smith and Daryl Duke at the Banff news conference.

Artists were watching the debate, waiting to hear (politicians) talk about culture, but they didn't. Not one word. The politicians had their chance to tell their stories, but the rest of us in Canada, it seems we can't tell our stories.

– Sonja Smits



Some of Canada's biggest stars spoke out for culture at the ACTRA Toronto Performers news conference.

ACTRA muscled its way into a crowded media-scape through a number of proactive initiatives including press releases, our post-card campaign and a number of press conferences. Early in the campaign, a number of Québec unions and organizations held a press conference and graciously offered ACTRA National President **Thor Bishopric** the podium where he spoke eloquently and convincingly against foreign ownership.

Soon after, ACTRA National and its partners in the Coalition of Canadian Audio-Visual Unions took advantage of the captive audience at the Banff Television Festival and held a press confer-

I've never been a part of anything as important as this is now. We deserve to see the political roadmaps while they are on their election trails before they lead us down this path of no return.

– Gordon Pinsent

ence challenging the federal leaders to come out and address cultural issues in the leadership debate. **Gordon Pinsent**, fresh from accepting Banff's Award of Excellence the night before, took centre stage and spoke passionately about the joys – and challenges – of being an artist in Canada. He was joined at the podium by ACTRA's 2004 John Drainie Award recipient and broadcasting guru **Daryl Duke** and TV star **Steve Smith** who made powerful calls for keeping our airwaves Canadian, and added their voices to challenge politicians to stand up for culture.

Worried Canadian performers took to the stage last week to flush out political leaders to say something, anything, about where they stand on support for film, television and other cultural industries. They have a point. Culture is being ignored in this campaign and that is not acceptable for a sector that employs hundreds of thousands of Canadians.

– Editorial, Toronto Star, June 21, 2004

A major coup followed two days after the Banff press conference when ACTRA Toronto Performers pulled out all the stops and organized a star-packed event that brought actors and other artists out to the CBC's Barbara Frum Atrium in Toronto. That kind of star power was impossible to ignore, and the event was covered nationally on television, radio and in print. The event succeeded in forcing the leaders to talk about culture, and their plans for the arts (see **Richard Hardacre's** full report on page 20).

Finally, that busy week in mid-June was capped off by a press conference in Vancouver where **Chris Haddock**, the creator and executive producer of *Da Vinci's Inquest*, offered up a west coast volley with a press conference supported by UBCP/ACTRA.

ACTRA's success in this election campaign is the direct result of the actions of all its members. Thanks and congratulations go out to every one of you who participated in ACTRA events or who spoke out at any time to let politicians know that Canadians care about culture.

The election has already had a long-term impact on the cultural community by bringing together unions, guilds and producers associations to create a mega coalition, the Canadian Film & Television Industry Council (CFTIC). ACTRA's National President Thor Bishopric and ACTRA National Executive Director **Stephen Waddell** were instrumental in forming the mandate of CFTIC whose influence in the coming year will be brought to bear on the minority Liberal government.

A minority Liberal government, balanced by the NDP and Bloc Québécois – who both voiced strong support for ACTRA's cultural objectives during the election – means that Canadian artists have an opportunity to ensure that culture plays a prominent role on the national agenda. ACTRA and its partners will remain vocal – fighting moves to relax rules restricting foreign ownership of media, ensuring the CRTC is directed to review its 1999 Television Policy and giving artists a chance to earn a living in Canada by getting federal income tax-averaging rules reinstated.

I believe Canadian values are unique. I believe our government should stand behind those values. I believe that if we choose leaders who believe in Canadian stories, we choose leaders who believe in Canada.

– Mag Ruffman

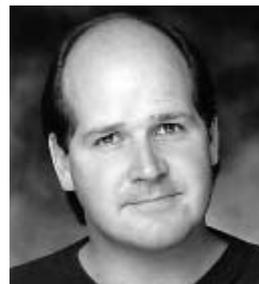
We are also buoyed by the appointment of **Liza Frulla** as the Minister of Canadian Heritage. Ms. Frulla has an impressive record on important cultural initiatives and has proven to be a great supporter of the arts. ACTRA met with her during last fall's Lobby Day in Ottawa and we were impressed by her knowledge of our industry's issues. We're optimistic that Ms. Frulla's appointment as a sign that this government is prepared to take cultural issues seriously and provide our industry with the support and investment it needs.

ACTRA is already working on securing meetings with the new heritage minister and several of her colleagues, including the ministers of Industry and Finance and their staff to make sure our issues are on their radars. A fall Lobby Day in Ottawa is also in the works where we will reach out not only to ministers and key Liberal MPs, but also the influential leaders and members of all opposition parties.

With a minority government, we have a great opportunity to forward our agenda and get more artist- and performer-friendly policies to work. Besides, the next election is already on the horizon in two years' time.

We must become ardent, articulate activists for our profession, our culture, our society and our country's future. Take a chunk of your freelance time and get involved with a party. Make sure the arts and artists and our issues are front and centre on their agenda. Get up! Get out! Get active! Don't wait until the next election is called to be ignored again. Get in your politicians faces now!

These are critical times and the opportunity to effect real change is here and now. It just needs you!



*In solidarity,
Bill Carr*

– ACTRA Maritimes member Bill Carr ran in the federal election as a candidate in Halifax West.

T O R O N T O

Actors get loud about arts during election

I welcome this opportunity to let you know what's been going on in the neck of the woods inhabited by the performers of ACTRA Toronto.

We are fortunate to be earning new loyalty from our members, giving them reasons to feel proud, whatever their stature or place in the tough journey that careers are made of in this craft of acting. Only a little while back we set out to give our members value in belonging with a few crucial but achievable initiatives: our new actors' gym – The Gordon Pinsent Studio; successful Members' Conferences; our new in-house training program; and in June, a star-studded media event during the election.

ACTRA Toronto put culture on the election agenda by hosting a news conference at the CBC Broadcasting Centre. Leading Canadian actors, writers and directors demanded that Canada's political parties speak out about arts and culture during the election and asked what steps their leaders would take to stop Canada's cultural integration into the U.S.

Gary Farmer and **Sonja Smits** graciously agreed to co-host a cast of many. Among those attending were **Nicholas Campbell**, **Wendy Crewson**, **Shirley Douglas**, **Ken Finkleman**, filmmaker **John Greyson**,



Wendy Crewson meets the media at the Toronto news conference.

Paul Gross, **Jessica Holmes**, **Peter Keleghan**, **Mimi Kuzyk**, **Rick Mercer**, **Sarah Polley**, **Leah Pinsent**, **Fiona Reid**, **Rick Roberts**, **Wayne Robson**, **Mag Ruffman**, **Polly Shannon**, novelist **Susan Swan**, **Tonya Lee Williams** and **Maurice Dean Wint**.

For their support, I am deeply grateful.

Our arts issues made the news. Reporters and voters took up the charge, and the party leaders were challenged on their arts policies. The media swarmed our gathering after the speaking to get further commentary. Coverage continued throughout the election.

ACTRA Toronto's political activity has started a groundswell for change, spearheading what has become one of our union's proudest endeavours – our national Campaign for Canadian Programming. Across the country actors have joined in. In less than 18 months ACTRA has galvanized itself into a real political force. We have become the leading voice among all the guilds, unions and associations of our industry pushing the agenda for an industry in which English-Canadian culture can thrive and in which we will see our own stories produced and performed by Canadians.

Members are getting involved in their union in other ways as well. Hundreds attended our successful Members' Conference in June that included workshops and a keynote address by Paul Gross titled *What's next for our industry?*

Also in June, **Gordon Pinsent** joined us to cut the ribbon opening ACTRA Toronto's new actors' studio named in his honour. Here, members can rehearse on-camera, or tape an audition.

In July, the Member Training Intensive got up and running, holding its first week-end-long course. Providing more professional development opportunities for our members, the course covers the business of being an actor, on-set and audition protocols, an overview of ACTRA's collective agreements and how our union works.

Canada's best-known performers are stepping forward to support our political action and hundreds are taking advantage of our



Gordon Pinsent and **Ferne Downey**, ACTRA National Treasurer, celebrate the opening of the Gordon Pinsent Studio.

professional development opportunities or taking part in celebrating our colleagues and our craft through our renewed ACTRA Awards. They have all lit a beacon showing us what we can be. If we continue this work, unifying ourselves across the country, ACTRA in our seventh decade will do many things. Our union will continue to play the major role in fostering the environment for an industry in which our members find real opportunity to prosper. We



will not just inspire our members – they will inspire us to be our best – a stronger and stronger ACTRA.

Richard Hardacre
President, ACTRA
Toronto Performers

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Collaboration over confrontation

“Get thee behind me grudges and bad blood. We are moving forward for the greater good of all performers, our union and the industry and the devil take the hindmost.”

The Executive Board of UBCP/ACTRA unanimously determined that getting work for our members would most likely be enhanced by effective and fruitful relationships with all industry partners. All performers, each branch and ACTRA National are industry partners and we have made great strides together in moving beyond the bad blood of the past into a time of fruitful collaboration. ‘Collaboration over confrontation’ has been our message and we have stayed on message almost

without exception. The result has been greatly improved relationships on all sides and kudos, almost daily, for this major sea change in approach.

We as performers could never afford to squander our opportunities and resources on internal bickering or regional alienation and it seems as though those days are behind us. If we work together in this manner, who knows what wonderment we can create. Although we compete with each other regionally, if we strategize closely together we can maximize our strengths rather than be played off against each other in our weaknesses.

We have taken the position of being completely open and transparent with our agreements and our initiatives and this has led to a more informed membership and community and encouraged other industry partners to respond more collaboratively to these challenging times. Due to falling revenues and rising costs, we find it necessary to make the hard choices leading to downsizing staff and office space. We are moving towards greater education and general awareness of our membership regarding the business, contracts and self-stewarding so

that we can become complaint-driven rather than members depending on the union to the degree we could once afford. This is a positive initiative in that an informed and more aware performer makes for a more collaborative professional. It will also result in less paperwork which means less administration and less of an 'aggravation factor' for the producers, as this was an issue for them at a recent consultation committee meeting.

On the national front, we are engaged in a side-by-side comparison of our agreements and an examination of buy-outs and residuals in order to more effectively plot our strategy for the next rounds of negotiations. We worked closely and effectively with performers from across the country on the recent National Commercial Agreement negotiations and are pleased to be in discussions with ACTRA National, AFBS and UBCP's plan, Member Benefits Trust, regarding the best benefits for the most performers on a sustainable basis.

On the home front, there is a new enthusiasm and vitality in the membership in response to the initiatives that this Executive Board is bringing forward.

Although the times are tough, our proactive approach to relationships and the commensurate ability to tell fact from fiction is encouraging the confidence and support we need to meet these rapidly changing times.

Kudos to all performers from across the country, who have joined us in fostering this new time of collaboration in ACTRA. I would particularly like to thank the ACTRA Calgary Council, who invited me to speak at their AGM; **Richard Hardacre** and ACTRA Toronto Performers for the warm welcome at their recent Members' Conference, and **Jeremy Webb** (ACTRA Maritimes President) in Halifax, where we successfully finalized the local and regional addendum to the National Commercial Agreement. This progress would not have been possible without the concern for the greater good demonstrated by **Thor**

Bishopric and **Stephen Waddell**, to whom we all owe a rousing vote of thanks.



*Howard Storey
President,
UBCP/ACTRA*

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applause



Tennant receives honours

ACTRA member **Veronica Tennant** is the winner of the 2004 Walter Carsen Prize for Excellence in the Performing Arts. The \$30,000 prize, administered and presented by the Canada Council for the Arts, recognizes the highest level of artistic excellence and distinguished career achievement by Canadian artists who have spent the major part of their career in Canada in dance, theatre or music.

WIDC Awards

Congratulations to **Mieko Ouchi** co-winner of the @Wallace Studios WIDC Alumnae Studio Location Award for her short film **Assembly**. Mieko will be shooting her short film in Toronto at the @Wallace Studios. **Veronica Tennant** was this year's winner of the WIDC Banff Television Festival Fellowship for her Rockie nominated film **Shadow Pleasures**. Veronica was awarded the inaugural @Wallace Studios Award last summer for the film.

LEO Awards shine spotlight on UBCP and John Juliani

The Leo Awards showered honours on **UBCP/ACTRA** at its Gala Awards Ceremony on May 29 in Vancouver, presenting the union with its Outstanding Achievement Award for a Group, Company, or Association.

Accepting the award on behalf of the Union, **Brenda Crichlow**, UBCP Secretary, remarked, "This symbolizes past accomplishments as well as present achievements. It is dedicated to all performers. It is indeed a tribute to all those who have come before us who demonstrated an unwavering commitment to performers' rights and to this business."

The Leos also bestowed **John Juliani** (1940-2003) with the Individual Award for Outstanding Achievement. The award was posthumously bestowed on Mr. Juliani and received by **Mrs. Donna Wong-Juliani**.

"There is a particular symmetry to these awards being bestowed upon UBCP and John Juliani in the same year," said **Howard Storey**, President of UBCP. "John was a founding member of the Leo Awards, and the UBCP were founding sponsors, so we are particularly pleased that we were honoured in this way."

Congratulations also go out to the many members who were nominated for Leos, and to the following who were honoured for their performances:

Barry Pepper, Male Lead, Feature-Length Drama, *The Snow Walker*

Gina Chiarelli, Female Lead, Feature-Length Drama, *See Grace Fly*

ACTRA at the Emmys

Montreal-native **William Shatner** took home an Emmy for his guest appearance on *The Practice*, edging out fellow ACTRA member **Matthew Perry** who was nominated for his guest role on *The West Wing*.

Kiefer Sutherland had two nominations, one for his performance as 24's Jack Bauer and the other for his role as co-executive producer of the series, which was up for Best Drama. Sutherland competed against fellow member **Victor Garber** who was nominated for his work in *Alias* as Agent Jack Bristow.



Donna Wong-Juliani and Alessandro Juliani and Brenda M. Crichlow, UBCP Secretary.

Michael Moriarty, Male Supporting performance, Feature-Length Drama, *Mob Princess*

Gabrielle Rose, Female Supporting performance, Feature-Length Drama, *Mob Princess*

Colin Cunningham, Guest performance, Dramatic Series, *Da Vinci's Inquest*

Zak Santiago Alam, Male Supporting performance, Dramatic Series, *Human Cargo*

Carly Pope, Female Supporting performance in a Dramatic Series, *The Collector*

Michael Shanks, Male Leading performance in a Dramatic Series, *Stargate SG-1*

Amanda Tapping, Female Lead performance in a Dramatic Series, *Stargate SG-1*

Tom Scholte, Male performance, Short Drama, *Exposures*

Kirsten Robek, Female performance, Short Drama, *The Watchers*

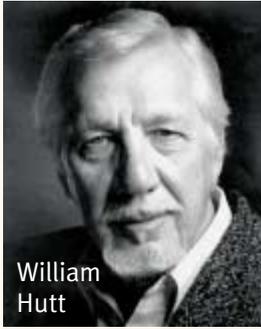
Vicki Gabereau, Host, Lifestyle Series, *Vicki Gabereau*

David Tarrant, Host, Lifestyle Series, *Spring – Spring English: Spring of Passion*

Roman Danylo, Performance, Music, Comedy, Variety Program or Series, *Western Alienation Comedy Hour*

Nominees **Jodelle Ferland** and **Brittney Wilson** celebrate at the Leo Awards. Both ACTRA members also recently attended the Young Artist Awards in L.A. as nominees.





William Hutt

Dora's adore ACTRA members

A number of ACTRA members were honoured for their performances in Toronto dance, theatre and opera at the 2004 Dora Mavor Awards. Members **Louise Pitre** and **Seán Cullen** hosted the special 25th anniversary gala in Toronto on June 28.

ACTRA Life Member **William Hutt** was this year's recipient of the Barbara Hamilton Memorial Award, presented annually to an individual who has demonstrated excellence and professionalism in the performing arts and **Alison Sealy Smith** received the The George Luscombe Award recognizing an individual for mentorship in theatre.

Congratulations to all of the nominees and the following ACTRA members who took home Doras:

Juan Chioran, Outstanding Performance in a Feature Role (Play or Musical), *The Producers*

Michael Therriault, Outstanding Performance by a Male in a Principal Role (Musical), *The Producers*

Jackie Richardson, Outstanding Performance by a Female in a Principal Role (Musical), *Cookin' at the Cookery*

Caroline Cave, Outstanding Performance by a Female in a Principal Role (Play), *The Syringa Tree*

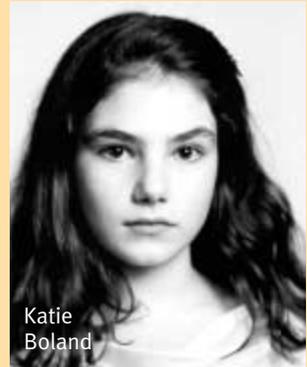
William Hutt, Outstanding Performance by a Male in a Principal Role (Play), *No Man's Land*

Michelle Polak, Outstanding Performance by a Female (Independent Theatre), *For Sale*

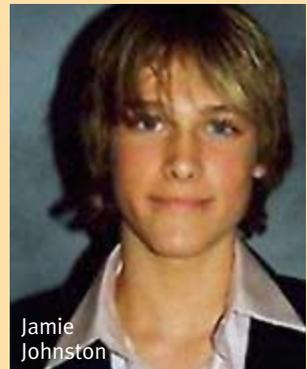
Andrew Moodie, Outstanding Performance (Young Audience), *Health Class*



Jackie Richardson



Katie Boland



Jamie Johnston

Supersize accolades for Peters

Maritimes Branch Councillor **Juanita Peters'** NFB documentary, **I Made a Vow** was nominated for two awards at the Yorkton Short Film & Video Festival. On top of a nomination for best political social film, the documentary was nominated for best location sound.

I Made a Vow explores the phenomenon of 'supersize' weddings in North Preston, Nova Scotia's oldest black community where weddings feature bridesmaids by the dozen.

Juanita's film traces one couple as they refine every detail of the wedding and try to suit up their 30-member wedding party.



Nelson Etienne Holland makes his debut

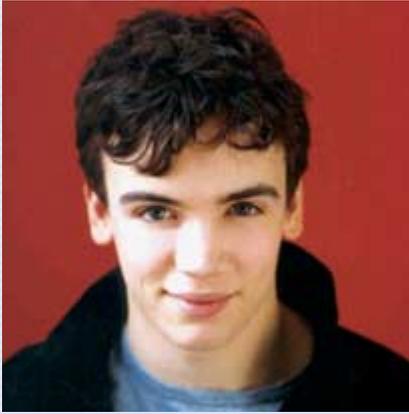
ACTRA Montreal President **Matt Holland** and **Margaret McBrearty** are celebrating the birth of their first child, **Nelson Etienne Holland**. Nelson made his debut on Monday, July 5, 2004 at 9 lbs., 1 oz. His proud father describes him as "a sunny young lad with a slight penchant for quiet introspection." Nelson's immediate plans are to control his fist enough to fit it in his mouth.

Young Artist Awards – Update!

Several ACTRA members were winners at this year's Young Artists Awards. **Katie Boland** won for her leading performance in *Salem Witch Trials*, **Jamie Johnston** for his supporting role in *More Than Meets the Eye: The Joan Brock Story*. As well, *Degrassi: The Next Generation* was honoured with the prize for Best Ensemble Cast. The annual awards were held in Hollywood this past May. ACTRA is extremely proud of all of these talented young nominees and winners!

Look out for...

Chris Kramer, **Rachelle Lefevre**, and **Ricky Mabe** were named by *Playback* as this year's hottest up and coming performers in their annual "Ten to Watch" list.



ANDRE NOBLE
1979-2004

Those of us fortunate enough to have known **Andre Noble** will treasure the memory of a gentle young man with a big heart and the warmest of smiles.

His hometown of Centreville, Bonavista Bay, Newfoundland, was overflowing on August 2 with hundreds of family, friends, and co-workers who gathered to celebrate his life. From right next door to half way across the country, we gathered in despair and, ultimately, in thanksgiving for his presence in our lives. Stories traded that day recalled him as a generous, nature-loving, lovable, loving friend with a blossoming talent.

Andre was a bright, committed, thoughtful actor with tremendous soul. While a student in theatre school, he landed the role of Issac Andrews in the top-rated CBC mini-series, **Random Passage**. After graduation he moved to Toronto, where his work flourished. His brief career included guest appearances on series television as well as feature roles in **Prom Queen**, and a memorable performance in the recently released film, **Sugar**.

While at home visiting his family and friends, Andre died tragically on July 30, 2004 after fatal exposure to a poisonous plant. He was predeceased by his Mom, **Maud (Rogers) Noble**, in 1999. He leaves his loving father **Bill, Wendy**, his brother **Shane**, and a tremendous circle of family and friends.

To commemorate Andre's life, his family is establishing a scholarship at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in Corner Brook, Newfoundland.

We miss him dearly.

– *Ruth Lawrence*
ACTRA National Councillor,
Newfoundland/Labrador



Courtesy: Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television

BRIAN LINEHAN 1943-2004

Canadian stage, screen and television lost one of its greatest champions this spring when **Brian Linehan** succumbed to cancer.

The number of viewers who tune in to celebrity talk shows is traditionally driven by the marquee lure of the scheduled guests. When viewers tuned in Linehan, it was Linehan they wanted to see. What would he ask his unsuspecting guest? What secrets, what long-forgotten memories had he unearthed this time?

In more than 2,000 interviews on TV series and specials, Brian Linehan became as famous as some of the stars he talked to. Some, like **Burt Reynolds**, came to him again and again for on-camera therapy; others, like **Shirley MacLaine**, happily made return visits to his **City Lights** set so he could continue to “tell me about my life.”

Linehan's use of television to promote Canadian artists was unprecedented. Canadian singers, dancers, actors, directors, filmmakers and authors experienced the same warm welcome, the same intensive research, the same probing questions that drew Hollywood stars like a magnet.

On his daily *City Lights* show he devoted specific weeks to interviews with actors appearing on stage at Stratford and Shaw, and entire weeks devoted to showcasing the rising stars of the National Ballet of Canada. Happily, the vast majority of these irreplaceable interviews now reside safely in the **Linehan Archive** of the Toronto International Film Festival Group's reference library.

Off-screen his life often resembled one

of the Hollywood melodramas he loved to watch as a child. One of seven children growing up in the shadow of the Ontario steel plant where his father and his brothers worked, he decided early on to make show business his business. After serving his apprenticeship in film exhibition and distribution, Linehan was hired as a programmer for Toronto's upstart City-TV. But his status changed dramatically when film director **Eric Till** came to the fledgling station to be interviewed and no reporter was available.

When movie-buff Linehan was summoned to save the station from embarrassment, he prepared for his first on-camera conversation by straightening his tie and brushing his teeth. The interview was a disaster and a humiliated Linehan begged Till to give him another chance. “And this time I promise to be prepared.” He was.

By the time he was 30 he had re-invented himself as a TV host who was wooed by every studio in Hollywood. His name was such a household word that, at fellow Hamiltonian **Martin Short's** request, Linehan sent his long-time pal screening cassettes of *City Lights* so Short could spoof him on **SCTV**.

A member of ACTRA for more than three decades, he was fiercely proud of his 1980 ‘Nelly’ award and displayed it prominently among his accolades. And when he died on June 4, 2004, of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, he was surrounded by friends from all walks of life who loved and admired him for the original he was.

– *George Anthony*

We share our sadness at the passing of the following colleagues:

George Balcaen
John Cavall
Victor Cowie
Susanna Friesen
Babs Gadbois

Paul Gubasta
John Hardy
Paul Latreille
Doris Malcolm
George Markos

Adrienne Pocock
Marie Schilder
Avery Schreiber
Michael Wade

FRANCES HYLAND

1928-2004

The voice of yet another Canadian cultural pioneer has been silenced with the death of **Frances Hyland**. The petite, Saskatchewan-born performer with the giant talent died in Toronto in July following appendix surgery.

Frannie, as she was known to friends, admiring colleagues and large numbers of appreciative fans, attained international renown in a career spanning more than 50 years. Following attendance at RADA, she interrupted a promising British career to answer **Tyrone Guthrie's** call to help our newly established **Stratford Festival**. She never looked back, providing brilliant portrayals of a wide range of Shakespearean characters – a definitive 'Ophelia', a sensitively innocent 'Desdemona', the raunchiest 'Doll Tearsheet' you will ever see, etching her mark on stage roles throughout Canada, as well as in numerous television, film and radio performances.

Frannie directed, as well as performed, at the Shaw and Stratford Festivals, and elsewhere, constantly deepening her expertise, mentoring by example. Her 'Rita Joe', in the original production of George Ryga's **The Ecstasy of Rita Joe**, at the Vancouver Playhouse in 1969, left audiences in awe of her abilities.

Frannie was an early Canadian cultural builder. Her reputation for excellence won numerous awards and recognition from her country and fellow Canadians, from the early days of television (when, as she recalled "We'd sweat like horses" from the "orange makeup [and] banks and banks" of hot, stifling kleig lights) – to her portrayal as 'Nanny Louisa' in *Road to Avonlea*.

She was an unapologetic nationalist, refusing to follow the Yankee dollar southward despite many opportunities.

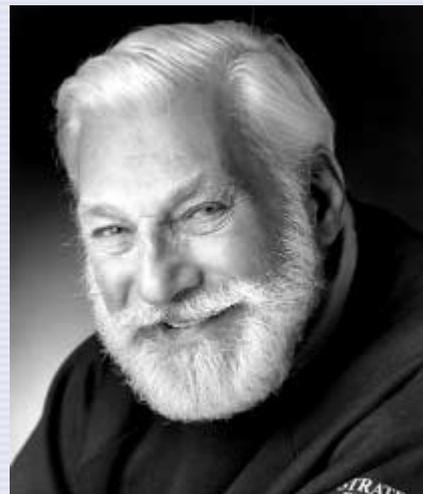


At the height of her success, she would judge over \$10,000 a good year. Like most Canadian performers, making ends meet and maintaining the integrity of her calling were paramount. She was a tireless champion for better performer compensation and respect.

Like the memory of her personality, shy smile and famed honey-whisky voice, Frannie's performances endure. At a recent Pal Place function (she was a first resident) an older gentleman interrupted to compliment "Miss Hyland" that her 1957 'Ophelia' was the finest ever experienced. In some detail he described her brilliance, adding how the recollection continues to provide pleasure so many years later. What a wonderful example of the enrichment actors spawn. How considerable her genius!

Her former husband, director **George McCowan**, died in 1995. Frannie leaves their son, **Evan**, his wife, **Anne Marie**, two grand children and one great granddaughter. A memorial service is planned for September at Pal Place Toronto.

– Dan MacDonald



MERVYN BLAKE

1907-2003

Born in Dehra Dun, India, **Mervyn 'Butch' Blake** graduated for London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in 1932 and made his professional stage debut the following year at the Embassy Theatre. He worked as an actor until he was commissioned to serve as a driver in WWII but returned to the stage at the war's end. From 1952-1955, he was a member of the **Stratford-upon-Avon Memorial Theatre Company** and in 1957 he emigrated with his family to join the Canadian Stratford, then in its fifth season. He remained with the festival for a record 42 consecutive seasons.

Mervyn's first role on the Stratford stage was the Marcellus in *Hamlet* and he went on to be one of only a few actors to have performed in every play written by Shakespeare. In total, he performed hundreds of roles on Stratford's stages.

When he was not in Stratford, Mr. Blake worked in TV and film and toured Canada and the U.S.A. for seven seasons with the Canadian Players. He made his mark on the Toronto theatre scene, winning the Dora Mavor Moore Award for Best Feature Performance in 1987, for **Saturday, Sunday** at the St. Lawrence Centre.

Mervyn was the first actor to be honoured with a seat in his name at all three Stratford Festival's theatres. He received the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal in 1978 and was invested as a Member of the Order of Canada in 1995.

Mervyn Blake was a guiding light and a role model for everything that theatre represents – passion for the stage and dedication to the craft.

Do we have money for you?

by Mercedes Watson,
Director, ACTRA Performers' Rights Society

Are you a Canadian recording artist? Have you ever recorded either as a solo artist, with a group or with a band? Are any of the songs that you recorded being heard on commercial radio? Have they received commercial radio airplay within the last four or five years?

If you've answered yes to any of these questions, then you should know more about Neighbouring Rights.

Along with pursuing payment for performers for continued use of audio-visual works, the ACTRA Performers' Rights Society (ACTRA PRS) also administers a form of copyright for performers known as a neighbouring right or equitable remuneration. What this means is that along with other rights holders such as composers and authors who have received payment from collecting societies such as SOCAN

for years, performers and makers/labels can now also receive money for use of their sound recordings, thanks to a 1997 change in the *Copyright Act*. And many performers have already been paid through ACTRA PRS!

What does this mean to you?

If you answered yes to any of the questions noted above, you may qualify for a share of the millions of dollars that are currently being collected and paid to performers for the use of their recorded work on commercial radio because of Tariff 1A – the Commercial Radio tariff – under the Copyright Act, and a variety of other tariffs.

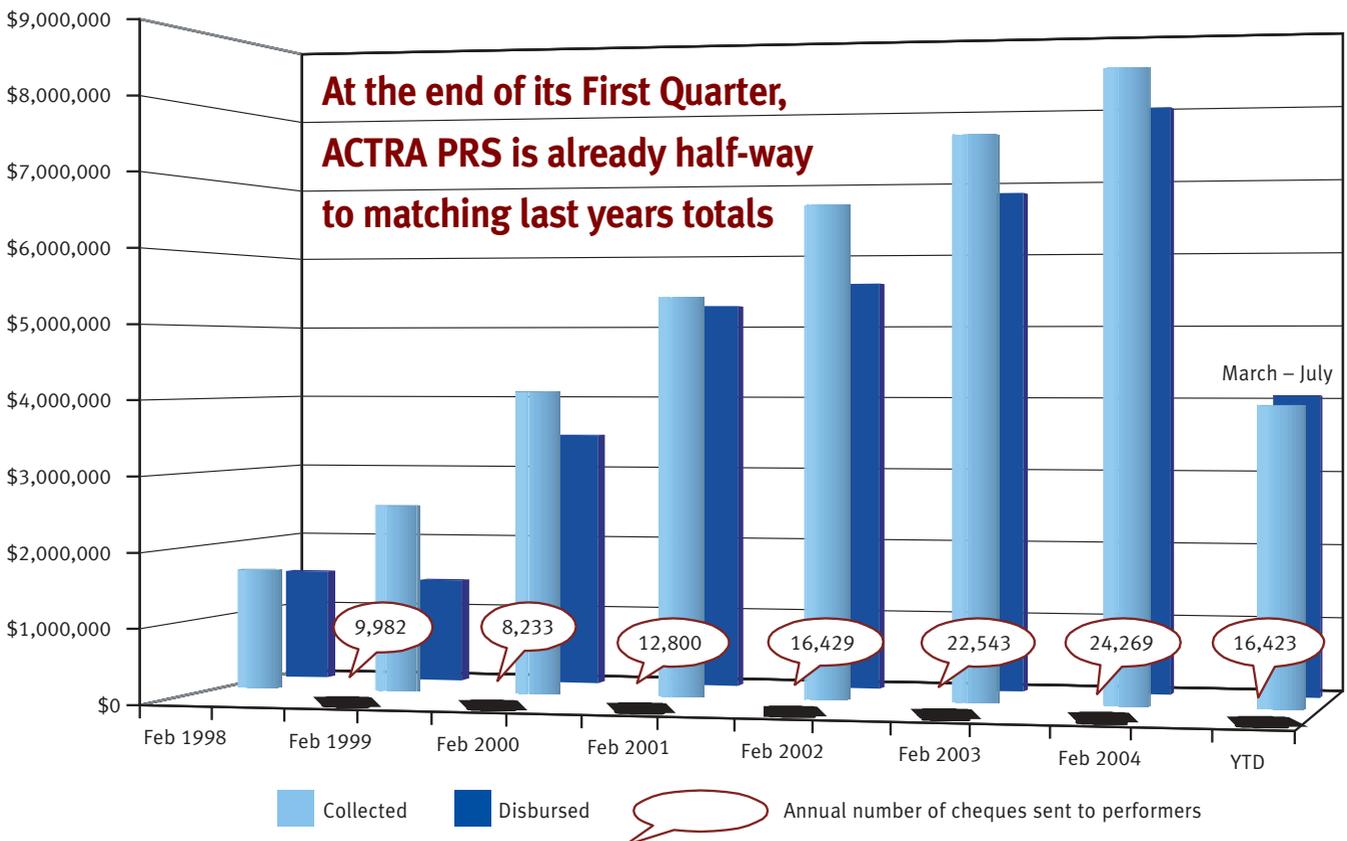
ACTRA PRS wants to keep sending money to eligible performers but we can only make payments to those recording artists who have chosen ACTRA PRS as

their collecting society. You can learn more about neighbouring rights and equitable remuneration by visiting the ACTRA website at www.actra.ca – go to the 'ACTRA PRS' section and learn what it means to be 'eligible'.

Even if you don't qualify, we are asking you to help spread the word to other recording artists by informing them about neighbouring rights and the need to assign their rights. If you or another eligible performer wishes to elect ACTRA PRS to administer these rights, all the forms can be downloaded from our website.

You can also call the ACTRA PRS at 416-489-1311 or 1-800-387-3516 ask for extension #5012 or e-mail us directly at prsnr@actra.ca. We'll answer your questions and arrange to mail a complete package to you on neighbouring rights.

ACTRA Performers' Rights Society Independent Production Agreements Audited Collections and Disbursements 1997-2004 (Fiscal Year: March – February)



Found on Face to Face Online! Face to Face, ACTRA's online talent catalogue, lets you market yourself to the world, for free! The stories below prove that you can make Face to Face work for you and use it spread the word of what you have to offer.

In January 2004, I received a call for my seven year-old daughter **Nicole Crimi** to audition for a short drama called **In The Stars** by **Michelle Daides**. She had several pages of dialogue that she learned very easily. We auditioned along with many other girls that all had the same look (long blonde hair, blue eyes). A few days later we got the call that she had booked the role of young Cassie. While on set filming, we were told that Nicole had been discovered as a result of her profile on Face to Face Online!



Nicole Crimi

Being on ACTRA's online directory was the first step that led to Nicole's booking and filming this fabulous role. Nicole had a wonderful time on set with an excellent cast and crew and got some very valuable experience. Thank you Face to Face Online!

– Sandra Crimi

My son, young actor **Derek Schnobb** was approached via email to audition for an ACTRA-approved spec commercial for Travelocity.ca by director **Bruce Lapointe**. Mr.



Derek Schnobb

Lapointe viewed Derek's portfolio on Face to Face Online and was extremely impressed with Derek's profile content. An opportunity to audition was set up through Derek's agent, **Cha Cha da Vinci** and Derek has a great experience.

Mr. Lapointe told us that for a director, a video clip is very important especially when searching online databases. As a result, we have since added video clips to Derek's online portfolio.

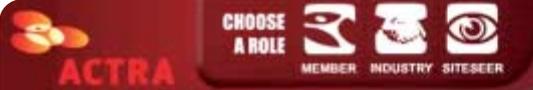
Thank you on behalf of Derek and his mom!

– Lisa Schnobb

Do you have a Face to Face Online success story you'd like to share? Please write to fff@actra.ca.

Did you know...?

Your agent can update your Face to Face profile. Just contact ACTRA and we'll give them access.



Putting a face to Face to Face Online!

Christine MacLeod is your connection to Face to Face at ACTRA National. She's here to answer any of your questions or help you set up your profile.

Give her a call at **1-800-387-3516** or **416-489-1311 EXT 4014** or drop her a line at fff@actra.ca.



Show your card and save your money

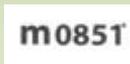
All ACTRA and UBCP members (Full, Apprentice and ACTRA Extras) are entitled to a number of **discounts** when you show your ACTRA or UBCP member card. For a full list of discounts and details on how to access these deals and more, pick up a copy of the benefits guide at your ACTRA branch, or download a copy from the members' section or the SiteSeer role at www.actra.ca. Questions? Contact Joanne Deer at interactra@actra.ca or 1-800-387-3516 EXT 4045.

Hotels – Participating hotels in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Hollywood. Check the Benefits Guide for full details and locations.

Concierge Connection – Get exclusive access to discounts on movies, theatre, attractions and more! Go to: www.conciergeconnection.com/members/index2.php, click on the "register" button on the left-hand side of the main page. You will then be prompted to a profile, you will also need to enter the special **MEMBER ID CODE: MAPCONC**. For more info, please contact Concierge Connection Inc. by phone at (416) 236-4985 or email at customerservice@conciergeconnection.com for more information.

Playback – Get a **25% discount** on one and two-year subscriptions to Playback: 1 year for \$52.50, 2 years for \$105.00 (including GST). Please contact Sidney Roberts at 416-408-2448 EXT 515 or go to www.playbackmag.com.

* Unfortunately the Cineplex Odeon program has been discontinued.



m0851 (Formerly Rugby North America) – One of Canada's finest retailers of leather products offer you **up to 30% off** regular-priced merchandise.

Visit m0851 in Toronto at 23 St. Thomas St. in Montréal at 3525 boul. St. Laurent or Vancouver at 429 Granville St. You can also visit them online: www.m0851.com.



Bell Mobility – Take advantage of special rates with Bell Mobility. With the plan, \$22.50/month gives you: 200 anytime minutes/month, free call display and voicemail, per second billing, \$0.20/min after 200 min., \$0.10/Canadian long distance, and NO connection charge.

Other plans are available, please ask for details when you call 1-866-548-2666 EXT 8020 or visit ANY Bell Mobility store, quoting plan number **100020530**. Existing Bell Mobility customers can also switch to this plan free of charge by calling 1-800-667-0123.



Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists

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AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ACTRA

We have audited the balance sheet of ACTRA National as at February 29, 2004 and the statements of operations and net assets 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 29, 2004 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
April 26, 2004

ACTRA NATIONAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2004

ACTRA NATIONAL BALANCE SHEET AS AT FEBRUARY 29, 2004

	2004	2003
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 900,288	\$ 433,892
Accounts receivable	281,847	370,439
Prepaid expenses and deposits	54,861	56,675
Due from ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch	993	32,648
Due from ACTRA Performers' Rights Society	2,773	174,778
	<u>1,240,762</u>	<u>1,068,432</u>
Furniture, equipment and software (note 3)	251,863	425,106
	<u>1,492,625</u>	<u>1,493,538</u>
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	403,114	481,183
Accrued vacation pay	35,428	30,208
Due to Branches	53,564	175,527
Due to U.B.C.P.	-	700
	<u>492,106</u>	<u>687,618</u>
NET ASSETS		
Extraordinary contingency fund (note 2)	2,383	2,383
Unappropriated surplus	746,273	378,431
Invested in furniture, equipment and software	251,863	425,106
	<u>1,000,519</u>	<u>805,920</u>
	<u>\$1,492,625</u>	<u>\$1,493,538</u>

Approved on behalf of the Board:

Thor Bishopric, Director
Thor Bishopric

M. Ferné Downey, Director
Ferne Downey

ACTRA NATIONAL

STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2004

	Invested in Furniture, Equipment and Software	Unappropriated Surplus	Extraordinary Contingency Fund	Total	
				2004	2003
Net Assets – at beginning of year	\$ 425,106	\$ 378,431	\$ 2,383	\$ 805,920	\$ 576,575
Excess of income over expenses	–	194,599	–	194,599	229,345
Purchase of furniture, equipment and software	64,202	(64,202)	–	–	–
Depreciation	(237,445)	237,445	–	–	–
Net Assets – at end of year	\$ 251,863	\$ 746,273	\$ 2,383	\$ 1,000,519	\$ 805,920

ACTRA NATIONAL

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

AS AT FEBRUARY 29, 2004

	2004	2003 (note 7)
Income		
Per capita – full members	\$3,106,025	\$ 3,017,350
Per capita – apprentice members	497,250	–
Information services	76,589	406,505
Equalization income	1,004,513	1,499,010
Interest income	12,258	6,018
	4,696,635	4,928,883
Expenses		
National council and executive (Schedule A)	122,995	139,362
National committees (Schedule B)	17,400	11,108
National executive director's office (Schedule C)	373,740	273,556
Bargaining and research (Schedule D)	413,244	547,723
Collective agreements (Schedule E)	265,368	168,109
Policy and communications (Schedule F)	537,951	295,494
Policy consultant (Schedule G)	58,236	83,925
External relations (Schedule H)	91,035	78,388
Finance, human resources and administration (Schedule I)	832,381	887,157
Information technology (Schedule J)	724,479	1,360,403
Occupancy (Schedule K)	357,739	361,503
GST expense	44,020	77,898
Transfer to ACTRA Performers' Rights Society	250,000	–
Transfer to Western Region	50,000	–
Apprentice member rebate	153,686	–
	4,292,274	4,284,626
Excess of income over expenses before transfer payments	404,361	644,257
Transfer payments to branches	(209,762)	(414,912)
Excess of income over expenses	\$ 194,599	\$ 229,345

ACTRA NATIONAL

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2004

	2004	2003
Cash flows from operating activities		
Cash receipts from members, nonmembers and producers	\$ 4,772,969	\$ 5,023,487
Cash paid for expenses	(4,335,626)	(4,508,565)
Interest received	12,258	6,018
	449,601	520,940
Cash flows from financing activity		
Advances from (repayments to) related organizations	80,997	(237,212)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of furniture, equipment and software	(64,202)	(103,662)
Proceeds from investments	–	200,000
	(64,202)	96,338
Change in cash during the year	466,396	380,066
Cash – at beginning of year	433,892	53,826
Cash – at end of year	\$ 900,288	\$ 433,892

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2004

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 have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles for nonprofit organizations.

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.

Furniture, Equipment and Software

Furniture, equipment and software 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 was financed through voluntary contributions of 5% of nonmember work permit income from the branches/local unions. Subsequent to the 2002 fiscal year, no additional contributions have been made to the fund.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian 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. FURNITURE, EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE

Details of furniture, equipment and software are as follows:

	Accumulated		Net Book Value	
	Cost	Depreciation	2004	2003
Computer equipment	\$708,412	\$590,040	\$118,372	\$260,240
Computer software	109,745	46,121	63,624	85,632
Furniture and fixtures	172,487	102,620	69,867	79,234
	\$990,644	\$738,781	\$251,863	\$425,106

Computer system development costs that relate to new functions are capitalized and amortized over five years. These costs are classified as computer software.

4. 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:

Fiscal year	2005	\$ 78,818
	2006	97,045
	2007	97,045
	2008	97,045
	2009	97,045
	2010-2011	199,540

In addition to the minimum rent, the Company is obligated to pay operating costs for its office space. The operating costs paid were approximately \$121,000 (2003 – \$136,000).

5. 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.

The fair value of these financial instruments, except for the advances to/from related companies, corresponds to their carrying value due to their short term maturity. The fair value of the advances to/from related companies is not readily determinable because of the related party nature of the balances.

6. CONTINGENCY

Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA), has ruled that certain revenue streams are not taxable. Consequently, previously claimed related input tax credits may not be deductible. This ruling is currently being appealed. In the event that the appeal is unsuccessful, input tax credits along with interest would become reimbursable to CCRA.

Neither the aggregate amount of input tax credits to be reimbursed and interest, nor the outcome of the appeal are determinable at this time.

7. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain 2003 comparative figures have been reclassified to conform with the financial statement presentation adopted for the current year.

ACTRA NATIONAL

SCHEDULE OF OPERATING EXPENSES

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2004

	2004	2003
National Council and Executive (<i>Schedule A</i>)		(note 7)
National Council		
Meeting costs	\$ 28,814	\$ 66,659
Councillor travel costs	19,509	–
Officer expenses	7,125	–
Senior staff expenses	4,672	–
	60,120	66,659
National executive		
Meeting costs	6,008	34,043
Officer expenses	4,971	–
Senior staff expenses	46	–
	11,025	34,043
Officers and senior staff meetings		
Meeting costs	710	–
Officer expenses	4,629	–
Senior staff expenses	4,589	–
	9,928	–
Honoraria	29,021	29,120
Officer expenses other	12,901	9,540
	\$122,995	\$139,362
National Committees (<i>Schedule B</i>)		
Political action committee	\$ 684	\$ –
Finance committee meetings	900	–
Women in the directors chair	10,000	10,000
PAL	5,000	–
Communications committee meetings	542	783
Discipline committee	274	325
	\$ 17,400	\$ 11,108
National Executive Director's Office (<i>Schedule C</i>)		
Salaries	\$285,817	\$194,041
RRSP	34,376	17,065
General benefits	23,107	29,315
	343,300	240,421
National executive director expenses	18,951	8,801
Western regional director expenses	5,900	14,952
Eastern regional director expenses	5,589	9,382
	\$373,740	\$273,556

	2004	2003
Bargaining and Research (Schedule D)		
Salaries	\$ 293,235	\$ 381,676
Maternity benefits	11,315	13,751
RRSP	17,993	34,130
General benefits	49,196	58,631
	371,739	488,188
Director expenses	4,692	-
Research materials	10,227	-
Organizing expenses	26,586	59,535
	\$ 413,244	\$ 547,723
Collective Agreement Negotiation and Administration (Schedule E)		
CBC		
Negotiations	\$ 4,252	\$ -
Officer expenses	1,557	-
Senior staff expenses	90	-
Administration	48	1,761
Legal	2,000	-
Editing	1,380	-
	9,327	1,761
Commercials		
Negotiations	-	18,130
Senior staff expenses	673	-
Administration	247	-
Legal	10,000	9,600
Printing	36,313	-
	47,233	27,730
IPA		
Negotiations	42,198	18,715
Officer expenses	6,358	-
Senior staff expenses	6,198	-
Administration	138	-
Legal	25,000	13,244
Conference fees	3,332	-
Printing	122,430	93,513
	205,654	125,472
Other		
Negotiations	-	13,146
Officer expenses	160	-
Senior staff expenses	940	-
Administration	54	-
Legal	2,000	-
	3,154	13,146
	\$ 265,368	\$ 168,109
Policy and Communications (Schedule F)		
Salaries	\$ 145,044	\$ 92,036
RRSP	10,973	7,964
General benefits	26,566	13,681
	182,583	113,681
Director expenses	14,765	-
Lobbying expenses	17,054	-
Coalitions	22,006	-
Presidents expenses	1,409	985
	55,234	985
InterACTRA News	65,458	86,309
Advertising	29,756	15,512
Sponsorships	24,852	27,032
Promotional materials	3,073	8,067
Administrative services	5,398	3,841
Publications	4,518	-
ACTRA awards	24,000	5,000
Communications advisor	8,802	82
Public relations officer's expenses	354	-
Face to Face marketing online	-	10,545
ACTRA website	-	20,224
	166,211	176,612
ACTRA 60th anniversary	133,923	4,216
	\$ 537,951	\$ 295,494
Policy Consultant (Schedule G)		
Advisor fees	\$ 50,000	\$ 61,250
Expenses	8,236	22,675
	\$ 58,236	\$ 83,925

	2004	2003
External Relations (Schedule H)		
FIA affiliation fees	\$ 35,264	\$ 30,271
CLC affiliation fees	21,578	20,883
Officer expenses		
FIA	4,607	-
FIANA	1,805	-
SAG/AFTRA	10,561	-
Senior staff expenses		
FIA	4,571	8,676
FIANA	1,291	1,390
SAG/WTO	11,358	16,599
Other	-	569
	\$ 91,035	\$ 78,388
Finance, Human Resources and Administration (Schedule I)		
Salaries	\$ 474,455	471,976
RRSP	43,367	44,367
General benefits	80,082	76,220
Temporary help	2,170	5,089
	600,074	597,652
National Director of Finance and Administration expenses		
Administration expenses	422	3,637
Printing	36,044	127,971
Referenda	-	22,775
Professional fees	5,377	4,095
Auditing fees	8,229	8,520
Legal fees	59,724	11,253
Staff conference	17,718	25,827
Staff recruitment	3,311	-
Staff training	5,605	2,374
Staff appreciation	2,580	-
Bank charges	8,297	8,053
Alliance debt reduction	85,000	75,000
	232,307	289,505
	\$ 832,381	\$ 887,157
Information Technology (Schedule J)		
Salaries	\$ 286,654	114,209
Maternity benefits	6,911	-
RRSP	21,633	10,239
General benefits	54,876	17,589
	370,074	142,037
Maintenance	4,422	7,546
Software	15,833	36,669
Hardware	2,297	5,892
Supplies	5,983	5,268
Network costs	53,607	83,103
Depreciation - computer equipment	42,392	39,857
Consulting fees	48,663	45,556
Webtrust audit	17,523	20,000
Depreciation - membership system	163,685	159,518
Training	-	19,338
Computer Systems Development		
Current membership maintenance	-	41,575
New membership system	-	617,504
Face to Face	-	101,848
IT administration	-	34,692
	\$ 724,479	\$ 1,360,403
Occupancy (Schedule K)		
Rent	\$ 200,084	\$ 215,521
Telephone	22,318	19,591
Insurance	15,597	13,305
Supplies and miscellaneous	9,690	9,092
Postage	22,693	19,306
Courier	18,778	18,523
Furniture and fixtures - repair	4,608	4,391
Equipment rental	23,975	23,724
Depreciation - furniture and fixtures	31,368	29,445
Western regional office expenses	8,628	8,605
	\$ 357,739	\$ 361,503

BANFF: An actor's view



by Heather Allin

The Banff Television Festival is northern Mecca for television buying, selling and the 'who's who' of the industry. Now in its 25th year, the festival is a hubbub of international producers trying to meet and sell to broadcasters worldwide. It's a place dominated with 'taking a meeting' and grabbing a cup of coffee, pitching and pitching again. Even so, by mid-week a small but vocal contingent from ACTRA had successfully turned conversations to the federal election, speculation about the parties' policies on culture, the need to strengthen our industry, and keeping ownership of our broadcasting Canadian.

Working the festival from beginning to end, we attend a myriad of meetings with industry colleagues and top-level decision-makers including Telefilm, the Heritage Minister, and the CRTC. On Monday morning, we joined with our partners in the **CCAU** (Canadian Coalition of Audio Visual Unions) to hold a press conference imploring the political parties to address culture in their election platforms. **Daryl Duke, Gordon Pinsent** and **Steve Smith** spoke eloquently about the current crisis of Canadian programming and the need to have our

cultural diversity represented on our TV screens. Steve Smith summarized it best: "We can't be ourselves if we can't see ourselves." That press conference, combined with the unprecedented star-power of two others held in Toronto and Vancouver, scooped much of the festival's media coverage and became the buzz of the festival

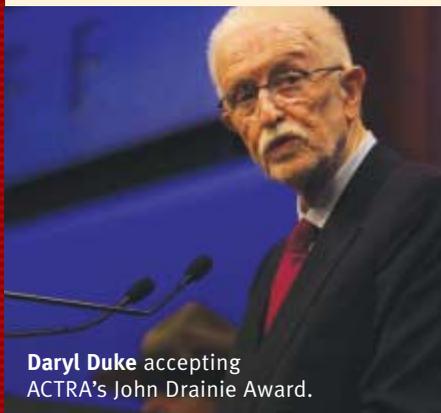
Our wily contingent constantly maneuvered drama onto the festival agenda. When CRTC chair **Charles Dalfen** commented during the CRTC breakfast that drama is a burden to broadcasters and that we needed more time to see the results of the regulator's policies, I challenged him. I pointed out that if we sit back and wait to see whether the CRTC's rules are working, Canadian drama could slide into extinction. He shrugged and walked away. The CAB (Canadian Association of Broadcasters) also tried to dodge the drama crisis by dedicating their luncheon to talk of international trade agreements. That didn't stop us from asking questions on drama policy during the Q&A periods while looking out for allies and potential converts. I even recruited **Chris Haddock**, executive producer of **DaVinci's Inquest**,

to our drama campaign at the official opening ceremonies.

In addition to the schmoozing and the politicking, Banff is also a place of celebration. We were proud to cheer on our own Gordon Pinsent at Sunday night's Rockie Awards where he was presented with the Banff Television Festival's **Award of Excellence**, a prestigious accolade acknowledging an exceptional body of work. At Monday morning's **Tribute to Canada**, hosted by Steve Smith, Gordon returned to the stage to present **ACTRA's John Drainie Award** for excellence in Canadian broadcasting to Daryl Duke. Daryl's Emmy-Award-winning career spans a wide range of accomplishments in film and television, including directing **The Thorn Birds** and founding Vancouver's **CKVU-TV**.

It was a busy week, and a successful one in which ACTRA made many important connections and great strides in promoting our members and our goals for strengthening our industry.

Performers in Banff: Howard Storey, Gordon Pinsent, Heather Allin, Thor Bishopric and Christie MacFadyen.



Daryl Duke accepting ACTRA's John Drainie Award.

Courtesy of the Banff Television Foundation



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ACTRA
www.actra.ca