



I N T E R

ACTRA

The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists

Beachcombers!

The show that made B.C.'s coast famous around the world is back as a TV movie.

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Thor Bishopric

What safety net? The insecurity of performer income

In addition to the traditional time with family and friends, holidays tend to be a time of generosity and goodwill to others. Artists, though often without means, are generous – giving to others of their time, talents and hard-earned money while having trouble making ends meet themselves. Performers face a particular hardship. Even those who achieve success and prosperity are at risk of destitution in later life. A strong income stream from one project does not guarantee financial security or future engagements.

At ACTRA's June policy conference, we resolved to act on two policy fronts: Canadian content, and income security for performers. Since June, we've launched our **Campaign for Canadian Programming**, to raise awareness about the decline in Canadian TV dramatic series production. We are pressuring the government and the CRTC to change regulations and get back on track with TV drama series that create meaningful jobs for performers and broadcast Canadian culture to Canadians.

We are also embarking on the serious issue of income security for performers – or insecurity. **David Hope** writes for us on the difficult and all-too-common situation of the artist in financial hardship. As Executive Director of the **Actors' Fund of Canada**, he has a unique knowledge of the performer struggle. Making the precarious financial life of performers more secure is a challenge. Where does one start?

One effort that has been forced upon us is to protect the independent contractor tax status of performers. With a rash of audits by the **Canada Customs and Revenue Agency** (CCRA), particularly in B.C., ACTRA has been trying legal means and has had discussions with the CCRA to curb the audits of our members. While we value being independent contractors, this status

also means performers can't claim 'employment insurance' when not working, adding to our financial instability. Shouldn't we get the best of both worlds?

In addition to battling the plight of the individual performer, ACTRA the organization is suffering financial hardship of late. Our June meeting saw the establishment of a **Finance Committee** to review our situation. National Treasurer **Jamie Bradley** has a brief report on this committee in the news section.

Dan MacDonald writes on **Performing Arts Lodges** – an inspiring organization that is making strides across the country.

ACTRA celebrates our **60th Anniversary** in 2003. Our members have a rich and accomplished history to be proud of, and a bright future to look forward to. We're thrilled that so many branches have embraced the idea of re-instituting branch **ACTRA Awards**, and we hope you will share in our celebrations.

I wish you all happiness and health over the holidays, and work and fulfillment in the new year.



Dying a dramatic death? Canadian culture is.

Since CRTC rule changes in 1999, production of English-Canadian television drama has seriously declined.

Why should you care?

"A country without a healthy diet of continuing, homegrown drama is lacking in the fibre of contemporary storytelling. In every country that has even the vaguest notion of a culture and identity, there is a distinct link between the idea of itself and the fictive imagination. A country is simply inauthentic if its stories are not reflected back to itself."

– John Doyle, *Globe and Mail* TV columnist, July 18, 2002

Support ACTRA's Campaign for Canadian Programming



ACTRA
we perform

It's easy – visit
www.actra.ca
and send an email
letter to your MP.



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.

If you are ill, injured, or have suffered a financial catastrophe that puts your health, shelter or ability to work in jeopardy, contact the Fund for quick and confidential help.

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

10 St. Mary Street, Suite 860, Toronto, ON M4Y 1P9
 TEL: (416) 975-0304 (TOLL-FREE 1-877-399-8392)
 FAX: (416) 975-0306
 E-MAIL: contact@actorsfund.ca
www.actorsfund.ca



Holiday 2002 Volume 8, Issue 3

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Got a computer? Want to receive InterACTRA by email?

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

Pedal pushing

Branch-to-branch bicycle adventure raises funds, makes ACTRA connections by D. Neil Mark

Like any great adventure, it started with ideas of grandeur. Visions of sweltering hot days, mountains rising to the heavens, fields of wheat swaying in a prairie breeze, and the sun shimmering off myriad lakes passed through my imagination like comets traversing the night sky. I had always wanted to do a long bicycle tour, and Canada was definitely one of my goals.

When I was eight, I made the trip from Victoria to Ottawa with my Mom, her friend, my two older sisters, and the family dog in a Toyota Corolla. When I was older, I took the bus back. This trip though, was a spiritual trip that would find me riding 4,500 km completely on my own in an estimated schedule of 24 days. It was no small feat, but I knew I was up to the challenge. Traveling by bicycle is a way to actually see the country how few do. I am at peace when on my bike, and the stresses of life are washed away like the sweat in a shower after a long ride.

There was another reason for the ride, and that came in the form of raising money for a couple of charities. It was the suggestion of my close friend, UBCP/ACTRA member **Bruno Verdoni**. He suggested that since I was already going on the ride, why not attach a charity to it? I thought it was a great idea and decided to choose two:

the **CKNW Orphan's Fund**, and the **University of Victoria's Keith Provost Memorial Scholarship in Theatre**. I chose these two because the Orphan's Fund reaches a broad range of people and I was adopted when a baby; Keith Provost was a friend and fellow actor, who exemplified the qualities of a great human being. He was tragically taken at the tender age of 40 while riding his bicycle in Vancouver.

I left on August 1st at 7 a.m., from the site where Keith's bicycling accident occurred. About 18 people came out to send me off, including Keith's widow Janet and her parents. I was presented with a folder containing some info about Keith and his untimely passing, and received the best good luck hugs and kisses ever. It was an emotional moment for others, and for me, but I truly couldn't have asked for a better 'bon voyage'. Trans-Canada Highway, here I come.

The first day tested my will right from the start. I was hoping to do a live interview for a local morning TV show, but the reporter was called away on an emergency story. Then, before I made it out of the city,



Alison Vieira

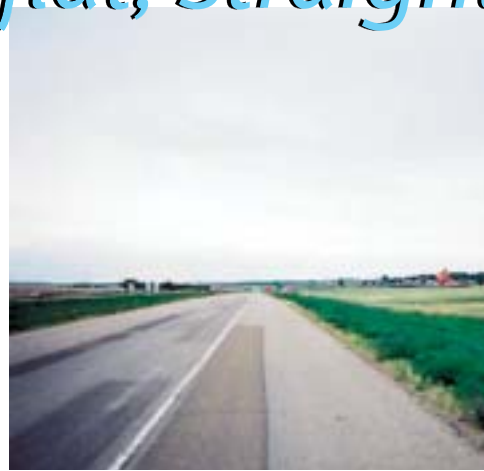
"The D" with Thor Bishopric, ACTRA's National President, and Richard Hardacre, President of ACTRA Toronto Performers, on the successful completion of his ride.

I lost my cell phone. Next came a 50-km detour around the Port Mann Bridge, because bicycles aren't allowed to cross it. By the time I had finished my first day, I had been introduced to how the rest of the trip was to turn out: frustrating!

The landscape and the weather were the hardest things to deal with. From the high mountain passes of B.C. and Alberta, to the flat, straight prairies, to the rolling miles of Ontario, add in the weather that isn't supposed to happen in August and you have a formidable opponent to a cyclist and his 85-lb. bike. Despite being told by many

D. Neil Mark sets out on his journey from Vancouver to Toronto.

The flat, straight



for a friend

that: the Rockies would grind me down, the prairies would burn me to a crisp, the bugs in Manitoba would eat me alive, and the humidity of Ontario would melt me, I was keen to go. In fact, most of that never really happened. I loved climbing the high mountain passes, there was no sweltering heat to contend with, the bugs didn't materialize and the humidity evaporated away. What didn't go away and seemed to follow me wherever I went was the rain and cool weather: everything from a constant drizzle, to a deluge of biblical proportions. Even hail! Of the 22 days it took me to reach Toronto, I had rain for 14 or 15 of those days. That makes for really tough riding and camping.

During my journey I was able to drop in at the local ACTRA branch offices in Calgary, Regina and Winnipeg. There I found a few surprises – mostly how small our other branches really are. I knew they didn't compare with Vancouver or Toronto, but still, they're tiny – sometimes just one person. I was pleasantly surprised at how great the staff is considering the workload they endure. Each time I was treated like a hero, fed, and sent on my way with hearty congratulations on my endeavours. I was really impressed. So, the next time you think no one is there to help you, go down and watch the staff at work. Thanks to all those at the ACTRA branches who helped along the way.

In the end, I discovered a lot about our country, my friends, and myself. Mostly,

Donations can be sent directly to:

The Keith Provost Memorial Scholarship in Theatre

University of Victoria
c/o Development Office
P.O. Box 3060, Stn. CSC
Victoria, B.C. V8W 3R4

CKNW Radio Orphan's Fund

Suite 2000 – 700 West Georgia St.
Vancouver, B.C. V7Y 1K9

that I never want to ride across Canada again!! Or go for a long bike ride like that without having someone to share it with each day. Friends are what helped me get through my struggles, and friends are what I missed and thought about most. And believe me, I had lots of time to think. Really, friends are the reason why I went on my journey in the first place.

So, in ending this article, I must give thanks to those who have helped me achieve the greatest feat of my life. Thanks, friends. Cheers to you!

UBCP/ACTRA member D. Neil Mark is a competitive cyclist and carpenter as well as an actor. His ride raised funds for the CKNW's Orphan's Fund and over \$1,000 for the Keith Provost Memorial Scholarship in Theatre.

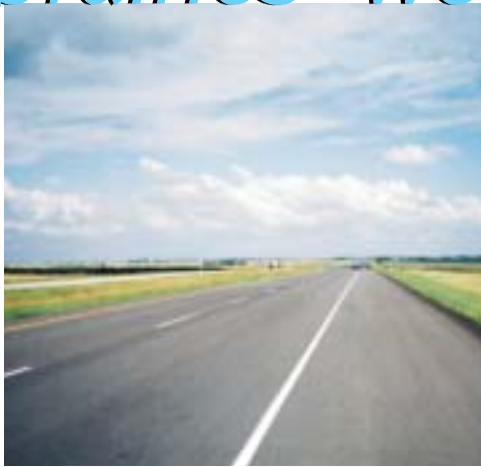
www3.telus.net/thedpage



Alison Vieira

D. Neil Mark arrives in Toronto on completion of his 4,500 km ride from Vancouver.

prairies went on and on...





PAL activist Patty Gail Peaker with ACTRA/CAEA member and PAL resident, the late Peter Sturgess, at his birthday party in PAL's Crest Theatre Green Room, July 1999.



Brian Demerly

Honourary President of PAL Vancouver Joy Coghill with Jackson Davies and Donnelly Rhodes.

From Halifax to Vancouver – PAL's with you all the way!

Performing Arts Lodges now have active chapters across the country by Dan MacDonald

From a longing in the hearts of a few performers in the 1980s to look after our own aging colleagues, **Performing Arts Lodges of Canada (PAL)** has become a coast-to-coast organization three full years ahead of schedule. While our 10-year-old 'pilot lodge', **Pal Place** in Toronto, is the only actual residence, superbly serving the needs of older members of 'the biz', vibrant PAL chapters are actively preparing to erect geared-to-income buildings in Vancouver and Stratford. PAL Halifax is not far behind. There are efforts afoot in Montreal, Calgary and Winnipeg to establish PAL chapters. PAL is now here for you, wherever you live and work.

Housing is not our only aspect. With the encouragement of activist and moving spirit **Patty Gail Peaker, Supporting Cast** is up and running in every PAL chapter from Halifax to Vancouver. Supporting Cast is a terrific group of volunteers dedicated to helping the elderly, frail or disabled lead comfortable and secure lives in familiar surroundings. The name was coined by one of its founders, ACTRA's own **Lynn Gorman**. Supporting Cast's dedicated volunteers do many necessary things: run errands, take a colleague to medical appointments, help with meals – any task able to be performed by a volunteer, short of those requiring licensed medical help. So you see, Performing Arts Lodges of Canada is, and does, much more than most people think. We are a service organization; a national charitable organization committed to ensuring that, as they age, those who have dedicated their lives to any of the aspects of the performing arts, receive the respect, dignity and gratitude that is their due. Our mandate is to provide affordable housing and health services to this constituency. Why? Because, if we don't, no one else will!

A microcosm of the national arts scene, the Toronto residence is filled with actors, producers, dancers, agents, critics, visual artists, casting people, directors, and designers. Interestingly, most of the 219 residents are not original Torontonians.

“Pal Place Toronto is a microcosm of the national arts scene.” Performers such as Ardon Bess, Len Doncheff, Jack Duffy, Colin Fox, Robert Haley, Elva Mai Hoover, Frances Hyland, James Kirchner, Arlene Meadows, Billie Mae Richards, Patricia Scott, Paul Soles, and Murray Westgate, are joined by many other ACTRA members, as well as producers, dancers, agents, critics, visual artists, casting people, directors, designers, and on and on...

Coming from every part of Canada, they have opted to remain in the city in which most have spent the bulk of their careers. Our successful maintenance of the performer in his or her milieu is much envied by visitors from other climes. Nowhere else do you find the feisty liveliness of PAL.

Believe it, PAL is no retirement home! One resident performer described Toronto's Pal Place as "the world's biggest theatrical boarding-house." The beauty is, if you want company, it's a few steps outside your apartment; if you want privacy, close your door and you will be undisturbed.

While all PAL chapters may soon launch drives to provide affordable accommodation, their object is always to *provide assistance and fellowship to those who need it*, wherever and however that help can be provided in Canada. Beyond providing affordable living spaces, PAL offers many other important services. All these cost money, which is raised through membership fees, donations and bequests, fundraising events, and through whatever federal and provincial programs still exist in this cost-cutting, user-pay world we now live in.

ACTRA has supported PAL from the beginning, joining with CAEA and AF of M to provide seed money to kick start the operation in 1986. This support continues. Final touches are being made to a voluntary contributions mechanism negotiated into the IPA, and through Equity's 'deputy package' system. Of special importance, many individual members donate time, effort and money to PAL each day, including PAL's Board of Directors, the bulk of the volunteer army without which PAL would grind to a halt, and the many bequests and sizeable monetary contributions made by individuals.

This support is critical. Financial consideration is important, of course, but what is perhaps of more importance is a demonstrated commitment to the philosophy of PAL that it represents. Performers have always been in the forefront in such efforts, in "caring for our own." Who started the **Actors' Fund of Canada**? Performers. Who began an envied benefit society (**Actra Fraternal Benefit Society**) when artists were being excluded from such assistance? Mainly performers. And, who began instituting services to older members to keep them in contact with their special community, to provide security, affordable housing and continuing involvement with their artistic community? Yep, performers!

Performers helped raise over \$7,000 for PAL Canada in **The Second City Second Annual Alumni Week** in May; in September performers raised over \$10,000 for PAL Stratford with a concert version of Stephen Sondheim's **A Little Night Music**; performers have brought many evenings of pleasure and dollops of cash to PAL's coffers through (continued on page 15)

Want to get involved with PAL?

PAL Vancouver

Box 2249, Main P.O.
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 3W2
Phone: (604) 255-4312

email: contact@palvancouver.org

Volunteer with Supporting Cast or drop by for Thirsty Thursday gatherings on the third Thursday of the month, 2-3 p.m. at the Subeez Café, corner of Homer and Smythe. (PAL surveys online at www.palvancouver.org)

PAL Stratford

P.O. Box 21045
Stratford, ON N5A 7V4
Phone: (519) 273-8058

email: banks@cyg.net

Drop by our Coffee Time every Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. at the Elizabethan Restaurant on Ontario St. New members always welcome.

Pal Place (Toronto)

110 The Esplanade, Suite 328
Toronto, ON M5E 1X9
Phone: (416) 777-9674

email: info@palcanada.org

Supporting Cast volunteers welcome! Many gatherings, services and programs for performers. Call or email for more information.

PAL Halifax

c/o ACTRA Maritimes
(interim address)
1660 Hollis Street, #103,
Halifax, NS B3J 1V7

Phone: (902) 420-1404

email: maritimes@actra.ca

As the newest chapter, we're looking for people with energy and ideas and willingness to get involved.

This just in! PAL Vancouver site is a go! PAL Vancouver received the go-ahead from city hall in November for the Bayshore Gardens site. PAL was one of several organizations vying for the location and now **needs to raise \$2.5 million before the end of January** to hold onto the site. **To help out, contact PAL Vancouver at (604) 255-4312 or visit www.palvancouver.org.**



Audrey Hoanck

Canada Day at the PAL Courtyard in Toronto.



CANADIAN ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

ACTRA, Equity updating reciprocal agreement

ACTRA and **Canadian Actors' Equity Association** (CAEA) have long had a reciprocal agreement in place, defining our respective jurisdictions, pledging mutual support and recognizing the professional status of our members by offering reduced-rate membership entry fees when a member accepts work in the other union's jurisdiction. As a result, many professional performers in Canada are members of both CAEA and ACTRA.

The first ACTRA/CAEA reciprocal agreement was nailed down in 1971, and subsequently updated in 1996. A small joint committee has been working on an update of the reciprocal agreement. The joint committee expects to conclude its work shortly. The usefulness of the reciprocal agreement has become evident recently as a result of 'rival union' activity in Alberta. In the Spring 2002 issue of

InterACTRA, ACTRA National Organizer **Don Dudar** explained that the **Christian Labour Association of Canada** (CLAC), considered an employer-dominated union, was claiming to represent performers at **Chinook Animation**, offering fees and standards inferior to ACTRA rates.

In order to dry up the pool of professional performers available to Chinook Animation, and encourage Chinook to engage professional performers at ACTRA rates, ACTRA sought and has obtained the support of CAEA in advising its members not to accept work at Chinook – all in an effort both to ensure fair rates and working conditions for professional performers and a level playing field in our industry. The **ACTRA/CAEA Joint Statement and Reciprocal Agreement** are at www.actra.ca in the Document Library under Reciprocal Agreements.

www.clacwatch.com
www.actracalgary.com
- *Stephen Waddell*

ACTRA renews terms with CTV

After a brief but intensive period of bargaining, ACTRA successfully negotiated a renewal of its agreement with **CTV Network** in August, updating the 1990-1991 ACTRA/CTV Agreement. The new

Agreement terms were ratified by ACTRA members in October by 94%.

Citing significant changes in the broadcast industry over the past decade, CTV argued for substantive amendments to the agreement. While not an ideal deal, ACTRA views the successful conclusion of negotiations as a positive step forward in improving relations with CTV, thereby encouraging more work opportunities for ACTRA members at the network and its local stations.

- *Stephen Waddell*



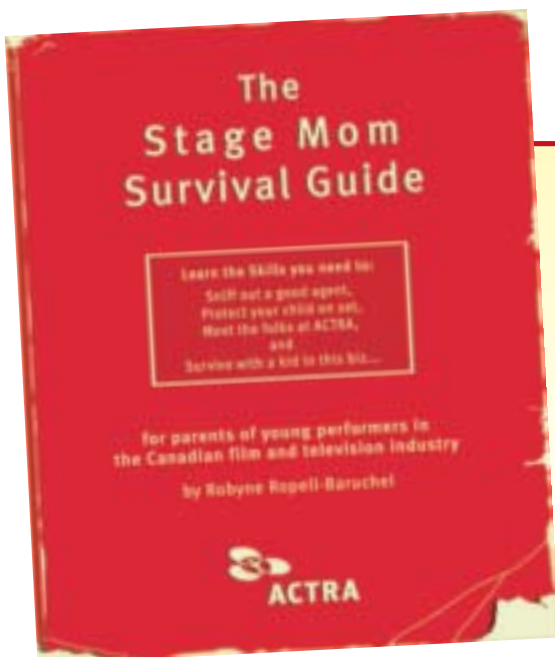
UBCP reaches tentative MPA deal

In July, UBCP began re-negotiation of the 1999-2002 **B.C. Master Production Agreement** (BCMPA) with representatives of both the B.C. Branch of the **CFTPA** and Canadian affiliates of the **Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers** (AMPTP). The current agreement expires March 31, 2003. At press time, a tentative agreement had been reached, subject to review by the UBCP Executive Board and ratification by the UBCP membership.

www.ubcp.com
- *John Juliani*

CBC

The **CBC Television and Radio Agreements** recently ratified by ACTRA members, expired on June 30, 2002, and ACTRA and CBC may soon be back at the table trying to reach another deal. This bizarre situation resulted from two years of prolonged negotiations after the expiry of the previous agreement. And by the time that



The Stage Mom Survival Guide

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

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

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



new deal was reached, it was set to expire. On a positive note, ACTRA has succeeded in getting CBC to participate actively in a joint committee to monitor digital media, or (to employ CBC jargon) the use of material on 'alternative platforms' (read: internet). That committee's work will support ACTRA's struggle to negotiate fair performer terms for digital media under all our agreements.

– Stephen Waddell

Finance Committee established

June brought about the formation of the **Finance Committee**. Some of our union's big thinkers are on the team and we have been given the task of creating world peace.

Okay, so at first it seemed that daunting.

We performers are dead in the middle of a wildly fluctuating business and while production goes up and down, the needs of our members remain the same. More and better services are in great demand.

Your Finance Committee is doing a study of how ACTRA receives money and where it goes. The aim is to find the perfect balance between all of ACTRA's units so that all have enough money to better lobby,

better bargain, better organize and better enforce our rights as Canadian performers.

At press time, National Council was considering the Finance Committee's recommendation that member dues be increased. The next step would be to ask you for your assent – watch your mailboxes for an important referendum.

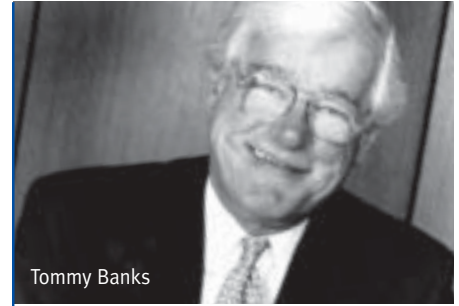
www.actra.ca/actra/control/referendum

– Jamie Bradley

At press time, National Council was reviewing the Finance Committee's report. A dues increase would require a referendum: watch your mailbox for an "Important Referendum"!

Tommy Banks onsite re: performer tax status

In October, ACTRA Edmonton member and Senator, **Tommy Banks**, convened a cross-section of Canada's artists' organizations to protect the self-employment tax status of artists. What brought them together is the significant concern that the **Canada Customs and Revenue Agency** (CCRA) has been re-classifying certain performers and musicians as 'employees' – and assessing huge back-taxes for **Employment Insurance**

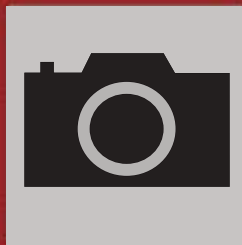


Tommy Banks

(EI) deductions. One of the major producers who attended the meeting – **David Mirvish** – believes these assessments would destroy productions like the *Lion King* and *Mamma Mia*, and have a significant impact on the tourism industry. **The Canadian Conference of the Arts** (CCA) has been lobbying to change the unfair tax treatment of artists for several years – and ACTRA, as a CCA member – is supporting these efforts. In attendance at this initial meeting were ACTRA's National Executive Director **Stephen Waddell**, ACTRA's new Federal Outreach Coordinator in Ottawa **Chris Cornish**, and reps from **CAEA, Uda, AF of M**, the CCA, **Stratford**, the **National Arts Centre** and the **Canada Council**. We welcome Senator Banks' initiative to focus on the self-employment tax status issue and look forward to working together in the coming months. The group believes that the only long-term solution is to make changes in the **Income Tax Act** and the **Status of the Artist Act**.

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.



ACTRA Full and Apprentice members: 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.)

Stop the destruction of Canadian TV drama!

by Christie MacFadyen

ACTRA's **Campaign for Canadian Programming** is inspiring political action across the country. Performers and other Canadians who care are sending hundreds of letters to their **Members of Parliament** via ACTRA's websites. We are demanding action from the **CRTC** to stop the disappearance of Canadian drama from our TV screens due to the steady dwindling of Canadian indigenous television programming.

ACTRA's National **Political Action Committee** (PAC) has formed and branches from B.C to the Atlantic are campaigning. Performers are lobbying MPs and Cabinet Ministers and have appeared before the **Macerola Committee** review of Canadian Content regulations. Members are working in tandem with labour, industry and cultural groups to win support in our campaign. Toronto branch marched proudly in the Labour Day parade distributing leaflets and placed campaign ads in the major local arts magazine, *NOW*, raising public support.

ACTRA and other union leaders met with Heritage Minister **Sheila Copps** in Banff to call for action. ACTRA National President **Thor Bishopric**, performer/writer/director **Paul Gross** and Toronto Executive Director **Brian Topp** met with the Chair of the CRTC, **Charles Dalfen**, to explore possible solutions to this problem – and he agreed to be the keynote speaker at Toronto's November members' conference!

The response from politicians and the public has been powerful and positive. MP **Dennis Mills** mailed a letter in his riding to over 100,000 constituents supporting ACTRA's campaign and calling on the **Prime Minister** for decisive steps. MPs have

said they will raise our concerns with their caucus colleagues and have also sent letters to the Prime Minister and to the Heritage Minister supporting our cause.

At the National Policy Conference in June we resolved to focus on political outreach. ACTRA will not stand by while broadcasters alone influence government policy that affects performer livelihoods. Performers' voices will be heard as well.

We must get our message out to the public and to the government and you can help! Please go to www.actra.ca or www.actratoronto.com and follow the simple directions to send a letter to your MP.

Do it now. It's your career we're talking about, and your country.



Christie MacFadyen is an ACTRA National Councillor and VP External at ACTRA Toronto Performers.

Go to www.actra.ca or www.actratoronto.com and follow the directions to send a letter to your MP. Now!



Photo courtesy CBC

(Left): Corporal Marina Di Luzio (Janet Kidder) and undercover crime-solving partner Tom Stone (Chris William Martin) in the Calgary-based CBC series *Tom Stone*, one of only five indigenous drama series on TV in 2002.

(Below): ACTRA members Gordon Pinsent and Sonja Smits meeting with the Hon. Bill Graham, MP.

**From 12...
to 5**

In 1999, there were 12 English-Canadian one-hour dramatic series produced in Canada:

- The City
- Cold Squad
- Code Name: Eternity
- Da Vinci's Inquest
- Emily of New Moon
- Nothing Too Good for a Cowboy
- Power Play
- Psi Factor
- Riverdale
- These Arms of Mine
- Traders
- Wind at My Back

...and in 2002

- The Eleventh Hour
- Blue Murder
- Cold Squad
- Da Vinci's Inquest
- Tom Stone



Alison Veira

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Reflections on the generosity of ACTRA members by our 10 Branch Presidents



John Juliani
UBCP President

At a time when the hoped-for upturn in business has been slow to materialize, it is especially heartening to acknowledge our members' ongoing generosity in support of charitable organizations in our community, including sponsorship of the Performing Arts Lodge in Vancouver to provide safe, dignified and community living for our senior members. Season's greetings!



Dave Clarke
Edmonton President

A time of giving doesn't mean only money or gifts. The generosity of Edmonton volunteers is what makes our numerous festivals possible. If you're temporarily resting and feeling low, check the paper and see who needs your help. Go volunteer and refresh your talent with an encounter with your community. Season's greetings.



Wayne Nicklas
Manitoba President

The Queen's water taxi stalled on the Red River during her recent tour. In spite of this humiliation ACTRA Manitoba moves forward with production through year-end. Our acting community threw a party for member Doreen Brownstone's 80th birthday, raising several hundred dollars for the Actors' Fund. Peace and love to the Queen, her subjects, and all ACTRA members.



Lorraine Ansell
Ottawa President

I am always moved by the generosity of ACTRA members, from performing free of charge at charitable events to raising money for a colleague in need. A gift idea for your friends this holiday season? Make a donation in their name to the Actors' Fund or another charity. To members from Sandspit to St. John's, happy holidays.



Andrew MacVicar
Maritimes President

Members and staff from ACTRA Maritimes are proud to announce the establishment of the Halifax Chapter of the Performing Arts Lodge. Several of our members played key roles in getting this worthy cause off the ground. As usual, a hearty holiday blessing to all fellow members and staff across this great country and organization!



Randy Birch
Calgary President

ACTRA members play such an important role in all of our communities. The greatest gift we give is the gift of service to others. We raise awareness of issues such as domestic violence, AIDS and poverty, as performers on-screen as well as in our individual endeavours. Congratulations to all ACTRA members for their contributions to our communities.



Chris Scott
Saskatchewan President

The best part of being President of the Saskatchewan Branch is nurturing local performers. Through Sask. Talent Development Fund's support of Big Soul Productions, we gave local youth a chance to get paid to perform and have their headshots professionally done. To have made a difference in a young person's life is all part of giving!



Richard Hardacre
Toronto President

Being proactive in our careers means being involved on a broader level. At our November Members' Conference, renowned Toronto actors, among them Shirley Douglas, Maury Chaykin, Rebecca Jenkins and Sarah Polley shared their experiences. Our Political Action Committee has been lobbying to save Canadian television drama. And over 500 members have emailed MPs urging government action on this issue.



Matt Holland
Montreal President

Season's greetings from Montreal! At our AGM in November 2001, we bolstered the cause of a volunteer Meals-on-Wheels program run by Santropol Roulant, and contributed financially to their pre-holiday fundraiser at which some of our members performed. We hope to continue our support this year and reach out even more into the community.



Amy House
Newfoundland/
Labrador President

Holiday greetings from Newfoundland and Labrador Branch. In keeping with our theme I would like to send tribute to our membership across the country for their perpetual generosity to the community at large. Actors are always answering to the call and donating their talent for non-profit and charitable organizations! Hearty applause and happy holidays.

The Canadian Conference of the Arts has an excellent policy paper on income security for artists. ACTRA is a long-time member of the CCA and we support the proposals included in the CCA's federal pre-budget submission.

- re-introduction of the income averaging provision for self-employed individuals
- make the first \$60,000 per year of income earned by artists and/or derived from copyright royalties tax-exempt
- lobby the Department of Finance to undertake a "full and comprehensive study into self-employment"
www.ccarts.ca
(look under Resources and Reports)

Read this!

More on work to protect self-employed artists through public policy... at www.ccarts.ca

For artists working without the safety net of substantial savings or a steady job, a small amount of money can make the difference between survival and destitution.

Actors helping actors

The Actors' Fund tides performers over when ends don't meet. A feature on income security, or rather, insecurity. by David Hope

ACTRA members know that they are players in a risky game. While the film and television production industry in Canada was not unique in experiencing a dramatic downturn in the months following 9/11, it's now more than one year later and production volume is recovering slowly. Add in the steep decline in production of Canadian dramatic series television and producers' fears of labour disruptions by **SAG** members in 2001, and ACTRA members have experienced more than their share of turbulence in recent times.

As **Rick Mercer** said recently, "None of us got into this business for job security." Film and television production is an unpredictable industry in which to make a living in the best of times. But if the contributions made by entertainment industry workers are truly of value to Canada's culture and its economy, surely something must be done to mitigate the effects of income insecurity in an industry where layoffs don't typically come with a severance package to cushion the blow.

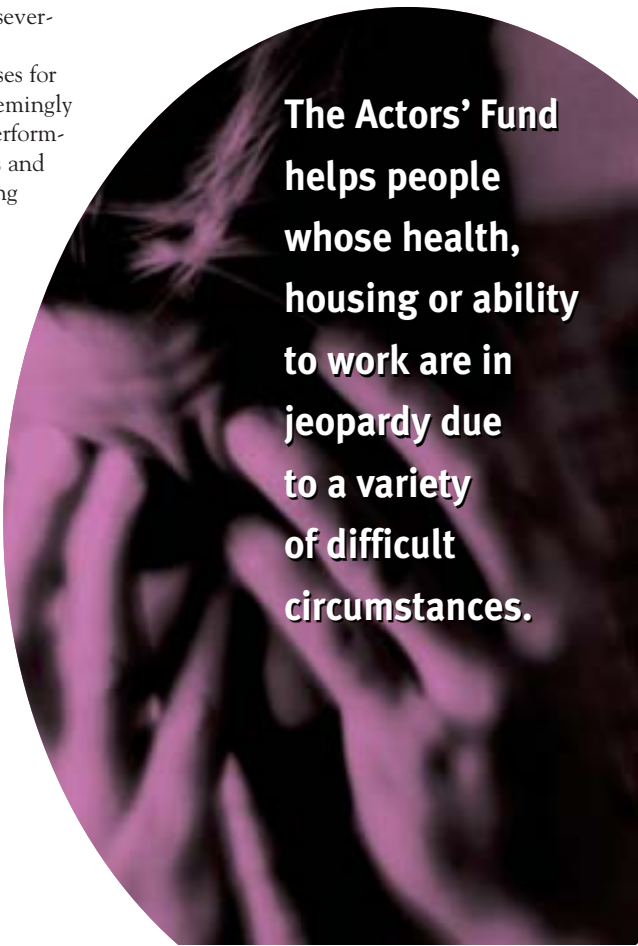
What are the appropriate responses for us as a society in the face of this seemingly untenable situation affecting our performing artists? What should the unions and professional associations representing workers in our sector be doing to address this? What can we do as individuals?

Advocacy on the part of ACTRA and others for increased Canadian television drama production and revised Canadian content regulations for broadcasters is important. Work being done by the **Canadian Conference of the Arts** to study models that might provide self-employed performers with access to **Employment Insurance** benefits is promising. Efforts to create more affordable housing for performers and other Canadians are laudable. New employment generated through the development of large-scale

studio facilities in places like Regina and Toronto might help.

The **Actors' Fund of Canada** was itself conceived as a response to the problem of income insecurity in the entertainment industry. In the past year the Fund provided just under \$250,000 in emergency financial assistance to community members – a large amount for a very small organization, and a new record for the amount of aid distributed in the community on an annual basis.

For artists working without the safety net of substantial savings or a steady job, a small amount of money can make the difference between survival and destitution. The Actors' Fund helps people whose health, housing or ability to work are in jeopardy due to a variety of difficult circumstances. The Fund's clients are men and women; they are old and young, and they live in every region of the country:



The Actors' Fund helps people whose health, housing or ability to work are in jeopardy due to a variety of difficult circumstances.

- They are people like Philip, a senior living alone on a fixed income who was injured in a car accident and unable to earn the small amount of extra income he needed to make ends meet. The Fund helped Philip to pay his rent for a short time until he recuperated from his injuries and was able to audition again.
- They are people like Sandra, an actor who was diagnosed with an advanced stage of breast cancer and underwent a year's worth of intense chemotherapy, radiation and surgery. The Fund helped Sandra through the worst days of her treatment, assisting her with housing costs and other living expenses to help give her the peace of mind she needed get on the road to recovery.
- They are people like Jason, a performer who was the primary caregiver for his partner living with AIDS. Jason himself became ill and was unable to work during his brief illness. Jason had been the household's sole income earner, and with no savings to draw upon, Jason and Bernard were facing eviction. The Fund helped them to stay in their home and pay for the medication Jason needed to regain his health and ability to work.
- They are people like Dawn, an actor who had always been careful to save money for a 'rainy day' but whose savings were wiped out by the cost of extensive dental work she needed in order to save her teeth. The Fund shared the cost of some of Dawn's dental work, which allowed her to keep smiling for the camera.

They are people who, like you, never thought they would need to ask for help from the Fund.

The Fund believes that performing artists should not have to accept the risk of extreme income insecurity as a consequence of pursuing their chosen career. All efforts to create a more favourable climate for working artists and to reduce their potential exposure to economic peril should be supported.

As individuals and organizations, we all have a role to play in creating the conditions that will enable our most talented artists to continue doing their best work.



They are people who, like you, never thought they would need to ask for help from the Fund.

The Actors' Fund cannot change the unpredictable nature of the business. It is not an activist organization or an advocate for investment or policy change. It is not a substitute for the foresight needed to build up savings when times are good to provide for oneself when work is scarce. It cannot call forth the resourcefulness that a performer needs in order to develop skills that could lead to a parallel career. The Actors' Fund helps performers to cope in the hard places and the desperate moments at which a performer's needs for dignity, respect and the freedom to create collide with his or her needs for food, shelter, health care and other elements critical to physical survival.

When it's the first of the month, you've got no money and the rent is due, it's good to remember that the Actors' Fund is your fund, too.



David Hope is Executive Director of the Actors' Fund of Canada.

RRSPs

RRSP savings are the backbone of your retirement. With all of us living longer, planning for retirement is the responsibility of the individual.

- start now
- untaxed growth of untaxed dollars out-pace non-RRSP savings even in a short period
- contribute up to your limit every year
- contribute early in the year
- make smaller contributions more often
- don't touch your RRSP

Over 40 years, untaxed compound growth at 7% will almost double the value of a \$50/month savings plan. Over 20 years, the effect is less pronounced, but you'll still be way ahead if your savings are untaxed in an RRSP.

SOURCE: Actra Fraternal Benefit Society

How RRSP savings may work for you

The key to having a successful retirement income is to make the maximum contributions to your retirement plan each year and from an early age.

For example, if you are 25 and contribute \$2,500 each year for the next 30 years to an RRSP, your total contributions will be \$75,000. If the annual compounded rate of return is 10%, at 55 your total fund value will be about \$410,000.

If you wait until you are 40 and begin to contribute \$5,000 each year for the next 15 years, your total contributions will also be \$75,000, but with a 10% annual compounded rate of return, your total fund value will only amount to about \$158,000.

Actra Fraternal Benefit Society (AFBS) will accept voluntary contributions from members and their families and invest the funds in the same Balanced Fund or Bond Fund options that are used for mandatory contributions. Contact Actra Fraternal for more information: 1-800-387-8897 or (416) 967-6600.

SOURCE: Actra Fraternal Benefit Society

SANDY HOYT 1939-2002

“That nice man on the radio”



Sandy had a passion for radio from the time he was a boy, growing up in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. He worked his way up the broadcasting ladder, doing odd jobs at a local station before landing at CJCH Halifax, spinning Top-40 hits in the late 1950s.

Then Ontario beckoned. After working at a number of stations in southwestern Ontario, Sandy became a fixture at CHCH-TV in Hamilton, where he covered sports and appeared in *Party Game*, *A Special Place* (as the elderly Mr. Nickel) and announced for *Tiny Talent Time*.

Sandy was then hired by CFTR/CHFI, where he worked for nearly 20 years. He became known as “that nice man on the radio.”

There was a brief return to Cape Breton in 1976, where Sandy was general manager of a new station called CIGO.

Back in Toronto, he also juggled freelance work in Radio and TV, including many years on *The Santa Claus Parade* for Global.

A type-1 diabetic, Sandy devoted many years to charity work and community service, receiving numerous awards for his generous efforts.

He had a tremendous sense of humour – Sandy’s impersonations of co-workers, family members and celebrities were legendary. We laughed a lot when we celebrated his life at Gilda’s Club Greater Toronto on August 14th, 2002.

Sandy died of complications due to brain cancer. He leaves behind six children, five grandchildren and many wonderful memories. Greatly missed by family, friends, colleagues and listeners, we will never forget that mischievous smile, those Bambi-like eyelashes or that beautiful voice.

“We rise again in the faces of our children.”

– The Rankin Family

Tracey Hoyt



In Memory of

LINDA CATHERINE RACINE

Actor, Singer: 1959-2002

My friend Linda Racine lost her battle with brain cancer on August 29th, 2002. A talented performer with a stunning voice, Linda could just as easily belt *I Dreamed a Dream*, as she could deftly render *Queen of the Night*. Born in Deep River, Ontario, she grew up singing with her older brother Leon, their mother Joan teaching them Italian art songs at bath time.

Linda studied music at Humber College, the Banff Centre, and in New York City. She performed in musical theatre across the country, including as Fantine in the Canadian touring production of *Les Misérables*. Other credits include soprano soloist in Alisa Palmer’s *A Play About the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo* and Maria in *West Side Story*. Her film and television work included commercials and background in such shows as *Wind at My Back* and *Road to Avonlea*. Linda proudly watched her youngest son Quinn receive his first ACTRA Apprentice credit at the tender age of 16 days.

I first met Linda at His Majesty’s Feast in the late 80s. She was wily and vivacious and her humour was snowflake unique. A true lover of performing, her zeal for the business and passion for the rights of performers were inspiring. She was also a mother, wife, daughter, sister, friend, Buddhist, feminist and she revelled in all these roles. Her two beautiful children, Jasper, 4, and Quinn, 1, and her loving husband Ulf helped bring her generosity of heart, spiritual insight and love of life into full, albeit brief, blossom.

Linda Linda, I wish you peace and freedom and I thank you for the honour of sharing this journey with you.

Abby Zotz

Performing Arts Lodges

– continued from page 7

presentations at the **Pal Place Crest Theatre Green Room**; it is performers such as **Joy Coghill**, who spearheaded the successful launch of PAL Vancouver and continue to raise thousands of dollars.

Not satisfied with the amazing progress of the past three years, plans are now afoot to provide extended-care facilities, a service becoming more necessary as our members age.

You can see that much is happening at PAL, but much needs to be done. We trust you also see how much PAL needs your participation. Hey, it's your organization! PAL is only for the performing arts communities. That's you! Become a member (only \$20), become a volunteer (contact a PAL chapter or the National Office in Toronto), become a donor, or remember PAL in your will. You may also want to apply for residency in a PAL lodge. With your help now, when you are ready to move into a facility, accommodation will be available. Join the gang! Support PAL, it's yours, it's ours!



Dan MacDonald is President of Performing Arts Lodges of Canada. He was Chair of ACTRA Performers' Guild through the reorganization of ACTRA in the early 90s, and served as its first President from 1993-95. He established Canadian Actors' Equity Association as an organization independent from American Actors' Equity in 1976, and also served as its first President.

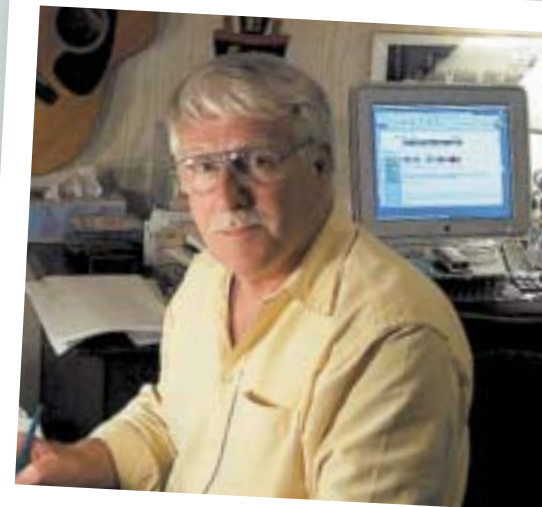
Brian Dennyhy



PAL Vancouver: Norman Young, PAL VP Internal, Chuck Slonecker, PAL VP External, Phil Boname, Acting PAL President, John Juliani, President of UBCP, and Joy Coghill, PAL Vancouver's Honourary President, posing with the Bayshore Gardens site.



PAL Stratford's President John Banks with PAL resident David King.



David Renton, Chair of PAL Halifax.



Taking Care of Our Own

Performing Arts Lodges of Canada

Under the distinguished patronage of Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada

PAL is a national charitable organization offering assistance to older, disabled or needy members and associates of Canada's professional performing arts community in the areas of health, well-being and accommodation.

PAL is a provider of services, not simply an assisted housing provider. Thus the establishment of assistance to individuals, such as that provided through Supporting Cast, is vitally important.

Share the PAL vision. Become a PAL member, or make a tax-deductible donation. For information about all our Chapters, you may contact us at:

PAL Canada, 110 The Esplanade, #328, Toronto ON M5E 1X9
 PHONE: (416) 777-9674 • FAX: (416) 777-0427
 info@palcanada.org • www.palcanada.org

applause



Congratulations, Nia!

Congrats to ACTRA member **Nia Vardalos** on the spectacular success of her film **My Big Fat Greek Wedding**. The indie production she wrote and starred in is now the top-grossing independent film ever, in Canada and the U.S. The 'sleeper' hit was originally developed for the stage as a one-woman show, which she performed in Los Angeles. Tom Hanks' wife, Rita Wilson, saw the show and the rest, as they say, is history. Success stories like Nia's keep the dream of 'making it' alive. Way to go!

Five ACTRA members named to Order of Canada

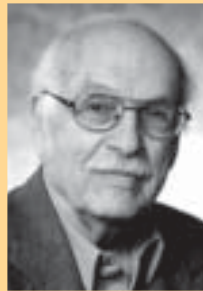
In early July, Canada's Governor General **Adrienne Clarkson** announced 99 new appointments to the **Order of Canada**. Five ACTRA members are among the new appointees. Congratulations to **Sharon, Lois and Bram** (Sharon Hampson, Lois Lilienstein and Bram Morrison), **Percy Saltzman** and **Austin Willis**.

Sharon, Lois and Bram are icons of children's musical entertainment and television. In addition to many recordings and concerts since their debut album **One Elephant, Deux Éléphants** in 1978, they have appeared on national and educational TV networks in Canada and the U.S. in their two television series, **Sharon, Lois & Bram's Elephant Show**, and **Skinamarink TV**. Sharon, Lois and Bram are also activists for children's causes, and have lent their voices and performed for numerous organizations, including **Mariposa in the Schools** and **UNICEF**.

Percy Saltzman is a pioneer in Canadian TV broadcasting and meteorology service whose career was one of many firsts. The night **CBC-TV** began broadcasting 50 years ago, he was the first person to be seen on English-Canadian television. With his easy-going manner, he simplified meteorol-

ogy, translating its complexities into layman's terms. The end of his CBC-TV weather report was always punctuated by his trademark toss of the chalk. In addition to broadcasting and performing, Percy has also been involved with a special needs program for disabled seniors at the **Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care**.

Austin Willis is an artist of multiple talents who has delighted Canadians for 40 years on radio, stage, television and film. He was a regular presence on the CBC, hosting and acting in radio and television programs, including **Of All Things** and **Cross-Canada Hit Parade**. His career also took him to the stages of London and Broadway and to the screens of Hollywood and Europe. Since his return to Canada, he has moved behind the camera and was a key player in the project **Comrades in Arms**, through which he is keeping alive the memories, achievements and sacrifices of World War II veterans. www.gg.ca



(Far left): Percy Saltzman.
(Near left): Austin Willis.
(Below): Sharon, Lois and Bram.

Michael Moriarty takes home Emmy

In September, ACTRA member **Michael Moriarty** won an Emmy Award as Outstanding Supporting Actor for his role as James Dean's father Winton Dean in the TV movie **James Dean**. Congratulations, Michael! The Annual Primetime Emmy Awards honour achievement in U.S. national nighttime programming.

www.emmys.tv



applause



Photo by Phil Hesse. Courtesy of CBC.



Rita Deverell named to Broadcast Hall of Fame

ACTRA member **Rita Deverell** was among 10 Canadians inducted into the **Canadian Broadcast Hall of Fame** in October. Over her successful 30-year career on air and behind the scenes, Rita has been a journalist, producer, host, professor and activist. As one of the founders of **VisionTV**, the first multi-faith and multicultural broadcaster in the world, she is known for her work promoting the careers of visible minorities and women. The honours took place during the **Canadian Association of Broadcasters** convention in Vancouver.

Welcome back Beachcombers!

The **New Beachcombers** returned to CBC as a made-for-TV movie in November. The movie stars **Dave Thomas** and **Graham Greene**, with **Jackson Davies** and **Cameron Bancroft** returning from the original cast. Commissioned for CBC Television's 50th anniversary, the drama began before the shooting started – the project was originally denied **Telefilm** funding. But with a public outcry, the funding came through and the film was back on track. The original *Beachcombers* series ran for a record 19 seasons on CBC from 1972 to 1991, and was shown in more than 35 countries around the world, making B.C. scenery famous. Producers are hopeful the movie will lead to a new *Beachcombers* series.

Beachcombers, then and now

(*Top*): The original *Beachcombers* (*front l-r*): Bruno Gerussi as Nick Adonidas, Charlene Aleck as Sara; (*back l-r*): Reg Romero as McLoskey, Juliet Randall as Margaret Carmody, Rae Brown as Molly Carmody, Bob Park as Hugh Carmody, Pat John as Jesse Jim and Robert Clothier as Relic.

The *New Beachcombers* (*front l-r*): Kendall Cross, Deanna Milligan, Jackson Davies, (*back l-r*): Graham Greene, Cameron Bancroft, Dave Thomas.

applause



Prestigious Honours for Coghill, Kain

Members **Joy Coghill** and **Karen Kain** were among winners of the annual **Governor General's Performing Arts Awards**, presented in November. The award is one of Canada's most prestigious artistic honours, and comes with a commemorative medallion and \$15,000.

Joy Coghill is considered a west coast theatre scene pioneer. An actor, director, playwright, teacher and arts advocate, she plays Da Vinci's mother on **Da Vinci's Inquest**. She is a Member of the **Order of Canada**.



Now artist-in-residence, Karen Kain was a principal dancer with the **National Ballet of Canada** for 25 years. A Canadian icon, Ms. Kain is a Companion of the Order of Canada and an inductee into **Canada's Walk of Fame**.



ACTRA members win kudos at Atlantic Film Fest

ACTRA members **Daniel MacIvor** and **Laura Regan** took home performance and writing awards from the **22nd Atlantic Film Festival** awards in September, 2002.

MacIvor took home two awards – Outstanding Writer for **Marion Bridge**, and Outstanding Performance by an Actor for his role in **Past Perfect**. Regan won for her portrayal of Emma in **My Little Eye**. ACTRA member **Jacob Tierney** won an honourable mention in the Best Canadian Short category for directing **Dad**.

www.atlanticfilm.com



27 ACTRA members are Gemini winners!



The Gemini Award statuette was created by Scott Thornley.

Congratulations to the 27 ACTRA members who received Geminis at the 17th Annual Gemini Awards, November 2-4, 2002, in Toronto. Congratulations also to the 100+ ACTRA members nominated this year. Way to go!

Jackie Burroughs

Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Supporting Role in a Dramatic Program or Mini-Series, **Armistead Maupin's Further Tales of the City**

Howard Busgang

Best Comedy Program or Series, **An American in Canada**

Garry Chalk

Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Supporting Role in a Dramatic Series, **Cold Squad V**

Julia Chantrey

Best Performance by an Actress in a Guest Role Dramatic Series, **Blue Murder**

Colm Feore

Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role in a Dramatic Program or Mini-Series, **Trudeau**

Wayne Grigsby

Best Writing in a Dramatic Program or Mini-Series, **Trudeau**

Peter Keleghan

Best Ensemble Performance in a Comedy Program or Series, **Made In Canada**

Dan Lett

Best Ensemble Performance in a Comedy Program or Series, **Made In Canada**

Bette MacDonald

Best Individual Performance in a Comedy Program or Series, **Halifax Comedy Fest Gala**

Ron MacLean

Best Sports Broadcaster, **2002 Winter Olympic Games**

Kevin May

Best Childrens' or Youth Fiction Program or Series, **The Famous Jett Jackson**

Rick Mercer

Best Writing in a Comedy or Variety Program or Series, and Best Ensemble Performance in a Comedy Program or Series, **Made In Canada**

Leah Pinsent

Best Ensemble Performance in a Comedy Program or Series, **Made In Canada**

James Rankin

Best Performance in a Pre-School Program or Series, **Scoop and Doozie 3**

Donnelly Rhodes

Best Performance by an Actor in a Continuing Leading Dramatic Role, **Da Vinci's Inquest**

Tom Scholte

Best Performance by an Actor in a Guest Role Dramatic Series, **Da Vinci's Inquest**

Dixie Seatle

Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Supporting Role in a Dramatic Series, **Paradise Falls**

Julie Stewart

Best Performance by an Actress in a Continuing Leading Dramatic Role, **Cold Squad V**

Jackie Torrens

Best Ensemble Performance in a Comedy Program or Series, **Made In Canada**

Codco – **Andy Jones, Cathy Jones, Greg Malone, Mary Walsh and the late Tommy Sexton**

The Earle Grey Award

Patrick Watson

The Margaret Collier Award

Wendy Crewson

The Humanitarian Award

Gordon Michael Woolvett

The Geminis' Hottest Star

17TH ANNUAL GEMINI AWARDS



by Anne Marie Scheffler

Our stars are shining on television

Well, it started with dancing and it ended with dancing. I'm talking about the **17th Annual Gemini Awards** on November 4th at the Convention Centre in Toronto.

Now I am the type of girl who likes to dress up and get a little attention for any event. But being an actress, an event like the Geminis is particularly high brow, even if I have to explain to my cab driver what the Geminis are. But then it dawned on me, as I explained to Mr. Taxi that it's like the **Emmy Awards**, that maybe this party might not be all that fun. But despite the regrettable pre-Gemini press, and the dismal state of Canadian television drama series dwindling from 12 to five over the last three years, it somehow ended up being quite an inspirational evening, (and night, and wee hours of the morning).

This year's host, the insanely talented **Sean Cullen**, opened the show with a stellar dance number complete with a chorus of gorgeous dancers back flipping and high kicking in front of pyrotechnics! With Sean in charge, and the clever writing, the show clipped along so quickly we were eating lamb in no time.

Highlights included a zippy new category, the **Geminis' Hottest Star**, and role model **Wendy Crewson** accepting the **Humanitarian Award** for her work with **ALS**, saying "Playing a role is nothing compared to living and dying from the disease," referring to her lead role in **The Sue Rodriguez Story**. When **Colm Feore** accepted his sure-bet best actor award for **Trudeau**, he declared, with as much

finesse as any Prime Minister alive or dead, "I am the luckiest actor in this country," I silently wished he'd run for PM one day.

A deserving **Julie Stewart** accepted the lead actress award for **Cold Squad**, and thanked her show's creators for "realizing that the lady could be the lead." "I'm thrilled," she said, and so were we.

The **Earle Grey Award** was presented to **Codco**, and the late Tommy Sexton's mother came up with the **Codco** crew and thanked the Academy on her son's behalf. A moving moment – and what an honour to witness that.

And Sean Cullen. Oh, Sean Cullen. With little quips like "You can clap if you want to – it's fun" he made the show a genuine celebration of ourselves. Like my cab driver said, "If you don't celebrate yourselves, no one else can celebrate you."

And then it was off to The Lone Star bar on the north side of Front Street for more celebrating, and get this, Sean Cullen and his band playing cover tunes until dawn. And that's when I did lots of dancing, with the gorgeous dancers from the opening number.

It was a happy night, a reminder that we need much more good Canadian television, and more great leaders. This is our industry. If we don't get dressed up and get a little attention for ourselves, how can anyone else give us any attention? I look forward to a time when cab drivers all over this country will not only know what the Geminis are, but who they are driving there to accept their awards.

(Pictured at left, from top to bottom):

Colm Feore celebrates his Gemini win with a Trudeau-esque pirouette.

Wendy Crewson received the Humanitarian Award for her work for ALS.

ACTRA member and writer/producer Howard Busgang won a Gemini for *An American in Canada*.

ACTRA members at the Geminis: Collette Stevenson and her husband Maurice Dean Wint, Gemini nominee for *Blue Murder*.

Author Anne Marie Scheffler with Gemini winner Bette MacDonald after the awards.

(Pictured at right): It started with dancing: Gemini host Sean Cullen and dancers in the opening number.



Photo courtesy The Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television. By Kodak Entertainment Imaging.

ACTRA 1943-2003: Celebrating 60 years

The history of Canadian media performers goes back to the first days of radio. In the early 1940s, radio performers were forced to work long hours for as little as \$15 a day. This prompted a small group of performers to get together and form the Radio Artists of Toronto Society (RATS). They fought to win better fees and improved working conditions for their members.

Shortly thereafter, radio performers in Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver also organized to fight for artists' rights, working conditions and better fees. In 1943, the Association of Canadian Radio Artists (ACRA) was formed as a loose national coalition of actors' groups.

Either as RATS, ACRA or ACTRA, members have always been proud of the accomplishments and achievements they attained together. The Mission of ACTRA – and its predecessors – has always been to negotiate, safeguard and promote the professional rights of our members.

ACTRA continues to grow as the pre-eminent performer union in the English-language recorded jurisdiction in Canada. Our membership and the industries in which our members work are constantly changing, and ACTRA is changing with the times, meeting the challenges of digital media and performers' rights management, global production and global unionism.

We are proud to be celebrating our 60th Anniversary in 2003 – 60 years of Canadian performing talent, 60 years of contributions to Canadian identity, and 60 years of advances in protecting performers. We have a number of celebrations in the works to honour our members and our anniversary, including a commemorative issue of *InterACTRA*. Celebrate ACTRA's 60th with us!



Photo courtesy CBC Still Photo Collection, Toronto.

ACRA: The first national organization of performers in Canada – the Association of Canadian Radio Artists – is formed

1943

1941

RATS: The first performer union in Canada – the Radio Artists of Toronto Society – is born

1963

ACTRA: The Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists

ACTRA: An organizational restructuring results in the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists

1984

1993

ACTRA: Reorganization of ACTRA – writers and broadcast journalists leave the Alliance, ACTRA becomes the ACTRA Performers' Guild

ACTRA: Celebration of our 60th Anniversary: 1943-2003

2003

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ACTRA
www.actra.ca