



I N T E R

FALL 2008

# ACTRA

The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists



The making of  
**PASSCHENDAELE**

The passion of  
**PAUL GROSS**

page 4

# Friends in all places



**It's not a stretch to say** that from our neck of the woods we look out on a political world that often appears disinter-

ested, and in which the opinion of creative people is often treated as an annoyance.

You only have to look at the impressive list of filmmakers, actors, screenwriters, and producers who have shown up (at a cost not borne by taxpayers) at the Senate Committee hearings into Bill C-10, amendments to the *Income Tax Act*, and then look at the reactions of the governing party. On the one hand we have some articulate and impassioned creative people arguing for the survival of freedom of speech in film and television production (accepting that strictures against *Criminal Code* violations are appropriate and sufficient). And on the other hand we have our Minister of Finance stating that we had better accept that his government knows best, and that if the opposition wants to 'cozy up' with the artists who make films, then he and his fellow brave-hearts will make the survival of the appalling amendment in that poorly-conceived bill a matter of confidence on which to trigger this country into a federal election.

Well, this country's artists who do all the creating in film and television recognize a challenge like that as really bad acting. It's easy to spot the bravado of a bully.

It must be rare in our political history that any issue dealing with our film industry has created such a stir on Parliament Hill. The prolonged attention on this is astonishing. Heavy-handed comments from a pugilistic Minister have only served to stir up creative people even further.

Bravo Minister Flaherty!

It's a shame that the Minister of Heritage, who has acquired a better understanding of the tenuous stability of our



ACTRA members and fellow supporters demanded More Canada on TV at the annual Canadian Association of Broadcasters convention.

Christine Webber

industry, was not permitted to resolve the tension by supporting a sensible revision to the bill. That would have been the smart thing for a government that is actually interested in the creation of Canada's cultural identity to do. And, it would have certainly won over a huge number of creative artists – who have become concerned with this government's lack of interest in our culture.

Lately our creative industry seems to be on a razor's edge. Conditions we don't control such as the currency exchange rate and brutal rounds of negotiations between our American cousins and the world's biggest media companies are creating huge swings in production levels throughout the English-speaking entertainment business.

There is no 'Easy Street' for creative artists, just as there were no soft and cultivated fields ready and waiting for our pioneers. There are no welcome mats put out by the corporate world and their enabling governments for unionized workers – be they miners, auto workers, nurses or actors.

We could do with a few friends. As a matter of fact we have now found 3.1 million of them. They are spread across this land. They are the unionized workers of Canada.

In the last week of May, ACTRA participated in the 25th Convention of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC).

We sent our full complement of delegates from across Canada (all of our National Councillors were able to participate) to endorse a composite cultural resolution – which the Congress endorsed unanimously as its first item of business.

The resolution addressed limitations to foreign ownership of media, income averaging for artists, called on the government to direct the CRTC to build Canadian dramatic programming during primetime broadcasting, and demanded the

withdrawal of the clauses in Bill C-10 that would grant the Minister of Heritage powers to censor film and video works based on their content.

Obtaining the endorsement of the Congress took a solid amount of work to plan and set in motion, and all involved are to be congratulated. The result is that our resolutions for cultural action are now in the 'Action Plan' of the CLC. In turn, our participation in the convention lends ACTRA's support to the entire plan of action and social change within the labour movement. The campaign for women's equality, the expansion of human rights, solidarity with Aboriginal Peoples, and the defence of our cultural identity and good jobs in the cultural sector are now among the major goals of the CLC. The Congress has committed our 3.1 million fellow workers to this 'Action Plan' that will lead into the next federal election. The CLC network of affiliates and labour councils are making themselves available to bring our messages to organized workers and all politicians at various levels of government.

What we have achieved is a convergence of culture and traditional labour such as we have not seen before. Without a doubt, we now know that the work we do with this ACTRA of ours – the work to improve our industry, our work to create good jobs and our work to build and protect this country's cultural identity – is not work we do in isolation. We have quite a few good friends.

In solidarity,



Richard Hardacre  
ACTRA National President



## ACTRA condemns cuts to arts funding

In August, when all eyes were on the Olympics, news leaked out of federal cuts to cultural programs that showcase Canada on the world stage. ACTRA's statement called the cuts shocking, short-sighted and not in the best interests of our business.

See [www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca) for our news release and updates.

**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](mailto:interactra@actra.ca)

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



Fall 2008 Volume 15, Issue 2

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

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Heather Allin, Ferne Downey, Keith Martin Gordey, Brian Gromoff, Richard Hardacre, Kim Hume, Susan Ponting, Carol Taverner, and Stephen Waddell.

CONTRIBUTORS: Jo Bates, Tyrone Benskin, Thor Bishopric, Jennifer Blaney, Mike Burns, Marlene Cahill, Dinah Christie, Chris Cornish, Susan Coyne, Neil Crone, Sharon Davidson, Ferne Downey, Randy Duniz, Anna Falsetta, Chris Faulkner, David Gonczol, Holly Guathier-Frankel, Jack Gray, Richard Hardacre, Kim Hume, Don Jordan, Ruth Lawrence, Maureen MacDonald, Rob Macklin, Keith Martin Gordey, Wayne Nicklas, Karl Pruner, Marit Stiles, Howard Storey, Ben Switzer, Stephen Waddell, Christine Webber, and Dawna Wightman.

LAYOUT: Joss MacLennan Design [www.joss.to](http://www.joss.to)  
Printed in Canada by union labour at Thistle Printing.

All contents are copyright ©2008 ACTRA. All rights are reserved and contents, in whole or in part, may not be reprinted without permission. The points of view expressed do not necessarily represent those of ACTRA.

Please return any undelivered mail to:  
ACTRA, 500 – 625 Church St., Toronto ON M4Y 2G1  
PHONE 1-800-387-3516 or (416)489-1311  
FAX (416) 644-1544  
EMAIL [interactra@actra.ca](mailto:interactra@actra.ca)  
WEB [www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca)

Publications Mail Agreement #40069134  
ISSN 1705-9496



**Mixed Sources**

Product group from well-managed forests, controlled sources and recycled wood or fiber

[www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org) Cert no. SW-COC-001326  
© 1996 Forest Stewardship Council



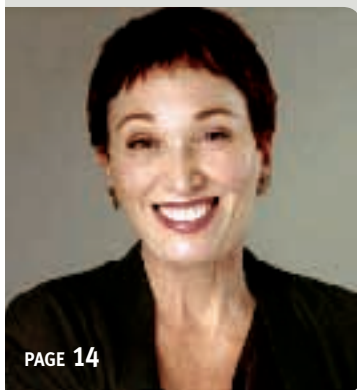
PAGE 4



PAGE 7



PAGE 9



PAGE 14



PAGE 21

## In this issue of *InterACTRA*...

- PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** 2  
*by Richard Hardacre*
- COVER STORY** 4  
Passchendaele:  
the Passion of Paul Gross  
*by Susan Coyne*
- MEMBER PROFILE: CARLO ROTA** 7  
Dinner with Carlo  
*by Neil Crone*
- WOMEN AS CREATORS** 9  
Starting up, staring out and  
starting over  
*by Jo Bates, Ruth Lawrence  
and Dawna Wightman*
- BRANCH NEWS** 12  
Updates from Alberta,  
Newfoundland & Labrador, Montreal,  
Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg and UBCP
- WORK HISTORIES ON AMS** 16  
*by Ferne Downey*
- APPLAUSE** 18  
*Flashpoint's* debut success,  
Carol Off to receive ACTRA's John  
Drainie Award, SMPIA award winners,  
Karen Hines wins WIDC Banff Fellowship
- POLICY ISSUES** 20  
Keep it Canadian!  
ACTRA in action: CLC, Bill C-10, CRTC
- PUBLIC POLICY** 22  
Copyright reform must improve  
the rights of artists  
*by Kim Hume*
- COMMERCIAL BARGAINING  
UPDATE** 23  
*by Marit Stiles*
- FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2008** 24  
The Big Picture  
*by Ferne Downey*
- FAREWELL** 30  
Don S. Davis, Jack Duffy,  
Walter Kaasa, Len Peterson
- FAMILY AFFAIR** 32  
The Camacho Family  
*by Holly Guathier-Frankel*



The making of

# PASSCHENDAELE

The passion of

## PAUL GROSS

by Susan Coyne



(Above:) Paul Gross as Sergeant Michael Dunne in the craters of Passchendaele. (At left:) Hundreds of background actors helped to recreate the grim realities of Passchendaele.



All photos by Chris Large

### It all began with a story, a haunting memory, passed on from one generation to another.

Paul Gross's grandfather, Michael Dunne, was part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force that fought in the First World War at the battle of Passchendaele, a name which has become synonymous with the horror of trench warfare.

Like so many, Gross's grandfather returned home unable to describe what he had witnessed. Then, one day, on a fishing trip with his then 15-year-old grandson, he found the words. He told of being on patrol in a small town in northern France, and being the only one in his group to survive an attack of machine gun fire from a nest in the ruins of a church. When the smoke cleared, Michael Dunne 'fixed bayonet' and moved forward, dropping over the sandbags where he found a young German soldier, still alive. "My grandfather said the German boy's eyes were like water, a watery blue. The boy raised his hand to my grandfather, saying, "Kamerad," and my grandfather bayoneted him in the forehead," Gross recalled in an interview.





Caroline Dhavernas



Paul Gross as Sergeant Michael Dunne and Caroline Dhavernas as Nurse Sarah Mann.

## *Art is our chief means of breaking bread with the dead.*

– W.H. Auden

The battle of Passchendaele was a defining moment for Canada and its Armed Forces, and has become a legend for those whose ancestors fought there. Gross was moved by how many people came forward when they heard about the film, offering up family stories, personal articles, and letters written from the front lines. In particular he was impressed by a man who, on the first day of filming, showed up in his grandfather's uniform wanting to volunteer as an extra. Someone else sent us a watch worn by his great-grandmother who was a nurse in the Canadian Armed Forces. In tribute, the character of the nurse, played by Caroline Dhaverna, wears that same watch.

And the Canadian Army itself got involved. Some 40 or 50 army regulars and Reservists were part of the production team and occasionally acted as background performers. "They were unbelievable," said Gross. "Several of them pitched a tent and lived on the site during the shooting."

Gross added that unlike regular crew members, they "...came with their own command structure – all you had to say to the platoon leader was – move the guys – and then they're there. At one point, we had to move a rain truss, a big steel thing, very heavy – it was going to take two cranes and really slow us down. And the Colonel said, 'I'll take care of it.' At six in the morning we arrived on set to see the Canadian Armed Forces moving our rain truss across the Prairies, with the sun coming up and coyotes bounding behind them. That's not something you see every day," recalled Gross.

Remarkably, this is only the second feature film that Gross has directed (after *Men With Brooms*). He credits his experience working with director Charles Binamé (*H2O*, *Trojan Horse*) with teaching him the importance of preparation.

That scene is the opening sequence in *Passchendaele*, a groundbreaking new film which Gross produced, wrote, directed, and stars. Though much of the story is fictional, the character he plays is called Michael Dunne in tribute to his grandfather.

Recreating the conditions of that battle – on the T'suu Tina Nation Reserve outside of Calgary – was a monumental task for the production team. Miles of barbed wire, hundreds of dead trees, thousands of sandbags, and 22 truckloads of water were bought in daily to create a sea of liquid mud.

Before filming could begin, a controlled burn of 150 acres was executed to create a blackened landscape mimicking the original conditions.

"I don't know how they did it," Gross said, referring to the physical challenges the soldiers faced waist deep in mud with 100 pounds of gear on their backs, under the relentless pounding of enemy artillery. Says Gross, "You just keep thinking about the soldiers who would be told, 'You five guys go and stop that gun'. And off they go."





(Left to right:) Script Supervisor Nancy McDonald, Production Designer Carol Spier, Director Paul Gross, Costume Designer Wendy Partridge, Cinematographer Gregory Middleton.

Early in pre-production, Gross prepared a massive 'blueprint' for all the crews: A 200-page document detailing each scene, with source photos, drawings, performance, wardrobe and camera notes.

"The hardest thing is to get everyone on the same page," said Gross. "After you do though, you have to trust the people you're working with. I was lucky to be surrounded by people who are better and smarter than me, like our production designer Carol Spier, who is incredibly professional. There were no weak links," he stated.

At \$20 million (CDN) the film's budget is high for a Canadian feature, though Gross notes a Hollywood film similarly themed would probably cost at least \$100 million. Nevertheless, it took seven years for Gross and his producing partner Niv Fichman (*The Red Violin*) to raise the capital for the film. During that process of fundraising, they realized if the story were to remain a Canadian one, the money would have to be raised entirely within our own borders. Inevitably, that meant creating a new kind of funding structure.

Gross openly discussed his frustration with the existing Canadian model of film funding. He stated, "The current cap on public funding is \$7 or \$8 million (CDN), which limits our imagination in thinking about the size of the stories we can tell in Canada."

He noted that having an industry that is entirely reliant on government support from beginning to end is becoming unworkable.

Gross explained, "The citizenry comes to see this as an obligation they may or may not want to take part in, and as a consequence, they tend to resent support for the Arts as if it were some sort of welfare scheme. If what we want to do is shine a light on our unfolding national narrative, everyone should be involved – private and public sector, both."

In approaching the private sector, Gross was surprised to find tremendous interest in what we do. He suggests it may be time to revisit the unfairly maligned 'tax shelters' of a few years ago that he feels were hugely beneficial to the industry without which *Due South*, which he starred in, he speculated could not have been made without those funds.

Nevertheless, Gross doesn't regret not having a bigger budget.

"We decided we wanted the point of view in the battle scenes to be that of an average soldier, who couldn't see much more

than a few feet ahead of him. We wanted the audience to feel that kind of chaotic 'fog of war', the real 3-D horror show. If we'd had more money, we could've had stuff like speed rails and cable cams – which can run a camera above the action – the kind of technology that everyone knows is amazing, but it's expensive and time consuming. And probably, we wouldn't have used it in the end, because when the camera finally pulls back, to reveal the vast, corpse-strewn wasteland of the battlefield, the shot is extraordinarily powerful," he said.

At the end of filming, the real Army personnel that were acting in the film presented the crew with an inscribed artillery shell. Gross was especially moved by that experience realizing that some of those soldiers were being sent to Afghanistan, and may not return home.

"I thought, there's a direct line between my grandfather's soldiers to the guys today. Politics aside, it's a particular kind of sacrifice that's not fashionable to honour, but we should. I have great respect for them all," remarked Gross.

The battle of Passchendaele took place from July to November of 1917 and claimed the lives of nearly one million soldiers on both sides. The Canadian army alone lost 16,000 soldiers all in the final two weeks of the battle.

Four months later, the Allies ceded every inch of the small parcel of land they had won to the Germans.

*Passchendaele* opens the Toronto International Film Festival on September 4, 2008. It will be released in theatres in mid-October 2008. ■



**Susan Coyne** is an actor, author, playwright and screenwriter. As an actor, she has appeared in theatres across Canada, including the Stratford festival, Citadel Theatre, Tarragon Theatre and Soulpepper Theatre, of which she is a founding member. Her writing career began in 2001, when she published a bestselling childhood memoir, *Kingfisher Days*, which she later adapted as a play for the Tarragon Theatre.

She is a creator, and co-writer of *Slings and Arrows*, for which she received three Writers Guild of Canada awards, and three Geminis, including Best Supporting Actress.

# DINNER WITH CARLO

by Neil Crone

There's an old saying that goes something like, 'He could read the phone book and make it sound interesting...' and that's how I felt listening to Carlo Rota ordering from an Italian menu.

We were sitting in Terroni, one of his favourite haunts tucked away in the heart of Toronto. Carlo skillfully perused the wine list. Actually, caressing it is more like it. I can't speak for the beautiful young waitress serving us, but listening to his deep, sonorous voice rolling pluperfect 'r's and pronouncing the vintage names as though he were reciting a verse from Dante's work, I could barely stop myself from developing a crush on him.

The guy is good.

Carlo has spent much of his life in the company of good food and drink. Actually, Carlo has spent more time in the restaurant business than in the acting business, with predictably, just as much success.

To illustrate the point, shortly before our lunch, Carlo had just finished another interview with *Toronto Life Magazine* as one of the city's most recognizable celebrities. The wonderful irony is that they had done a similar spread on him some 16 years ago as the best Maitre D' in Toronto.

So what happened? How and, perhaps more importantly, why does a 30-year-old man want to make the leap from the top of his game in the service industry to show biz? I wondered if perhaps he had run afoul of the law and needed to hide out for a while. Most of us in the biz can attest to the near invisibility that one has as being 'number 56' on the call sheet.

According to Carlo, the reason for his change of industry was nothing as dramatic as I had imagined. He simply wanted a change, to see what else life had 'on the menu' as it were. And, what for most of us would be a groin-pulling leap, was, for the best Maitre D' in Toronto, an elegant step.

This is my third year working with Carlo on the television series *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. Prior to the show, we shared some time on the set of Ken Finkleman's *At the Hotel*. So, I know him fairly well. Still, one has only to sit with him for a few moments – indeed the time it might take to enjoy a dish of melon and prosciutto – to understand how the same charm, poise and remarkable empathy that made him such a sought-after Maitre D', now had directors, producers and all manner of VIPs putting his number on speed dial for a different reason.



## CARLO ROTA

...why does a 30-year-old man want to make the leap from the top of his game in the service industry to show biz?

Carlo is an ever-changing enigma. At the beginning of his career, his 'mafioso' good looks landed him plum 'bad guy' roles almost immediately. Carlo is also an imp. I've seen him like this too. On the set of *Little Mosque* no one is more apt to wise crack or play around than Carlo.

None of this, of course, is to say that his career has come easily to him or that he doesn't work at it. Carlo is as passionate about his work as he is about a good Bordeaux. He expressed his thoughts on what he thinks acting is all about.

Carlo explained, "An actor really has only one job and that's to make the role as compelling as you can."

When I questioned him on how he is able to create such diverse and compelling characters as *Little Mosque's* Yasir Hamoudi and *24's* Morris O'Brian he remarked, "My greatest source of inspiration is my family. We are informed at a very early age by the people we find ourselves closest to and who we grow up with. That's where we go to access those core emotions that acting demands from us."





Sophie Giraud

Carlo Rota opposite Paul Sun-Hyung Lee in a scene from CBC Television's hit comedy, *Little Mosque on the Prairie*.

The long hours he spent working shoulder to shoulder with family in the Rota restaurant business have a profound impact on the choices he makes as an actor. And certainly his career has not been without its share of challenges.

Carlo recalls a seminal moment on the set of *Thirty-two short films about Glenn Gould*. As a new and very inexperienced actor, he found himself sharing scenes with the likes of Colm Feore, Don McKellar and Allegra Fulton; some pretty seasoned actors with serious chops. He says he was, "very nervous", but that after his close-ups and coverage, he sensed his colleagues had some real respect for his acting abilities and he began to think, 'hey, maybe I can do this.'

That was 15 years ago, and yes, I think most of us would agree that Carlo can do this and do it very well. Still with all the remarkable success he is enjoying, the challenges remain. Recently, the actor with no formal theatrical training was terrified at the thought of playing Othello. He said, "Frankly, it scared the codpiece off of me."

But Carlo is a big believer in walking toward what scares you. (I would agree. That's how I found out where babies come from) – I can think of no better advice for anyone in this business where it seems, almost daily, people, problems and challenges do their best to whittle down our courage and make us wonder, even after decades on the job, if we can still... do this.

I would add a few words that Carlo didn't mention, but which I think he embodies nonetheless: walk strongly, confidently and happily, toward what scares you... and try the calamari... it's fantastic. ■



Actor/writer **Neil Crone** has performed in dozens of television and radio commercials, TV shows and is the voice of numerous cartoon characters including YTV's *Erky-Perky*. His feature film roles include *Stir of Echoes 2 – The Dead Speak*, *Hollywoodland*, *Eating Buccaneers* and his TV roles include *Little Mosque on the Prairie* and *The Summit*. Neil is a Second City Mainstage alumnus.

## Contact ACTRA...

### ACTRA National Office

#### ACTRA Performers' Rights Society

300 – 625 Church St | Toronto ON | M4Y 2G1

TEL: (416) 489-1311/1-800-387-3516

FAX: (416) 644-1544

EMAIL: national@actra.ca | EMAIL: prs@actra.ca

EMAIL: prsrd@actra.ca (SRD-SOUND RECORDING DIVISION)

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

### Union of B.C. Performers

300 – 856 Homer St | Vancouver BC | V6B 2W5

TEL: (604) 689-0727 | FAX: (604) 689-1145

EMAIL: info@ubcp.com | [www.ubcp.com](http://www.ubcp.com)

### ACTRA Alberta

304 – 1300 8 Street SW | Calgary AB | T2R 1B2

TEL: (403) 228-3123/1-866-913-3123

FAX: (403) 228-3299

EMAIL: alberta@actra.ca | [www.actraalberta.com](http://www.actraalberta.com)

### ACTRA Saskatchewan

212 – 1808 Smith Street | Regina SK | S4P 2N4

TEL: (306) 757-0885 | FAX: (306) 359-0044

EMAIL: saskatchewan@actra.ca

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

### ACTRA Manitoba

203 – 245 McDermot Avenue

Winnipeg MB | R3B 0S6

TEL: (204) 339-9750 | FAX: (204) 947-5664

EMAIL: manitoba@actra.ca

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

### ACTRA Toronto Performers

200 – 625 Church St | Toronto ON | M4Y 2G1

TEL: (416) 928-2278 | FAX: (416) 928-0429

EMAIL: info@actratoronto.com

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

### ACTRA Ottawa

The Arts Court | 170 – 2 Daly Avenue

Ottawa ON | K1N 6E2

TEL: (613) 565-2168 | FAX: (613) 565-4367

EMAIL: ottawa@actra.ca | [www.actraottawa.ca](http://www.actraottawa.ca)

### ACTRA Montreal

530 – 1450 City Councillors Street

Montreal QC | H3A 2E6

TEL: (514) 844-3318 | FAX: (514) 844-2068

EMAIL: montreal@actra.ca

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

### ACTRA Maritimes

103 – 1660 Hollis Street | Halifax NS | B3J 1V7

TEL: (902) 420-1404 | FAX: (902) 422-0589

EMAIL: maritimes@actra.ca

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

### ACTRA Newfoundland/Labrador

685 Water Street | P.O. Box 575

St. John's NF | A1C 5K8

TEL: (709) 722-0430 | FAX: (709) 722-2113

EMAIL: newfoundland@actra.ca

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



# STARTING UP, STARING OUT AND STARTING OVER:

# WOMEN as creators...

Interviews by Jo Bates, Ruth Lawrence and Dawna Wightman, compilation by Dawna Wightman

When actor, writer and director Sarah Polley's directorial debut *Away from Her* garnered international recognition – Oscar and Gemini nods among them – it became a perfect example of how Canadian actors can, and do, produce phenomenal projects.

Polley's exceptional success is also a good reminder to us all that redefining ourselves as full-fledged creators – in careers, which include writing, directing and producing – also requires the courage and tenacity to believe in, and market our own projects.

Polley's success got us wondering, 'how many other women in our membership are pursuing such courageous ventures?'

As it turns out, there are many.

We wanted to find out how, and why, they do it. We set out to talk with three phenomenal ACTRA members from across the country – all at different stages in their creative careers. These women, like Sarah, serve as inspiration to us all.

## SHERRY WHITE

Although she's relatively new to working behind the camera, actor, writer, producer and director, Sherry White has had quite a year! *Diamonds in a Bucket* is a short film Sherry wrote and directed, which played at major festivals across North America and in the Bahamas. The film won best short at the 'Female Eye Festival' in April 2008. White also co-wrote the CBC drama series *MVP*, which captured a dedicated audience with its intriguing storylines and earthy characters. Unfortunately the series was not renewed by the public broadcaster but fortunately was picked up by an American network. Then there's *Down to the Dirt*, a feature film Sherry co-wrote, which was selected to be

shown as part of the 'Perspectives Canada Series' at the Cannes Film Festival. Recently, Sherry received funding from Telefilm to direct *Crackie*, her first low-budget feature film to be released in the Fall of 2008. It's not because the script won the WGC's Jim Burt prize that *Crackie* is particularly close to Sherry's heart, she says she loves it because, "It was created on my terms."

Growing up in Stephenville, Newfoundland, Sherry earned her BFA in theatre at Grenfell College. Soon afterward, she co-wrote the critically acclaimed play, *The House Wife* (*Signature Editions*), and she said, "From then on I pursued writing, first as a means to perform, and then that slowly shifted."

A feeling of the lack of control over her work choices in acting led Sherry to write and direct. Sherry admits everything has a price. She remarked, "Writing is a lonely job... there is something so great about being hired, and someone saying, 'Hey, you're good, I want you to be part of my project,' but when you are on your own, you have to tell yourself you are good, because nobody else is around to validate you. And there are so many lonely hours."

Sherry knows how hard it can be to turn that bit part down when you're hard up for cash, but has come to believe, that going down that path is 'too humbling and without any rewards.'

Sherry's writing has produced a different life picture for her. She recalled, "As an actor, you have to be able to tap into,



Sherry White with Stephen Reizes.



Tamara Podemski won the Special Jury Prize for Acting – the first Canadian actor to win an acting prize at Sundance.

# WOMEN as creators...

humanity and put yourself in someone else's shoes and explore the truth of the emotion in any given scenario."

Sherry's advice to industry hopefuls is to, "Take workshops. Submit your scripts for things. Meet people of like minds and compete with them. Lovingly, let them push you to be better."

## TAMARA PODEMSKI

Tamara Podemski (*Bear Clan*) is of Saulteaux (a branch of Algonkian Nation from the Great Lakes region) and Israeli heritage, born and raised in Toronto, Canada.

A creator in every sense of the word, Tamara Podemski is an actor, singer, choreographer, songwriter and television scriptwriter. Her newest comedy, *Honeyland* is a television series co-written with her sister Jennifer Podemski. It's currently being pitched to several networks, including Fox in the U.S.

With more than 15 years in the business and many prestigious awards under her belt, Tamara is on her way to 'breaking into' the U.S. film industry. While shooting the television series *Rabbit Falls* in Saskatoon last summer, the Podemski sisters began to conceptualize a television series that would enable them to work together as writers and actors and *Honeyland* was born.

Determined to make the project Tamara moved to Los Angeles with a promising television pilot in hand. Together the sisters presented their ideas to the big networks, despite their fear that Hollywood may be an ugly, commercial, money-monster. She said, "I'm always afraid it's going to be art versus the machine, but, I hope I'm wrong."

As a thriving actor with ever broadening career aspirations, Tamara's advice for anyone who wants to become successful is to be a 'creator'.

She explained, "Give yourself licence to be a creator, period – opposed to, I'm 'just' a songwriter or 'just' an actor.' I thought that was... my box."

Tamara continues to make a name for herself as a talented writer in the Canadian and American television and film business because of her talent, perseverance and ability to explore her skills and talents.

## KATRIN BOWEN

As a working actor, writer, director, singer and songwriter, Katrin Bowen is indeed a creative dynamo. Her short films – *Edna Brown*, *Sand Castle*, *Almost Forgot My Bones* and *Someone* – have each won numerous awards and continue to garner worldwide attention.

Without a lot of 'meaty' roles being offered to women, and the need to keep her creative spirit alive, Bowen started to write parts for herself. Sketch comedies and different pieces for television began to surface. She started to research and pitch ideas for documentaries and that's how *Linden* came about: A one-hour documentary for CBC focussing on the Holdeman Mennonites.

Katrin reveals, "The experience of writing a one-pager, sending it out, and then receiving the money to shoot it, is extremely liberating. This experience, unlike acting, has nothing to do with how I look or any kind of casting stereotype. Writing and directing gives me the opportunity to create stories and roles that didn't exist before."

Katrin says the training she received as an actor at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City enriches her writing and directing in a concrete way. It enables her to write compelling characters and ensures every line and action serves a goal. And for Katrin, the rehearsal process is the best part of making any film. The performance revelations that can be flushed out in a relaxed, explorative environment are not only fun, but gold to her.

As a woman, she found directing a challenge at first because she found herself defending directorial decisions while trying to maintain her duties to the cast and production design crew and keeping tight schedules. As her confidence grew, it became easier for her to win a crew's trust.

Katrin feels the challenge facing women directors is to hold true to their vision and keep conquering their own fears. Film is



If you want to learn more about how to turn your idea into a script, check out the ACTRA National Women's Committee webpage at [www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca) and click Resources to find opportunities to develop your own ideas and become your own creator.

Katrin and DP Cliff Hokansen on the set of the music video, *Financially Strapped*.



one of the most powerful mediums in shaping attitudes and lives, and as long as directors are mainly men, this will be a man's world.

Even with directing and writing under her belt, Katrin still loves to act. Directing has given her a new appreciation for the pressures of being on the directing side, which, in turn, has made her a more respectful actor. She says, "I'm here. I'm half an hour early. I know my lines. I've made some choices, but I'm open."

What's next on the 'Bowen agenda'? Nothing less than conquering the Cannes Film Festival! Pitch, network and make her dream of producing three features in three years a reality.

## WHO'S NEXT?

This country, needs more women like Sherry White, Tamara Podemski and Katrin Bowen: Women who are 'starting up, staring out and starting over' over successful careers. It may be a coincidence that all three of these women completed the Women in the Director's Chair (WIDC) program. If you're interested in taking strides to expand your career, the WIDC is open to all ACTRA/UBCP members. It's time for your stories to be seen and heard around the world. Take their advice and start marketing your ideas. Take control of your career instead of passively waiting to get a part. Write your own material. Direct your own career. Act on your instincts and sing your own praises. Who else is going to do it for you? And, how else will you discover your full talents? ■



Jo Bates



Ruth Lawrence



Dawna Wightman

ACTRA members Jo Bates, Ruth Lawrence and Dawna Wightman collaborated on this article. They represent a Canadian span: Ruth as an ACTRA Newfoundland member and National Councillor, Jo Bates as Elected Director on the Executive Board at UBCP and Dawna Wightman as an ACTRA Toronto member who was recently a rural Eastern Ontario transplant to Toronto's Beach. All are active members of the ACTRA National Women's Committee.

To learn more about ACTRA's Women's Committee, please contact Committee Chair Ruth Lawrence at [rlawrence@actra.ca](mailto:rlawrence@actra.ca).



## WIDC 2009 is calling all actors and women directors!

The acclaimed **Women in the Director's Chair** workshop is a one-of-a-kind professional development offering in Canada. The workshop runs from Jan 15 to Feb 1, 2009 in beautiful Banff, Alberta.

**Deadline women directors:**  
September 30, 2008

**Deadline actors & crew:**  
October 31, 2008

For more information and application forms:  
[www.creativewomenworkshops.com](http://www.creativewomenworkshops.com)

**THE WOMEN IN THE  
DIRECTOR'S CHAIR  
WORKSHOP**



## Alberta

by Jennifer Blaney, Branch Representative

It has been an exciting spring season for ACTRA Alberta. We completed our official amalgamation process, name change, and we were granted Successor Trade Union status by the Alberta Labour Relations Board.

We also concluded the very first ACTRA Alberta Branch Council elections with a brand new election process. Congratulations to the new Council (many of whom have served on past Edmonton and Calgary Councils, and saw us through this interesting journey)! And many thanks also to those Councillors who have served ACTRA Alberta, but who have chosen to retire from ACTRA politics

– at least for the time being!

Our Council includes representation from both Northern and Southern Alberta, and we are very much looking forward to our first face-to-face meeting in August. We have a few projects and activities in mind for the coming year that should keep our committees busy and our members interested.

The production season will also keep us busy in Alberta, straight through until December, as we are thankful hosts to a number of television series this year and we have high hopes that they will all return in 2009.

We also remain optimistic for a serious change to our 'Film Incentive Program' in the next provincial budget cycle that will once again make us a competitive location. ■

## Newfoundland/ Labrador

by Marlene Cahill, Branch Representative

It has been a good year in Newfoundland so far for production – we began the year with two feature films being shot here; *Screamers II* was shot between Newfoundland and Calgary, and *Love and Savagery* was shot on location in Ireland and finished in Newfoundland. The feature film entitled *Diverted* began shooting in July and will be followed by a Telefilm 'First Directors' film in September.

*Down to the Dirt* was selected as one of 10 Canadian feature films to be part of the 'Perspective Canada' program at Cannes Film Festival in May. This was presented by Telefilm Canada for the International Buyers market.

Cape Fund, the artists' emergency fund founded by ACTRA Newfoundland, celebrates its 40th anniversary and continues to build momentum. To date, the fund has raised \$32,000 with \$24,500 paid out to artists in need. We are delighted that AFBS continues to contribute to the fund.

ACTRA Newfoundland held a weekend of interviews with some of our senior members (and some not so senior), in early June as part of the National Archive Project. We gathered some amazing vintage footage and were fortunate to hear some amazing stories. ■

## Montreal

by Don Jordan, President

Our 2008 ACTRA Awards and Short Film Festival was a resounding success this year as more than 300 members and industry guests turned out to the Just For Laughs Museum on May 10 for a splendid ceremony and fabulous party, celebrating the work of our very talented performers.

**Ellen David** won the Outstanding Female Performance award for her passionate portrayal in the film *Surviving My Mother*. **Andrew Walker** nabbed the



Des Walsh

**Bob Joy** presented **Paul O'Neill** with ACTRA Newfoundland's Award of Excellence. Paul was one of the first branch members and through his efforts as a producer at CBC Radio gave many of our members their start in writing and performing.





Don Jordan presenting Ranee Lee with ACTRA Montreal's Award of Excellence.

The 5th Annual ACTRA Short Film Festival had fantastic attendance this year as more than 150 people packed into a screening room at the Just For Laughs to watch some clever and enjoyable films. **Vanessa Matsui's** *Call Back* earned the Audience Choice award, and **Robert Higden** was given the Jury Selection award for his short, *Haley's Gals*.

Unfortunately, not everything is sunny this summer in 'La Belle Province'. The much publicized departure of two major Hollywood films, *2012* and *Nine*, which were expected to shoot here this year, have left the studios empty in Montreal and that has some folks panicking.

All of us in the industry have watched the SAG negotiations, and WGA for that matter, with great trepidation, knowing full well the affect foreign production has on livelihoods north of the border.

Given the opportunities that we, as ACTRA members, have this coming year to effect some real change to our own broadcasting regulations, I think we can all agree that a strong, reliable indigenous Canadian film and television industry is not just ideal, it is imperative for our survival as artists. ■

## Ottawa

by Chris Cornish, Branch Representative

ACTRA Ottawa's 50th anniversary year kicked off to a good start with news of a \$10-million, 26-episode TV series coming to town. The MUSE production *Dad's In the Attic* (AKA *Family Biz*) is the biggest-budget production to shoot in Ottawa in many years. Last year, a record number of 11 MOWs were produced locally, but unfortunately this year only one has been produced to date. Low-budget feature *Smash Cut*, by local indie producer Lee Demarbre, was slated as a non-union production earlier this spring, however we are glad to report that they came on board and re-cast the project with local ACTRA members.

Earlier in the year, the Lorraine Ansell ACTRA Award of Excellence was presented to local performer and filmmaker **Derek Diorio**

Outstanding Male Performance award for his riveting performance as a neo-Nazi in the film *Steel Toes*. And, **Rick Jones** took the award for Outstanding Voice Performance for his incredible work in the animated series *What's With Andy?*

I was especially proud to present the ACTRA Award of Excellence to a dear friend of mine – the exceptionally talented and beautiful **Ranee Lee**. A Canadian legend in jazz and a renowned actress, Ranee is truly deserving of such recognition by ACTRA.

Our very own National Vice-President, **Tyrone Benskin**, presented Zoe and Jeremy Spry with the Community Builder Award, in recognition of their father, Robin Spry's significant career as a writer, director and producer in Montreal.



Derek Diorio, 2008 recipient of the Lorraine Ansell ACTRA Award of Excellence.

## Ottawa continued

at an evening gala held at the National Library and Archives of Canada Theatre. The evening included the screening of several short films highlighting the talents of our local members followed by the presentation of the award and a reception.

In April we hosted a 2-day Auditioning for the Camera workshop with well-known casting director Marsha Chesley. She was thrilled with the calibre of our members and commented that it was the best class she'd ever taught (she may say that to all her classes but in this case we think she's right on).

Our May AGM and social drew an enthusiastic crowd and included an informative presentation from Bob Underwood on behalf of AFBS. We look forward to rounding out our 50th anniversary year with a gala in the fall to celebrate our important milestone. ■

## UBCP

by Howard Storey, President

The UBCP held its Annual General Meeting on Sunday, July 20, 2008. We celebrated our achievements made possible with our member's ongoing support and active participation in the union, and reviewed initiatives already in place as well as an assessment of our plans to address the challenges we face in the industry. As working performers, our objectives are always focused on exploring opportunities. These opportunities can continue to be expanded by remaining committed to our role as industry partners, and leaders, in maintaining a sustainable and vibrant industry in B.C., and across the country.

The AGM granted us all the privilege of honouring two long standing members: for their participation in the life of the Union and for their significant contributions and achievements as performers. We presented the Life Member Award to **Donnelly Rhodes** and the John Juliani Award of Excellence to **Babz Chula**.

We have demonstrated our fortitude, preparedness and solidarity – building



Carolyn Arbuckle

On the Ottawa set of *Smash Cut* with **David Hess, Michael Berryman and Peter Dillon**.

on the success of the last round of BCMPA negotiations and already preparing for its renewal this coming fall and into next spring. We have been involved in negotiations of our National Commercial Agreement (and Local and Regional Addendum), the B.C. Animation Agreement and have prepared our first draft Video Game Agreement in order to capture work opportunities for members in this growing sector of the industry.

Our members made this, and more, possible and we look forward to their continued involvement. We are stronger together and we encourage their participation on behalf of the well-being of performers throughout our jurisdiction, across the country and around the world.

These sentiments are not merely an idea or a philosophy. They must be our reality. It is only by functioning strong locally and thinking smart globally that we will foster the respect and remuneration that our creative contribution so rightly deserves.

The UBCP will hold elections later in the year and it is time once again for members interested in giving back to their union to consider running for election for the new 2009–2011 term. ■



Sharon Davidson

Howard Storey presented the Life Member Award to Donnelly Rhodes.



Babz Chula received the John Juliani Award of Excellence.



# Toronto

by Karl Pruner, President

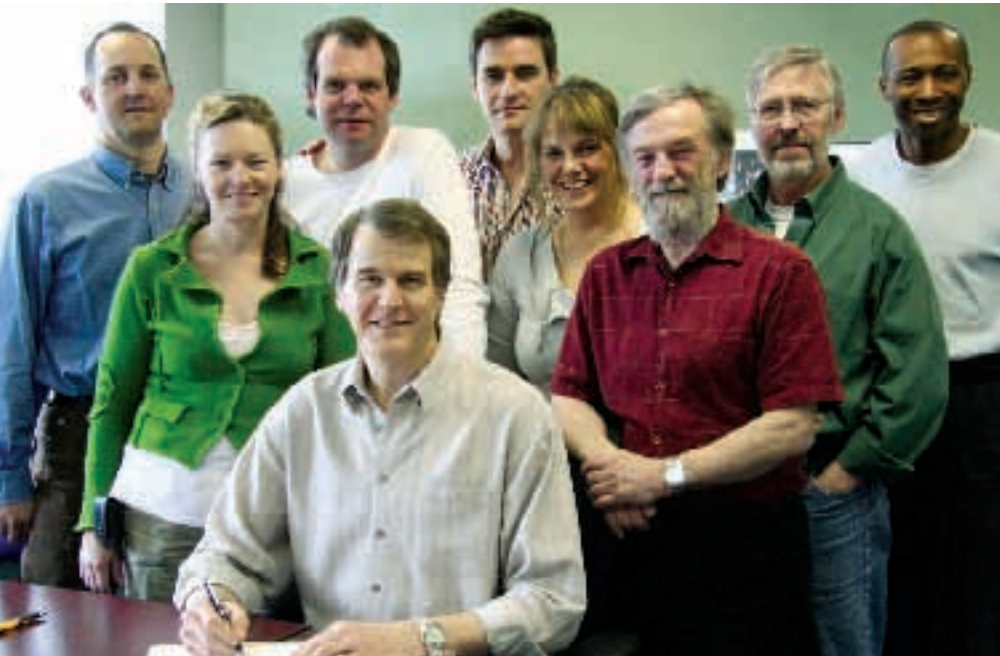
It's hard to believe it's been just over two years since the idea for a credit union, built around the needs of performers, was first planted into the minds of the Toronto Council.

Since then, this incredible enterprise has firmly taken root in the hearts and minds of all of us here at ACTRA Toronto. The credit union you've heard so much about is finally 'ready for primetime'.

ACTRA Toronto is celebrating a decision by the provincial regulator for credit unions that gives final approval to the *Creative Arts Savings and Credit Union (Creative Arts)* to begin selling investment shares. This approval marks a key milestone in a long process spearheaded by ACTRA Toronto, together with other film and television industry guilds and unions.

The credit union is now poised to begin operations as soon as it raises \$2.5 million in start-up capital by selling investment shares. These shares, which will be RRSP eligible, can earn interest up to 1.25% above the average five year GIC rate. For a new credit union like *Creative Arts*, investment shares are vital to its formation. They provide the bulk of the equity capital needed to ensure the safety of member deposits, support the credit union's asset base as it grows, and finance the institution's operating costs until such time as expenses can be met by revenues on an ongoing basis.

Credit Union Working Group members proudly signing ACTRA Toronto's application for a credit union. (Left to right:) John Nelles, David Macniven, Heather Allin, Karl Pruner, Peter Keleghan, Lyn Mason Green, Wayne Robson, Austin Schatz, Stephan Graham Simpson.



Kim Hume

This is an exciting opportunity for professionals in the film and television industry, where the fact that you are a performer marks the beginning of your conversation with the credit union, not the end of it.

For more information on the credit union's planned products and services visit [www.creativeartscu.com](http://www.creativeartscu.com) and see what the future has in store for all of us. ■

# Winnipeg

by Wayne Nicklas, President

The official document marking incorporation of ACTRA Manitoba is framed and has been hanging on the office wall for so long no one really notices it much. But last year Rob Macklin, our branch rep, astutely pointed out that the date on that document was June 13, 1958. Reaction from council was swift and unanimous – we must commemorate this important date to the biggest and best of our ability.

Fear of the number 13 is strong in today's world. More than 80% of high-rises lack a 13th floor. Many airports skip the 13th gate. Hospitals and hotels regularly have no room number 13. And as for Friday, it is well known among Christians as the day Jesus was crucified. Many also believe that it is when Eve tempted Adam with forbidden fruit and that Abel was slain by Cain on Friday the 13th. Nonetheless we plunged ahead because in Manitoba we don't believe in superstition – 'we think it brings bad luck'.



Sharon Bajer, Evelyne Anderson (Vic Cowie Award recipient) and Robb Paterson

And so it was on Friday the 13th of June, over 100 members and guests proudly and joyously celebrated the 50th anniversary of ACTRA, Manitoba. After a lengthy struggle with a testy archivist at Concordia University and an indifferent staffer at CBC, president Sharon Bajer was able to obtain an original radio drama script that had been performed by ACTRA members in 1958. A group of our current members performed it live at our celebration complete with sound effects and ambience. This re-creation was warmly received by all and left those of us old enough still pondering "where the yellow went when we brush our teeth with Pepsodent". National Vice-President Tyrone Benskin attended on behalf of ACTRA National, bringing warm words and a generous gift to commemorate the occasion. Eating, drinking, laughing and dancing to a live jazz band went on well into the night as vocally gifted members took turns at the microphone singing their favourite standards.

Members also generously attended our AGM on that evening and after reports from officers we presented our annual Vic Cowie award for lifetime commitment to the Arts community in Manitoba. This year's recipient was **Evie Anderson**, one of the most beloved ACTRA members in our branch. Her membership dates back to the 1950s and she spoke eloquently about our branch history and the individuals who created it.

As usual life is beautiful in Manitoba and our ACTRA branch continues in general good health. But on the downside our branch is experiencing a remarkable lack of production this summer, so maybe there is something to this Friday the 13th thing. ■

Every ACTRA member is encouraged to get into the groove of viewing your work history on a monthly or quarterly basis.

**ACTRA SYSTEM - Work History - Search - Windows Internet Explorer**

http://stageandmembers/memberhistory.asp

**ACTRA** **MEMBER** **YOU ARE IN: ACTRA NATIONAL**

**MEMBERS-HOME**  
 VIEW SUMMARY INFORMATION  
 UPDATE YOUR PERSONAL INFO.  
 VIEW YOUR WORK HISTORY  
 BILLS ASSESSMENT

**SUSAN T SMITH'S WORK HISTORY**

**YOUR ID INFORMATION**

Member Type: Full Member  
 Stage Name: SUSAN T SMITH  
 Canadian Resident: Yes  
 Member Date: 4-07-1998

Member Status: Active  
 Login Name: SUSAN SMITH  
 Password: [blacked out]

**YOUR HISTORICAL WORK HISTORY INFORMATION**

Enter Date Range To View: From 01 Jan 2003 To 31 Dec 2003  
 CLEAR ASSESSMENT YEAR: [input field] Print Work History

Production Title / Sponsor	HRP	Gross Earnings	HRP Employer	Insurance
FLASHPOINT		6,837.38		183.72
THE BRIDGE		452.85		32.40
TOTAL RECALL 2070	Y			
MOLSON CANADIAN (EXPECTED, UNEXPECTED)				
THE TROJAN HORSE	Y			
TERRY	Y			

Gross Cash Paid	RRSP Contribution
\$12,536.17	\$875.02
RRSP Deduction	Workable Dates Distribution
\$376.00	\$273.05

**ACTRA**



# Online work histories the ball is in your court

by Ferne Downey, ACTRA Treasurer

**Did you know that you can view your work history in your ACTRA Membership System Profile?**

Effective this year, AFBS will no longer be responsible for work histories – ACTRA is. The ball is now in ACTRA's court. We will be mindful of the careful transition necessary to consider moving from snail mail to online review of work histories on ACTRA Membership System (AMS). But you're in charge. No matter where you are working, no matter how far from home – AMS is available to you.

To access the glorious ACTRA Membership System (AMS), you will need a password – if you're a Face To Face Online user, you already have one. If you need a password, it's easy as pie to get – email: [f2f@actra.ca](mailto:f2f@actra.ca) (the password is yours until you choose to change it – the old restriction about changing it annually is gone, gone, gone).

Every member is encouraged to get into the groove of viewing your work history on a monthly or quarterly basis. And not just to please your accountant – to please yourself. ACTRA has been responsible for processing all IPA remittances since April 2007 and the National Commercial Agreement (NCA) since August 2005. (Naturally AFBS still updates the insurance and retirement info that is received from ACTRA on their

website [www.actrafrat.com](http://www.actrafrat.com), but it is only the info that is relevant to your insurance and retirement monies. ACTRA is the keeper of all the detail of your work history – and there are many fields of info – keep scrolling and you'll see what I mean.)

As of this year, ACTRA has a dual responsibility: 1) the ongoing responsibility of ensuring that all data in member work histories is 100% accurate; 2) the new responsibility for work history reporting starts with this calendar year (2008). So, now, if you find an error or glaring omission in your work history, call ACTRA and ACTRA staff will track it down for you.

Realistically, the data is entered into AMS within a range of time (as quickly as possible is the administrative goal) but the time does vary – the quickest turnaround being the week after your work date to up to three weeks later from some of the more far-flung locations. So review your Full ACTRA member work history online regularly. It's also a wonderful way to keep current with your PRS income. And being able to print out an accurate work history for your year end will make life somewhat less stressful at tax time. (If your year end is not Dec. 31, you have the flexibility to print it whatever way serves your need.) ■

*Being able to print out an accurate work history for your year end will make life somewhat less stressful at tax time.*

## Once you have your AMS password, here's how to access your work history:

- go to [www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca)
- choose a role – double click on Member (top centre of home page)
- enter your user name and password; then click on log in
- select ACTRA Membership System – from menu at top left of screen
- once in the Membership System select “view your work history”
- you can view your work history information by date range or assessment year
- to print your work history- click on “print” next to the printer icon

Gross Earnings ▼	RRSP Engager ▼	Insurance Engager ▼	Member Contribution ▼	Working Dues ▼	Work Date ▼
6,867.38	480.72	343.37	206.02	154.52	17-Apr-2008
462.85	32.40	23.14	13.89	10.42	11-May-2008
493.88	29.63	14.82	14.82	9.88	29-Jun-1998
2,321.31	162.49	116.07	92.85	46.43	27-Aug-2007
612.75	42.89	30.64	18.38	12.26	02-Oct-2006
1827.00	127.89	91.35	30.94	36.54	Jun 07, 2003

# applause



*Flashpoint* cast Hugh Dillon, Amy Jo Johnson, Enrico Colantoni & David Paetkau.

Courtesy of CTV

## **Flashpoint debuts at #1 in Canada and the U.S.**

Canadian police drama *Flashpoint* won its Friday primetime spot both on CTV in Canada and on CBS in the U.S. for its debut on July 11. The pilot drew more than 1 million Canadian viewers and 8 million U.S. viewers. Kudos to our stars and to ACTRA member creators **Stephanie Morgenstern** and **Mark Ellis**. Said **Stephen Waddell** to *The Hollywood Reporter*, "It shouldn't be a surprise that a Canadian production can do so well in the U.S. We are great storytellers. *Flashpoint's* success is a proud moment for all Canadians." The 13-part *Flashpoint* is the first Canadian drama series since *Due South* to air in network primetime in both Canada and the U.S. ■



## **Carol Off to be honoured with ACTRA's John Drainie Award**

**Award recognizes distinguished contribution to Canadian broadcasting**

"Carol Off is one of our country's finest and most prolific journalists," said **Richard Hardacre**, ACTRA National President. "From her hard-hitting TV documentaries for CBC's *The National*, which have won numerous awards, to the sharp wit and intellect she brings to interviews on CBC radio's *As It Happens*, Ms. Off's journalistic style reveals a deep humanity in the stories she tells about Canadians and people around the world."

ACTRA's John Drainie Award has been presented since 1968 to a person who has made a distinguished contribution to Canadian broadcasting. John Drainie was one of Canada's most celebrated and well-known actors. Ms. Off joins an illustrious list of past recipients that includes Wendy Mesley, David Suzuki, Shelagh Rogers, Pierre Berton, Mavor Moore, Knowlton Nash, Peter Gzowski, Barbara Frum and Vicki Gabereau among others. ■

## **Congratulations**

ACTRA Alberta Branch Rep Jennifer Blaney was selected to attend the prestigious Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference, held in June 2008. ■





# applause

## Cheers to Mathew Stongeagle, Kayleigh Shikanai and Andrea Menard: SMPIA Award Winners

ACTRA Saskatchewan celebrated its 40th anniversary in April as a part of the Saskatchewan Motion Picture Industry Association Showcase Awards (SMPIA), and was presented with a special achievement award. Over 400 people attended and cheered ACTRA members **Mathew Stongeagle, Kayleigh Shikanai and Andrea Menard** as they accepted performance awards.

Saskatoon performer and writer Andrea Menard (*Rabbit Falls, Moccassin Flats*) was the big winner of the night. *The Velvet Devil*, which she wrote, starred in and produced, won 11 awards! ■

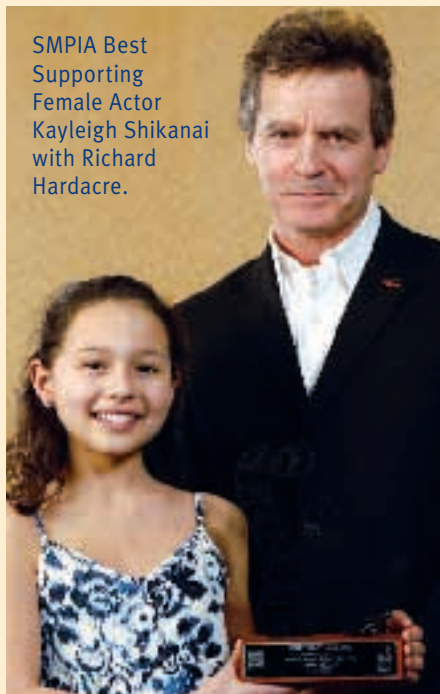
*Below:* ACTRA Saskatchewan member #000001 **Jean Freeman**, ACTRA Saskatchewan councillor **George Grassick** and Saskatchewan producer Rhonda Baker. Jean accepted the SMPIA institutional achievement award in recognition of ACTRA Saskatchewan's 40th anniversary.



Karen Hines with then Banff Executive Director Jennifer Harkness.

## ACTRA member Karen Hines wins WIDC Banff Fellowship

Kudos to Karen for beating out many high-calibre applicants for this year's Women in the Director's Chair Banff Fellowship. She is a *Second City* alumna and an award-winning writer, performer and director. She co-starred in **Ken Finkleman's** *Married Life*, *Foreign Objects* and three seasons on the Emmy Award-winning satire *The Newsroom*. ■



SMPIA Best Supporting Female Actor Kayleigh Shikanai with Richard Hardacre.



Photos by Call Fehr



Left: Gabrielle Miller spoke on behalf of Canadian culture at the Vancouver Quadra candidates meeting.



Above: National Councillor Jani Lauzon took centre stage at the CLC convention.

Right: R.H. Thomson spoke to media, characterizing our broadcasting system as being about "Canadians talking to Canadians."

Below: Robb Wells and Julie Stewart at CRTC hearings.



### Canadian stars fight for Canadian programming at CRTC

Richard Hardacre, Julie Stewart and Robb Wells took ACTRA's fight for more drama on television to the CRTC in April. The regulator held public hearings on the regulatory framework for cable and satellite services in addition to specialty and pay channels.

"We need more Canada on TV. Broadcasters will not spend on drama unless they are regulated to do so. We know this from the fallout of the CRTC's disastrous 1999 Television Policy that caused English-Canadian drama to virtually disappear from primetime conventional TV," said Wells, star and writer of the hit show *The Trailer Park Boys*.

"Canadian culture on the small screen is at a crossroads. If the ecosystem of CRTC rules is dismantled, it will be the death knell for Canadian culture and our sovereignty," said Julie Stewart, star of *Cold Squad*.

ACTRA maintains that strong rules must remain in place in order to achieve the cultural objectives of the *Broadcasting Act*. To view our CRTC demands, visit the ACTRA website.

### Competition Report sells Canada out

Our cultural sovereignty is under threat if the recommendations in the report, *Compete To Win*, are implemented, says ACTRA. *Compete to Win* is a race to the bottom that proposes to sell Canada to the highest bidder. The report from the Competition Policy Review Panel recommends reviewing foreign investment restrictions for cultural industries and opening our telecommunications and broadcasting industries to more foreign ownership. Foreign interests can already own up to 46.7% of media companies.

Read ACTRA's news release at [www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca).

### Canadian Labour Congress unanimously endorses action on culture

ACTRA's activism took centre stage at the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) convention in May, when the cultural resolution we'd put forward as part of the CLC's Media Caucus was the first item for debate from the convention floor. Delegates attending the convention, representing more than

3 million workers from across Canada, unanimously endorsed the resolution calling for government action on a range of issues including limiting foreign ownership of media companies, denouncing media convergence, increasing the value of film and television tax credits, fixing the crisis in Canadian dramatic television programming and deleting the censorship provisions from Bill C-10. ACTRA sent its full complement of delegates from across the country to the week-long convention. ACTRA and the CLC Media Caucus held a joint news conference hosted by actor **R.H. Thomson**, drawing attention to our work together and the importance of culture to all workers in Canada, gaining coverage in the *Globe and Mail*.

### Send a message to Prime Minister Stephen Harper

Our media is our message: Keep it Canadian! Many of Canada's big media companies are lobbying the government for permission to sell out to American interests. If Ottawa allows this, decisions about what we see and hear will be made in boardrooms in New York and L.A., not in Canada. If we lose control of our media,





Chris Faulkner



David Gonczol



David Gonczol

Above: Wendy Crewson and Sarah Polley called on the Senate Committee to fix Bill C-10.

# ACTRA action: Senators listen to film community on Bill C-10

## Wendy Crewson and Sarah Polley demand action

ACTRA is relieved that Senators are proposing to fix Bill C-10. The proposed amendments show that the Senators have listened to ACTRA and the film and television industry. Bill C-10, amendments to the *Income Tax Act*, took the film and television industry by surprise in late February by granting arbitrary powers to the Minister of Heritage to deny tax credits after the fact to film and television productions deemed to be 'contrary to public policy.' Our voices are threatened and the fight isn't over. For more information visit ACTRA's website.

## Kicks and kudos to the CRTC Report on the Canadian Television Fund...

### ACTRA opposed the CRTC's fund splitting decision

The idea of splitting the CTF into two streams and putting cable and satellite companies in control of the private stream is like putting the fox in charge of the henhouse. Let's not forget that when Shaw and Vidéotron withheld payments to the CTF in early 2007, they sent the fund and the Canadian television industry into turmoil. The CTF is already a market-driven results-based fund that supports successful Canadian shows. Dividing the fund would mean that we'll lose the high-quality dramas we need more of on Canadian television.

### The CRTC did hear us on Canadian content

The CRTC did hear us on Canadian content by affirming that only fully Canadian, 10-out-of-10-point CAVCO productions will be CTF-eligible. ACTRA argued strongly against their earlier suggestion of watering down that requirement as it would have directly jeopardized work for Canadian writers, directors, performers and crew. ■

we lose control of our culture. Send a message to Prime Minister Stephen Harper at [www.KeepItCanadian.net/takeaction-actra](http://www.KeepItCanadian.net/takeaction-actra).

## ACTRA and partners release Pollara poll at news conference

ACTRA along with the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, CEP, WGC and ichannel broadcaster Stornoway Communications released results of a public opinion poll in preparation for the April CRTC cable/specialty hearings that began the following day.

The poll surveyed Canadians' views of cable and specialty deregulation. ACTRA member R.H. Thomson introduced the news conference, held at the Toronto Film Studios, characterizing our broadcasting system as being about "Canadians talking to Canadians." Key poll results include:

- 67% of Canadians trust the CRTC and the federal government most to preserve Canadian culture and identity on TV

while only 8% place their trust in cable companies.

- 55% believe the Canadian television production industry will not survive and succeed in an unregulated cable and satellite environment.
- 74% think that less regulation is likely to reduce the choices of Canadian programs on TV.
- 88% believe it is important (53% very important) to have regulations and/or incentives to ensure the continued presence of independently owned Canadian broadcasters on cable and satellite line-ups.
- Eight in ten believe Canadian drama and comedy, local news, public affairs and documentaries are important to have on TV. A firm majority, 57%, oppose replacing Canadian drama and comedy with foreign programming.

# Copyright reform must improve the rights of artists

by Kim Hume, Director of Public Policy and Communications

## Strong copyright laws are important

protections for artists and performers, tools for guarding the integrity of artists' work and ensuring that they are fairly compensated.

Updating Canada's copyright law must take into account the contributions that artists make to our society, and our cultural fabric, by enhancing rights for performers and creators, and not just protecting the interests of 'big business'.

In early June, on the film set called Parliament Hill, things got rolling with the introduction of Bill C-61, the long-awaited reform of Canada's *Copyright Act*.

Bring it on! Canada's artists and performers have been waiting 10 years for stronger protections through reform of our copyright law and for Canada to bring its law into line with international standards.

ACTRA does not support all the changes included in Bill C-61, but sees the bill as a good first step for artists and for Canada's international reputation.

On the plus-side, the bill includes two new rights for performers: moral rights (the right of attribution and to protect against distortion), and making available rights (the right to authorize the Internet release of their work). While the new rights apply only to aural works such as sound recordings, ACTRA supports these changes as they are in line with the changes set out in the WIPO Treaties Canada agreed to more than 10 years ago. Implementing WIPO in our own law means we can go back to the international table for the next set of rights for performers – rights in audiovisual works such as film and television programs.

There's been a vocal campaign against legalizing technological measures or TMs. Again, ACTRA supports these changes as they make our law WIPO compliant.

Including TMs in the law doesn't obligate copyright owners to use them. Meanwhile, TMs are important for innovation in other sectors such as software and offer creators a choice in how to protect their works.

ACTRA's objections to Bill C-61 are in its legalizing of format shifting without putting in place an income stream for the creators of the works; the artists. Devices such as ipods or MP3 players aren't subject to a levy that would find its way back to the artists through the private copying regime. Legalizing format shifting absent a levy is a lopsided approach that needs fixing, which ACTRA will actively pursue.

Another problem is Bill C-61's light hand with Internet service providers (ISPs). As a member of the Creators' Copyright Coalition, ACTRA supports the "notice and takedown" approach over Bill C-61's "notice and notice," whereby ISPs merely have to pass on notice of copyright infringement to a client.

Overall, despite the voices suggesting consumers lose, the bill favours them with its \$500 penalty cap, and rightly sets stiffer \$20,000 penalties for commercial infringers and large-scale piracy.

Copyright reform in Canada is long overdue. Bill C-61 must be fixed. ACTRA will be submitting amendments and working with other arts groups. Bring on the debate! ■

## GOOD THINGS

- Gives new rights to performers including moral rights and the right of making available
- Makes Canada WIPO compliant
- Stiff penalties for large-scale piracy and infringement

## PROBLEMS

- Allows format shifting without compensating artists
- Jeopardizes the private copying regime, an important way for artists to earn income from their works

## FIND OUT MORE

Creators' Copyright Coalition  
[www.creatorscopyright.ca](http://www.creatorscopyright.ca)

Canadian Conference of the Arts  
[www.ccarts.ca](http://www.ccarts.ca)

ACTRA's issue backgrounder on copyright reform and Bill C-61  
[www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca)





# Commercial Bargaining Update

by Marit Stiles, ACTRA Director of Research

ACTRA's commercial bargaining team has been hard at work for 17 months, since May 2007, buried deep in data, with a vision of a new and improved National Commercial Agreement (NCA) in reach. Unfortunately at press time, we are still in negotiations and without a deal.

Back in 2007, both sides – the industry, represented by the Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA) and Institute of Communication Agencies (ICA), and ACTRA – agreed to a one-year extension from July, 2007 to June 30, 2008, with a 3% increase in rates and 1% into insurance. Both sides also agreed to enter into talks on a list of key issues. The ACTRA membership voted to approve these terms and this approach.

In fall 2007, your bargaining team engaged in training with the ICA/ACA in a new process of bargaining – Interest-Based-Bargaining. The intent was to delve deeper into the issues both sides are facing, to understand the perspective of the other side, and to try to come up with solutions that work for everyone.

So, starting in January 2008, we met to work our way through a series of issues that seemed to sum up concerns and interests on both sides: payment for use of members' work (including payment for Internet and other new media), company compliance with the NCA (non-union production), limiting the number of Canadian and foreign productions shooting 'off-shore', and improving working conditions.

After months of sifting through data provided by both sides and grappling with some tough questions, we have made some slow and steady progress on issues, particularly with regard to non-union production and new media.

In terms of non-union production, at the time of writing, we have a tentative agreement that non-signatory Canadian advertising agencies will no longer be able to use signatory 'front companies' to hop in and out of the agreement. This is an extremely important issue for ACTRA

and the industry. We are looking for a new agreement that ends this practice.

In terms of new media, we have a tentative agreement that harmonizes our NCA new media terms with the groundbreaking terms reached in the last round of Independent Production Agreement (IPA) negotiations. This is one area which – not

surprisingly – took a great deal of our time and focus.

As part of the bargaining process, we met in smaller working groups with media company representatives – the people making the media buy decisions and tracking them – and we considered – *continued on page 29*

## ACTRA's National Commercial Agreement Negotiating Committee



Richard Hardacre,  
NCA Negotiating  
Committee Chair



Stephen Waddell,  
NCA Chief Negotiator



Heather Allin  
(Toronto)



Joanna Bennett  
(Toronto)



Marium Carvell  
(Toronto)



Paul Constable  
(Toronto)



Bruce Dinsmore  
(Montreal)



Ian Finlay (Montreal)



Rob Morton (UBCP)



Doug Murray  
(Toronto)



Karl Pruner  
(Toronto)



David Sparrow  
(Toronto)



Howard Storey (UBCP)

### NCA Bargaining continues

In July 2008, ACTRA and the advertising industry filed jointly for conciliation, to resolve outstanding issues. At time of writing, conciliation was set for September 3 and 4. Get NCA updates at [www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca).

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: The big picture



by Ferne Downey  
ACTRA National  
Treasurer

## So what the heck happened this year?

Work opportunities fluctuated across the country, and with the exception of the Prairies, most branches were hard pressed to balance their books. We had hoped that with a shiny new Independent Production Agreement (IPA) in place early in our fiscal year, domestic and service production would rebound – but it didn't. Negotiations south of the border and the rising Canadian dollar both had a negative impact. Production seemed to stall. Was this the 'new normal' in terms of production levels? When branches get squeezed in terms of low member earnings, it makes it pretty darn stressful for the branches to make their 'per capita' payments to National. And, stress on any one part of ACTRA is stress upon ACTRA as a whole. Something had to be done, and it entailed a dues increase, five years after the last full member dues increase. All the revenue derived from basic dues, working dues, work permits etc. flows directly to the branches to keep them healthy and able to deliver the front-line services. ACTRA has huge responsibilities to the membership and must be able to fulfill those responsibilities. How did we ensure all would be well?

It was vital that per capita payments from the branches to ACTRA be kept stable at \$237.50 per full member and \$75 per Apprentice Member, so they were. ACTRA

National Council approved a reduction in per caps for full senior (1/2) and life members (0) which resulted in a decrease in payments flowing to ACTRA of \$161,100. Apprentice Member per caps decreased by \$12,200 from the prior year – simply because fewer members were enrolled in the program. Information services revenue decreased by \$78,200 from the prior year as no fees were charged to the branches. Equalization revenue was 'flat as a pancake'. Interest revenue increased by \$34,200 due to a decent return on investments made within the year. *(There's also one new detail for the accountants in the house – Canadian accounting principles now require that investments held for trading be adjusted to their market value at year end. The market value of the investment decreased by \$18,600 at fiscal 2007/08 year end close. The \$18,606 loss recorded this year will be adjusted to market gains or losses at the close of the next fiscal year.)* Our total income from all sources was lower than last year at \$4,850,400. That's the bird's-eye view of how the money flowed in. Let's see how that carefully acquired revenue was spent.

Total fiscal 2007/08 expenses of \$4,630,700 decreased by \$341,000 or 6.9% from the prior year. Collective agreement negotiation and administration costs were \$481,300 lower from the prior year as the IPA negotiations were concluded last fiscal and National Commercial Agreement

negotiations began. This substantial saving was offset by higher policy and communication expenses of \$116,900. During fiscal 2007/08 many policy issues rose to the forefront which resulted in higher lobbying expenses as there were so many files before the CRTC, in particular. Some of the campaigns undertaken were television licence renewals, broadcaster acquisitions and mergers, foreign ownership, competition policy review, and CRTC hearings into the cable and satellite companies and the Canadian Television Fund. We must speak loudly and passionately and encourage others to speak with one voice every chance we get. External relations expenses were higher from the prior year because of a one-time building per capita of \$53,000 owed to the Canadian Labour Congress.

ACTRA National's fiscal 2007/08 surplus is \$219,655. In October 2007, the National Council approved a recommendation from the Finance Committee capping ACTRA's Strategic Reserve Fund at \$2 million. We have achieved this target and the surplus of \$156,375 will be distributed to the branches. *(Consistent with Canadian accounting rules, the transfer of this amount to the branches will be recorded on the balance sheet.)*

Contact me anytime by email at [fdowney@actra.ca](mailto:fdowney@actra.ca) and I'd happily answer any questions about these financial statements. ■

Eric Peterson rallied hundreds of ACTRA members and fellow supporters in November 2007 outside the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) convention in Ottawa to demand broadcasters put More Canada On TV!





# ACTRA

Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists

Auditors' Report .....	27
Balance Sheet .....	27
Statement of Operations .....	28
Statement of Net Assets.....	28
Statement of Cash Flows.....	28
Notes to the Financial Statements.....	29
Schedule of Operating Expenses.....	29

## AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ACTRA

We have audited the balance sheet of ACTRA National as at February 29, 2008 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 29, 2008 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  
Licenced Public Accountants  
Toronto, Ontario  
April 25, 2008

## ACTRA NATIONAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2008

### ACTRA NATIONAL BALANCE SHEET AS AT FEBRUARY 29, 2008

	2008	2007
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 2,124,115	\$ 2,252,377
Accounts receivable	247,165	341,492
Investments at fair value (note 3)	1,113,728	-
Prepaid expenses and deposits	75,197	91,263
Due from ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch	-	621,848
Due from ACTRAWORKS Incorporated	-	437
Due from ACTRA Performers' Rights Society	21,896	59,426
	<u>3,582,101</u>	<u>3,366,843</u>
Furniture, equipment and software (note 4)	80,108	81,143
	<u>3,662,209</u>	<u>3,447,986</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	568,390	910,603
Accrued vacation pay	38,258	51,301
Due to Branches	865,421	455,968
Due to ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch	60,842	-
Due to U.B.C.P.	45,768	9,864
	<u>1,578,679</u>	<u>1,427,736</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Extraordinary contingency fund (note 2)	2,383	2,383
Surplus transferred to Branches	(156,375)	-
Unappropriated surplus	2,157,414	1,936,724
Invested in furniture, equipment and software	80,108	81,143
	<u>2,083,530</u>	<u>2,020,250</u>
	<u>\$ 3,662,209</u>	<u>\$ 3,447,986</u>

Approved on behalf of the Board:

Richard Hardacre, President

Ferne Downey, Treasurer

## ACTRA NATIONAL

**STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS**

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2008

	Invested in Furniture, Equipment and Software	Unappropriated Surplus	Surplus Transferred to Branches	Extraordinary Contingency Fund	Total	
					2008	2007
Net Assets – at beginning of year	\$ 81,143	\$ 1,936,724	\$ –	\$ 2,383	\$ 2,020,250	\$ 1,900,479
Excess of income over expenses	–	219,655	–	–	219,655	119,771
Transfer of surplus to branches	–	–	(156,375)	–	(156,375)	–
Purchase of furniture, equipment and software	38,088	(38,088)	–	–	–	–
Depreciation	(39,123)	(39,123)	–	–	–	–
Net Assets – at end of year	\$ 80,108	\$ 2,157,414	\$ (156,375)	\$ 2,383	\$ 2,083,530	\$ 2,020,250

## ACTRA NATIONAL

**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2008

	2008	2007
Income		
Per capita – full members	\$ 3,150,554	\$ 3,311,700
Per capita – apprentice members	483,225	495,375
Information services	22,000	100,182
Equalization income	1,126,144	1,131,398
Interest income	87,083	52,859
Unrealized loss on investments	(18,606)	–
	4,850,400	5,091,514
Expenses		
National council and executive (Schedule A)	196,454	158,262
National committees (Schedule B)	2,527	1,813
National executive director's office (Schedule C)	271,397	262,188
Bargaining and research (Schedule D)	451,794	470,824
Collective agreements (Schedule E)	255,994	737,327
Policy and communications (Schedule F)	720,033	603,153
External relations (Schedule G)	298,645	221,806
Finance, human resources and administration (Schedule H)	1,043,240	1,014,444
Information technology (Schedule I)	614,163	617,479
Occupancy (Schedule J)	415,158	390,373
GST expense	39,613	47,127
Apprentice member credit	94,461	144,649
Donations	21,166	30,577
	4,424,645	4,700,022
Excess of income over expenses before other items	425,755	391,492
Transfer payments to branches	(106,100)	(171,720)
Transfer to ACTRA Performers Rights' Society	(100,000)	(100,000)
Excess of income over expenses	\$ 219,655	\$ 119,772

## ACTRA NATIONAL

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2008

	2008	2007
Cash flows from operating activities		
Cash receipts from members, non-members and producers	\$ 4,876,250	\$ 5,227,860
Cash paid to employees and suppliers	(4,930,810)	(4,684,925)
Interest received	87,083	52,859
	32,523	595,794
Cash flows from financing activity		
Advances from related organizations	1,009,638	(836,821)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of furniture, equipment and software	(38,088)	(51,854)
Purchase of investments	(1,132,335)	–
	(1,170,423)	(51,854)
Change in cash during the year	(128,262)	(292,881)
Cash – at beginning of year	2,252,377	2,545,258
Cash – at end of year	\$ 2,124,115	\$ 2,252,377



## ACTRA NATIONAL SCHEDULES OF OPERATING EXPENSES

YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2008

	2008	2007
<b>National Council and Executive (Schedule A)</b>		
<b>National Council</b>		
Meeting costs	\$ 32,173	\$ 24,009
Councillor travel costs	27,876	27,766
Officer expenses	5,097	5,445
Senior staff expenses	7,838	6,192
Councillor tool kits	996	4,060
	73,980	67,472
<b>National Executive</b>		
Meeting costs	28,251	26,374
Officer expenses	14,152	11,515
Senior staff expenses	8,965	9,480
	51,368	47,369
<b>Officers and senior staff meetings</b>		
Meeting costs	207	96
Officer expenses	1,645	2,006
Senior staff expenses	189	-
	2,041	2,102
Honoraria	49,000	29,246
Officer expenses - other	20,065	12,073
	\$ 196,454	\$ 158,262
<b>National Committees (Schedule B)</b>		
Political action committee	\$ 619	\$ 424
Finance committee meetings	638	933
Other committees	1,193	174
Diversity committee	77	282
	\$ 2,527	\$ 1,813
<b>National Executive Director's Office (Schedule C)</b>		
Salaries	\$ 206,944	\$ 204,962
RRSP	24,916	24,252
General benefits	20,857	21,173
	252,717	250,387
National Executive Director expenses	10,356	6,650
Regional Director expenses	8,324	5151
	\$ 271,397	\$ 262,188
<b>Bargaining and Research (Schedule D)</b>		
Salaries	\$ 320,188	\$ 333,328
RRSP	29,924	28,951
General benefits	63,568	70,688
	413,680	432,967
Director expenses	14,040	11,673
Research materials	5,261	12,614
Organizing expenses and tools	18,813	13,570
	\$ 451,794	\$ 470,824
<b>Collective Agreement Negotiation and Administration (Schedule E)</b>		
<b>CBC:</b>		
Negotiations	\$ 1,915	\$ 11,187
Officer expenses	797	982
Senior staff expenses	75	504
	2,787	12,673
<b>Commercials:</b>		
Negotiations	46,689	466
Officer expenses	2,466	-
Senior staff expenses	9,489	99
Administration	53	4,023
Legal	18,684	-
Printing	31,959	18,120
	109,340	22,708
<b>IPA:</b>		
Negotiations	40,800	285,403
Officer expenses	2,532	17,514
Senior staff expenses	5,262	38,632
Administration	6,521	25
Legal	21,161	329,525
Conference fees	3,059	-
Printing	56,198	29,052
	135,533	700,151
<b>Other:</b>		
Negotiations	3,802	138
Senior staff expenses	2,086	431
Administration	-	256
Printing	2,446	970
	8,334	1,795
	\$ 255,994	\$ 737,327

	2008	2007
<b>Policy and Communications (Schedule F)</b>		
Salaries	\$ 263,814	\$ 234,435
RRSP	16,554	15,402
General benefits	44,103	44,148
	324,471	293,985
Director expenses	35,252	24,755
Lobbying expenses	58,494	18,523
Coalitions	43,025	47,406
President's expenses	14,305	6,234
	151,076	96,918
InterACTRA news	99,418	111,011
Advertising	12,747	18,379
Sponsorships	37,495	41,811
Promotional materials	7,050	4,476
Administrative services	7,380	2,642
Publications	5,119	1,849
ACTRA awards	21,843	21,216
Public relations officer's expenses	2,540	2,000
Face to Face marketing online	-	4,366
Policy consultant	50,894	4,500
	244,486	212,250
	\$ 720,033	\$ 603,153
<b>External Relations (Schedule G)</b>		
FIA affiliation fees	\$ 34,811	\$ 34,477
CLC affiliation fees	171,000	170,999
CLC building per capita	53,002	-
CLC committee and travel	819	1,824
Officer expenses:		
FIA	9,107	3,715
FIANA	750	1,760
SAG/AFTRA	5,489	-
Senior staff expenses:		
FIA	7,669	5,351
FIANA	2,418	1,487
SAG/WTO	10,148	2,056
Other	3,432	137
	\$ 298,645	\$ 221,806
<b>Finance, Human Resources and Administration (Schedule H)</b>		
Salaries	\$ 543,000	548,779
RRSP	50,318	45,793
General benefits	112,124	113,007
Temporary help	645	2,612
	706,087	710,191
National Director of Finance & Administration expenses	1,131	3,187
Printing	24,140	31,085
Referenda	14,529	30,881
Professional fees	1,199	34
Auditing fees	10,473	11,527
Legal fees	9,222	3,457
Staff conference	17,570	14,579
Staff recruitment	-	1,076
Staff training	2,629	5,876
Staff appreciation	1,513	2,509
Bank charges	8,795	8,020
Administration arrangement fee	221,452	165,622
Alliance debt reduction	24,500	26,400
	337,153	304,253
	\$ 1,043,240	\$ 1,014,444
<b>Information Technology (Schedule I)</b>		
Salaries	\$ 405,058	380,587
RRSP	30,727	26,727
General benefits	83,359	75,736
	519,144	483,050
Maintenance	6,748	2,467
Software	14,706	13,987
Hardware	3,661	1,668
Supplies	5,349	4,700
Network costs	39,405	48,852
Depreciation - computer equipment	19,601	23,036
Consulting fees	1,961	4,245
Webtrust audit	-	19,330
Depreciation - membership system	3,588	16,144
	\$ 614,163	\$ 617,479
<b>Occupancy (Schedule J)</b>		
Rent	\$ 253,445	\$ 244,182
Telephone	22,564	21,207
Insurance	27,970	37,168
Supplies and miscellaneous	20,540	12,177
Postage	17,795	22,029
Courier	16,757	14,548
Furniture and fixtures - repair	17,005	1,427
Equipment rental	23,148	22,161
Depreciation - furniture and fixtures	15,934	15,474
	\$ 415,158	\$ 390,373

**ACTRA NATIONAL**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
 YEAR ENDED FEBRUARY 29, 2008

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.

*Investments*

Investments are classified as held for trading and are recorded at fair value. Unrealized holding gains and losses related to held for trading investments are included in the statement of operations. The quoted market price of investments is used to estimate fair value.

*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 Recognition*

Fees are recorded as revenue in the year to which they relate. Fees for member and apprentice per capita charges are recorded as invoiced. Fees for information services are billed monthly. Equalization income is recorded as received. Interest income is recorded as accrued in the year.

*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. INVESTMENTS

Details of investments are as follows:

Units		2008		2007		
2008	2007	Fair Value	Cost	Fair Value	Cost	
107,637	–	KBSH	\$ 1,113,729	\$ 1,132,335	\$ –	\$ –
		Enhanced Income Fund				
			\$ 1,113,729	\$ 1,132,335	\$ –	\$ –

4. FURNITURE, EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE

Details of furniture, equipment and software are as follows:

	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value 2008	2007
Computer equipment	\$ 707,894	\$ 664,411	\$ 43,483	\$ 24,996
Computer software	109,745	109,745	–	3,588
Furniture and fixtures	226,924	190,299	36,625	52,559
	\$ 1,044,563	\$ 964,455	\$ 80,108	\$ 81,143

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

5. 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:

Fiscal year		Premises	Equipment	Total
2009		\$ 105,090	\$ 45,972	\$ 151,062
2010		105,090	35,472	140,562
2011		43,788	35,472	79,260
2012		–	35,472	35,472
2012		–	10,255	10,255

In addition to the minimum rent, the Association is obligated to pay operating costs for its office space. The operating costs paid were approximately \$117,000 (2007: \$116,000).

5. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The organization's financial instruments consist of cash, investments, 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 investments and advances to/from related organizations, corresponds to their carrying value due to their shorter term maturity. The fair value of the investments, being their market value, is disclosed on the balance sheet. 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.



# Commercial Bargaining Update

– continued from page 23

alternative models for compensating performers for the use of their work. We looked at real examples, real commercials, to see if we could find a way to more fairly compensate ACTRA performers for their work in new and emerging markets, including new media.

It comes as no surprise that ACTRA performers' traditional commercial work is being moved over to the Internet at a significant pace. But we are also seeing more 'made-for' new media commercials produced in Canada under the NCA, from advergames and interactive websites, to internet commercials, banners and ringtones. And remember that ACTRA was the first union to recognize and successfully negotiate payment for work used on the Internet, when we achieved new media terms in the NCA back in 1999. While other unions are still fighting for that right, we have it!

So how do we encourage growth in new media, ensure ACTRA members get the work, and are paid at fair rates? The number of made-for-new-media commercials that were produced in Canada under the NCA increased from only 43 in

2004 to 238 in 2007. And the Interactive Advertising Bureau of Canada's projected total for 2008 Online Advertising Revenue in Canada is estimated to be \$1.5 billion – a full 25% percent more than the 2007 actuals of \$1.2 billion (which was a 38% increase from the previous year). With most of those dollars spent on search and directories, it's not all that surprising that spending on video ads online only represents about 1% of that spending, to date. The potential is huge. And that could mean more opportunities for ACTRA performers.

And so we came to an understanding that the rules for new media needed to be harmonized with the groundbreaking terms ACTRA achieved in the 2007 IPA. It's been a successful model, and it will ensure that the future of advertising is done through ACTRA at fair rates.

Your commercial bargaining committee remains a solid team and strives to wrap up negotiations by mid-September. If a deal can't be reached, be prepared for a test of wills between ACTRA members and the advertising industry. Your union needs your support. ■



Joanne Deer

## Please welcome our new National Director of Public Policy and Communications

### ACTRA National Executive Director

Stephen Waddell announces the appointment of Joanne Deer as ACTRA's new National Director, Public Policy and Communications.

For the past two years, Joanne served as the Director of Communications for Canada's New Democratic Party. Her previous communications appointments include ACTRA National's Public Relations Officer and Communications Officer at the WGC. Upon completing an M.A. in International Affairs and a Graduate Diploma in Journalism, Joanne spent four years covering Parliament Hill for a TV news bureau. Please welcome Joanne back to ACTRA in her new role.



The Actors' Fund of Canada  
The lifeline for Canada's entertainment industry.

## The 2008 Canadian TV Charity Challenge is coming to a set near you!

As part of the Actors' Fund of Canada's 50th anniversary celebrations, casts, crews and producers of TV series shooting in Canada are challenging each other to raise money for the Fund through auctions, karaoke nights, pool tournaments and many other fun activities, each vying for bragging rights as the production that can have the most fun while raising the most money for the charity that benefits the entire production community.

Want to start the challenge up on your set? It's easy! Just call the Actors' Fund office and let them know you're in. The Fund will help to find your show a worthy opponent, issue your challenge to another production and help to keep the competition fun and exciting by sharing fundraising ideas and providing play-by-play results as the contest progresses. Producers and production offices can join in the fundraising events or match the dollars raised by cast and crew.

For more information, visit [www.actorsfund.ca/charitychallenge](http://www.actorsfund.ca/charitychallenge) or call the Fund toll-free at 1-877-399-8392.



## Don't miss

the 9th annual Canadian  
Comedy Awards & Festival

**October 3-5, 2008**  
**Regina, Saskatchewan**

Live shows with sketch, improv  
and stand-up plus workshops  
and Gala event.

Awards reception & dinner  
Friday, October 3

Great industry rates for a weekend  
of laughs & networking!

For more information visit:  
[www.canadiancomedyawards.ca](http://www.canadiancomedyawards.ca)  
888.527.3434  
519.263.5050



## Jack Duffy

**For those of us who reveled in the wit and energy of Jack Duffy, the city of Toronto feels a little grayer and a lot slower these days. Jack crossed over on the 19th of May, 2008.**

Jack began an extraordinarily long career in entertainment as a teen in the mid-'40s. Early on, he was plucked up by Tommy Dorsey and toured with his Big Band as 'a crooner'. In the '50s, CBC gave him his own show, *Here's Duffy!* After a 4-month run, he was claimed by Perry Como and headed back to the U.S. to become a beloved member of the tight comedy troop on The Perry Como Kraft Music Hall.

When Jack came back to Canada to tour with *Spring Thaw* and met his love Marylyn Stuart. They shared a wonderful 41-year marriage.

Billy Van and I shared 11 years of laughter with Jack as a fellow Home Team player on *The Party Game*, out of Hamilton's CHCH. He was adored by cast and crew alike. And through the '80s and '90s he just kept on working.

Jack is survived by his wife, his daughter, his sister and his sweet dog, Jake. And all the rest of us who will never forget him.

Jack turns up some nights in old movies. And in dreams, soft-tinged with tears. So always his beauty will linger, his laughter will ring in our ears

Blessings on you, dear Duff. ■

– Dinah Christie

A celebration of Jack's life is to be held on Sunday, October 19, between the hours of 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the Green Room of The Performing Arts Lodge of Toronto, 110 the Esplanade.

## Walter Kaasa

**Our dear friend Dr. Walter Kaasa** left this earth for his higher calling.

Remarkable when you consider the richness of his life's work already. For more than 60 years, Walter's heart and soul worked overtime to promote arts in Alberta. He spent 27 of those years working his way up to Assistant Deputy Minister in the provincial department of culture.

Each week, Walter spent many hours acting and directing with community theatres, and volunteered as a speech and drama adjudicator in festivals across the country, including the Kiwanis Festival.

The namesake of the Walter H. Kaasa Theatre at the Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Literature from the University of Alberta in 1993 and the Order of Canada in 1996.

Our friend passed away July 10, 2008 after battling Alzheimer's. Our thoughts are very much with his wife of 58 years, Gretta, their children and grandchildren. ■



## Len Peterson

While ACTRA from the start included writers, the union was long considered primarily a performer's act. If early on some writers felt neglected, the major reorganization in the 1960s that brought in Paul Siren as General Secretary and saw Henry Comor elected President, included a start on reducing this when leading writer members, including top dramatists like Len Peterson and Norman Klenman, were recruited to focus on writer concerns. By 1970, when Len first involved me in ACTRA's writer affairs, that focus had become a movement.

Len was a dedicated union man, an early – and shining – example of the extraordinary contribution made to our unions by our members. Though he later preferred to stay in the background Len always cared deeply about the work we do. He was a lovely and a generous man, to whom we in ACTRA and the WGC owe a great debt. ■

– Jack Gray

ACTRA President 1978-1981

Len was a respected and prolific writer and a recipient of ACTRA's John Drainie Award. He coordinated the Drainie jury for many years on ACTRA's behalf.





# Family affair



## Don S. Davis

**Don S. Davis, actor, artist, teacher, soldier, and straightshooter** passed away on June 29, 2008. He was 65 years of age. Born and raised in Aurora, Missouri, Don served in the United States Army before immigrating to Canada in the early 1970s to teach theatre at the University of British Columbia. He left teaching to pursue acting full-time in 1987.

Don is best known for his portrayals of General Hammond in *Stargate SG-1* and Major Garland Briggs in *Twin Peaks*. He worked on many productions, including the *Historica Minute*, *Sam Steele*, in which he portrayed an obstreperous American gambler who was refused entrance to Canada.

Don was an integral part of the British Columbia performer community. It was characteristic of him that he became a fatherly figure to the cast of *Stargate SG-1*. It was also typical of the loyalty he inspired that *Stargate* supported both his decision to work, despite health problems he had experienced at the start of the 2002 season, and his decision to retire from his position as a regular cast member.

He leaves his wife, Ruby Fleming-Davis, and his son, Mathew. ■

➤ *continued from back cover*

**HG-F: Do you find it daunting?**

**JC:** A little, but I started earlier so hopefully that gives me some kind of advantage. I've got more years to do it! But yes, acting is very daunting. I've seen so many people stop acting after trying their whole lives and then give up, even when they're as talented as any Hollywood actors.

**HG-F: You see this with so many other child actors. Some of them just implode. How do you feel about yourself?**

**JC:** People like that, I believe have made bad choices... but I find that you can learn from that as well. They don't deserve some of the media that hounds them, but you can learn from them too, and if they do great things after, you know, like the commercials for 'Don't Do Drugs', and that type of thing...you can believe them, because they're honest! I take it as a warning experience, and I wish them the best.

*Jesse's not the only kid in the Camacho family with his head on straight. His sister Sarah is just as confident, smart and determined to go after what she wants.*

**HG-F: Sarah, how would you characterize what you want your acting career to be versus what your brother does?**

**Sarah Canacho:** Well, Jesse wants to be the whole package; he wants to be the director, the producer, the writer... I just want to focus on the acting... I really like theatre acting.

**HG-F: What is it like for you growing up in a family full of actors?**

**SC:** Oh, it's fun! They get to tell me their experiences in auditions, and can give me advice... especially my brother... he gives me advice, but mostly in a sarcastic way,

so I can't take it really seriously! (*laughs*) My Dad really helps me with my auditions, and my Mom comes to a lot of my voice work [sessions] so she can help me too.

*Of course without Mom and Dad, there'd be no Sarah or Jesse. It's easy to see where these two well-balanced actors get their amazing points of view on life and acting.*

**HG-F: So, Mark and Pauline, having this Empire, this little team (they laugh)...**

**How do you cope? What are some of the best and worst parts of you all being in the same business together?**

**Pauline Little:** Best? Dinner conversation is never boring! (*everyone laughs*) We always talk about different movie parts, or we play games, but we try to make sure we have dinner together every night. It's vitally important.

**Mark Comacho:** The other good thing is everyone knows what the other one is going through. When you have an audition, the anxiety, the disappointment, the elation, that kind of thing that goes with the roller coaster life of being an actor. On the other side of it, is that there's not going to be that one person who's going to be a doctor who's going to support the rest of us!

**Pauline Little:** We're all going to be struggling together! (*they laugh*)

*Leaving the Camacho home that night, I realized that this sense of togetherness is what makes them all such integral members of ACTRA Montreal. They are truly inspiring, and I can't wait to see what they'll do next! ■*



Holly Gauthier-Frankel has been a professional voice actor in Montreal for more than 20 years. She also performs in musical theatre productions and has produced, directed and written her own shows, mainly as her burlesque alter-ego, *Miss Sugarpuss*. You can read Holly's regular column in the ACTRA Montreal Grapevine, *It's My Damn Union!*, at [www.montrealactra.ca](http://www.montrealactra.ca).

by Holly Gauthier-Frankel

# Family affair



Jesse Camacho



Mark Camacho and Pauline Little on the set of *I'm Not There*, the Bob Dylan bio-pic



Sarah Camacho

**> Montreal is a city known for its abundance of talent.** I am, admittedly, slightly biased. When I sat down to interview 17-year-old Jesse Camacho, star of the Mark McKinney-produced Canadian series *Less Than Kind*, as well as a slew of other films and series, I knew he would be no exception to Montreal's roster of charismatic and savvy actors taking Canada (and that large area to the south) by storm!

Jesse is the son of actors Pauline Little and Mark Camacho, both are mainstays in Montreal's voiceover and film community.

Jesse's 13 year-old sister, Sarah Comacho, is a blossoming stage actor and singer, and over the course of the evening, I got to witness the strong bonds that unite this merry band of performers. As we sat down for the interview and a raucous and yummy family dinner afterwards, I was touched to see how their connection as a family and as colleagues has imbued Jesse with a sense of balance, integrity, and humour – above all else!

**Holly Gauthier-Frankel: When did you start acting?**

**Jesse Camacho:** I started acting when I was eight. I wanted to start earlier, but my parents kind of delayed me for as long as they could – physically – stop me! (Laughter) And, finally they said 'okay'.

It's easier for me because they're actors as well. They know what it's like. Always, education comes first, as it should, and I've never had a problem with that... so I still live a very normal life, and it's just something else I do.

**HG-F: I'm noticing that you're rolling your eyes a lot! (Jesse laughs). You seem to have a pretty realistic idea of work; I guess it must come from working so young, so much?**

**JC:** I think it comes from seeing great actors like my father and my mother, and others who are struggling and having done television shows and then saying 'Why wasn't that picked up?' So, you know, (rolls his eyes), you can't have your chickens... or whatever the expression is... just yet! But I'm blessed to have grown up in this community, and so I know what to expect.  
– continued inside back cover



*Less Than Kind* is a new half-hour comedy series shot in Winnipeg starring Maury Chaykin, Wendel Meldrum, Benjamin Arthur, Jesse Camacho and Nancy Sorel. Catch *Less Than Kind* when it premieres Monday, October 13 on Citytv.

Photo courtesy of Breakthrough Films & Television/Bufallo Gal Pictures/Allen Fraser

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT #40069134



**ACTRA**  
www.actra.ca