



I N T E R

ACTRA

The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists



Clockwise from centre:
Thor Bishopric (National President, ACTRA),
Kent McCord (National Treasurer, SAG),
Arne Gundersen (Eastern Region
Vice-President, Actors Equity – U.S.),
Sandy Winsby (Vice-President External,
Canadian Actors' Equity Association),
Freddie Pyne (National President, Equity – U.K.),
John Connolly (National President, AFTRA),
Allison Enright (National Organiser,
New Zealand Actors' Equity),
Susan Lyons (National President, Media,
Entertainment and Arts Alliance – Australia).

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message from the
president



Thor Bishopric

Going global to protect performers

Dear Fellow Members,

In January, your newly elected **National Council** met to review ACTRA's accomplishments and plan the direction for our union in 2002. Reviewing what we've done is not an unpleasant task, as our organization has accomplished a great deal recently. A year-and-a-half ago, ACTRA's National Council took a bold step and adopted the **ACTRA Plan**, a five-year plan that commits us to stay focused on our three key areas of activity – bargaining, organizing and member services. We've stuck to our plan and achieved some great results.

In the area of bargaining, we successfully renegotiated the **IPA** despite difficult economic times, achieving reasonable general increases and expanded recognition in the important area of digital media. In organizing, our National organizers are defending our turf and actively seeking new jurisdiction for ACTRA, creating work opportunities for our membership. In the area of services, we count our new website and **Face to Face**

Online as some of the best tools we've put into the hands of our members in many years.

Our unity, focus and discipline have made us the most powerful organization in the film and television industry in Canada. In my opinion, we are the most dynamic and forward-thinking performers' union in the world.

And we'll need to be dynamic and forward-thinking. There are decisions being made that will affect our organization, and more importantly, affect the ability of our members to make a living in the entertainment industry: threats of countervailing tariffs, SAG's Global Rule One, Revenue Canada's consideration of changing the status of the self-employed artist, Canadian content rules, co-production treaties, and immigration guidelines governing the entry of foreign workers.

To face these challenges, we'll need to consolidate our gains, continue to build on the pride and solidarity of our community and engage as never before in the public policy areas that affect performers.

This issue of *InterACTRA* focuses on these topics. Read about our successes, such as ACTRA Performers' Rights Society and ACTRA's John Drainie Award. Find out more about our ACTRA community: Face to Face Online, the Women in the Director's Chair Workshop, and the inspiring diversity initiatives happening in our branches.

You'll also find out more about ACTRA's role in public policy. We know that our industry has become a global industry, and in response to that reality and the continued hyperbole around so-called 'runaway production,' ACTRA initiated an international meeting of performers' unions to discuss our rights on the global stage – **GPOP** – the Global Protection of Performers. Read about GPOP in this issue.

It's clear that there are many challenges and opportunities ahead. ACTRA looks forward to facing them – your union is better prepared than ever before.

ACTRA National Council 2002

(Names in **bold** are members of ACTRA National Executive)
Back row: Christie MacFadyen (Toronto), Barry Blake (Ottawa), Ferne Downey (Toronto), **Mike Burns** (Saskatchewan), David Macniven (Toronto), Jon Baggaley (alternate for Colin MacLean, Edmonton), Peter Partridge

(British Columbia), Seán Mulcahy (Toronto), Austin Schatz (Toronto), Kate Robbins (alt. for John Juliani, British Columbia), **Jefferson Mappin** (National Vice-President), Bob Collins (alt. for John Evans, Toronto), Mack Furlong (alt. for Glenn Downey, Newfoundland and Labrador).
Middle Row: **Susie Almgren** (Montreal), **Thor Bishopric**

(National President), Maria Bircher (Montreal), Jennifer Wigmore (Toronto), Michael Miranda (Toronto), **Brian Gromoff** (Calgary), Aidan Devine (Toronto), **Howard Storey** (British Columbia). Front row: **Jamie Bradley** (National Treasurer), **Richard Hardacre** (Toronto) Absent: Wayne Nicklas (Manitoba), Anne Marie Scheffler (Toronto).





AFTRA thanks ACTRA for support during Network Television Code negotiations

Dear Stephen,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking time out of your schedule to observe our recent Network Television Code negotiations. Our efforts, along with your and President Bishopric's participation, proved a great success, and ACTRA's presence at these talks was an extraordinary show of solidarity.

On behalf of the 75,000 members of AFTRA, thank you again for being a part of this important process.

Fraternally,

John P. Connolly
National President

Shelby Scott
Co-Chair, Negotiating Committee

Greg Hessinger
National Executive Director

Tom Wiggin
Co-Chair, Negotiating Committee

Write to InterACTRA

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



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ACTRA

bargaining



Photo by André Leduc

Stephen Waddell
National Executive Director

Commercials Negotiations a Challenge

In mid-January 2002, ACTRA formally commenced re-negotiation of the **National Commercials Agreement** with management represented by the **Institute of Communications and Advertising (ICA)** and the **Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA)**. Following an extensive membership consultation process, your **ACTRA National Negotiating Committee** developed a streamlined package of proposals that the ACTRA Committee proudly presented to the representatives of the two management associations. ACTRA's principal objectives in these negotiations are to correct certain inequities in working conditions and Use payments that presently exist in the agreement and secure an equitable rise in minimum fees. At the outset of negotiations, management's representatives stated that the Canadian advertising industry is in serious trouble, and that ACTRA has to provide concessions to help the Canadian industry survive in the global advertising market.

After over 2 months of negotiations, ACTRA and the ad industry reps reached a deal on March 13th. The new agreement includes a 5% increase over 2 years for performers, substantially improved language to protect children in commercials, and incentives to produce commercials in Canada for global audiences and the internet.

Once ratified, the new National Commercials Agreement will be in effect until June 30, 2004.

A ratification package including terms of settlement will be mailed to all ACTRA Members eligible to vote in early April.

ACTRA Members ratify IPA and CBC Agreements by over 97%

In December 2001, ACTRA members ratified a renewed **Independent Production Agreement (IPA)** by an overwhelming majority of 97%. The renewed IPA will ensure stability in the Canadian film and television marketplace and enhance employment opportunities for Canadian performers.

The new IPA took effect on January 1, 2002 – the first time that a new IPA became effective immediately following the expiration date of the prior Agreement. The new IPA will expire two years later on December 31, 2003.



Again in December, ACTRA members eligible to vote on ratification of the **CBC Agreements** approved the Terms of Settlement negotiated between ACTRA and the CBC by a 97.8% majority concluding a lengthy but ultimately successful negotiation process!

The term of the new Agreements is 36 months expiring on July 3rd, 2002.

To view the Terms of Settlement for these agreements, visit www.actra.ca and click on the **Bargaining** section from the homepage.

ACTRA NATIONAL PERFORMERS IPA RATE CARD January 1, 2002 – December 31, 2002 / January 1, 2003 – December 31, 2003

Category	Included Work Time	Minimum Fee		Hourly Fee		O/T Rate		Weekly (5 days)	
		2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
Principal (6 lines or more) Article B101	8 hrs	\$525.25	\$541.00	\$65.75	\$67.75	\$98.50	\$101.50	\$2,232.50	\$2,299.50
Rehearsal-Principal Article A2308	2 hrs min.	\$131.50	\$135.50	\$65.75	\$67.75	\$98.50 (after 8 hours)	\$101.50	n/a	n/a
Actor (5 lines or less) Article B101	8 hrs min.	\$354.50	\$365.25	\$44.25	\$45.75	\$66.50	\$68.50	\$1,507.00	\$1,552.25
Rehearsal-Actor Article A2308	2 hrs min.	\$88.50	\$91.50	\$44.25	\$45.75	\$66.50 (after 8 hours)	\$68.50	n/a	n/a

Wardrobe Call: (Day of Production) Article A1501
A maximum 15 minutes at the Performer's hourly rate when not part of 8-hour work day. Time in excess of 15 minutes is considered part of the regular 8-hour day.

Wardrobe Call: (Prior to Production Day) Article A1502
Minimum 2-hour call at: \$65.75 per hour (2002) and \$67.75 per hour (2003) or the Performer's contracted hourly rate, whichever is greater.

Travel Time: Article A1702/1703 For work beyond the 40 km radius travel time will be paid at the hourly rate in 1/4 hour units when not part of the 8-hour work day.

Advance Use Payment/Prepaid Use:
Prepayment options or Advance payments may vary. Refer to Article B501 of the Independent Production Agreement (IPA).



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Performers IPA Rate Card
January 1, 2002 – December 31, 2003

IPA
Independent
Production
Agreement



In February ACTRA held a reception honouring the past recipients of **ACTRA's John Drainie Award**, and announcing that the award will be presented at the **Banff Television Festival** in June, 2002.

Orson Welles once called John Drainie "the greatest radio actor in the world." Drainie passed away in 1966, at just 50 years of age. In his memory ACTRA established the John Drainie Award for distinguished contribution to broadcasting in 1968.

Drainie Award recipients **Pierre Berton, Ruth Springford, Robert Weaver, Norman Campbell, Len Peterson** and **Gordon Pinsent** joined ACTRA's National Executive Director **Stephen Waddell** and Banff Television Foundation President and CEO **Pat Ferns** in celebrating the award's new home.



Past recipients: Pierre Berton, Ruth Springford, Len Peterson, Dora de Pédery-Hunt (medallist), Gordon Pinsent, Norman Campbell and Robert Weaver.

ACTRA's John Drainie Award to be presented at Banff Rockie Awards



ACTRA's John Drainie Award medal, created by Dora de Pédery-Hunt.

"The Banff Television Festival's Rockie Awards show is one of Canada's prestigious industry events. ACTRA is very pleased that the Rockies will be the internationally recognized venue for celebrating the outstanding career of ACTRA's John Drainie Award recipient," said Waddell.

Ferns said that the Banff Television Foundation was pleased to join with ACTRA in celebrating the award, and in continuing the tradition of paying special tribute to John Drainie.

The award plaque is a bronze medal portrait of John Drainie by renowned Canadian medallist **Dora de Pédery-Hunt**.

The 23rd Banff Rockie Awards show will be telecast by the CBC.

The award is unlike any other in that the final judging is performed by a jury of previous recipients. ACTRA Members' nomination suggestions are forwarded to the jury for their consideration. The nomination period closed March 8, 2002.

For more information on ACTRA's John Drainie Award and a list of past recipients, visit www.actra.ca.

Orson Welles once called John Drainie "the greatest radio actor in the world."



ACTRA National Councillor Seán Mulcahy with John Drainie Award recipients Gordon Pinsent and Pierre Berton.



Stephen Waddell, ACTRA's National Executive Director with Pat Ferns, President and CEO of the Banff Television Foundation.



John Drainie's widow Claire Drainie-Taylor with Pierre Berton, who received the award in 1999.

All photos by David Leyes

GOING GLOBAL:



Photo: Carol Racicot

The GPOP gang, including elected leaders and staff from eight unions, FIA and observers from UBCP, ACTRA Maritimes, ACTRA Montreal and ACTRA Toronto Performers.

National unions participating at GPOP

ACTRA (Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists) www.actra.ca

AEA (Actors Equity Association – U.S.) www.actorsequity.org

AFTRA (American Federation of Television and Radio Artists) www.aftra.org

CAEA (Canadian Actors' Equity Association) www.caea.com

Equity (U.K.) www.equity.org.uk

MEAA (Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance – Australia) www.alliance.org.au

New Zealand Actors' Equity

SAG (Screen Actors Guild – U.S.) www.sag.org

ACTRA HOSTS GPOP

Global protection of performers (GPOP) a kickstart to 'bigger-picture' thinking on international rights of performers

by Jamie Bradley

So, I'm cooking some semi-nutritious dinner for my family when I get a call from Thor. "As the new National Treasurer, I think it'd be a good idea if you came to the **GPOP Meeting** in two weeks."

GPOP... GPOP... I need a glossary for all the acronyms that abound in our business.

I check my calendar, no auditions, no work (not usually a good thing). "I serve at the pleasure of the President," I say, and then begin the thinking process.

GPOP... **Global Protection Of Performers** – ACTRA's progressive National President's initiative within **FIA** (the International Federation of Actors. Yes, we use the French acronym but the English translation. Sigh.) GPOP was a meeting of the English-speaking unions of FIA "to assess the current levels of global protection offered to performers in the fields of theatre and audio-visual production." Phew.

On Saturday, Feb. 16th I suddenly found myself in the boardroom of ACTRA National, noshing and settling in my chair for two days of international chatting. On the table in front of me lay my info-package, a pad of paper, three pens and too many small plates of breakfast items. At the table around me milled about actor and staff representatives from quite a few acronymic

organizations: **ACTRA, AEA, AFTRA, CAEA, MEAA, SAG**; some unions that use words: **Equity U.K.**, and **New Zealand Actors' Equity**; and some observing members from ACTRA Montreal, Toronto and B.C. branches (I also represented the Maritimes).

ACTRA's calm and collected NED **Stephen Waddell** rapped the gavel and we were out of the gate.

Okay, the first topic of discussion was 'what defines a domestic or international production.' This is fairly important because it deals with government funding, international co-production treaties (Canada has fifty-five!) and union jurisdiction. Canada and Australia look at the nationality of all the key creative people; Equity U.K. doesn't make that distinction, while SAG considers the nationality of whichever entity owns the copyright over the final work. This last one is a bit murky when you remember that Universal Studios was owned by Seagrams and is now owned by a French winemaker.

Item two opened the floodgates. SAG and its **Global Rule One Campaign**.

SAG has a lot of members – about 98,000, (ACTRA has about 18,000) – and not a lot of their middle class actors are working. As we've seen in the news over the past couple of years, many of them



Photo: Carol Racicot

Dominick Luquer (FIA) and Thor Bishopric (ACTRA) getting the GPOP meeting underway.

blame so-called 'runaway productions.' Now, I don't have the space to really get into the whole 'runaway production' morass but let's just say that this isn't a new thing... after all, *Mary Poppins* and *Star Wars* could be considered 'runaway productions.' Even the term 'runaway production' is in dispute – there are many definitions. ACTRA's official position holds that in a global film and television industry, productions that locate in Canada aren't 'runaway' from anywhere... they're Canadian productions.

SAG now sees the rise in so-called runaway productions as a serious situation and SAG members are frustrated. What has developed is the famous 'us versus them' attitude and Canadian flags being burned at Hollywood and Vine. One of the purposes of this GPOP meeting was to clarify some cross-border rhetoric. So, let's get into it.

To make sure the SAG members are covered by the SAG contract no matter where they go in the world to work, SAG is enforcing Global Rule One.

All eyes and mouths aimed at the SAG reps – you see, once a performer crosses a border it's usually into some other union's jurisdiction.

We were told that SAG members are concerned with the loss of **Pension & Health**

GPOP glossary

GPOP – Global Protection of Performers. The name of the FIA meeting of English-speaking unions hosted by ACTRA on February 16, 17, 2002.

FIA – International Federation of Actors. ACTRA is affiliated to this international

body representing the unions of actors, singers, dancers and other performers throughout the world. www.fia-actors.com
INCD – International Network for Cultural Diversity. The INCD is a worldwide network of artists and cultural groups dedicated to countering the homogenizing effects of globalization on culture. Made

up of artists from all continents, ranging from new media artists to traditional artisans, organizations from more than 50 countries belong to the network. ACTRA is an active member of the INCD, and a founding member of the Canadian Coalition for Cultural Diversity. www.incd.net and www.cdc-ccd.org

Photo: Carol Racicot



R.H. Thomson addresses the meeting.

The INCD is a 'worldwide network of artists and cultural groups dedicated to countering the homogenizing effects of globalization on culture'... or 'hey, give us a chance to tell our stories too.'

(we call it **Insurance & Retirement**). It would take a bilateral agreement for the host union to transfer the collected monies down to SAG. This is called 'pass through' and ACTRA and SAG already have a limited form of a 'pass through' understanding. (Similar bilateral agreements with the other unions would seem to solve this problem.)

Dues payments would be affected also, especially with our dual members. If you have to work under a SAG contract everywhere, then would the dues from dual members be deducted and sent across the border every time you work in Canada? This might have a pretty big effect on your ACTRA membership and I & R.

It was mentioned by many of the unions that if a SAG actor negotiates SAG rates and working conditions with the producer, these can be incorporated into the host union's contract.

How Global Rule One is going to help the middle class or second-tier SAG performer, I'm not sure. Which is cheaper for a producer shooting in Canada: a 'non-recognizable' American performer for SAG rates in American money or an equally 'non-recognizable' Canadian actor for ACTRA rates with our 62¢ dollar and tax credits?

It was clear that SAG hasn't to date considered all of the possible international ramifications of GR1. They're going to launch it on May 1st and before that date will attempt to work out implementation details. At the end of the day, one hopes that they're not going to end up with a 700-page tome of Global Rule One with 130 amendments and a lot of international hard feelings.

As you can probably tell, GR1 took up a chunk o' time.

ACTRA member and cultural activist **R.H. Thomson** spoke to the meeting about the **International Network for Cultural Diversity**. The INCD is a 'worldwide network of artists and cultural groups dedicated to countering the homogenizing effects of globalization on culture'... or

'hey, give us a chance to tell our stories too.' Thomson calls it an "individual expression of consciousness."

Here's one of the problems in our country: 0.2% of English-Canada's film screens show Canadian movies. Our filmmakers can't get their projects out there and our performers can't get our faces out there. The rest of the English-speaking countries share our plight. It is difficult breaking the hold Hollywood has on our eyeballs.

The SAG members were concerned that INCD might be a tool for America-bashing and Thomson assured them that INCD was an all-inclusive organization. But really, no matter how you slice it, there is the problem of global mass culture, which is a diplomatic way of saying global American culture.

At the end of the GPOP weekend, what was accomplished? Although the general consensus around the table was that SAG had a right to protect its members, the way they're going about Global Rule One could have been better thought out. **John McGuire** of SAG said that the concerns of the GPOP meeting would be taken back and considered while the GR1 document was being written.

There was talk of a global collective agreement, but we've got eight unions from five countries all with very different laws and a whole bunch of countries that don't have collective bargaining unions at all. It would take a very long time and an oil tanker full of international lawyers to figure that one out. Still, this group was undaunted and decided that a legal sub-committee would be set up to discuss a way to enforce protections.

Here's the big action of the GPOP Meeting – each union will list their top five concerns in three categories: **Residual Structures, Rights and Working Conditions**. Along with those, they'll send the applicable sections of their agreements to the FIA office where all will be compiled into a document that'll be reviewed when

SAG's Rule One

RULE ONE in SAG's National Constitution states that SAG members agree not to work for producers who have not signed a SAG contract. SAG's Global Rule One campaign is about enforcing this rule on a global stage. SAG is seeking the extension of their jurisdiction by declaring that the SAG contract will follow SAG members wherever they go in the world to work.

The rule is not that different from the commitment of ACTRA members when they join ACTRA – the commitment not to work non-union.

Presently, when SAG members are engaged in the U.S. and come north to Canada, they may sign contracts where they are promised 'SAG working conditions,' but the producers aren't necessarily signatories to a SAG agreement. The global extension of SAG's Rule One puts the onus on the performer to make sure they are working on a SAG contract whenever they work outside the U.S.

Where Global Rule One gets complicated is with performers who are dual members. What about a Canadian who is both a SAG and an ACTRA member? When home in Canada, does the actor have to work on a SAG contract because she's a SAG member? What about when she wants to work under the ACTRA contract when at home, to receive the protection the ACTRA contract provides, and to support ACTRA with her union dues?

While ACTRA supports SAG's right to enforce Global Rule One, we seek SAG's clarification on how they will handle the situation of dual members – an issue that we discussed at the GPOP meeting.

In order to protect and assert ACTRA's jurisdiction, we are working with SAG to resolve how Global Rule One will be applied to performers working in Canada prior to the implementation date of May 1, 2002.

FIA reconvenes in the summer. If all goes well, we could end up with a template each union could use when collective bargaining – a Declaration of Basic Actor's Rights. And that's pretty good for only two days' work.



ACTRA

branch news

NEWFOUNDLAND

2001 an extraordinary year

In Newfoundland, we're coming off an extraordinary year. Our members have worked on international productions such as **Random Passage**, **Rare Birds**, **The Red Door**, and **The Shipping News**. Local production has included **Messiah** from Montreal, **Bread-maker**, and **Ashore**.

CBC Television continues its dance around a couple of pilot shows that could signal a six- or 13-episode series to be produced in **St. John's**. Otherwise, things are pretty slow in our region.

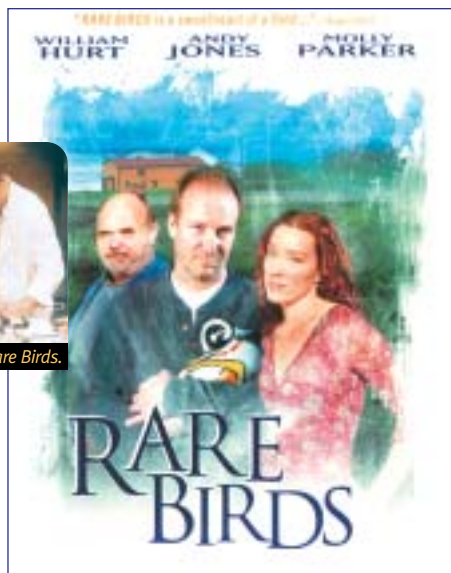
But while production has backed off, that doesn't mean that the industry has slowed down. With only a limited number of local producers, they're all busy in post-production and marketing, while development of new projects has just begun. This lull affords us the opportunity to work on industry-wide initiatives with the other members of the film community.

A new legal entity has been established for professional development – the **Film Professional Development Inc.** Funding has been secured from **HRDC**. A director and program officer have been hired and initial meetings with the stakeholders have begun. The professional development needs of performers are brought forward by **Ruth Lawrence**, a member of our Branch Council who is participating on the board.

With the **Safety Guidelines for Newfoundland and Labrador** completed, all producers producing in Newfoundland are required to operate under the guidelines.

Mack Furlong sits on the advisory board to the **Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation**, and **Glenn Downey** is our representative on the **Executive Board of the Association of Cultural Industries**.

We're very excited to report the completion of a proposal for Newfoundland's first **soundstage**. Applications for funding are underway. The facility will better serve our own community and should be a boon to our

Molly Parker and William Hurt in *Rare Birds*.

burgeoning commercial industry.

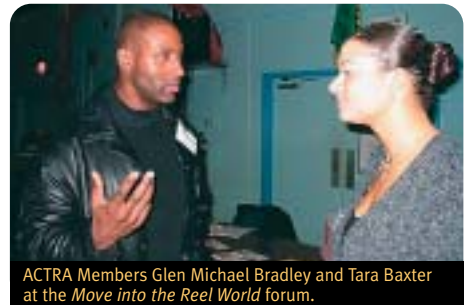
We continue to organize and unionize the workforce, and look forward to Eastern Region Organizer **Gary Saxe's** visit in the coming year.

MARITIMES

Move into the Reel World forum builds bridges

Despite the tremendous growth of the film industry in Nova Scotia, the **African Nova Scotian community** has remained, for the most part, on the outside looking in.

So in late 2001, a committee which included ACTRA Maritimes member **Tamara Patkau** and Branch Rep **Gary Vermeir** – along with representatives from the Atlantic **IATSE** and **DGC** locals, the **Moving Images Group**, the **Black Business Initiative** and other interested parties – began planning an event which would bring the African Nova Scotian community and the film community together. Our plan was to bring together reps from all aspects of the industry in an informal question and answer session for interested members of the black community.

ACTRA Members Glen Michael Bradley and Tara Baxter at the *Move into the Reel World* forum.

Branch Rep Gary Vermeir with keynote speaker and ACTRA member Anthony Sherwood

Entitled **Move into the Reel World**, the forum took place on January 23rd. The film unions, government film agencies, the **Atlantic Film Festival**, Moving Images Group, the **Atlantic Filmmakers Co-op**, the **Nova Scotia Community College**, **Filmworks Casting** and the **Nova Scotia Producers Association** all took part. The turnout from the public was great, the atmosphere was relaxed and we answered a lot of good questions and handed out a lot of information.

The star of the evening was ACTRA member and social activist **Anthony Sherwood**. A Halifax native, Anthony spoke of the history of the Canadian black community in film and television and of the first **black actors' association's** successes in forcing advertisers to better reflect Canada's ethnic diversity in commercials. He spoke of his audition for the role of Crown Attorney Dillon Beck on **Street Legal**. There had never been a black co-star on a Canadian series before, so he didn't hold out much hope. But he of course won the role and a Gemini nomination to boot.

Things have gotten better, he admitted, but there is still a long way to go. The industry is more inclusive, but still does not accurately reflect the richness of Canada's fabulously diverse society. He emphasized that it is the responsibility of those currently working in the industry to point the way for those coming after. Anthony's talk and his encouragement was an inspiration for everyone there.

Building on the momentum of this event, we are happy to report that our Branch is establishing its own **Diversity Committee**. Stay tuned! *(continued on page 10)*

MONTREAL

Record attendance at Montreal AGM

Montreal held its AGM in November, with a record turnout of some 350 members. Any divisiveness over the **Daredevil** debacle seemed to have evaporated. Members were clearly happy with the new IPA. Kudos to the negotiating team, and thanks to **Stephen Waddell** for walking our membership through the highlights of the agreement at our AGM. Members were wowed by the live online demonstration of www.actra.ca and **Face to Face Online**, and the party that followed went on into the wee hours.

In keeping with the emphasis on improved communication, the branch has created our own website and upscaled our newsletter.

Our office is expanding to accommodate organizer **Gary Saxe**, computer wizard **Randy Duniz**, and to generally allow our staff to function more efficiently. We now have room for a proper studio facility for taping voice and on-camera auditions for members. As well, the **Professional Development Committee** will have expanded space for workshops. Meanwhile, the staff is tweaking the Montreal version of the **Apprentice Training Program**.

The only less-than-happy news is that Montreal Branch did run a deficit last year. We will be gingerly dipping into our surplus for now, attempting to strike that balance between maintaining the services our members expect, and saving for a rainy day.

Production for this year is picking up, with about a dozen projects in the pipe. While we are happy for the work, the conspicuous lack of indigenous production is of great concern. Montreal Branch wonders what actions ACTRA might take to help the Canadian industry.

OTTAWA

Like most branches, 2001 was a slower year for Ottawa ACTRA members. The downturn in the economy, the threat of a SAG strike, and the events of September 11th all combined to create a difficult climate for low-budget producers in our small jurisdiction.

Nevertheless, the news wasn't all bad. The series, **The Endless Grind**, which airs on the **Comedy Network**, was shot in Ottawa over the summer and a number of local actors found work in the series along with

quite a few of our colleagues from Toronto. A mix of local and Toronto performers also found work in the low-budget film **Posers** by **Katie Tallo**, which stars Ottawa resident **Adam Beach**. Animation remains a strong industry in town with two continuing series **Hoze Hounds** and **Kevin Spencer** keeping Ottawa performers working. We're continuing to encourage the development of local filmmakers and actors who are making local products through the use of our **Local Development Agreement**.

Our training subcommittee has been researching and arranging developmental programs for our members. We've hosted some very successful workshops this year and continue to offer weekly **Apprentice Member workshops** to help develop our newer members. We hope to receive 'Train the Trainer' courses in the near future and introduce the Apprentice Training Program as soon as possible.

The jurisdiction remains strong. There are a few producers who do not use ACTRA talent, but these are getting fewer and farther between. Our Branch Rep. **Nanci Morrison** continues to work with producers to ensure that they pay promptly.

TORONTO

Casting task force prompts dialogue

ACTRA Toronto Performers had a busy fall and winter.

A **Task Force** opened a dialogue with casting directors toward an understanding of what 'good industry standards' mean in the practice of auditions and casting. We met with key film and TV casting directors around Toronto in a good first dialogue.

We are re-developing the **co-op production guidelines**, and revising a low-budget successor to the experimental CLIPP. We are also participating in discussions with the other unions and stakeholders around the city's plan for a \$150-million world-class film production facility.

From perhaps the most diverse city in the western hemisphere, we launched a **diversity casting campaign** that received wide media coverage including **Citytv**, CTV's **Canada AM**, and **The Toronto Sun**. Our 'Cast Reality' posters were sent to all ACTRA branches, and the artwork is available to share.

On Feb. 15th we initiated our **Members' Conference** entitled, 'Making Connections – With Your Art and Your Industry.' This year ATP evolved our AGM into a full day



One of the postcards from ACTRA Toronto Performers' diversity campaign

of professional panels, an Executive Council plenary session, and an evening celebration with more than 500 members. The strength and unity of the membership was evident with the massive turnout.

We hosted industry panels with guests including members **Alberta Watson**, **Chris Owens**, **Don McKellar**, **James Allodi** and **Michael Healey**, in discussion with prominent producers, directors, and casting directors.

A rousing address was given by ATP President **Richard Hardacre**, who then introduced **John Connolly**, National President of AFTRA, one of the American Performers' unions. Connolly's inspiring keynote speech brought a standing ovation for his views on unity and the harmful 'runaway production' rhetoric. ACTRA National President **Thor Bishopric** also gave a tremendous solidarity speech.

Toronto thanks the Montreal Council and members for the temporary 'loan' of **Raymond Guardia** as interim Director. We welcome our new Executive Director, **Brian Topp**, who with his new team is off to an excellent start.

MANITOBA

2002 already a busy year in Manitoba

Manitoba, for the first time in recent memory, has experienced production in almost every month of the year 2001. The number of productions was unprecedented. Many members worked on more than one production throughout the year.

Canadian indigenous production was more than half of total production in terms of work days, but there was strong foreign production as well. Both the number of our **Full Members** and **Apprentice Members** are



Alice Poyser, William Carl Backman and Ida Reichardt Backman at ACTRA Manitoba's Open House in December.

growing faster than ever before. And we are expecting a financial surplus for 2001. 2001 has indeed been a good year for ACTRA Manitoba.

2002 is starting off even better. Three productions started in February and a fourth is getting ready. And there are more in the wings.

Last July we moved into a new office in Winnipeg's **Exchange district** – right in the middle of the film and arts community. We are establishing a studio within our office for acting workshops. Our council and membership are very excited with these improvements.

We held an **Open House** in our new office in December. All members and many film industry workers were invited. We had a good turnout and a very enjoyable time was had by all. In a little ceremony we recognized Alice Poyser for her past twenty-five years of service to ACTRA Manitoba and presented her with a gift – a very charming memory box.

Life is good in Manitoba and if the weather would improve it would be downright excellent.

SASKATCHEWAN

Status of the Artist legislation in the works



Chris Scott, President, ACTRA Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan is proving once again that it's the centre of the universe as the provincial government is set to introduce **Status of the Artist** legislation this spring. We'll be only the second province (after Quebec) to have such a law. The feds brought their law down in the early 1990s. This is extremely important for artists of all ilk as it will provide for collective bargaining rights for freelance artists and commits our government to honouring existing scale agreements.

The **NDP government** will bring in enabling legislation in March and form a high-powered committee of culture sector types that will be charged with putting meat on the bones of the law over the next couple of years. Our branch is expected to participate in a big way as ACTRA not only has a lot to gain it has a lot to offer other artist organizations.

Renovations of our new **ACTRA Saskatchewan Audition and Resource Centres** are complete. We've had several bookings from members and expect all Regina auditions will be held in the new spiffy space.

Construction of the \$12 million, 82,000-square-foot **soundstage** is due to be completed this spring. It's expected to change everyone's life here. Now we're worried about a shortage of crew and a number of them will need to be enticed home after they left last year for greener pastures.

Branch President **Chris Scott** has agreed to sit on the **Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board**, representing ACTRA and all cultural industries. This prestigious appointment by the Sask Fed of Labour will help raise ACTRA's profile in both the cultural sector and labour movement.

We're also working with the other prairie branches and ACTRA's National office to formalize regional administration out of the Calgary office, to free up our one-person staff from the over-burdening clerical duties.

EDMONTON



Colin MacLean, ACTRA Edmonton's National Councillor

ACTRA Edmonton is pleased to announce **Colin MacLean** has been acclaimed as our National Councillor. Colin is a veteran CBC broadcaster and writer and one of the founding members of the Edmonton Branch. His extensive knowledge of the entertainment industry, and his history with ACTRA will be a great benefit.

We're not as busy as we would like – but we are steady. Productions include documentaries (Great North/Alliance Atlantis) and other local independents; **Mentors** (the series); and the occasional feature film, MOW, commercial, and CBC Radio pickup. We are pleased that **The War Bride**, an official co-treaty production shot in Edmonton and England during 2000,

was nominated for 7 Genies including Best Motion Picture.

100 Days in the Jungle, a recent MOW that was filmed in Costa Rica for 3 weeks, had been variously affected by the September 11th attack, hurricane Michelle, a monsoon and a minor earthquake. The branch anticipates sending some recommendations to ACTRA Fraternal Benefit Society on behalf of members working out of the country. We salute the indomitable Canadian cast and crew of *100 Days* and we are confident that they will ultimately be very proud of this undertaking.

The branch continues to focus on the pursuit of work opportunities and training initiatives for ACTRA members.

Our website was transferred to www.actraedmonton.com in December, and is already attracting enthusiastic enquiries. With the assistance of the Calgary regional office, we have managed to turn around some non-union activity.

In December, we held our first-ever combined **Equity-ACTRA** holiday celebration at the Varscona Theatre. It was a successful event which brought together the entire Edmonton acting community in celebration. It is the beginning of a new tradition in Edmonton.

In closing, we wish to thank the Western Regional Office for maintaining the Edmonton Branch during our Branch Rep.'s absence last summer: John Rooney, Dan Goy, Donna Burwood, and Jennifer Blaney. Kudos from all of us at the Edmonton Branch to the National staff for their continued hard work and recent achievements.

CALGARY

We need a National presence in every region

It was a so-so year for Calgary, certainly not one of the blockbusters (no advertising intended). We had five feature films, of which three were deferrals, and two unit shoots for feature films. Five MOWs, two TV series, one mini series, one co-treaty and some odds and ends.

Preliminary figures for Canadian talent show: background days at approximately 3,500 of which more than 2,000 were non-members. Working days were approximately 2,000, of which 850 were for members in other branches and approximately 300 for (continued on page 14)



Magic. Intensity. Growth.

Eight women directors.
10 actors. 14 days.
The Women in the
Director's Chair Workshop
from the actor perspective

by Kerry Segal
Photos by Gail Maurice

On January 19, ten ACTRA members flew into the Banff National Park to partake in the **Women in the Director's Chair (WIDC) Workshop**. The workshop was set appropriately in **The Banff Centre** situated above the tectonic plates, a place for dream/vision quest among natives. The energy here is so strong that many native people won't live here. In this energetically and creatively charged setting, all involved embarked on an intense journey of growth and exploration amid eight female directors (**Annie Bradley, Maureen Bradley, Shirley Cheechoo, Susan Duligal, Patti Henderson, Andrea Mann, Shandi Mitchell, Jacqueline Samuda**), mentor director **Nanci Rossov**, mentor actor **Patti Allan**, mentor DOP **Richard Leiterman**, mentor editor **Paul Mortimer**, mentor story editor **Peg Campbell**; under the tutelage of the ever-capable **Carol Whiteman** and her right hand **Amanda O'Leary**.

The WIDC Workshop is an incredible opportunity to understand the process of filmmaking. The workshop allowed the actors to drop the false sense of centrality one often feels as a performer, and provided space for analyzing and articulating the role that we play in creating film and television. The discussions with fellow actors and directors created a supportive environment for participants to discuss their needs. This simulated professional environment focused



Mentor director Nanci Rossov
(former ACTRA member).

an intense journey of growth and exploration

on learning created an environment conducive to the analysis of the emotional processes that one usually engages in. This allowed actors to become aware of personal blocks in a safe environment.

WIDC created a place where actors could learn from each other not only about craft, but also about what's going on in the industry throughout the country, and meet up-and-coming female directors.

Several of the performers expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work in a learning-focused environment, commenting that it reminded them why they became a performer in the first place. Through working toward the creation and realization of the directors' vision, all participants were able to be part of a collaborative experience. The participants discussed the unfortunately unique opportunity of working with so many female directors on set.

As a performer, having roles written by women, about women and directed by women, I was given the opportunity to explore meaty stories with female characters of substance. One can only hope that the workshop and its graduates will permeate the industry, creating a more

Unique synergy through collaborative experience

truthful reflection of the general populace's experience of life. With more female storytellers, we would have a diverse influx of stories where women portray the protagonists and a more honest depiction of women's existence. This would not just be to the benefit of women (and female performers!) but also to the benefit of humanity.

The workshop brought people from all over the country, specialized in all aspects of the industry, together. It created a meeting place for women working within the industry, one that encourages a supportive cross-regional network for women of diverse professional backgrounds. It gives hope that some day the industry will be permeated with women working on creating a more truthful reflection of the reality of not just women, but of the world in general.

Kerry Segal is a Toronto-based performer. She is a creator, mover, singer, writer, actor, and artist.

Photography by Gail Maurice – a Toronto-based actress and writer, soon to be seen in Street Time, a new ShowTime series. She's also heading to Alaska and the Yukon for a shoot with the BBC/Discovery.





(Left) All work and no play? Finally, we got some time off – and went cross-country skiing in our beautiful surroundings. Actors Lori Hallier, Genevieve Steele and Tammy Bentz.

(Below) Director Maureen Bradley and actor participant (and photographer) Gail Maurice on a hike near the Banff Centre.



Author Kerry Segal with directors Patti Henderson and Jacqueline Samuda.

Quite the contingent: ACTRA members participating in the 2002 Women in the Director's Chair workshop. Front: Kerry Segal (actor), Amanda O'Leary (line producer). Middle: Shirley Cheechoo (director), Victoria Barkoff (actor), Genevieve Steele (actor), Andrea Mann (director), Gail Maurice (actor), Carol Whiteman (producer), Tammy Bentz (actor), Nanci Rossov (mentor director), Lori Hallier (actor), Jacqueline Samuda (director), Patti Allan (mentor actor/instructor). Back: Russell Ferrier (actor), John MacLaren (actor), Jenn Griffin (actor), Shaker Paleja (actor).



Don Lee

A WIDC diary

by Shaker Paleja

Day 1 I have my first meeting with **Andrea Mann**, one of the directors whose final scene I will be working on with fellow actor, **Genevieve Steele**. After Andrea bestows background info about our characters, we proceed to discuss psychological and emotional journeys our characters will undertake. I am silently struck by her strength and clarity of vision. After the hour-and-a-half-minute meeting I leave inspired. I have never had the opportunity to discuss many of the things we touched on in the meeting with professional directors in the real world. I unwind and finish the day with a workout, a swim in the 25-metre pool, followed by a visit to the steam room.

"I've never been around so much estrogen in my life."



Discussing a scene: 1st AD Michele Williams with director Shirley Cheechoo, and script supervisor Sabrina Birrell.

Day 2 Up at 6:45 a.m. Only two meetings and three rehearsals on the agenda for today. As I open the curtains in my room I begin to realize just how beautiful it is here. Nestled in the heart of the Rockies, the views from here are spectacular. It feels like I'm in a magical place, which only exists in dreams. At the morning meeting, **Carol Whiteman**, the program producer and co-creator, reminds us that we are in the middle of a national park (the oldest in Canada) and that we are in fact in a magical place. The First Nations people started coming here 10,000 years ago. They believed it was indeed a magical place where dreams have the power to transform you. The meeting later adjourns with the announcement of a cougar warning in the area. Someone makes a joke about it being a middle-aged woman and we get up from our seats laughing, but before stepping outside we all take a moment to see if it's safe.

Day 3 The crew arrived last night. DOPs, ADs, hair and make-up, script supervisors, sound technicians, camera operators, gaffers, student assistants, and God knows who else. They have come from all over Canada. In total, there are over 100 of us.

Day 4 Our first and only day off. The work so far has been challenging, the directors have been wonderful to work with, as have the actors and DOPs, and crew. After working so hard, we were rewarded last night with a screening of the dailies. At lunch I broke bread with artists from all over the world: a violinist from Australia, a viola player from Minnesota, a Canadian composer who works in Europe, an author who is going to Holland to write her second book, and an artistic director of a dance company from Winnipeg. It feels like I've snuck into an exclusive club while the bouncer or maitre d' wasn't looking.

Day 14 The past few days have been hectic. Shooting the main scenes is challenging but also fun. It's extraordinary that the directors I've worked with so far (**Andrea Mann**, **Shirley Cheechoo**, and **Maureen Bradley**) have been so busy and yet so together. Not only are they intelligent and talented, but also incredibly nice. I have never been around so much estrogen in my life, but I must admit that it is wonderful to work with a director who is sensitive to actors' needs. I will always treasure my experiences here. I wish the real world were like this.

Shaker Paleja has acted in the U.K. and India. He currently resides and works in the beautiful city of Vancouver.



Women in the Director's Chair Workshop a unique experience

The **Women in the Director's Chair Workshop** is a specially designed intensive program for mid-career Canadian women directors. From prep through production and post – all of the components of a professional dramatic media production are explored, complete with professional actors (ACTRA) and crews (DGC, IATSE).

The WIDC Workshop alumnae have gone on to complete new original projects, collaborate on fellow graduates' projects and many are hired to direct series television. Graduates credit the increased skills, greater confidence and action plan developed at the workshop as a major force behind subsequent success.

Among graduates' successes, **Veronica Tennant** received a star on Toronto's Walk of Fame, **Gerry Rogers'** autobiographical *My Left Breast* garnered accolades across Canada and around the world, while **Katie Tallo** went to camera on a full-length dramatic feature film.

ACTRA member **Carol Whiteman** is co-founder and producer of the annual WIDC workshop.

ACTRA member authors **Kerry Segal** and **Shaker Paleja** and photographer **Gail Maurice** participated in the 2002 acting ensemble.

Application deadlines for the WIDC 2003 Workshop are:

Directors:	September 30, 2002
Actors:	October 31, 2002
Crew:	November 30, 2002

Watch the website for more information:
www.womeninthedirectorschair.com.

Note to 2002 applicants: demo tapes have been returned to your local ACTRA branch office for pickup.



ACTRA is a proud sponsor
of the Women in the
Director's Chair Workshop.



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

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CALGARY

(continued from page 11)

non-members. Calgary members cast were nearly 200. The interesting figure is the 'other branches' figure, which supports the argument for a national presence in every production region.

Our members need and expect the local office of the area where they are working to be supportive and provide service. The local branch can only do that if we continue to maintain a National Agreement, fair to all our members.

On to other matters. Calgary has a new council which is getting its feet wet, coming to terms with itself and trying to be a cohesive group working for the membership who elected them. A new **workshop committee** is committed to providing dynamic courses and enhancing the educational opportunities for the membership.

Calgary was pleased to hear that the City of Toronto is building a new soundstage and hopes that the work for members will expand exponentially.

Carpe diem.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Waiting for 'business as usual'

2002 is a year of uncertainty and guarded optimism as we wait to see if and when the 'business as usual' flag will be hoisted by the entertainment industry.

Our long-awaited **financial statements** were completed in November and forwarded in a holiday bouquet to the national office. We are delighted and relieved that this onerous and time-consuming task has been completed and we thank you for your patience as we wrestled the financial demon to the mat.

In perhaps the most hotly contested elections in UBCP's eleven-year history, 27 candidates ran for 10 positions on the UBCP Executive Board. Elected on December 3, 2001 for a two-year term were:

Mark Holden, John Juliani, Stephen E. Miller, Peter Partridge, Elfie Pavlakovic, Kate Robbins, Alvin Sanders, Howard Storey, Gerry Vivash and Byard Wood.

In early September, it came to our attention that **CCRA** (formerly Revenue Canada) was auditing the tax returns of an inordinate number of our members. We pro-actively requested a meeting with the CCRA reps in an attempt to understand why we've become the object of their attention. After six meetings we managed to get CCRA to agree to put the audits for several UBCP members on hold pending the results of our meetings. We hope to send members a CCRA-UBCP statement about new guidelines for allowable expenses for performers.

UBCP has negotiated a one-year continuance of its collective agreement through March 31st, 2003. This arrangement seemed to be the obvious and most prudent choice to make. We have also met with the **AMPTP** and **CFTPA** in a 'consultation committee' mechanism provided for in the BCMPPA to discuss issues of mutual concern. We hope this process will facilitate bargaining when we sit down formally to renegotiate the BCMPPA.



member profiles

Vik Sahay



Vik Sahay knows the Canadian actor experience of public anonymity. Though he's surprised at how many kids recognize him instantly – as **Dalal**, the character he plays on CBC television's **Our Hero**.

Our Hero centres on 17-year-old **Kale**, who writes a zine to deal with the 'issues' in her life. Sahay's Dalal has started a relationship with Kale's best friend **Mary-E**. Sahay says Dalal "is a fiery, poetic soul who has acted as a sage to some of the other characters."

The challenge with the part was to play someone younger than himself. "Dalal is 17. I've been hanging out with my younger brother to research the part." And the rewards? "The chance to work with a creative team of such a high calibre."

Other credits include the YTV series **Radioactive**, a Showcase original feature

The Ride, and what he calls a "blip part" in **Good Will Hunting**. Upcoming, he'll be treading the boards in Canadian Stage's co-pro with the National Arts Centre of Tom Stoppard's **Indian Ink**.

He's also part of an experimental film project called **Fine**. Still in development, the actors meet regularly with the writer and a director to workshop a film on-camera. Sahay says developing a character on film has been one of his greatest experiences.

Sahay has started building bridges to L.A. "My long-term goal is to make it in L.A., and then come

back and make the films I want to make," he says.

As for acting, Sahay says "there's pretty much nothing else I can imagine doing. It's just it."



Vik Sahay as Dalal, and Jeanie Calleja as Mary-E in *Our Hero*.

Photo courtesy CBC



Jennifer Overton

Nova Scotia performer **Jennifer Overton** earned a Masters in performance at **York University**, and went to teach at **Dalhousie University** in Halifax for a year. "I fully expected to return to Ontario, but you know the story – I met someone, got married, and stayed. I love it here. The Maritimes is a great place to be a performer right now."

An actor, director, writer and educator, Overton most enjoys acting for the camera, though she struggles with being considered for what she calls 'more mature roles,' after her hair went prematurely grey. She's worked with

Sissy Spacek in the MOW **Songs in Ordinary Time**, and James Caan in the feature **Glimpse of Hell**.

Most recently, Overton worked on Agnieszka Holland's film **Julie Walking Home**. An emotional story about a woman whose son has cancer, Overton plays the grandmother. The challenges in this role weren't just dramatic. "10-hour days in heels and no make-up. Not a stitch!"

Other recent credits include **Liocracy**, – a biography spoof for the Comedy Network, and **Between the Covers** on CBC Radio reading **A Student of Weather**

by Elizabeth Hay. Upcoming, she'll be on stage at Neptune Theatre in Jonathan Wilson's **Kilt**.

She's also working on a book for a British publisher. "We have a high-functioning autistic son, Nicholas, and I'm writing a book about our lives."

In her spare time, Overton sits on ACTRA's Maritimes Branch Council, and serves as Chair of the Board of Directors of the **Moving Images Group**, a non-profit co-operative venture of the Writers Guild, the Directors Guild, ACTRA and IATSE.

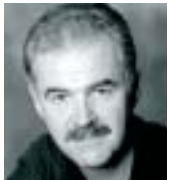


who's who at ACTRA



Maria Bircher

Maria has been working as a professional performer for more than fifteen years with memberships in **UdA**, **CAEA** and **ACTRA**. She has performed in television, film and theatrical productions across Canada and lent her voice to numerous animation, radio and digital media projects. She is proud to be a member of this great organization and has served ACTRA as a Montreal Councillor for four years and as a National Councillor for two. Maria sits on Montreal's **Professional Development Committee**. She finds the experience of bringing improved services and profile to Montreal performers to be enjoyable and rewarding and encourages all members to get involved and share in the fun. Maria also sits on several National committees including the National ACTRA **Women's Committee**.



Barry Blake

Barry is a bilingual actor, narrator and director who divides his time between Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto, appearing in Canadian and international productions. Balancing many film, documentary and television roles, Barry occasionally shares his knowledge, experience and ironically jaded world view through courses offered by organizations such as ACTRA and the Canadian Screen Training Centre. He has represented Ottawa-area performers on ACTRA's National Council since 2000. Well known for his starring role in the Québécois cult classic **Elvis Gratton II: Miracle à Memphis**, Barry also has recently appeared in **Confessions of a Dangerous Mind**, **Asbestos** (French mini-series), **Wrong Number** (starring Eric Roberts), **The Endless Grind** (Ocnus Productions) and the NFB miniseries, **Chiefs**.



Christie MacFadyen

Christie has a BA in Philosophy from **U of T** and is a graduate of the **Neighborhood Playhouse**. She lived in NYC for many years, working in theatre, TV, and film there and here. She has been on Toronto Council for three years, and has been a National Councillor for two. As the newly elected Vice-President of External Affairs at ACTRA Toronto she is working on improving ACTRA's communication with other arts organizations on government policy issues that affect us. Recent credits include appearances on **The Associates**, **Blue Murder**, **The Famous Jett Jackson** and **The War next Door**, and the films **Clean Right Cowboy**, **White Lies** and **Ararat**.



Wayne Nicklas

Winnipeg-born and raised, Wayne is a big person and sensitive to the issues of the large actor – bigger costumes, bigger sets and bigger parts. But seriously, he has been a working actor for more years than he would care to admit and is therefore closely acquainted with the difficulties that an acting career can present. He is committed to helping to improve the lives and livelihoods of the everyday actor. During his time on council, Wayne has seen tremendous gains on behalf of all Canadian actors and Manitoba actors in particular. It has been Wayne's privilege and pleasure to represent Manitoba actors on National Council since 1995, and he will continue on the 2002 council.

Show your card and save your money: MAP



All ACTRA Members, along with members of the **Directors Guild of Canada**, the **Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television** and the **Writers Guild of Canada** are entitled to a number of discounts, under what's called the **Members' Advantage Program**, or **MAP**.

Just show your ACTRA member card. Use your ACTRA member password to log in to the members' section of www.actra.ca for a full list of discounts.

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on cell phones, air time**



ACTRA members have access to the MAP multi-subscriber discount plan. Quote your ACTRA member number
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The Hollywood Reporter – \$111 off
ACTRA and MAP members can subscribe for US \$175. All orders must be prepaid. Fax circulation at (323) 525-2150 attn. R. Wilkes or email rwilkes@hollywoodreporter.com



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1 year for \$52.50, 2 years for \$105.
Quote your ACTRA membership number. Contact Angie Sawicki (416) 408-2300



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No discounts in your area? Want to expand discounts for ACTRA members? Ideas for other discounts? Contact us at interactra@actra.ca or call Kim Hume at 1-800-387-3516



ACTRA

organizing

MONTREAL

The Pillsbury Dough Boy Goes ACTRA

In January 2002, **Pillsbury** attempted to film a non-union commercial in Montreal. The commercial, featuring performers as young as 6 years old, will be aired across the United States. Quebec has **Status of the Artist legislation** which recognizes ACTRA and obliges producers to negotiate with us.

National Organizer **Gary Saxe** contacted the advertising agency in New York and the local production company in Montreal to inform them of their legal obligation. After several days of promised negotiations and no results, Gary faxed a press release to the ad agency, Pillsbury and their parent company General Mills. The release was titled 'Pillsbury Underpays Performers in Canada.' Gary informed them that the press release would be distributed to the media unless they use our collective agreement. Shortly thereafter, Gary received a telephone call from a vice-president of General Mills, who assured us that the commercial would be shot union. From that point, negotiations went much more smoothly. The commercial was filmed under ACTRA contracts in January.

ACTRA Continues to Fight to Protect Children's Rights

ACTRA recently scored a victory in protecting the rights of children working in our jurisdiction. The producer, **Ciné Qua Non Films**, backed by the Quebec producers' association, the **APFTQ**, wanted to use children in an unacceptable and inappropriate manner. One scene involved an 8-year-old girl performing in the nude in the presence of two boys. Another scene involved an 11-year-old boy performing with a nude 23-year-old woman in a scene that involves physical contact with sexual content.

This difficult arbitration dragged out over five days of testimony. IPA Steward **Molly Ann Rothschild** and National Organizer **Gary Saxe** coordinated ACTRA's case. The producer claimed that ACTRA should have no role in the matter. They even demanded

that we pay their costs for the arbitration.

The arbitrator ruled that ACTRA has both the right and the obligation to be involved in such cases. While the arbitrator decided that the IPA does not specifically ban nudity for minors, he ruled on exactly how the scenes will and will not be filmed. His decision stated that the two boys will not be present when the young girl is filmed. Further, the producer is not permitted to film her pubic area, and her parents can insist that she wear something during the filming. In the second scene, the arbitrator ruled that the boy will not be present when the adult is nude and will not have any objectionable physical contact with her.

The arbitrator also rejected the demand of the producer that ACTRA pay for their costs. He ruled that ACTRA was fully within its rights to pursue the case because the producer did, in fact, violate the IPA.

The scenes were filmed on February 22 and 24, 2002. Regardless of the arbitrator's decision, the director filmed the scene with the two boys present while the girl was partially nude. As a result, ACTRA will be pursuing the producer for damages for the children as well as punitive damages for



ignoring an arbitration decision.

Gary Saxe
ACTRA National Organizer
gsaxe@actra.ca

WESTERN CANADA

Beware of CLAC!

Who's CLAC you ask? It is an organization known as the **Christian Labour Association of Canada**. It is important to note that the labour movement and the **Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)** do not

recognize this union as it is considered to be employer-dominated. In Calgary, ACTRA is concerned about the relationship between Chinook Animation and CLAC in respect to the security of our jurisdiction.

Established in 1999 by a producer signatory to an ACTRA contract in B.C., **Chinook Animation** certified with CLAC and signed an agreement offering fees and conditions inferior to ACTRA standards. This certification is significant as it marks the first time that CLAC has moved into ACTRA's jurisdiction. It is imperative that we eliminate CLAC from our industry before they do more harm or damage to the fees, working conditions, benefits and residual rights that ACTRA has fought hard to establish for performers.

The organizing department has adopted an initial strategy of isolating Chinook Animation and CLAC by focusing on drying up their talent pool. A supplemental strategy is being examined and developed. **ACTRA** and **Equity** members are not to work for Chinook Animation or any other engager who does not adhere to the Independent Production Agreement (IPA) or the B.C. Master Production Agreement. This includes engagers who have signed agreements with CLAC. Equity members working in ACTRA's jurisdiction are governed by the **ACTRA/Equity Reciprocal Agreement**, which means that they must only work on ACTRA-approved productions. ACTRA will report all violations by Equity members to their national office.

ACTRA has worked with the **Trade Union Coalition of Alberta** to develop an information website on CLAC: www.clacwatch.com.



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(ORGANIZING continues on page 18)

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

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

NATIONAL

Warning: Non-union Commercials

This year ACTRA organizers will be focusing even more effort toward making sure that commercial work is done union. Currently, too much work is going **non-union**. The following list is just a small sample of non-union commercial breakdowns we received between the end of October and the start of December 2001: **Little Caesars, TSN-Promo, Bell ExpressVu, Hot Pockets, National Geographic Channel, Crayola Crayons, Snickers, Safeway, Heineken Beer, Verizon Wireless, Target Stores, Ontario Ministry of Education, CCM, Pizza Pizza, Lindt Chocolates, Ocean Spray, Fidelity Mutual, Kodiak Boots, Lord of the Rings and Spiderman 'Toy Biz', Mattel, and Hasbro.**

What's alarming is that these well-known companies and the agencies they hire, don't feel the need to use 'the best talent available' – ACTRA members. Instead, it appears that agencies feel that they can find talented non-ACTRA performers to do the work at lower rates of compensation.

ACTRA organizers will communicate with agencies, producers and advertisers to try and convince them to use our members, but we will also need to look at new ways of

reducing the number of performers who are out there doing non-union work.

Dan Mackenzie
ACTRA National Organizer
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DIGITAL MEDIA

New Media is dead!

Yes, that's right **New Media** is dead – the term that is.

The use of 'New Media' to describe **digital media** was always problematic. Projects developed with digital media technologies continue to be categorized as 'new' even though these 'new' productions are now commonplace in the industry and have been for years. Although this may not seem to be significant, it is and here is why: using the term 'new media' connotes the idea that these productions are somehow separate, and perhaps make up only a small part of the entertainment industry and this is simply not the reality. 'New Media,' or better said 'Digital Media,' is not only part of the entire industry it is quickly becoming the industry.

From the perspective of feature films, it is often pointed out that digital features do not look as good as features produced on film. Whether a production is captured on

film or video is not necessarily relevant. Even if a project is produced on film, you can bet that it will be digitized once it is completed. For example, one would be hard pressed to find a major theatrically released Hollywood film over the past year that has not been digitized and released on **DVD** (Digital Video Disk). DVDs include a wealth of additional footage, however payment models for performers involved in this work have not been established.

And on the television front, the press is quick to point out that the digital stations have gotten off to a rocky start – sure, what would one expect? However shaky the start, let's not forget that television broadcasts in the United States (and Canada will likely follow) must be digital by the proposed date of 2006. After that time all programming on the tube will be digital.

The **NATPE** (National Association of Television Program Executives) Convention in the United States is one of the world's most important television markets, and this year's market revealed some interesting developments. A significant number of the Canadian titles sold (hundreds of episodes) were short-length programs (90-second to 11-minute). This is consistent with our predictions last year that short-length programming will continue to find markets (and revenues) in the internet and 500-channel universe.

all entertainment will be in digital format within 3-5 years

As **Bill Gates** stated at **Digital Hollywood** this year, he believes that all entertainment will be in digital format within the next three to five years. The reason that all entertainment will be digital or digitized, is that in order for entertainment companies to remain competitive and increase revenues, the entertainment that they produce will have to be used cross-platform (on a number of audio-video devices). Cross-platform uses will drive new revenues and cross-platform use can only be obtained in digital format.

New Media is dead, but Digital Media is alive and very well.



Thom Tapley
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Digital Media
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THE 2002 CANADIAN COMEDY AWARDS



The 2002 Canadian Comedy Awards thank all who nominated, voted and bought tickets to the party! Stay tuned to the website for winners info, and bulletins on next year's show.

www.canadiancomedyawards.com

Brought to you by ACTRA.

applause



Kiefer Sutherland wins Golden Globe Award

ACTRA Member **Kiefer Sutherland** took home a **Golden Globe Award** for Best Actor in a Leading Role (Drama Series) for his role in **24**. Among the nominees, Kiefer beat out Martin Sheen, nominated for his role in **The West Wing**.

The **Hollywood Foreign Press Association** awards its Golden Globes to honour achievements in film and television during the calendar year. The awards took place in January.

Order of Canada honours 4 ACTRA Members



ACTRA members **Judith Lawrence** and **Red Kelly** have been named to the Order of Canada for the first time. **Patrick Watson** and former ACTRA member **Brian Macdonald** have been promoted to Companions of the Order of Canada.

Judith Lawrence created and animated the much-loved puppets **Casey and Finnegan** on CBC's **Mr. Dressup** until her (and their) retirement in 1992.

Hockey legend **Red Kelly** played with the **Detroit Red Wings** and the **Toronto Maple Leafs** in a career spanning 20 years from 1947 to 1967.

Patrick Watson is best known as a television journalist and producer. This year, CBC rebroadcast a number of episodes from **This Hour Has Seven Days**, the famous current affairs show Watson hosted in the 1960s. Watson was named to the Order of Canada in 1981.

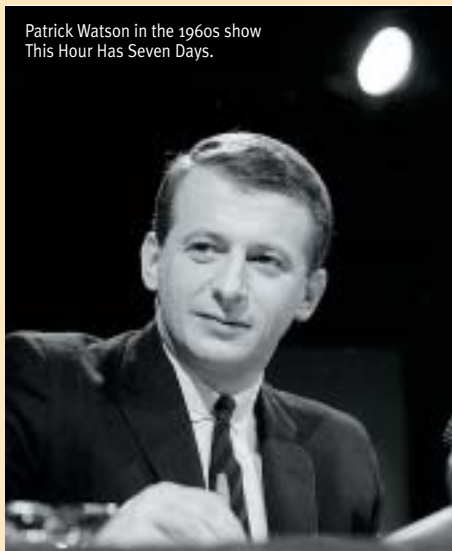
Brian Macdonald is an internationally acclaimed choreographer and director. Macdonald was an original member of the **National Ballet of Canada** and is the director of the professional dance program at the **Banff Centre**. Macdonald was named to the Order of Canada in 1967.

The Order of Canada recognizes people who have made a difference to our country – Canada's highest honour for lifetime achievement. The Order is awarded by the Governor General of Canada.



Mr. Dressup (Ernie Coombs) with Casey and Finnegan who were created by Judith Lawrence.

Photo courtesy CBC



Patrick Watson in the 1960s show This Hour Has Seven Days.

Photo courtesy CBC

2002 Genie Awards

The Genie Award statuette was created by Sorel Ergog



Molly Parker

ACTRA members **Molly Parker**, **Vincent Gale** and **Brendan Fletcher** each won Genies at the 22nd annual Genie Awards on February 7, 2002.

Winning best-supporting actress for her role in **Last Wedding**, Parker had also been nominated in the same category for her work in the film **The War Bride**. Gale won the best-supporting actor Genie for his work in **Last Wedding**. Fletcher, at 20 years old, is the youngest performer to win the best-actor Genie. He won for his portrayal of Henry in **The Law of Enclosures**.

The film **Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)** won five Genies including Best Motion Picture, Best Director and Best Screenplay.

The Genie Awards honour outstanding achievement in the Canadian film industry. Inaugurated in 1980, the Genies are awarded annually by the **Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television**. For more information, visit the Academy's website at www.academy.ca.

Farewell to **FRANK SHUSTER**



Photo courtesy: CBC

Frank Shuster was a master comedic craftsman who, along with co-writer and performer Johnny Wayne, brought sophisticated schtick to our TV screens for decades. Wayne & Shuster had their own unofficial repertory company of character actors – a talent pool of perhaps 20-25 guys and dolls from which

they'd cast their specials.

I was privileged to be one of those 'faces' in the 70s and 80s and it was great fun. I spent a lot of time working abroad in those days, but when possible, I would fly home to make myself available for their shows.

Of course Johnny and Frank were the dominant actors in almost every sketch, but there would always be a few delicious cameos for us guys in the trenches and I looked forward to every new script selfishly hoping there'd be something juicy for me.

Aside from the shoot week itself, each show involved a week of rehearsals and costume fittings at the CBC studios on Sumach Street, and it was here where all the fun took place, especially at coffee break time when jokes would fly, outrageous anecdotes would be exchanged, and laughter would fill the air. Johnny and Frank would always contribute to the humorous banter and I admired them both, but was especially intrigued by Frank who had a gracious presence not often found in comedians – considerate, articulate, and kindly. Hey, and he was funny too. Blessed with perfect timing, he could be and often was as manic as Johnny and with that doleful, expressive face. No one could arch an eyebrow or do a double-take better than he.

Frank Shuster was a class act, a splendid fellow and a true gentleman. Those who worked with him deeply mourn his passing, but will always have the memories of the camaraderie and the good times we shared.

Howard Swinson



Photo courtesy: CBC

GOODBYE, PETER

Let me just say up front... I find it very difficult to write anything about Peter Gzowski. It's hard to describe how much I miss him now, never mind how much I will miss him down the road. I miss the comforting sound of his voice in the morning; although there was always the chance his 'best of' would calm the airwaves later in the day.

I am very sad that I didn't have the chance to say goodbye before he ventured on a new journey. But then something very strange happened... I heard wonderful voices singing... poetry recited... friends laughing... and finally, a conversation between Peter and W.O. Mitchell... I felt myself smiling at the power of love and what Peter had done for me and everyone else who was blessed to have known him.

Goodbye old friend... I'll see you later.

Tom Jackson

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

Maria Barrett
Herbert Belyea
Peter Boretski
Patrick Brennan
Kay Caisley
Terri Clark
Edward Greenhalgh
Don Harper
Gwyneth Harvey

John Heywood
Elsa Houba
Irene Kessler
John McKinney
Gillian McNair
Marshall Perlmutter
Elsa Pickthorne
Ramiro Puerta
Ken Rabat

Gordon Ruttan
Carol Shamy
Tony Sheer
Dr. Gordon Signer
Charles Templeton
Vladimir Valenta
Larry Zirkle



Canadian content production in decline

At an appearance before the **House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage** on November 27, 2001, ACTRA policy advisor **Garry Neil** pointed out that the fall in number of Canadian content productions, particularly of television drama, has reached crisis proportions. “We are losing our ability to tell Canadian stories in the recorded media,” said Mr. Neil.

He also told committee members the situation is only made worse with the decision of the **World Trade Organization (WTO)** to launch a comprehensive new round of trade talks at its recent Ministerial meeting in the Persian Gulf Kingdom of Qatar. “The WTO and other trade agreements already restrict Canada’s sovereignty to implement policies that support Canadian cultural expression. The WTO decision to expand the services agreement and to discuss investment and competition policy is further bad news for the television and film industry.”

But before Mr. Neil could explain and

analyze the concerns of ACTRA members in detail and outline ACTRA’s proposed alternatives, the division bells started ringing, calling members to the House of Commons for an urgent vote. As a result, the committee hearings dissolved chaotically. Delegates from the Canadian Film and Television Production Association, who traveled to the session from across Canada and were scheduled to appear after ACTRA, were sent packing.

This debacle highlights the problems of the Standing Committee’s review of the Canadian broadcasting system. Launched last June, the review was to cover all aspects of Canadian broadcasting and propose new and contemporary solutions to the challenges facing the industry. The committee was given eighteen months to complete the work. But, according to Neil, “the committee seems to have bitten off rather more than it can chew.”

The committee appeared to be caught off guard by the extent of the challenges

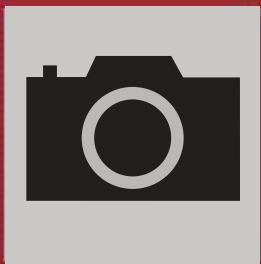
confronting the system, including interactive television and the internet, increasing competition and vertical integration. The committee appears also to lack the resources necessary to complete a thorough review. “Members of the committee were surprised to hear the latest statistics that show that there was a greater amount of foreign service production in Canada in 2001 than there was English-language Canadian content production. They also hadn’t been told about the decision of **Alliance Atlantis** to get out of production.” In fiscal 2000, budgets of the foreign productions shot here totaled \$1.5 billion, while only \$1.2 billion of English-language Canadian content was produced.

The committee has not decided on a new appearance date for ACTRA and seems to be reconsidering its entire work plan. “This might be the best thing,” concluded Mr. Neil, “since it will give ACTRA and others time to consider the implications for Canadian public policies of the dramatic shift in production patterns.”

For more information on ACTRA’s public policy positions, visit www.actra.ca. Look under News and Information, and find the Policy Issues section under InterACTRA.

What if Léa Pool, Atom Egoyan or Clement Virgo were looking for YOU... but all they could find was...

If ACTRA doesn’t have your photo, this icon is what casting directors and producers will see in Face to Face Online.



Get yourself in the picture! Send us your latest headshot.

If you don’t know what your password is... Send an email to ftf@actra.ca with your full name, member number and your agency (if applicable) and ask to have your password re-sent, OR call 1-800-387-3516 and ask for Face to Face.



ACTRA

Make sure you’re in **Face to Face Online** – ACTRA’s searchable talent catalogue – at www.actra.ca (It’s free.)

Behind-the-scenes

Selecting Canadian films for the foreign-language Oscar race



Atanarjuat (played by Natar Ungalaaq)
Inset photo: Puja (played by Lucie Tulugarjuk) and Panikpak (played by Madeline Ivalu)

Atanarjuat's impressive list of awards

Winner Caméra d'or

Un Certain Regard
– Official Selection
– Cannes 2001

Co-Winner Guardian Award for First Directors

2001 Edinburgh International Film Festival

Winner Toronto-City Award for Best Canadian Feature Film

2001 Toronto International Film Festival

Winner Grand Prix of the Flemish Community for Best Film

28th Flanders International Film Festival – Ghent

Winner Special Jury Prize and the Prix du Public

Festival International du nouveau Cinéma et des nouveaux Médias de Montréal 2001

CTV Best of Fest Award

Next Fest 2001 – Digital Motion Picture Festival

Best Film

2001 ImagineNATIVE Media Art Festival

Winner Claude Jutra Award

(special achievement by a first-time Canadian feature film director)
2002 Genie Awards – Toronto

Best Motion Picture

2002 Genie Awards – Toronto

by Terrence La Brosse Ross

Many ACTRA Members are probably not aware of Canada's role in sending films to the **Academy Awards** – the **Oscars**. For years, ACTRA has participated on **Telefilm Canada's** pre-selection committee which deliberates each year over a number of Canadian films that qualify in the 'foreign-language' category, and selects just one to send to the Oscars.

As a bilingual nation, Canada always has a film to submit due to production in Quebec, and French-language production outside of Quebec. But this year, there was another stunning entry on the short list – the Inuit-language film **Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)**.

Atanarjuat is an exciting entry on many levels. It is director Zacharias Kunuk's first venture into feature film directing, for which he has already won the Canadian Academy's **Claude Jutra** award. The press reviews are remarkable – "the dazzler," "surprise movie of 2001," "one of the most

exciting new films to come along in years," "arguably the most impressive film," and "destined to go down in Canadian film history," to cite just a few of the accolades this film has received.

Sadly, despite these rave reviews, *Atanarjuat* was not among the Oscar finalists announced by the Academy on February 12th.

Canada has never won an Oscar in the foreign-language category. It's a broad category, and every nation in the world is invited to submit an entry.

Atanarjuat was filmed entirely on location on the sea-ice and tundra around Iglolik. The film draws on the rich oral tradition of the Inuit. Among its impressive list of awards, it won the **Toronto International Film Festival's** Toronto-City Award for Best Feature Film, two awards at the **Festival International du nouveau Cinéma et des nouveaux Médias de Montréal 2001**, and five **Genie Awards** including Best Motion Picture and Best Director.

The story is based on an ancient Inuit legend passed down the generations through an oral tradition. The *Atanarjuat* fable teaches young Inuit the dangers of putting individual desires above the needs of the group. Director Zacharias Kunuk believes that translating the fable to film is

a way of bringing back the lost tradition of storytelling. While not a documentary, the film does depict authentic historical details of Inuit life. Kunuk says "*Atanarjuat* is a universal story with emotions people all over the world can understand. It is also totally Inuit: a story we all heard as children, told and acted by Inuit."

ACTRA is proud to be part of Telefilm's pre-selection committee. We are witness to the high calibre films our country's talent is producing, and pleased to be part of ushering that talent to a larger audience. We also look forward to the day not far from now when Canada's submission to the foreign-language category will earn a statue.



Terrence La Brosse Ross is a member of Union des Artistes and is a life member of ACTRA. It is his honour to have been ACTRA's volunteer representative on the Telefilm

Canada Canadian pre-selection committee for 10 years. Each year, the committee selects one foreign-language Canadian film to represent Canada at the Oscars in the Best Foreign-Language Film competition.

Related links www.telefilm.gc.ca
www.atanarjuat.com
www.oscars.org

Some Canadian films sent to the Oscars in the Best Foreign-Language Film category

2001 **Maelström** (Denis Villeneuve)

2000 **Emporte-moi** (Léa Pool)

1999 **Un 32 août sur Terre** (Denis Villeneuve)

1998 **Cosmos** (seven directors)



member
services

ACTRA PRS puts millions into performers' pockets

Demystifying the ACTRA "collection agency" that works for performers

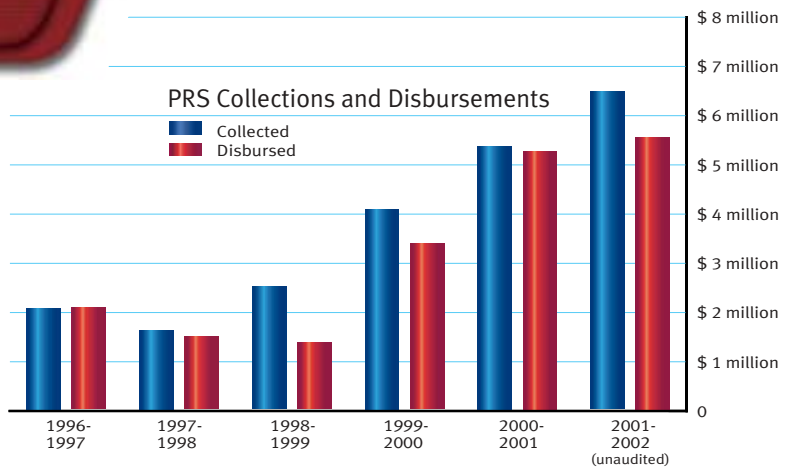
ACTRA Performers' Rights Society's (ACTRA PRS) ability to collect residuals for performers has improved considerably over the last five years. We have increased our collections from **\$1.8 million** in 1996 to approximately **\$6.5 million** in 2001, at no cost to the members. That means that in 2001 alone, ACTRA PRS distributed almost \$6 million to performers – a tremendous achievement we can all be proud of. ACTRA PRS is committed to ensuring that residual payments make their way to performers.

It's still a challenge though, to collect on productions made prior to the 1990s. At that time, the Canadian film industry was just starting to mature. The deals made were convoluted. Many performer contracts were drafted by lawyers unaware of how the IPA worked. References were made to agreements that didn't exist, and ACTRA language was pasted into performer contracts referencing SAG agreements, without anyone taking into account the administrative repercussions of what was being drafted.

The result was performer contracts that are difficult to decipher. Agreements that tied producers to the product were never signed, and contracts varied throughout the same production. Worst of all, producers had no infrastructure to calculate payments even if they wanted to and the PRS staff was too small to take on all the work.

millions of dollars, years of use fees for performers

While all this makes collecting a difficult task for PRS, we have successfully collected millions of dollars from pre-1990 productions and performers have been paid years of Use Fees owed to them. We have improved our systems and we have hired exemplary staff, committed to getting more money in the door for our members. We have gone to arbitration with our expert legal counsel, **Paul Falzone**, and won significant claims for our members. And claim file by claim file, audit by audit, we have been increasingly successful.



2 years in arbitration: Wayne and Shuster

ACTRA member **Sylvia Lennick** was surprised to see herself on the **Comedy Network** while she was in Edmonton doing a play. She didn't know **CBC** had sold the **Wayne and Shuster** shows to the **Comedy Network**. So she mentioned it at an ACTRA Toronto Council meeting. Two years later through the efforts of ACTRA PRS, an arbitrator awarded **\$75,000** to the performers involved, and the cheques were divided up accordingly, arriving in their mailboxes just before the holidays in 2001.

"I was delighted to get a small cheque for my work in this program over 20 years ago. And I was particularly interested that ACTRA PRS enclosed the reasoning details in the matter of arbitration... Well done. I remain a very proud member of ACTRA. You serve us well." — **John Swindells**

"I know (PRS) can't resolve it overnight, but I had no idea it would take two years. I think they've done a great job." — **Tom Harvey**



Courtesy CBC



John Swindells



Tom Harvey

Never Cry Wolf



John Wardlow

ACTRA member **John Wardlow** knew that Disney's **Never Cry Wolf** had done well. Some time after its release in 1983, it was repackaged as a **Disney Classic**, and Wardlow knew it was selling on video, making the top ten. Following the initial pre-paid period, Wardlow started receiving royalties cheques in 1994, a few hundred here, a few hundred there. He had no idea he was owed much more than that. "The beauty of PRS," he says, "is they made a breakthrough with Disney. Now the 'use fee' payments are coming through on a regular basis for work I did on a host of Disney films – **Stakeout**, **Shoot to Kill** and others." Which, Wardlow admits, is much better than getting a whopping cheque that makes up for years of payments owing – a cheque that is almost entirely taxed away.



John Wardlow, doubling for Charles Martin Smith in *Never Cry Wolf*.

© MCMXXXII Walt Disney Productions

Earth: Final Conflict



Leni Parker

Leni Parker played **Da'an**, the only alien in the first year of the series **Earth: Final Conflict**, filmed in the summer and fall of 1997. Working on the series was an amazing experience, she says, though being in make-up for three hours a day can get gruelling. Parker knew the show had been doing well – it had been picked up by the **Sci-Fi** channel in the U.S. Then she heard that a couple of the other performers had received **Use Fee** cheques, so she called PRS. "PRS did a great job. Just when you need it. I didn't think I'd see anything until 2002. Earth is the show that just keeps on giving."

February 7th, 2002,
The Genie Awards at The Metro
Toronto Convention Centre.

5:00 I slip out of the cab onto the red carpet of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre: out from the cold into the already hot cocktail party. I pass on the complimentary Genie Martini (I'm on the wagon) and exchange kisses with the very talented **Chris Owens** who's nominated for Best Actor in **The Uncles**.

5:30 After some sober schmoozing – not the easiest thing to pull off – we are encouraged to take our seats for the pre-show. The bars close and we head for the theatre.

Teri Hart does a lovely job of hosting the pre-show, awards for the behind-the-scenes people. Quick break and we're back for the main event.

7:00 **Brian Linehan**, Genie Host for the 5th time, adeptly takes us through the evening. He repeatedly reminds us that "four out of five Best Picture nominees are first-time directors." Inspiring.

Vincent Gale, accepts a Genie on behalf of **Molly Parker** (Best Supporting Actress for her role in **Last Wedding**.) She was nominated twice in this category – also for her work in **The War Bride**. Vincent tells us



Best Actor nominee Chris Owens with William B. Davis and Nicholas Campbell.



Our intrepid author Anne Marie with Best Supporting Actor Vincent Gale.



Helen Du Toit, producer of *Treed Murray* with Best Supporting Actor nominee Julian Richings.



René Dowhaniuk, director of the Genie Awards with ACTRA member and Genie Host Brian Linehan at the nominee reception in January.



The youngest-ever (20 year-old) Best Actor Brendan Fletcher.



Genie pre-show host Teri Hart with ACTRA members Don McKellar, Arsinée Khanjian and director Atom Egoyan.

A STARRY NIGHT AT THE GENIE AWARDS

by Anne Marie Scheffler

"Molly is in London, working." More inspiring. Then he's back on stage picking up his own award – Best Supporting Actor.

The engaging **David La Haye**, Best Actor nominee, tells us that he is nothing like the womanizer he plays in **Un crabe dans la tête**.

Actress (and presenter) **Leni Parker** says she is a left-handed Scorpio who likes long walks – intended for David La Haye. The cheekiness continues with **Patrick Huard's** hilarious "I'm from Québec so I don't speak Henglish So Good" routine. **David Usher** performs and by now I'm so inspired, I can barely stand it.

Then **Brendan Fletcher** scoops the Best Actor award and says "I'm young and I'm from the west and I'm feeling good!" God, could they get any cuter?

Finally, our favourite Canadian star, **Gordon Pinsent** steps on stage to present a Genie. We jump to our feet for a healthy standing ovation, and Gordon says "Half of that would've been more than enough. I'm Canadian – I bruise easy."

The awards are over, and Brian Linehan rightly proclaims that it is up to us to make sure everyone knows the name **Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)**. This Inuit movie cleaned up, winning five awards, including Best Motion Picture and Best Director for **Zacharias Kunuk**, who thanked "the

elders for passing the story on to us and the actors who didn't need much directing."

9:00 Off to the dining room to dine and dance with the cream of Canadian film.

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