



I N T E R

FALL 2007

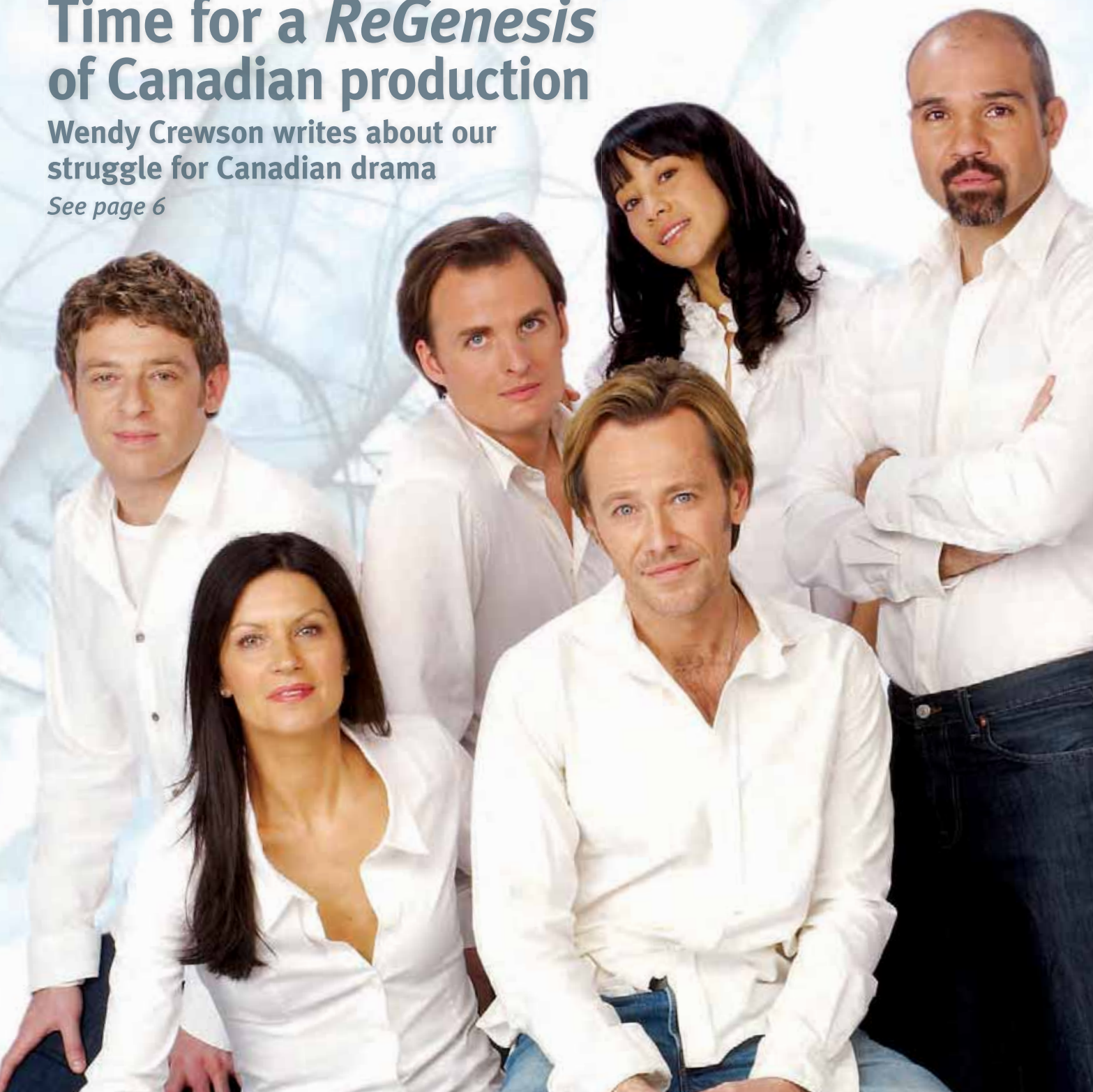
ACTRA

The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists

Time for a *ReGenesis* of Canadian production

Wendy Crewson writes about our
struggle for Canadian drama

See page 6



So, what's new? by Anna Falsetta

As of August 2007, ACTRA's online marketing tool, *Face to Face (F2F)*, will make it easier for you to identify yourself if you are a visible minority performer.

You will have the choice not only to tell us what roles you can play, but you'll also get the chance to **tell us who you are!**

F2F has added fields in the ethnic background and disability sections. These new fields are in response to requests from producers and industry professionals. They were seeking a way to differentiate "who you are" from "who you feel you can play."

The new fields will give producers, directors and industry professionals the opportunity to create accurate and specific talent searches that are not available anywhere else.

These new improvements to *F2F* support our membership by helping to create a strong and inclusive Canadian film industry by creating more work opportunities for all our members.

Once you're on the ACTRA website, access your profile and choose "Self Identify" then – **tell us who you are!**

This information is only available to ACTRA-approved industry partners.

Questions about Face to Face? Contact **Anna Stefosis** at ftf@actra.ca

In production: ACTRA Toronto Entertainment Credit Union



Hi! My name is **Steve Mumford**, and after nearly 30 years of working in the financial services sector, I'm thrilled to join the ACTRA family as CEO of *ACTRA Toronto Entertainment Credit Union*.

A tremendous amount of work has been done during the past year, as we build a financial institution that will provide full financial services to

entertainment professionals and their families. You'll be hearing much more exciting news from us over the coming weeks, so stay tuned! In the mean time, if you have any questions please e-mail me at smumford@actrotoronto.com or call me at **(416) 642-6751**.

Please welcome our new Public Policy and Communications Director



ACTRA National Executive Director **Stephen Waddell** announces the appointment of **Kim Hume** as ACTRA's Director, Public Policy and Communications. Kim will oversee all of ACTRA National's public policy and communications initiatives. Kim has been with ACTRA for six years, starting first with ACTRA National, and

since 2003, with ACTRA Toronto as Public Relations Officer. Kim brings a wealth of experience in communications, organizing, and lobbying to her new position, along with extensive involvement in arts advocacy and the union movement. Please join me in welcoming Kim to her new position.

Great news!

The Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC) has just launched a website for self-employed actors, craftspeople, dancers, filmmakers, musicians, new media content creators, visual artists, and writers. Check out some great info written by artists for artists on how to further your career at www.culturalhrc.ca/amyc. For more information contact **Megan Guy** at **613-562-1535 ext 31** or at mguy@culturalhrc.ca.

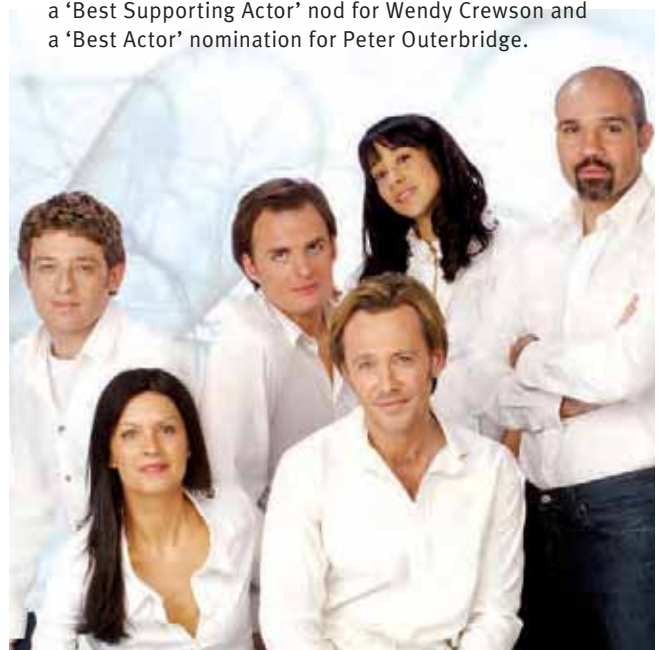
On the cover

Cast of *ReGenesis*: (front row) **Wendy Crewson** as 'Rachel Woods' and **Peter Outerbridge** as 'David Sandström'; (back row) **Dmitry Chepovetsky** as 'Bob Melnikov,' **Greg Bryk** as 'Wes Field,' **Mayko Nguyen** as 'Mayko Tran' and **Conrad Pla** as 'Carlos Serrano.'

The internationally successful one-hour drama series *ReGenesis* centres on David Sandström (Peter Outerbridge), and his team of top scientists at NorBAC (North American Biotechnology Advisory Commission) who find themselves caught in a number of controversial and challenging biotech dilemmas. This group of highly specialized experts work to unravel worldwide threats involving deadly new strains of disease, super-bacteria and bio-terrorism that, if left unchecked, could wreak havoc on a global scale.

Produced by Shaftesbury Films, *ReGenesis* airs in 13 languages in more than 100 countries worldwide. In Canada, the series airs on The Movie Network, Movie Central and Showcase. Season four is currently in production.

ReGenesis is nominated for 12 Gemini awards including a 'Best Supporting Actor' nod for Wendy Crewson and a 'Best Actor' nomination for Peter Outerbridge.



Letters

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

Calling all scribes!

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

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.



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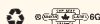
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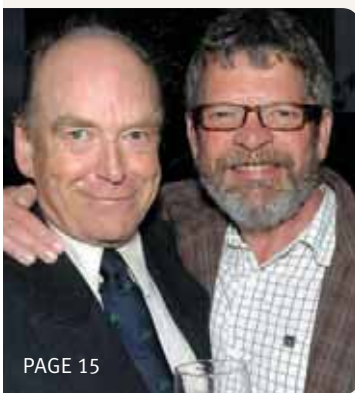
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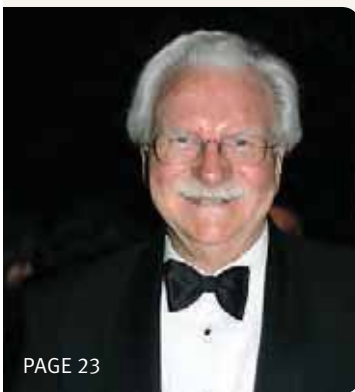
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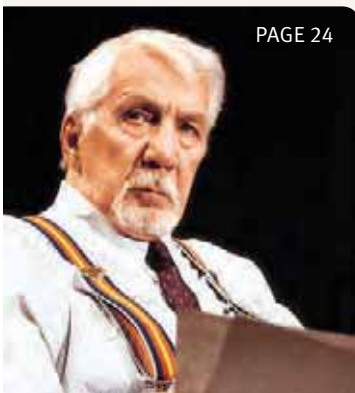
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Meet the new boss, same as the old boss

Won't Get Fooled Again – Pete Townshend, The Who, 1971

Well friends, there's a new boss in the office of Canadian Heritage in Ottawa, the fifth Minister we have seen in the past seven years.

Canada's new Minister of Heritage is Josée Verner. She is also the MP representing a fair-sized citizenry of Québec City. Madame Verner has solid political experience as both a Québécoise and a federalist. One must assume she cares about culture; she has been Minister of la Francophonie up until now. And, as one of the more socially progressive Conservative MPs, she may be more comfortable with the arts community. Verner spent 20 years in communications and public service, including a period working for former Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa.

Let's hope as the new boss she's not the same as the old boss.

However, rather than on Mme. Verner's abilities, skills and aspirations, that hope rests to a great extent on Prime Minister Harper's expectations of what she can do for his plans, and what the Prime Minister's Office will allow her to do. On Parliament Hill, we now have a government, albeit a minority one, that is more centralized, controlled and watched over by the PMO than we have had in recent memory – or perhaps ever. Conservative MPs who don't 'toe the line' are back-benched in a heartbeat. At least one other Minister's Chief of Staff, following the recent Cabinet shuffle, has found her keys don't fit the locks anymore after trying to do the best job she could for her boss, and by doing so ran afoul of the 'Politburo' in the PMO. The Cold War Soviets used to erase the faces of those fallen out of favour, now they find their key-cards disabled and their BlackBerries cut off.

So what do we want our new Minister to do? What do we hope she will be encouraged to do? And what, in her crucial portfolio of Culture and Heritage, do we hope she will be permitted to do? Her portfolio covers a vast range of industries, performing arts companies, funding bodies and the artistic aspirations of creative Canadians in both official languages. Hers is a very challenging position.

Minister Verner has taken up one of the most important responsibilities in the running of an enlightened and successful nation – protecting its cultural growth and identity. We ask nothing more of her than we have been asking since long before the last election: We want our Minister of Heritage to promote and build an environment in which Canadian television and film production in the English language will be allowed to flourish. An environment in which Canadians will be able to make a decent livelihood and where the stories of our peoples can be told. In short, we want her to help build our heritage.

By now, everyone in our industry is aware of the devastating effect brought on us all by the big private broadcasting concerns

– let's call them the 'Protected Broadcasters' since they argued successfully in 1999 for the CRTC to allow their conditions of license to exclude Canadian drama in primetime. The effect of that decision has been an almost complete collapse of Canadian-made dramatic series and films for television. With the burning of those grain fields, the opportunities for countless aspiring filmmakers have also gone up in smoke.

The corporate honchos at CTVglobemedia, CanWest Global and their association of smaller broadcasters got their wish: wall-to-wall American programming, including endless varieties of *CSI*'s, reality shows, *Amazing Races*, *Lost*, and *Desperate Housewives*. For eight years now they have gone on annual spending sprees in Los Angeles – sometimes returning with duds, or even shows they purchased just to shelve to keep them out of the hands of other "protected" broadcasters in our own country. Last year they spent more than \$470 million on foreign drama and less than \$70 million on Canadian programs. And with those programming choices, all of the programs that are simulcast with the same shows on American networks

are beamed into Canada anyway, they were able to rake in advertising revenue and – one has to assume – commensurate executive bonuses. It is outrageous, and it is unacceptable.

For the workers who just want to make production and perform in this multi-billion dollar industry, the situation has become dire. People have sold their homes, many are re-training in other trades, and too many are planning just to leave. What exactly are the great broadcasters giving back to this country for their free licences to print money? We all deserve an answer to that! Canada's Minister of Heritage deserves an answer to that too.

Certainly, the broadcasters should be able to make profits. No one expects them to be patrons of the arts as were the wealthiest families of the glorious High Renaissance of Italy, a fairly promising era for artists, performers, architects and poets that ended abruptly with the horrifying sacking of Rome in 1527. In my opinion, a touch of that social and cultural consciousness by some of the most powerful media barons in North America would make us a better country. It would certainly keep us a different country, one with its own stories passed down from generation to generation, and separate us in our goals and aspirations from our powerful, but rarely benevolent neighbour to the south.

However, a high-falutin' cultural identity for Canada does not sit well with the interests of the media barons who will really only be content telling us which stories they want to be told. With their stretched SUVs, limos, rent-a-cops, and gated country clubs they will do all they can to keep the status quo and protect their self-interests.





by
Richard
Hardacre

Dig out your toques, we've got our work cut out for us

ACTRA's ramping up for a full fall schedule of events including a trip on November 5, 2007 to Ottawa for the annual Canadian Association of Broadcasters' (CAB) convention. Check our website regularly for information on buses to the rally and how you can be a part of this very important event.

Write your politicians, let them know you want to see more Canadian stories on Canadian screens. Let's make the drama crisis in this country a political issue.

What do Canadians deserve?

- More Canadian drama on TV.
- CRTC rules to make private broadcasters spend 7% of their ad revenue on new Canadian drama.
- Keep the current CTF funding in place.
- Canadian programming scheduled in 'real' primetime.

We all know our stories are worth fighting for. Our industry is worth protecting and our performers – the artists who make our country distinct among other nations – are also worth defending.

We will continue to demand that broadcasters spend 7% of their hefty ad revenues on Canadian drama production. We will not cease to discover ways of finding more work opportunities, tax incentives, and initiatives.

We must continue to remind broadcasters there is a price to pay for the gift of using Canada's public airwaves – and it isn't paying millions of dollars for American programming and then reaping multi-million dollar revenues from advertisers. Their responsibility is to the Canadian public to be able to see their own stories on our TV screens.

We hope that our efforts over the past six years, and our recent campaigns, will be considered in license hearings, once the private networks have to justify their licence renewals before the CRTC in 2008.

There is a lot of work ahead and we are ready.

What can you do?

Get involved. Spread the word. You've shown your passion, and we're thankful to you. Now there's more to do. Distribute leaflets, support *Status of the Artist* legislation, write your MP or get involved in your local media's support of the arts. Come with us to Ottawa in early November. Check www.actra.ca for more information.

Their power and influence is immense. Media and entertainment industries spread from DVDs through HD television, gaming, feature films and internet programming, all the while making profit in truly staggering amounts. The gaming industry alone now exceeds the revenue levels of Hollywood's feature films.

It is now time to take the pen out of the hand of those who want to dictate which stories we are entitled to hear. It's time for that pen to be in the hands of Canadians who have a wealth of stories to write, to create, and to perform.

We are not governed by creative artists. However, we are fortunate to have a few performers, writers, poets, composers and former musicians in the House and the Senate. That's as it should be in a country as culturally promising as ours. We know they have lots on their plates now, but we also know these few, and their colleagues who are of similar mind, believe in the richness that a healthy culture brings to a nation.

Now we all turn to a new Minister of Heritage to see if she will hear the voices of those, like we at ACTRA, who are professionals and committed to Canada's cultural identity.

The Honourable Minister Josée Verner must send a clear signal to her fellow Cabinet members, to the government, and especially to the regulators at the CRTC, that the 'protected broadcasters' must accept licensing conditions which guarantee minimum expenditures on hours of Canadian content at times when people are watching, and that our filmmakers must be given adequate development and distribution opportunities. Our government must budget for stable and increased funding of our essential cultural agencies and the CBC, as well as restricting foreign ownership of our media.

There can be a time when the new boss is not the same as the old boss. A time when we could see Canadian artists, performers, and composers given the chance to build their influence to the point where, like an ageless British rocker has sung for many years, they can sing their own anthem.

*I'll tip my hat to the new constitution
Take a bow for the new revolution
Smile and grin at the change all around
Pick up my guitar and play
Just like yesterday
Then I'll get on my knees and pray
We don't get fooled again.
No, no! ■*

Richard Hardacre
ACTRA National President



ACTRA MEMBERS IN ACTION

Global TV retrenches



by Wendy Crewson

The potential of Canadian drama is out there:
ReGenesis star Wendy Crewson wants to see more of it on our screens

On June 6, 2007, hundreds of ACTRA members gathered outside Massey Hall for Global Television's Fall launch event. It was a glamorous event. All of the advertisers present for the shindig were 'dressed to the nines' in their Hugo Boss, BCBG, and big designer sunglasses. Well, why not? Global's big bash was to rejoice in their multi-million dollar buy of ready-made American programming. The ad agencies were there to be courted.

As for the actors, well, we were a slightly scruffier looking lot (except for **Shirley Douglas**, who always manages to look effortlessly glamorous). We were there to ask, once again, "Where are the Canadian shows?"

I saw many of the same faces that, in sub-zero temperatures, put on their ACTRA toques, picked up a sign, and bravely stood their ground against the producers' associations during the six-week ACTRA strike at the beginning of the year. But since then, there has been a palpable change in the crowd. We have become politicized. We better understand that together we are strong. We have found our confidence – and, of course being summer, we're not wearing the toques.

Global's fall primetime schedule had not one minute of domestic dramatic programming. NOT ONE MINUTE. How the hell does this happen?

We have become politicized. We better understand that together we are strong. We have found our confidence.

For the privilege of using our airwaves private broadcasters fill primetime with all-American programs – and line their pockets with hundreds of millions of dollars in ad revenues. Surprising? Not really.

Thank goodness we now have a new Minister of Heritage, our old one, who was shuffled to another portfolio by the Prime Minister was so snug inside her post I thought the poor gal must spit lint. A couple of years ago, in response to my query about broadcaster regulations, I was told that – *continued on page 8*



Wendy Crewson and hundreds of other ACTRA members rally outside Massey Hall in Toronto at Global TV's Fall launch of American programs.



Canadian drama under attack – Canadian stories worth fighting for

As our Canadian broadcasters dive deeper into American programming with announcements of their content distribution deals: CTV has teamed up with TMZ.com; Global has re-branded their CH channels to E! which will broadcast American content, and even the CBC has announced it has purchased 180 one-hour episodes for its daytime schedule of *The Martha Stewart Show*.

That's the latest. But this past summer, Global Television and CTVglobemedia held opulent ceremonies to launch even more of their all-American shows – CTV at The Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, and Global Television at Massey Hall.

But they weren't expecting us.

Hundreds of ACTRA members and supporters rallied outside Massey Hall in protest of all-American programming on our Canadian airwaves. We also leafleted outside CTV's equally ostentatious event.

ACTRA issued the following press release in response to the networks' parties, and consequently garnered media from across the country:

ACTRA protests skewed, all-American "Canadian TV"

On June 6, 2007 CTV and Global threw themselves some parties to celebrate spending hundreds of millions of Canadian dollars to stuff Canada's primetime television with American dramas. And hundreds of Canadian actors and other industry workers were out on the sidewalk protesting.

"These private shindigs the broadcasters threw for themselves are disgraceful. And so was their latest junket to Hollywood to sell out their country's broadcasting system," said **Richard Hardacre**.

ACTRA members and their supporters rallied in front of Massey Hall as Global Television followed up CTV's party Monday. Both networks were celebrating their foreign programming purchases. Last year, private broadcasters spent more than \$470 million on foreign drama and less than \$70 million on Canadian programs.

"These shameless self-serving parties clearly demonstrate that the networks don't care about their own country's culture and can't be trusted to do anything with their licences other than rebroadcast someone else's work," said **Stephen Waddell**. "It's time for the CRTC to live up to its regulatory role, since the broadcasters don't have the slightest intention to live up to theirs," added Waddell.

Canada's private broadcasters were let off the hook when Canadian drama content regulations were watered down by the CRTC in its disastrous 1999 TV Policy decision. The result is Canadian network primetime schedules are dominated by U.S. shows. ACTRA demands that the CRTC reinstate drama content regulations on the private broadcasters before Canadian culture completely fades to black.

Check out: [Worth Repeating news section of www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca).



ACTRA MEMBERS IN ACTION – continued from page 6

she wanted to avoid the 'reluctant bride syndrome'. What? The odious, beastly, Canadian story having its way with the virginal, trembling broadcaster? Call in the Mounties. No wonder Ottawa had to race to their rescue. Here's hoping our newly appointed Heritage Minister, José Verner has the courage to stand up to the monopolies and fight for Canadian culture. The Heritage website states: "Canadian Heritage is responsible for national policies and programs that promote Canadian content, foster cultural participation, active citizenship and participation in Canada's civic life, and strengthen connections among Canadians." We can't strengthen our 'connections' without our stories on our airwaves.

While the private broadcasters struggle with tough decisions, like how to finance multi-billion dollar mergers and acquisitions, the creative industry struggles to eat.

In 1999 the CRTC eased broadcaster regulations, and Canadian drama all but disappeared. While a few benefit, many suffer. Our artists suffer. Our performers, our writers, our directors, our crews are being starved out of existence. While the private broadcasters struggle with tough decisions, like how to finance multi-billion dollar mergers and acquisitions, the creative industry struggles to eat. While private broadcasters and cable companies lobby the CRTC for loopholes favouring monopolies and thinly veiled foreign ownership, we ask that our regulatory board look to its mandate and brush up on the Broadcasting Act. It states the system must serve to "...safeguard, enrich, and strengthen, the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada." Someone's going to have to explain to me how a primetime schedule filled with U.S. shows complies with that law. As we used to say in Winnipeg, 'beware the Philistines'.

Don't get me wrong. I like Americans. I feed three of them every day. I like some of their programs, but I have been there and I know that we are different. Not better – just different. And I know that it is important to protect that difference.

So don't put those toques away just yet. We have work to do. ■



Arlene Duncan – triple threat

by Susan Ponting

Arlene Duncan is a salt of the earth kind of woman. The versatile actor, dancer and singer has one of those fabulous faces every actor either envies or relishes in – her expressions effortlessly morph from intensity to joy – and her eyes are just as animated. Duncan has a highly contagious and soulful laugh. We get together in a downtown coffee shop along Toronto’s Danforth Avenue in Greektown. She is dressed in a breezy white linen top and matching skirt. She is noticeably delighted to be off for a one-week hiatus from the CBC show, *Little Mosque on the Prairie*” she says, “It was an unexpected hiatus for us, but it’s great to be able to enjoy the sunshine.”

For more than 20 years, Duncan has moved easily in and out of the three worlds of acting, dancing and singing, while raising two sons, Matthew 22, an actor and athlete, and Yuri 18, an avid soundman (both are also ACTRA members). She is quite involved in a couple of ‘labours of love,’ including a line of natural essential oils and creams, and she handcrafts her own jewellery. Duncan is also an avid techno-wiz who loves her Mac computers and sound system.

Living in mid-town Toronto, she is a comfortable distance from the singer and dancer who used to trek from her family’s home in Oakville to perform at clubs in Hamilton and Toronto, but she says, “Those were the days I really honed my craft.” Duncan began working in commercials, and was quickly swept into theatre and musical productions. Her career has taken her across Canada, to Europe, the U.S., the Arctic, and New Zealand.

Currently, Duncan lives and works in Canada, a country she says, “Is like no other.” She plays Fatima Dinssa on Zaqqa Nawaz’s hit comedy *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. At first glance, it seems Fatima and Arlene are diametrically opposite – Fatima is a Muslim woman who wears a hijab, has a thick Nigerian accent and lives in small town Saskatchewan. Arlene is a fifth-generation Canadian, who lives in Toronto. She is sexy, vivacious, and confident. Upon closer

inspection, however, the two women are similar in more ways than not. Fatima may wear a hijab, have an accent, and be Muslim, but she is a no-nonsense, shoot-from-the-hip, single mother, running her own diner, who doesn’t take any guff from the locals. Like Fatima, Duncan is also passionate, and speaks her mind. “She lives a very liberated life, which is in contrast to what we often hear in the media about Muslim women. For me, the show has been an amazing education,” Duncan says.

It helps that Duncan identifies with the character she plays, because she too is a single mother, and while her experience with her own religion may be different, she says, “I admire all people who live out their faith.” Moreover, she admires Fatima’s breaking of stereotypes, “She’s (Fatima) really a feminist at heart.” Duncan feels the program is an important one in multicultural Canada, she says, “Essentially the show reveals that, while we all may look different on the outside, we all have the same hopes, dreams, aspirations, and that our only difference is our culture.”

Duncan always knew she wanted to act, but it was at Sheridan College’s ‘triple threat’ program that she learned all three trades. After graduating, she went on to roles in musical productions including: *Ain’t Misbehavin’*, *The Nutmeg Princess*, and *The Who’s Tommy*. Her work has garnered several nominations, including the Gemini-nominated television production of *Sing Out Freedom Train*, and the Emmy-nominated drama, *The Emancipation of Fanny Kemble*, and an ACTRA nomination for her performance in the CBC television special, *All for One*. Her numerous theatre credits include *Sophisticated Ladies*, *Once on this Island*, and *Jacob Two Two and the Hooded Fang*.

Looking back on her profession, it seems lady luck, along with the town of Oakville, played a part in launching her – *continued on next page*

It helps that Duncan identifies with the character she plays, because she too is a single mother, and while her experience with her own religion may be different, she says, “I admire all people who live out their faith.”



Photo by Jag Gundu

Arlene Duncan – continued from page 9

career, from her days at college to a fateful conversation with her next door neighbour, former sports caster, Mike Anscombe who helped her find her first agent. “We were just having a casual conversation one day about finding an agent and that led to a friend of a friend of Anscombe’s eventually becoming my agent.”

It was kismet.

In the 80s, Duncan got a chance to try out for the DuMaurier *Search for Stars* and that show really launched her career, “I’m not a big fan of contests,” she laughs, “but a friend asked me what else I was doing that day, and so I gave it a try.” Much to her surprise, she won.

Enter again... serendipity.

Duncan hosted the DuMaurier show for a couple of years, which led to another hosting gig for the *Pacific Song Contest*. “That’s when I got more into musical theatre. The shows really helped me learn the art of ad-libbing, and pointed me in that direction.” She now gets a good laugh about her high-powered dancing days, “My knees just don’t bend like they used to.”

Duncan’s had more hits than misses as a Canadian actor, and she is adamant about working and staying in Canada. She says, “I’m one of those performers who not only gets opportunities to do a lot of things, film, commercials, theatre and television – but as Canadian actors we have no choice but to do everything. We must be versatile.”

Familiar with the revolving cycles of Canada’s film industry, Duncan says she knows how fortunate she is to be able to do so many things as a performer. Duncan’s work opportunities have stayed steady over the years and this amazes her.

“I take it all one day at a time, I struggle, we all do, but I keep plugging and when the opportunity to be a part of *Little Mosque on the Prairie* came up, it was such a blessing.” She says the entire cast count their blessings every day they’re on-set. “Of course everybody has their own perspective on how wonderful this opportunity is, and when we think of how the show is reaching people all over the world, and it’s amazing.” *Little Mosque on the Prairie* premiered on the CBC January 9, 2007, and already airs on Vision TV and is broadcast in parts of Europe and the Middle East. (An American network has also just bought the rights to the show’s concept).



Photo by Jag Candia



Richard Hardacre, Tina Keeper, Raoul Bhaneja, and Arlene Duncan.

The success of *Little Mosque* is fuel for Duncan's passion to fight for more Canadian dramas on film and television. She travelled to Ottawa with National President, **Richard Hardacre** who says, "Arlene's presence, along with Raoul Bhaneja, at the Canadian Heritage hearings in Ottawa on the CBC mandate earlier this year, really helped to impress upon the government that, if given the chance, Canadian drama can flourish on our airwaves." Duncan adds, "Canadian culture is worth defending."

There are many issues facing Canadian actors, not the least of which is a tough landscape since the CRTC's 1999 Television Policy crippled parts of the industry. Duncan is well aware what actors face. Among the most important issues Duncan says, "It's not only lack of work, it's lack of credit. We need to build a star system, we need to build and support our own people, and encourage others to support us, give us a chance."

Duncan is irked by media coverage, which seems addicted to what's happening in the U.S. "Some days we hear our interest rates are going up, or that the Canadian dollar is threatening parity with the 'U.S. greenback' and we suddenly get scared because we think, the Americans won't want to shoot here or do series or MOWs here, or spend as

much money or invest in us. But I say who cares! I hate to say that, but why can't we do our own thing? Why do we have to depend on someone else? We need to encourage and create our own industry so we don't have to rely on handouts – waiting for somebody else to support us – make us into something – what happens when Americans decide to go to Ukraine because it's cheaper to shoot there? It's not about respect for our product it's because we're cheaper." She said.

Duncan says she's also baffled by how some view our industry and its reputation, "There still are some in the business who truly don't know the Canadian industry. We have the most talented actors, writers, directors, set designers, wardrobe, makeup, crew, you name it – we're world class – but for some reason many are surprised to learn that. We've got to start supporting and promoting our own, here at home and abroad."

So, she plans to be a part of helping to turn the industry around, "I think we're starting to get the message, you know the American industry isn't any more creative than we are. They take a lot of British and Canadian ideas and make them their own, but it's the machine, the hype, the publicity – the belief of how great they are – and they constantly tell the rest of the world they are

– belief is a strong thing."

Duncan cites the phenomenal success of the Canadian music industry, "it took a while for our music industry to get as good as it is, but it was given the chance," she says.

As Duncan works alongside others in the struggle to restore Canadian drama on our television screens, and defend Canadian culture, she says she's proud to be an ACTRA member, "To me, it means I'm a professional – it's always been there for me – and it signifies the quintessential example of being a professional. You know you've made it when you become a member."

But the best parts? "Oh for sure it's being taken seriously as an actor, and knowing the union is sticking its neck out for us actors. If there's a problem there's a lot of people who are behind you," she says. ■

Little Mosque on the Prairie airs on the CBC Wednesday, October 3, 2007, at 8:00 p.m. Its creator and producer is Zarqa Nawaz, and stars **Carlo Rota, Manoj Sood, Sheila McCarthy, Sitara Hewitt, Zaib Shaikh, Derek McGrath, Debra McGrath, and Neil Crone**. Produced by Susan Flanders-Alexander and Michael Snook. Directed by Michael Kennedy.

Little Mosque's big cast.



Specialty channels

Are they the 'long tail' of broadcasting? by Jason Chesworth

While the recent CRTC Task Force report on the Canadian Television Fund suggests that reducing the required contingent of Canadians working on a production might make a Canadian show more successful (read: profitable), the actual growth in revenue from the specialty channel segment provides an interesting context in which to view the current struggle for funding.

If you've been following the trials and tribulations of the Canadian Television Fund (CTF) since January, you may have the impression that: A) Broadcasters are hurting financially or: B) Canadian television should be more – Amer... actually, it hurts too much to spell it out – let's leave that one blank and assume that if you're reading this magazine, you'll be able to fill in the blank from your own audition experiences. (For those readers who have never auditioned, it's pronounced 'abaht' not 'aboot'). Numbers don't lie (accountants might, but numbers don't), and the numbers in 2006 for the Canadian broadcasting industry look very nice. So nice in fact, that one wonders what all the griping is 'aboot.'

The operating revenues of the television broadcasting industries totaled just over \$6 billion in 2006, up 8.2% from 2005. This increase was well above the average growth rate of 5.4% for the last 10 years.

In fact, it was the third largest year-over-year revenue gain.

Revenues for the specialty channel segment (including Showcase, IFC, HGTV, Food Network, etc.) topped \$2 billion in 2006. Digital channel revenues have nearly quadrupled in five years. The 87 channels combined revenues were \$192.9 million, just under 10% of the total revenue earned by specialty channels.

Though digital is somewhat viewed as a minor player, its growth is rapid, and for those unsure about whether ACTRA was visionary or fool in our decision to strike over the right to be fairly paid, revenues of pay, pay-per-view, and on-demand television jumped 17.7% to \$482.3 million.

In a recent *Playback* interview, David Purdy, V.P. and G.M. of Television Services for Rogers Cable said, "...many of the primetime episodic shows on CTV and CanWest Global will become available

on demand in 2008, and that will continue to drive digital – we're projecting to be 100% digital in the not-so-distant future." (This is the new media that we fought to get paid for, argued by the producers' associations thought to be 'too new' to be negotiated only a few months ago).

While the recent CRTC Task Force report on the Canadian Television Fund suggests that reducing the required contingent of Canadians working on a production might make a Canadian show more successful (read: profitable), the actual growth in revenue from the specialty channel segment provides an interesting context in which to view the current struggle for funding. One would assume that a hit such as *The Trailer Park Boys* could have an impact on Showcase's bottom line, and yet, rather than trying to give another group of Canucks a chance, Alliance Atlantis tried to squeeze *CSI: NY* inappropriately onto the History Channel. (Surely there are Canadian history programs in this country waiting to be developed or looking for a window?)

The CRTC put an end to that programming choice, but it took seven months to do it and they gave the broadcaster another





Durham County



Trailer Park Boys



ReGenesis



Slings and Arrows

Photos courtesy of Corus Entertainment

Specialty channels

– continued from previous page

To be fair, broadcasters are obliged to put the interests of their shareholders before the interests of other industry stakeholders (ACTRA, CFTPA, WGC etc. who benefit from the Broadcasting Distribution Undertaking contributions to the CTF.) It's called 'shareholder value.'

However, before being creators of Canadian content, we are Canadian citizens, and this means that the very airwaves

If you're wondering "is it me, or are auditions getting farther and fewer between?", you may want to start with a letter to your MP before you think of firing your agent.

that Global, CTV, Shaw, Videotron, Rogers and other private networks broadcast over, belong to us – the Canadian citizen. If, collectively as a society, we decide that we don't really want to see ourselves reflected in our own stories, and would rather watch more reality, game, and lifestyle programming about Americans, let's keep our mouths shut and let the 'invisible hand' of the free market work its magic. But,

if you're wondering "is it me, or are auditions getting farther and fewer between?", you may want to start with a letter to your MP before you think of firing your agent. ■



Jason Chesworth is an ACTRA Maritimes member and writes the blog, "Broadcast This!"

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WIDC 2007 Photo by Glen Lee



www.creativewomenworkshops.com

WIDC 2008 Deadlines: Directors, September 30, 2007 – Actors and Crew, October 31, 2007

six months grace period in which to take the show off the air. As well, the CRTC made Alliance Atlantis pull the show on the grounds it wasn't historical in nature, therefore not meeting the channel's mandate. Canadian content had nothing to do with the decision.

The Task Force also recommends that "...audience success must be the primary criteria for continued funding," and, "... actual and potential Return On Investment must be a factor in allocating funding".

It begs the question: Is the 'commercial appeal' sought by the CRTC to be along the same lines as the popular American programming that Canadian broadcasters bought up in their yearly shopping spree this past spring? It's difficult to imagine that 'audience success' is not already considered a policy objective of Canadian producers and creators.

since the broadcasters don't have the slightest intention to live up to theirs."

Luckily, we have some powerful numbers to prove not only can we create quality programming in this country, but we can also sell it. In fact, a recent *Globe and Mail* online poll asked readers, "Do you agree with Shaw Communications Inc., CEO Jim Shaw that the \$265 million CTF props up 'shows nobody watches'?" There were more than 15,000 responses. 66% said 'No,' giving credence to the idea that Canadian programming is worth 'propping up'... maybe it will even be able to stand on its own if it is given a fighting chance.

The specialty channel segment posting such outstanding gains with shows like *Trailer Park Boys*, *Slings & Arrows*, *ReGenesis* and *Durham County* stands as a testament to our ability to create strong and diverse programming. Most likely

Specialty channels kickstarting Canadian production

In 2006, Canadian specialty, pay, pay-per-view television and video-on-demand, enjoyed their highest revenue growth in the past five years, according to a report released by the CRTC. Total revenues rose by 12.4% last year, to \$2.5 billion, compared with \$2.2 billion in 2005, with profits before interest and taxes totalling \$572.7 million.

Breaking down the numbers, the total revenues include \$48 million from local advertising, \$834 million from national advertising and \$35 million from other revenues. The largest share of total revenues, \$2 billion, was earned by the 136 Canadian television services operating in 2006, while the remaining \$482 million was earned by pay, pay-per-view and VOD services. Of the \$2 billion, \$1.8 billion came from 49 analog services, \$69.7 million from 17 Category 1 digital services, and \$123.3 million from 70 Category 2s.

SOURCE: PLAYBACK MAGAZINE

Largest subscriber base (2006)

1. Newsworld	10.3 million
2. Weather Network	10.2 million
3. RDI	9 million
4. YTV	8.8 million
5. VisionTV	8.7 million

Who's spending the most on Canadian programming:

1. TSN	\$93 million
2. Rogers Sportsnet	\$80 million
3. Newsworld	\$66.4 million
4. RDI	\$36 million
5. Discovery	\$32.1 million

SOURCE: TAMSEN TILSON, PLAYBACK MAGAZINE

"These shameless self-serving parties clearly demonstrate that the networks don't care about their own country's culture and can't be trusted to do anything with their licences other than re-broadcast someone else's work."

– Stephen Waddell

ACTRA was at CTV and Global Television's celebrations for advertisers for a whack of American programming. In a news release, ACTRA National Executive Director **Stephen Waddell** said, "These shameless self-serving parties clearly demonstrate that the networks don't care about their own country's culture and can't be trusted to do anything with their licences other than re-broadcast someone else's work. It's time for the CRTC to live up to its regulatory role,

Alliance Atlantis and Astral are pleased with their decisions to develop, produce, and air this content – as they should be, these programs are terrific achievements. Is CTV pleased with the performance of *Corner Gas*? Of course. Why not try another one? Actually, why not try ten more? If the CRTC is to be more 'market friendly,' why not begin by encouraging production to actually compete in the market as opposed to allowing the continuing 'dumping' of U.S. shows into Canadian territory? Good questions.

– continued on next page

PAL Vancouver celebrates with three official openings



by Keith Martin Gordey

I don't live there, but I have often found myself in the PAL Vancouver building on Cardero Street – whether it has been on the way to a board or committee meeting, the AFBS AGM, the UBCP AGM, taking someone on a tour, or just visiting a friend. Lately I have been there quite a lot as there have been not one, not two, but three openings of the building (three, as there were so very many to thank). Frequently, while in the yet-unnamed theatre, I glance down and remark to whoever I am in conversation with, “You are standing on a miracle.” It was a near thing. **Joy Coghill** has observed that, if any one of the multitude of individuals and organizations who have contributed had not been there, it would not have happened. But it has happened. The building has been running and occupied for nearly a year now. Inside is a vibrant and caring community of individuals who have made their career the professional performing arts. Performing Arts Lodge is a stunning success story.

The first ‘Official Opening’ on June 24 took the form of “An Afternoon Tea Dance with **Dal Richards**” which included a surprise performance by **Robert Silverman**. It was put on for the many individuals who donated generously in the early days when the building was just a dream. Their faith that it would happen against all odds was the cornerstone from which we built.

The second ‘Official Opening’ on June 28 was a walk through of all the spaces in the building that have been named so far. It began with the UBCP Lobby, continued through the various floors, on to the ACTRA Fraternal Benefit Society Dressing Rooms and wound up in the IATSE 891 Roof Top Garden. This was by way of thanks and recognition for significant donations from the private sector.

The third ‘Official Opening’ brought together representatives of the three levels of government. Someone remarked that they had never seen everyone in the same room and looking so happy and relaxed before. It was a joyous occasion that celebrated their partnership with the other two very significant donors, UBCP (the BC branch of ACTRA), and IATSE 891, in the realization of the PAL Vancouver building.



Don Stewart, Veena Sood, Jane Heyman, President PAL Vancouver, Gordon Campbell, BC Premier, and Sam Sullivan, Vancouver Mayor, at PAL Vancouver Official Opening in July 2007.

Though we revel in the jubilant afterglow from the Grand Opening we cannot afford to rest, or let up. The sizeable mortgage has to be paid. While PAL Vancouver can boast eighty per cent of the rented suites have significant subsidies, it still requires we continue to fundraise \$150,000 dollars per year to make up the subsidy shortfall. In fact, when the market value rents are compared to the residents’ net rents, the yearly subsidies represent well over half a million dollars. While we have faith that all will be well, we also realize that there is much left to do. One must not forget that PAL Vancouver has a growing waiting list, we have an aging demographic, and the need for this kind of social housing will only increase.

To be pragmatic about the challenges, we are hopeful as we look to the future. We have achieved so much, and PAL Vancouver’s success has become an inspiration to other local organizations wanting to create social housing. As we looked to PAL Canada in the beginning so PAL chapters across the country are asking us how we did it and PAL Vancouver willingly shares its knowledge and experiences, confident that other buildings like ours and Toronto’s will soon grace the Canadian landscape. ■

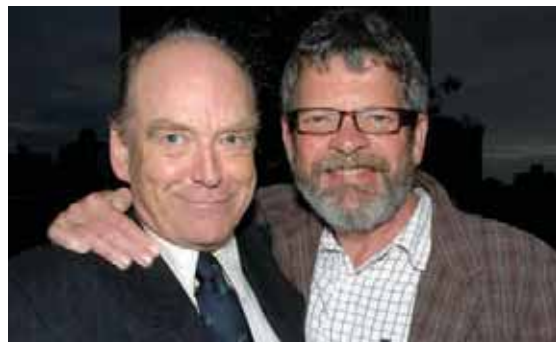


Dax Bellanger and Keith Martin Gordey in the ‘UBCP Lobby’ at PAL Vancouver.

For more information about PAL Canada and its chapters, visit www.palcanada.org.



Keith Martin Gordey serves on the boards of UBCP (the BC branch of ACTRA) and PAL Vancouver.



David Peterson and John Gray at the Naming Ceremonies at PAL Vancouver in June 2007.

Brave New World

by Patricia McCutcheon and Randy Duniz

Box office is down. Ratings have dropped. No, people aren't reading more books, they're just getting their fill of TV shows, movies and entertainment elsewhere. The internet has changed everything and everyone, and our industry is rushing to make sure they get their fair share in this...

Nine months ago, ACTRA members across Canada took a stand. Faced with immeasurable pressure from producer's associations, performers in this country decided to go on strike for the first time in the history of our organization rather than surrender their right to fair compensation for the use of their talent in projects that found their way onto digital platforms like the internet, cell phones and iPods.

As ACTRA National President **Richard Hardacre** explained, "We needed to achieve certainty about the ownership of rights as our work migrates into the uncharted galaxy of distribution on new media platforms and over the internet."

media, and its significance for performers is enormous as distributors scramble to move their content over to these new platforms.

In the U.S., episodes of U.S. network television shows like *Desperate Housewives* are available for download on Apple's iTunes and streamed online minutes after they are broadcast on ABC on their website. However, this content is geo-limited and is not available for view, or sale, in Canada. Studios like Paramount and Disney have already concluded deals that will open their vaults for downloading through iTunes.

Here in Canada, Joost has gained the attention of Canadian broadcasters like CityTV. Founded by the same folks who

technology. CityTV now has a deal to stream *Fashion Television* on Joost, and more shows are sure to follow.

So what does all this mean for ACTRA performers?

It means that as new digital platforms continue to emerge, producers will want to use performers work on these new platforms. This will result in additional revenue flowing into the pockets of ACTRA members.

The freshly negotiated 'new media' section of the 2007-2009 **Independent Production Agreement (IPA)** ensures performers get compensated for their work. Our strike and the resulting agreement set the standard for other unions south of the border that are embarking on negotiations of their own.

In the coming months, the WGA, DGA and SAG will come up against the same pressures ACTRA faced at the negotiating table. "This is a unique point in time," says Barry Meyer, Warner Bros. Chairman and Chief Executive. "It's not business as usual anymore."

But is it worth it? In a word, yes.

The internet may be different from traditional means of distribution, but then, once upon a time, so was TV and the VHS tape. To hear the studios argue for concessions in digital distribution, you'd think they were reinventing the wheel.

"These businesses are so new, we don't know if they are sustainable," says Anne Sweeney, President of Walt Disney Company – owned by ABC Television Group.

The truth is Hollywood and our own Canadian producers really have no choice in the matter. The future is now and the internet has already radically changed how audiences watch their product. Whether it's through pay-per-view downloads, ad revenue, subscription fees, sponsorship

The future is now and the internet has already radically changed how audiences watch their product. Whether it's through pay-per-view downloads, ad revenue, subscription fees, sponsorship or product placement, they have to make it 'sustainable,' because, like it or not, these businesses are the new reality.

It was a difficult decision to make, but an essential one given what was at stake.

ACTRA has a long history of negotiating terms and conditions for every emerging platform. Today's 'emerging platform' is new

brought us the internet telephone service, Skype, Joost is an internet-based service that provides full-screen television entertainment via the internet. The service is based on secure, peer-to-peer streaming

or product placement, they have to make it 'sustainable,' because, like it or not, these businesses are the new reality.

Producers and distributors are being forced to re-think what they produce and how they can exploit it. According to Robert Iger, President and CEO of Walt Disney Company, "Clearly customers are saying to us they want content in multiple ways."

And the studios aim to give it to them.

That's why not only are we seeing streaming or downloading of episodes, but today almost everything in film and television has an on-line component, be it mobisode, webisode, mangasode, interactive online games, or just an old-fashioned website. While much of it may appear promotional – intended to draw eyes back to the TV show or movie that spawned it – most on-line content has made the transformation from being purely complementary, into something supplementary, or even stand-alone.

Take CTV's new weekly online spin-off, *Canadian Idol: All Access*, which the network is billing as their 'third night' of Idol programming – complete with its own stream of ad revenue, one would imagine.

A free market

If YouTube has shown us anything – other than a bulldog can ride a skateboard, and you shouldn't mix Mentos with a bottle of Diet Coke – it's that we must re-think our definition of broadcaster.

In this viral video world, the internet provides an immediate international audience. All you need is content and buzz. For example, Shane Smith, the co-founder of *Vice* magazine says his website frequently draws millions of hits (www.vbs.tv) and has attracted more than five million visitors to view their documentaries about life inside places like North Korean and the Sudan.

While the internet is used as a slick marketing tool – and there's lots of professionally produced programs – still, almost anyone can be a producer. Regardless of what you may think of the quality of anything on the web, there's no denying the impact it has on the industry. According to some estimates, 'volume' or 'views' of what is commonly called, 'User Generated Content'



Photo by Stephen Scott/Temple Street Productions Inc.

Billable Hours is one of the shows that creates original content for the internet. New scripts are written expressly for 'webisodes' and 'mobisodes' and the actors are engaged separately once the production is wrapped. These productions are short 5-7 minute pieces. Pictured above are (left to right) **Brandon Firla** as Clark Claxton III, **Jennifer Baxter** as Robin Howland, and **Fabrizio Filippo** as Sam Caponelli.

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(UGC) will surpass 65 billion by the year 2010, and revenue tied to UGC, will be nearly \$1 billion (Cdn).

Rest assured the networks aren't waiting on the sidelines while all of that low-cost content makes a ton of money. Most studios are already beginning to produce their

own slate of professional low-cost films and TV shows to distribute exclusively on the internet. Whatever content proves to be successful on the digital platform, will undoubtedly find its way back to traditional platforms like our TV and movie screens.
– continued on next page

Brave New World

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Have it your way

Ten years ago, a webcast wasn't possible. Ten years from now, it may be the way we receive all of our content. As bandwidth and download speed rapidly expands, distributors are taking full advantage of the ability to stream broadcasts for a larger audience on the web.

For now, most simultaneous broadcasts are of live events, like the CFL's *Grey Cup* or the recent *Live Earth* concert. But in the on-demand world, there are real benefits for distributors to bring all of their content (including TV shows and films) to the viewer on every platform simultaneously, instead of asking the viewer to come to them through conventional means like cable TV or movie theatres.

"It is a time of great experimentation," says CBS C.E.O., Leslie Moonves.

That's fantastic. But experimenting costs money Leslie, and it's time for the studios to agree that writers, directors and performers aren't the ones who should be picking up the tab.

Our strike was – and the SAG and WGA negotiations are – about artists staking their claim in the digital world and its seemingly endless possibilities.

We may not know where our content will end up, but we are certain we want to share in its value, wherever and whatever that may be.

Truth be told, we're moving at high speed in more places than on the internet – and no one can say for certain where media in the digital world is headed. ■

Have a question or suggestion for ACTRA's Digital Media Coordinator, **Patricia McCutcheon**? Give us a shout at: info@interactra.ca

Digi-lingo primer

Advergaming: The use of video games to advertise a product or sponsor a company.

Voken: Animated image appearing over a web page's regular content, that when clicked on, takes the user to an advertisement or promotional site.

Pre-rolls: Edited-down versions of TV commercials, shown before watching content online. The broadcaster disables the viewer's ability to fast forward through commercials, thus enabling a captive audience.

Bluetooth: A global wireless standard, Bluetooth eliminates the need for cords, allowing users to exchange contact information more easily between devices like mobile phones, laptops, PCs, printers, digital cameras, and video game consoles over a secure, globally unlicensed short-range radio frequency.

IPTV (Internet Protocol Television): Transmission of television over high-speed internet connections. Broadband is revolutionizing television; it is a step up from conventional TV, which uses cable or satellite via analog or digital signals. IPTV can take the form of live TV, but it is more usually stored video, sometimes known as **video on demand (VOD)**. To watch IPTV, a person needs a computer, or set-top box, plugged into the TV.

Webcast: To use the internet to broadcast live or delayed audio and/or video transmissions, much like traditional television and radio broadcasts.

Geo-Fencing/Geo-Fenced: The ability to geographically limit public access to websites. This viewer is unable to view the content outside of the restricted area.

DRM (Digital Rights Management): A method of protecting the copyright of digitized content that is distributed to consumers online.

Web apps:

Blog: Users post entries of their thoughts in an up-to-date, chronological order.

Vlog: Online video diary.

Moblog: The short form of the phrase 'mobile blog' or 'mobile blogging', it is the practice of blogging using mobile devices (such as PDAs, cell phones, camera phones, telephones, and email). Blogs that are updated on the internet using these devices are called 'moblogs'.

Webisodes & Mobisodes: Short and very creative episodes. Usually 2-5 minutes each, streamed online or destined for mobile viewing (**mobisode**). TV shows for younger audiences generally produce these. Can be either live action or animated.



Tyrone Benskin
in *300*:
The Persian Emissary.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

by Marlene Cahill

Down To The Dirt has just completed production in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. *Down To The Dirt* is a Newfoundland Films production, produced by **Anna Petras** and directed by **Justin Simms**. Simms is recently acclaimed for his film *Punch Up At A Wedding* winning 3 awards at the Atlantic Film Festival 2006.

Starring **Joel Hynes** as Keith Kavanagh and **Mylene Savoie** as Natasha, *Down to the Dirt* is a darkly humorous chronicle of one man's improbable redemption. Scary, sexy, and funny (sometimes all three at once) **Keith Kavanagh**, 24, is the turbulent hero of this visceral feature film adaptation of the internationally acclaimed novel by Joel Thomas Hynes. Also features **Hugh Dillon** and **Robert Joy**.

Down To The Dirt is scheduled for a release in the spring of 2008. ■



Down To The Dirt, produced by Anna Petras and directed by Justin Simms. Starring **Joel Hynes** as Keith Kavanagh and **Mylene Savoie** as Natasha. A darkly humorous chronicle of one man's improbable redemption. Scary, sexy, and funny (sometimes all three at once) Keith Kavanagh, 24, is the turbulent hero of this visceral feature film adaptation of the internationally acclaimed novel by Joel Thomas Hynes. Also features **Hugh Dillon** and **Robert Joy**.

ATLANTIC CANADA

by Gary Vermier,
Branch Representative, ACTRA Maritimes

Nova Scotia continues to be the production hotspot in Atlantic Canada. Halifax was home to several features including Clement Virgo's Canadian feature *Poor Boy's Game* starring a roster of talented ACTRA performers including **Tonya Lee Williams**, **Cory Bowles**, **Adrian Bowles**, **Laura Regan**, **Wes Williams**, **K.C. Collins**, and **Lee J. Campbell**, along with Danny Glover.

Other indigenous features shooting in Nova Scotia included *Pushing up Daisies* and a portion of the Roméo Dallaire biopic *Shake Hands with the Devil*. Local feature *A Stone's Throw* and U.S. indie *Snow Angels* wrapped in late spring.

While *The Trailer Park Boys* rolled into their seventh season, other Canadian productions included the MOW *October 1970*, and prep for a new series of *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*.

The area continues to attract a number of U.S. MOWs, with *Candles on Bay Street*, *The Wedding March*, *Relative Chaos*, and *Sybill* already wrapped in late spring by early summer and the next installment of Tom Selleck's *Jesse Stone* series shot over the summer.



Wally MacKinnon in *A Lion's Tear* which was written and directed by New Brunswick member **Bunthivry Nou**.

The province also continues to turn out world-class animated series, including new seasons of *Poko*, *Lunar Jim* and *Bo on the Go* from Halifax Film Co., and the *Secret World of Og* out of Helix Studios in Sydney. New Brunswick is reporting an average summer production season with the CTV MOW *Sticks and Stones* along with several Francophone series.

Unfortunately, ACTRA members in Newfoundland aren't enjoying the produc-



Aaron Webber and **Kris Holden Reid** in Camelia Frieberg's feature *A Stone's Throw*.

tion boom that it did last year. They're facing a tough summer with very little production happening in the province, aside from a couple of docs. The sole dramatic production, a second season of *Hatching, Matching and Dispatching*, has already been cut back by the CBC from an original order of 12, to just 3 episodes. There are a small number of producers in the province, and a number of whom are still in post from projects wrapped – *continued on next page*

ATLANTIC CANADA

– continued from previous page

in 2005, and others weren't able to get broadcast licenses that would allow them access production funding.

The CTV hockey MOW *Sticks and Stones* wrapped in June – having shot primarily in Fredericton with some location work in Saint John and Halifax.

Coming out of Halifax Film Co., the kid's series *Mighty Jungle* will feature some of our local puppeteers, who will be joining dolly doctors from Toronto.

A number of members were engaged as 'reporters' on the quirky news magazine series *That News Show*, produced by Halifax's Arcadia Entertainment. **Valerie Pringle** is off on another search for the old, dusty and potentially valuable on the fourth cycle of the *Canadian Antiques Road Show*, which is produced out of Saint John, New Brunswick.

The long-form drought seems to be coming to an end though, with our friends at Von Zernick Sertner returning with a racing MOW entitled *Circuit*, while service producers Magic Rock have an MOW entitled *A Very Lucky Girl*.

We also had our very first videogame session with producer Douglas Carrigan returning to his native Halifax to record voices for the WWII shooter, *Company of Heroes*. Pink Dog Productions continues to create content for its online television station, untv.ca. The latest addition is *The Candy Show* – a talk show hosted by local member **Candy Palmater**. The CBC in Halifax recorded a radio drama series for the first time in ages, entitled *Y Soccer*.

There's rumour of more work coming up, including a feature or two, but as of this writing nothing else is locked. ■

MONTREAL

by Don Jordan, President, ACTRA Montreal

With the dust finally settled on the technician turf war and a fully functioning promotion office in place, Montreal is enjoying its first summer in three years back in the good graces of Hollywood, welcoming a considerable amount of on-location and service production. We're open for business and business in the city has been brisk this season.

You could chalk it up to studios stockpiling material in anticipation of a possible WGA or SAG strike or just a much-appreciated change in fortune. Whatever the case, Montreal has played host to 15 shoots this summer, with 7 more already confirmed for the fall.

Benjamin Button (Brad Pitt), *Whiteout* (Kate Beckinsale), *Get Smart* (Steve Carell), *Death Race* (Jason Statham) and *Mummy 3* (**Brendan Fraser**) are some of the Hollywood blockbusters that have rolled through town, while local powerhouses Incendo Productions and Muse Entertainment continue to deliver an impressive production slate with projects like *Voices*, *Mistaken*, *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*, *Killer Bees*, a feature version of the television series *Dead Like Me* and more.

Montreal was also fortunate enough to land the fifth season of the Lion's Gate series, *Dead Zone*.

Confirmed for the fall are *Mr. Nobody* with **Sarah Polley**, *Picture This*, *Swamp Devil*, Incendo's *Summer House*, *Grave Obsession* and an untitled MOW, the sequel to *The Punisher* and the third installment in the *Cutting Edge* franchise.

On the Canadian front, the numbers are not nearly as impressive this season with only two productions. The sequel to *Rene Levesque* (Emmanuel Bilodeau) will begin shooting in September while production has already begun on 13 episodes of *Sophie*, starring Natalie Brown, Amy Lalonde, Mimi Kuzyk, and Sara Botsford, adapted from the French language series *Les Hauts et Les Bas de Sophie Paquin*. ■

OTTAWA

by Guy Buller, President, ACTRA Ottawa

The mood was very positive and upbeat at our AGM this spring and reports on the conduct and settlement of the IPA strike, along with branch operations and the local production scene, were enthusiastically received by our members.

ACTRA Ottawa was pleased to welcome newly elected President **Guy Buller** as well as councillors, **Nicole Blundell** and **Katherine Dines**.

We bid a sad farewell to long-serving council members **John Koensgen**, performing in Stratford for the season, and President **Thelma Farmer** who is heading

for Halifax. Both will be greatly missed.

On the political action front we were highly visible on Parliament Hill at the 'Awakening' protest in support of the Arts, organized by the Writers' Union with **R.H. Thompson** and National President **Richard Hardacre** carrying the ACTRA banner and our message to the Harper government. Local members and staff also joined with hundreds of USW members in a rally on Parliament Hill as part of the USW national policy conference at which ACTRA was a prominent participant.

We are also currently in discussions with representatives of the Canadian Artists and Producers Professional Relations Tribunal (CAPPRIT) and various government departments perusing ACTRA's jurisdiction under the federal *Status of the Artist Act*.

Things continue to be positive on the production front with a steady stream of MOWs and several national commercials engaging our local members. ■

TORONTO

by Karl Pruner, President, ACTRA Toronto

ACTRA Toronto welcomes an upswing in production, despite a soaring loonie and misplaced whining about our strike's affect on the business. We report a number of big-budget productions underway including *The Incredible Hulk*, Mike Myers' *Love Guru*, *Traitor*, Don McKellar's *Blindness*, and good prospects for the fall.



Proposed building design for Film Port studios.

ACTRA Toronto's 'Co-op Challenge' is in its third installment, with selected films by members being posted on YouTube and Facebook



ACTRA Toronto's YouTube site.

Add to this the good news that construction is underway for Toronto's new film studio complex, FilmPort. A key initiative is creating a credit union for artists, set to launch in late 2007, now that we've completed our regulatory filings and hired our C.E.O., Steve Mumford.

Recent member events and activities include, (as written about by Wendy Crewson in this issue), our protest outside CanWest Global TV's big sell to advertisers where we demanded more Canadian shows on TV, our march with Toronto-area unions in the Labour Day Parade, and our summer members' conference and barbecue.

For the Ontario provincial election, ACTRA Toronto puts provincial politicians in the hot seat at a culture debate. ACTRA Toronto's 'Co-op Challenge' is in its third installment, with selected films by members being posted on YouTube and Facebook.

We urge members to 'play a part for Canadian culture' by making a short film. The deadline is October 20, and details are at www.actratoronto.com. ■

SASKATCHEWAN

by Mike Burns, Branch Representative, ACTRA Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan is in the midst of its 40th anniversary year and it seems our celebration will coincide with our biggest production year ever!

Highlights include: the promising looking CTV pilot *Sabbatical* (featuring local members **Tatianna Maslany** and **Amy Matysio**).

Also, *Moccasin Flats*, and *Rabbit Falls*, shot in and around the criminally underused city of Saskatoon, and the near north. Also returning are *Corner Gas*, www.renegadepress.com, and some movie features. And... because we have so much spare time on our hands... the Gemini's are being hosted by Regina in October. So come on out we have plenty of Rider toques and scarves for everybody! ■



Local member **Darla Biccum** with *Corner Gas*'s **Gabrielle Miller**, **Fred Ewanuik**, and ACTRA Saskatchewan Councillor **Shannon Jardine** offer pie in celebration of ACTRA Saskatchewan's 40th anniversary!

BRITISH COLUMBIA

by Howard Storey, President, UBCP

After our successful negotiations for the British Columbia Master Production Agreement, we went into our Annual General Meeting with buoyant spirits. In a departure from past practice of holding our AGM at a hotel, we were fortunate to be able to have this year's meeting at the recently "officially opened" PAL Vancouver.

More than 90 members filled the top floor theatre and a reception followed on the staggeringly beautiful (rain aside) rooftop patio.

We presented the John Juliani Award of Excellence to the talented and gracious **Micki Maunsell**, who brought tears to our eyes, and her own, with her heartfelt words of thanks. The Award of Excellence is presented in recognition of an individual's achievement as a Performing Artist and acknowledges the recipient's distinguished contribution to the film and television industry. Ms. Maunsell has a prolific career in film and television dating back to 1969. She has appeared in numerous television series such as *The Outer Limits*, *Cold Squad*, *Counter Strike* and *Masters of Horror*. Her film credits include *The Tooth Fairy*, *My American Cousin*, *White Noise* and *A Twist of Faith*. Ms. Maunsell is also a notable director, writer and acting coach.

The UBCP Life Member Award went to **Dale Wilson** in recognition of his ongoing support and participation in the life of the union. Mr. Wilson is a Past President of the performers for ACTRA British Columbia and the Founding President of the union of BC Performers/ACTRA.

None of our significant accomplishments this year could have come about without the dedication and courage of our Membership, Executive Board and Staff who have made and are making it possible for our Union to meet the challenges of our times and to become the effective organization we need it to be. We look forward to continued growth and success. ■



Howard Storey and Micki Maunsell.

applause

FILM INDUSTRY EVENT RECOGNIZES FABULOUS “FEMME FATALES”

Women in Film & Video Vancouver 2007 Spotlight Award recipients

There was some well-deserved recognition for six recipients of the prestigious Women in Film and Video Vancouver (WIFVV) Spotlight Awards.

Gabrielle Rose, a well-known and respected actress who, over the past 30 years has embraced a broad range of groundbreaking roles in film and television, received the prestigious ‘Woman of the Year Award’ for her significant contributions and achievements in film and television and for her role in mentoring other women in the industry.

Other winners include **Julia Kwan**, **Janice Talbott**, **Janine Bizzocchi**, **Amy Belling**, and **Lynne McNamara**.

The Spotlight Awards were held on June 28, 2007, at the Hycroft House on the grounds of the University Women’s Club of Vancouver. ■



Gabrielle Rose

Photo by Wendy D



Laurence Leboeuf



Alain Goulem

ACTRA Awards in Montreal

ACTRA Montreal President, **Don Jordan** announced the winners of the 2007 ACTRA Awards in Montreal:

Laurence Leboeuf is the winner of the *Outstanding Female Performance* award, **Alain Goulem** is the winner of the *Outstanding Male Performance* award, **Michel Perron** is the winner of the *Outstanding Voice Performance* award and **Stephane Lefebvre** is the winner of ACTRA’s first ever *Outstanding Stunt Performance* award.

Walter Massey received ACTRA Montreal’s *Award of Excellence* and **Arden Ryshpan** was presented the ACTRA Montreal *Community Builder Award*. The awards were held at Le Medley on June 9, 2007.

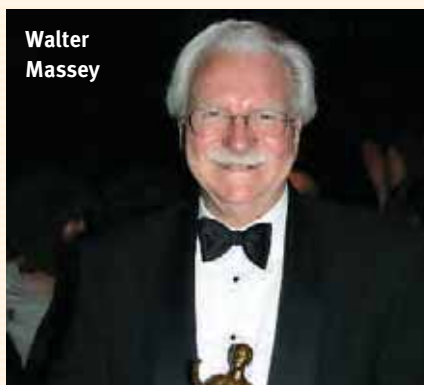
The gala was hosted by voice performer and director **Richard M. Dumont**. The annual ACTRA Awards in Montreal recognize outstanding performances by ACTRA Montreal members and celebrate accomplishment and excellence in our industry. The ACTRA Awards were re-instituted in 2003 as part of ACTRA’s 60th Anniversary. ■



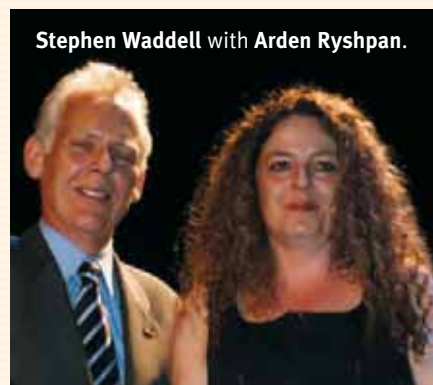
Michel Perron



Stephane Lefebvre



Walter Massey



Stephen Waddell with Arden Ryshpan.

applause

Leo Awards: Vancouver hosts 'glitterati'

On June 1 and 2 Vancouver's glitterati turned out in full regalia to attend the 9th annual Leo Awards at the Westin Bayshore. The glamorous event was hosted by **Ellie Harvey** and **Gary Jones**. The Leo Awards celebrate excellence in British Columbia film and television. For the full list of Leo Award winners, go to www.leoawards.com/winners_2007.html.

- Best Supporting Performance by a Male in a Feature Length Drama: **Ben Ratner**, *Mount Pleasant*
- Best Supporting Performance by a Female in a Feature Length Drama: **Margo Kane**, *Unnatural & Accidental*
- Best Lead Performance by a Male in a Feature Length Drama: **Callum Keith Rennie**, *Unnatural & Accidental*
- Best Lead Performance by a Female in a Feature Length Drama: **Alexia Fast**, *Past Tense*
- Best Supporting Performance by a Male in a Dramatic Series: **Haig Sutherland**, *Robson Arms – Mr. Lonely*
- Best Supporting Performance by a Female in a Dramatic Series: **Gabrielle Miller**, *Robson Arms – Texas Birthmark*
- Best Lead Performance by a Male in a Dramatic Series: **Jesse Moss**, *Whistler – Fallen*
- Best Lead Performance by a Female in a Dramatic Series: **Amanda Crew**, *Whistler – Coming Together, Coming Apart*
- Best Performance by a Male in a Short Drama: **Michael Lewis**, *Head Shot*
- Best Performance by a Female in a Short Drama: **Gina Stockdale**, *Regarding Sarah*
- Best Performance or Host(s) in a Music, Comedy, or Variety Program or Series: **Janet Wright**, *Corner Gas – Dog River Vice*
- Best Performance in a Youth or Children's Program or Series: **Rachel Colwell**, *renegadepress.com – The Rez*
- Leo Awards Outstanding Achievement Award: **Terry David Mulligan** ■



Ellie Harvey, host of Leo Awards Celebration



Gary Jones, host of Leo Awards Gala



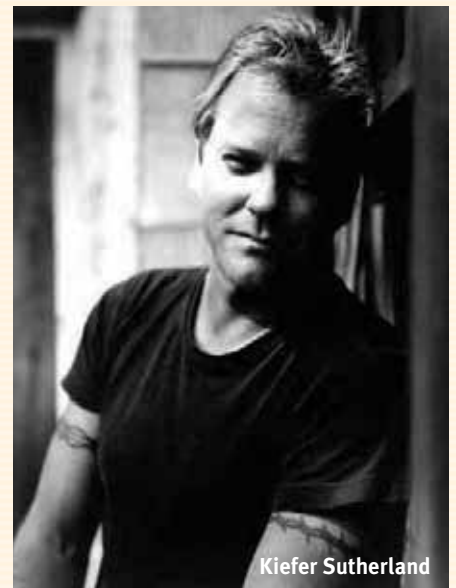
LA Award: Congrats Kiefer

by Richard Hardacre, President, ACTRA National

A special ceremony to honour the work of Canadian actor and ACTRA member, **Kiefer Sutherland** will take place on September 25, 2007 in Los Angeles.

Kiefer will receive the ACTRA Award of Excellence for promoting the work of Canadian actors in Los Angeles at the residence of the Consul General of Canada.

The award is given out every two years by ACTRA National President, **Richard Hardacre**, who says, "Kiefer's contribution to film and television is an amazing success story. We are pleased to be able to recognize Kiefer for his unique work as a Canadian actor in Los Angeles, along with his strong support of his fellow Canadian actors in California." ■



Kiefer Sutherland

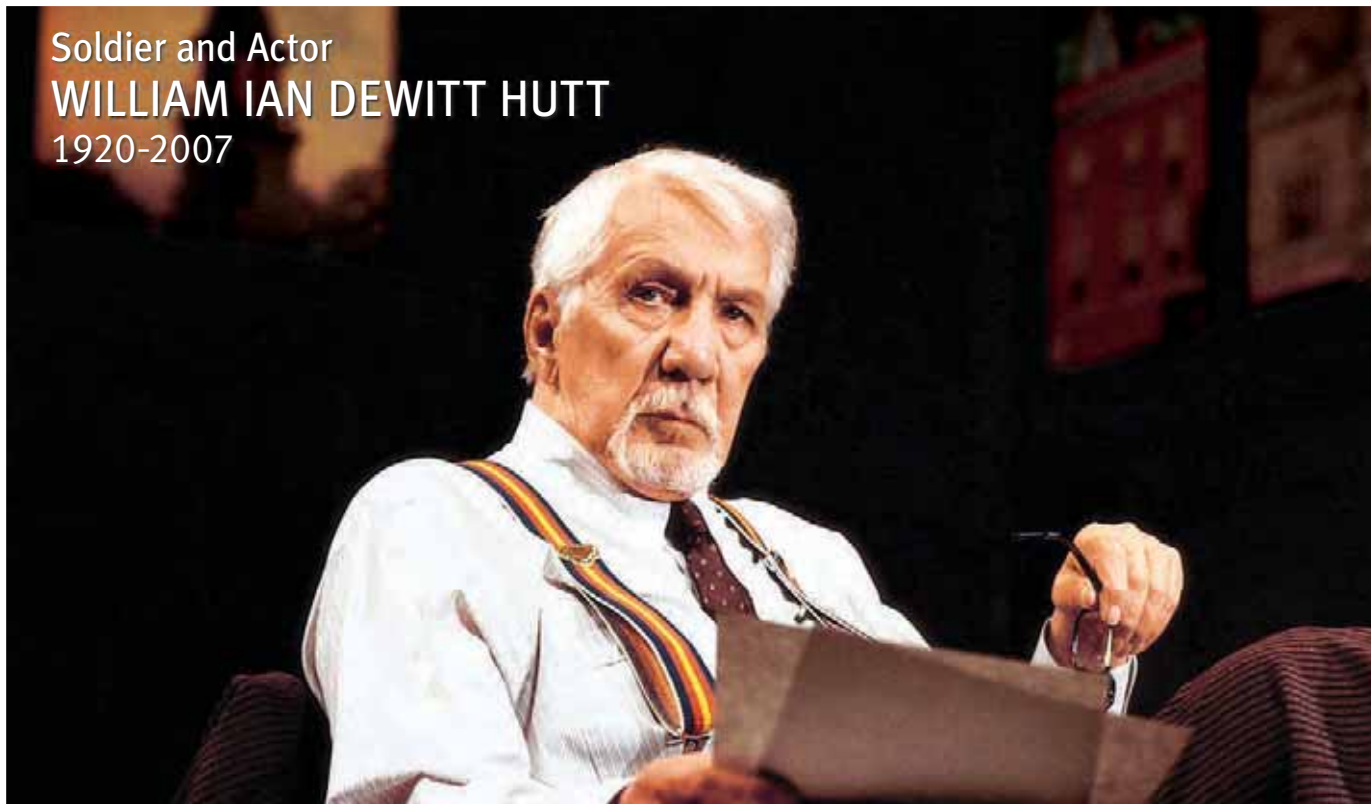
Gemini Awards

Congratulations to all ACTRA members who are nominated for a Gemini Award. The 22nd annual celebration recognizes excellence in Canada's English-language television. Check out the Gemini website for more details:

www.geminiawards.ca/gemini22/gemnoms.cfm

The Awards Gala takes place on Sunday, October, 28, 2007, at the Conexus Arts Centre, 200A Lakeshore Drive, Regina, Saskatchewan. ■

Soldier and Actor
WILLIAM IAN DEWITT HUTT
 1920-2007



Being with Bill

Just as I started to write this, I realized I never actually exchanged two words with **William Hutt** on stage. In all the productions I was in with him, we reacted to each other, but never was a word spoken between us.

Hah !

Not so, off-stage.

I auditioned for the Festival Company in the fall of 1974. At a desk in a darkened Avon Theatre, illuminated only by a gooseneck lamp, sat **Robin Phillips**. Next to him was William Hutt. I was prepared with my comedy and classical speeches – and my song. I wasn't prepared for some of the questions from Robin:

Can you do a cartwheel? “No.”

Can you ride a unicycle? “No.”

Can you juggle? “No.”

Can you roller skate? “Ummmmm, no.”

Can you ice skate?

“Well, I'm not exactly *Barbara Ann Scott*” I said tentatively.

And from the semi-darkness came Bill's voice: “*Never mind dear, neither is Barbara Ann Scott, anymore.*”

When I think about being with Bill, so often the memory includes that voice

coming out of the darkness. In *The Tempest* – he was a magnificent Prospero – but backstage he was still Bill. Before one of his entrances in Act 2, he would “stop-off” in the wings to tell me a joke, or ask me some ridiculous question to make me laugh. He could stand mere inches away from me in the obscurity of the wings and speak to me in my position on-stage! He always began with, “*Since you're standing around out there, doing nothing, Barb...*”

For all my memories of Bill onstage or off, my fondest will always be the night Bill drove Robin Phillips and me through a treacherous blizzard from London to Stratford. Ironically, we were rehearsing *Long Days Journey into Night*. What should have taken less than an hour, took several. It was nerve-wracking for all three of us. Snow drifts as high as houses. No other cars, but the ones abandoned on the side of the highway.

We all spoke very little.

But part way home Bill said, “*I'm going to tell you a story.*”

That unforgettable voice of his, and his story told in the darkness, brought us all

safely home.

Just after making it through the horrific snowstorm, Joe Mandel had very kindly kept the Church Restaurant open just for our arrival. And, as late as it was, we had the place all to ourselves. What we ate, all we laughed about, what, or how much we drank... I can't remember now. But I do remember this; Bill deciding that he should show us what a good cocktail pianist he was. And, in the candlelit Church Restaurant, he did. We sang Gershwin, and Porter, Berlin – and others we couldn't even remember the lyrics to.

When Bill – his face illuminated only by the light on top of the piano – sang *September Song*? Well, nothing could follow that.

Indeed, I share the vision of William Hutt bathed in the lights of the theatre. My fondest memories of Bill? He's lit by a gooseneck lamp, a dashboard-light, and a 20-watt piano bulb. ■



by Barbara Budd

“Bill was extremely brave and generous in preparing those near to him for his final exit. And yet today it seems unthinkable that he is no longer among us.”

– Albert Schultz,
Founding Artistic Director,
Soulpepper Theatre Company

Since Bill...

We have been left without another of our voices. A truly important and familiar one, that I still hear, as I am sure, do many. It is not a voice which will fade easily in our memories, made up of so many rich and glorious notes enjoyed by us through his vast number of character portrayals on the many stages of this country. Now the voice will be heard in the memories of what he has left us through the magic of his beloved theatre roles; his Prospero, his Lear, Tyrone, his Lady Bracknell, Valpone, among so many.

Since Bill...

We have been left to run and catch up to his level of dedication, his professionalism, his great enjoyment of his craft, his final satisfaction.

Since Bill...

The theatre has lost one of its most faithful friends; and so has the oldest and the youngest of us; the scenery is not quite as bright as once it was.

Since Bill. ■



by Gordon Pinsent



JOHN “MEL” DOWNEY 1937-2007

John has gone. For many of us – and there are many – the world is a poorer place. We won't hear again the warm, rumbling thunder of his incomparable laugh. We won't feel again that special magic he had to turn all of his attention onto any one of us and make us feel important. Our thoughts are with Jane, and the Downey family, and we join with them in the sadness, and joy, that we're poorer because he has gone, but so much richer for having had the privilege to know him. Vale, dear friend. ■

– David Calderisi



KEITH KNIGHT 1956-2007

Keith Knight was a Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario native who had a successful 30-year career on stage, film and television. Knight was best known for his role as counsellor-in-training Larry Finklestein in the film *Meatballs*, the first starring role for Bill Murray. Filmed in 1979, *Meatballs* was shot in Haliburton, Ontario with a budget of \$1.6 million. It earned more than \$25 million in the first six weeks of its release. In recent years, Knight did voices on the animated shows *Blazing Dragons* and *Franklin*. Knight also appeared at the Shaw Festival. ■



DAVID NORRIS-ELYE 1950-2007

David Norris-Elye was a member of ACTRA since 1981. He also played guitar for the Stampeders, and operated Towne Music as engineer/producer. David played sax and acoustic guitar, and worked with many great musicians and bands over his 35 year career. ■

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2007: A very focused year



by Ferne Downey,
ACTRA National Treasurer

How did we do it? How did we come through the grueling IPA negotiations, a six-week strike and still stay afloat fiscally? The ACTRA story this year is a complex one and I'm only talking about the fiscal aspect of the story revealed in these Audited Financial Statements (the behind-the-scenes story of IPA negotiations is novel-worthy). It needs to be clearly said that the fiscal stresses were borne by all units of ACTRA, especially the Branches, who worked hand in glove with ACTRA National at all times throughout the year to play their substantial part in belt-tightening. Every part of ACTRA was affected and never has our union worked at a deeper and more collaborative level. Our eyes were wide open, and our hearts beat in trepidation on more than a few occasions but our resolve stayed strong.

As you will see on the *Statement of Operations*, ACTRA's biggest stream of revenue flows from the branches in the form of 'per capita' payments for full and apprentice members. Even in times of duress, branches pay their per caps to ACTRA of \$237.50 for every full member and \$75 for every apprentice member. This year that income totaled \$3.8 million, the lion's share of our total income of \$ 5 million. You will notice that the 'information services' income was much

lower than last year, and has been on a gradual downward trend over the past several years. Next year it will be eliminated totally (which is excellent news for the bottom lines of every branch). Equalization income was flat – and expected to be flatter. As we uphold our investment policy, we reap better investment returns. In a nutshell, that's the income overview.

Turning to the expenses side, it would be something of an understatement to say that negotiations for the 2007-2009 IPA were different in nature from prior years (see schedule E). Bargaining challenges abounded. Thus, to stay sharp and prepared for all eventualities we trimmed, tightened and controlled all ACTRA expenses. We had to – final IPA expenses were going to be hard, if not impossible, to predict. In addition to more offsite meetings and more people participating, negotiations were also dependent upon the support of our strong legal team to assist the Negotiating Committee in thwarting a multitude of legal issues raised by the CFTPA, including court appearances. Our new lawyers, Cavalluzzo Hayes Shilton McIntyre & Cornish, served us brilliantly – and were worth every penny we invested in their expertise.

The increase in IPA negotiation expenses

was offset by reductions in all other ACTRA expenses. We saved money absolutely everywhere we could: Negotiation expenses on other contracts were minimized; National Executive expenses were reduced with more teleconferences and less face-to-face meetings; Research Department expenses were concentrated on supporting IPA negotiations and all other research projects were postponed; Public Policy and Communications cancelled an anticipated National Lobby Action due to the priority of bargaining, to name but a few. We kept our eye focused on the ball and breathed a collective sigh of relief when the IPA Strike ended February 19, just nine days short of our fiscal year end.

At this point, it would be prudent to draw your attention to the Action Defence Fund which is shown on the *Balance Sheet* as net assets, unappropriated surplus of \$1,936,724 (which included this year's small surplus of \$119,771). This carefully acquired Fund offers security against future fluctuations in operations and support for any future strikes.

This year was a year focused upon the IPA – next year will be a different story. Please contact me anytime by email at fdowney@actra.ca and I'd be happy to take you through these statements in glorious detail. ■

At the negotiation table.



Photo by Kim Hume



ACTRA

Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists

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Statement of Net Assets.....	28
Statement of Cash Flows.....	28
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AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ACTRA

We have audited the balance sheet of ACTRA National as at February 28, 2007 and the statements of operations, 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 28, 2007 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
Licensed Public Accountants
Toronto, Ontario
April 27, 2007

ACTRA NATIONAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2007

ACTRA NATIONAL BALANCE SHEET AS AT FEBRUARY 28, 2007

	2007	2006
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 2,252,377	\$ 2,545,258
Accounts receivable	341,492	526,712
Prepaid expenses and deposits	91,263	59,956
Due from ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch	621,848	-
Due from ACTRAWORKS Incorporated	437	-
Due from ACTRA Performers' Rights Society	59,426	41,267
	<u>3,366,843</u>	<u>3,173,193</u>
Furniture, equipment and software (note 3)	81,143	83,943
	<u>3,447,986</u>	<u>3,257,136</u>
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	910,603	665,184
Accrued vacation pay	51,301	33,249
Due to Branches	455,968	546,494
Due to ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch	-	78,606
Due to U.B.C.P.	9,864	33,124
	<u>1,427,736</u>	<u>1,356,657</u>
NET ASSETS		
Extraordinary contingency fund (note 2)	2,383	2,383
Unappropriated surplus	1,936,724	1,814,153
Invested in furniture, equipment and software	81,143	83,943
	<u>2,020,250</u>	<u>1,900,479</u>
	<u>\$ 3,447,986</u>	<u>\$ 3,257,136</u>

Approved on behalf of the Board:

Richard Hardacre, President

Ferne Downey, Treasurer

ACTRA NATIONAL
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
 YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2007

	2007	2006
Income		
Per capita – full members	\$ 3,311,700	\$ 3,241,166
Per capita – apprentice members	495,375	488,400
Information services	100,182	260,894
Equalization income	1,131,398	1,183,490
Interest income	52,859	22,407
	5,091,514	5,196,357
Expenses		
National council and executive (Schedule A)	158,262	169,302
National committees (Schedule B)	1,813	17,931
National executive director's office (Schedule C)	262,188	274,546
Bargaining and research (Schedule D)	470,825	447,423
Collective agreements (Schedule E)	737,327	143,589
Policy and communications (Schedule F)	603,153	613,434
External relations (Schedule G)	221,806	248,568
Finance, human resources and administration (Schedule H)	1,014,444	971,682
Information technology (Schedule I)	617,479	653,768
Occupancy (Schedule J)	390,373	377,194
GST expense	47,127	57,274
Apprentice member credit	144,649	190,834
	4,669,446	4,165,545
Excess of income over expenses before transfer payments	422,068	1,030,812
ACTRA financial rebates to branches	–	(192,900)
Transfer payments to branches	(171,720)	(156,153)
Donations	(30,577)	(15,541)
Transfer to ACTRA Performers Rights' Society	(100,000)	(200,000)
Transfer to ACTRA Members' Insurance Premium subsidy	–	(100,000)
Excess of income over expenses	\$ 119,771	\$ 366,218

ACTRA NATIONAL
STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS
 YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2007

	Invested in Furniture, Equipment and Software	Unappropriated Surplus	Extraordinary Contingency Fund	Total	
				2007	2006
Net Assets – at beginning of year	\$ 83,943	\$ 1,814,153	\$ 2,383	\$ 1,900,479	\$ 1,534,261
Excess of income over expenses	–	119,771	–	119,771	366,218
Purchase of furniture, equipment and software	51,854	(51,854)	–	–	–
Depreciation	(54,654)	54,654	–	–	–
Net Assets – at end of year	\$ 81,143	\$ 1,936,724	\$ 2,383	\$ 2,020,250	\$ 1,900,479

ACTRA NATIONAL
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
 YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2007

	2007	2006
Cash flows from operating activities		
Cash receipts from members, non-members and producers	\$ 5,227,860	\$ 5,279,590
Cash paid to employees and suppliers	(4,663,597)	(4,549,821)
Interest received	52,859	22,407
	617,122	752,176
Cash flows from financing activity		
Advances from related organizations	(836,821)	312,590
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of furniture, equipment and software	(73,182)	(39,143)
Change in cash during the year	(292,881)	1,025,623
Cash – at beginning of year	2,545,258	1,519,635
Cash – at end of year	\$ 2,252,377	\$ 2,545,258

ACTRA NATIONAL

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2007

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 not for profit 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

Revenue

Revenue is accrued as earned.

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 management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the year. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

3. FURNITURE, EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE

Details of furniture, equipment and software are as follows:

	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value 2007	2006
Computer equipment	\$ 669,806	\$ 644,810	\$24,996	\$43,160
Computer software	109,745	106,157	3,588	19,732
Furniture and fixtures	226,924	174,365	52,559	21,051
	\$1,006,475	\$925,332	\$81,143	\$83,943

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 and equipment. The premises leases expire on July 31, 2010 and the minimum annual payments under the leases are as follows:

	Premises	Equipment	Total
Fiscal year			
2008	\$105,090	\$31,416	\$136,506
2009	105,090	20,958	126,048
2010	105,090	–	105,090
2011	43,788	–	43,788

In addition to the minimum rent, the Association is obligated to pay operating costs for its office space. The operating costs paid were approximately \$116,000 (2006: \$118,000).

5. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The organization's financial instruments consist of cash, accounts receivable, accounts payable and advances to/from related organizations. 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 organizations, corresponds to their carrying value due to their shortterm maturity. The fair value of the advances to/from related organizations is not readily determinable because of the related party nature of the balances.

6. GUARANTEES AND INDEMNITIES

The Organization has indemnified its past, present and future directors, officers and employees against expenses (including legal expenses), judgments and any amount actually or reasonably incurred by them in connection with any action, suit or proceeding, subject to certain restrictions. The Organization has purchased directors' and officers' liability insurance to mitigate the cost of any potential future suits and actions, but there is no guarantee that the coverage will be sufficient should any action arise.

In the normal course of business, the Organization has entered into agreements that include indemnities in favour of third parties, either express or implied, such as in service contracts, lease agreements and purchase contracts. In these agreements, the Organization agrees to indemnify the counterparties in certain circumstances against losses or liabilities arising from the acts or omissions of the Organization. The maximum amount of any potential liability cannot be reasonably estimated.

ACTRA NATIONAL

SCHEDULES OF OPERATING EXPENSES

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 28, 2007

	2007	2006
National Council and Executive (Schedule A)		
National Council		
Meeting costs	\$ 24,009	\$ 28,148
Councillor travel costs	27,766	27,078
Officer expenses	5,445	10,453
Senior staff expenses	6,192	6,635
Councillor tool kits	4,060	–
	67,472	72,314
National Executive		
Meeting costs	26,374	25,407
Officer expenses	11,515	7,288
Senior staff expenses	9,480	4,929
	47,369	37,624
Officers and senior staff meetings		
Meeting costs	96	861
Officer expenses	2,006	6,638
Senior staff expenses	–	4,772
	2,102	12,271
Honoraria	29,246	29,229
Officer expenses – other	12,073	17,864
	\$ 158,262	\$ 169,302
National Committees (Schedule B)		
Political action committee	\$ 424	\$ 621
Finance committee meetings	933	749
Women in the Director's Chair	–	15,000
Communications committee meetings	–	251
Other committees	174	1,166
Diversity committee	282	144
	\$ 1,813	\$ 17,931

	2007	2006
National Executive Director's Office (Schedule C)		
Salaries	\$ 204,962	\$ 182,900
RRSP	24,252	21,831
General benefits	21,173	19,566
	250,387	224,297
National Executive Director expenses	6,650	11,109
Regional Director expenses	5,151	2,980
Organizing	–	36,160
	\$ 262,188	\$ 274,546
Bargaining and Research (Schedule D)		
Salaries	\$ 306,225	\$ 275,070
Maternity benefits	27,104	13,227
RRSP	28,951	21,697
General benefits	70,688	65,885
	432,968	375,879
Director expenses	11,673	11,086
Research materials	12,614	32,810
Organizing expenses and tools	13,570	27,648
	\$ 470,825	\$ 447,423
Collective Agreement Negotiation and Administration (Schedule E)		
CBC:		
Negotiations	\$ 11,187	\$ 12,715
Officer expenses	982	1,805
Senior staff expenses	504	316
	12,673	14,836
Commercials:		
Negotiations	466	5,544
Senior staff expenses	99	–
Administration	4,023	4,170
Printing	18,120	34,382
	22,708	44,096
IPA:		
Negotiations	285,403	17,380
Officer expenses	17,514	5,472
Senior staff expenses	38,632	11,119
Administration	25	68
Legal	329,525	4,923
Conference fees	–	5,506
Printing	29,052	26,269
	700,151	70,737
Other:		
Negotiations	138	3,654
Senior staff expenses	431	705
Administration	256	–
Legal	–	1,791
Printing	970	7,770
	1,795	13,920
	\$ 737,327	\$ 143,589
Policy and Communications (Schedule F)		
Salaries	\$ 234,435	\$ 210,931
RRSP	15,402	14,244
General benefits	44,148	39,626
	293,985	264,801
Director expenses	24,755	32,414
Lobbying expenses	18,523	56,244
Coalitions	47,406	40,031
President's expenses	6,234	4,445
	96,918	133,134
InterACTRA news	111,011	99,393
Advertising	18,379	28,103
Sponsorships	41,811	26,314
Promotional materials	4,476	8,583
Administrative services	2,642	9,592
Publications	1,849	9,941
ACTRA awards	21,216	22,014
Public relations officer's expenses	2,000	3,634
Face to Face marketing online	4,366	4,550
Policy consultant	4,500	3,375
	212,250	215,499
	\$ 603,153	\$ 613,434

External Relations (Schedule G)		
FIA affiliation fees	\$ 34,477	\$ 39,120
CLC affiliation fees	170,999	158,613
CLC committee and travel	1,824	2,210
Officer expenses:		
FIA	3,715	8,118
FIANA	1,760	676
SAG/AFTRA	–	10,694
Senior staff expenses:		
FIA	5,351	7,571
FIANA	1,487	3,700
SAG/WTO	2,056	9,765
Other	137	8,101
	\$ 221,806	\$ 248,568
Finance, Human Resources and Administration (Schedule H)		
Salaries	\$ 548,779	517,742
RRSP	45,793	44,494
General benefits	113,007	116,290
Temporary help	2,612	2,810
	710,191	681,336
National Director of Finance and Administration expenses		
Printing	31,085	34,437
Referenda	30,881	10,060
Professional fees	34	5,000
Auditing fees	11,527	10,797
Legal fees	3,457	41,662
Staff conference	14,579	20,889
Staff recruitment	1,076	3,640
Staff training	5,876	6,894
Staff appreciation	2,509	3,516
Bank charges	8,020	7,994
Administration arrangement fee	165,622	115,417
Alliance debt reduction	26,400	28,000
	304,253	290,346
	\$ 1,014,444	\$ 971,682
Information Technology (Schedule I)		
Salaries	\$ 380,587	389,292
RRSP	26,727	25,544
General benefits	75,736	74,759
	483,050	489,595
Maintenance	2,467	524
Software	13,987	18,117
Hardware	1,668	6,853
Supplies	4,700	6,540
Network costs	48,852	41,586
Depreciation – computer equipment	23,036	35,549
Consulting fees	4,245	9,310
Webtrust audit	19,330	23,750
Depreciation – membership system	16,144	21,944
	\$ 617,479	\$ 653,768
Occupancy (Schedule J)		
Rent	\$ 244,182	\$ 223,007
Telephone	21,207	22,150
Insurance	37,168	20,282
Supplies and miscellaneous	12,177	10,038
Postage	22,029	26,434
Courier	14,548	14,063
Furniture and fixtures – repair	1,427	4,082
Equipment rental	22,161	25,073
Depreciation – furniture and fixtures	15,474	22,681
Regional office expenses	–	9,384
	\$ 390,373	\$ 377,194

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Brendan on the set of
Blood Ties with Kyle Schmid
and Gina Holden.



Photo by Kathleen Horde Meyer

Brendan Meyer – continued from back cover

breathing down my neck – if I've had a long week filming, we can adjust my off-camera schedule accordingly." Most kids would love that kind of schedule.

However, it's not rosy all the time. Sometimes Brendan doesn't get the parts. His mother Kathleen, says, "Oh he takes a lot of hits. Just last month he was up for a recurring role in a new series in the U.S. Brendan was the director's first choice, but he was the producer's second choice, and the network went with the producer's."

As everyone knows, the acting business can be tough, Kathleen says, "In the last eight months Brendan has made it to the call-back stage of eight different movies, TV shows etc., but didn't get the part – so he has a LOT of misses."

But all the difficulties are worth it for Brendan. He loves the acting community, and working with the crews

on different productions, but, he says, "Nothing beats the rush of performing before a live audience."

Brendan is a big dreamer with lofty goals – that compliment his big sense of humour – great attributes that will serve him well in this business and in life. Asked where he wants to be in 10 short years he says, "I hope to be one of the youngest best actor Oscar winners in history. No, really. But seriously I would like to be making a living acting in great arts cities like New York, Los Angeles, Vancouver, London, England or places like that."

One of his favorite creatures on earth? His dog, 'Dr. Phil.'

His favorite pastime? "Waiting for the phone to ring. No, seriously: swimming."

There's no stopping this kid. No doubt, he's moving closer to grabbing that Oscar – or Gemini! ■

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Brendan Meyer

Budding actor, dynamite Dinosapien by Susan Ponting



Photo by Kimberley French

Brendan Meyer as Frank in *The Secret of the Nutcracker*.

Brendan Meyer is already a prolific performer at the tender age of 12. The Kitchener, Ontario-born actor started theatre classes at age four. Brendan's first professional part was as one of the royal princes in *The King and I* at Festival Place in Sherwood Park, Alberta. Meyer says he loves the home where he and his mother, father, and 10 year old brother, Lachlan live. He says, "It's like a cottage on the edge of town, well, it's not really a cottage, but it is on the edge of town!"

By the age of nine, Brendan was attending film, television, and acting classes, and by 10 he was auditioning regularly for film and television.

Meyer considers his part as the goalie in the 2005 CBC movie, *Waking up Wally: The Walter Gretzky Story* one of his big breaks to date, because he says, "That part finally got me listed on the Internet Movie Data Base, IMDB! That was way cool!"

In 2006, Brendan, still on a roll, played David in the film, *For the Love of a Child*

for Lifetime Network.

Even at such a young age, Brendan attributes his success to a series of breaks, hard work, and determination.

This pint-sized, bright-eyed kid has a big personality and a keen sense of humour to go with it. Brendan and his mother Kathleen go to lots of auditions. He is philosophical about it, "Well, if I get the part, I'm happy, if I don't, it wasn't meant to be, but that doesn't mean I don't sit by the phone a lot!"

Brendan's current role as a series regular on the show, *Dinosapiens* is "a lot of laughs" for the young actor. Brendan plays Nelson Ort. The plot, in his own words, goes something like this: "It's about a camp called Dinosaur Explorer Camp where a bunch of kids go. One of the counsellors, Lauren, whose father went missing in the badlands while investigating his Dinosapien theory, discovers that dinosaurs aren't extinct after all, they're living underground. Three of the dinosaurs escape, Eno is a good dinosaur and he befriends the counsellors.

The other two dinosaurs, the Diggers, are trying to get Eno and his friends."

The show airs on Discovery Kids and the BBC. He loves to promote the website, which, by the way, is worth a look at: <http://kids.discovery.com/fansites/dinosapien/dinosapien.html>.

After signing with Vancouver's Play Management, Brendan booked his first out of province role – a one-episode gig in *Blood Ties*, a feature-film shot in Vancouver. "I played an evil kid, which was a change from my normal roles, but it sure will look great on my demo reel and show my versatility as an actor," he said.

Brendan loves Shakespeare and his love for the bard sees him performing in productions like *Encore! The Best of 30 Years* for the Edmonton Musical Theatre, where he says, "I managed to deliver a very long Shakespearian monologue as Proteus in another Edmonton production of *Excerpts of Two Gentlemen of Verona*."

He may love Shakespeare, but school, as with most kids, is another matter. His mother home-schools Brendan. With such a busy work schedule, it's the only way, Brendan says, "We squeeze in schooling whenever we can, when I'm not on set, but it's nice not to have the pressure of an outside school system – *continued inside back cover (page 31)*



Brendan at work on the set of *Dinosapiens*.

Photo by Kathleen Forde Meyer

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