

ACTRA

ACTRA MAGAZINE WINTER 2016



We almost always visit the ACTRA talent database website (now ACTRAonline.ca) when searching for casting ideas for all of our film and television productions!

We want to access all of our Canadian talent, not just those who are submitted or are able to pay to register on talent websites! ACTRAonline.ca is invaluable in helping us to reach beyond to uncover, discover or recover the actors we need for the full range of our casting mandates. Sometimes, while searching the site, the casting vision takes shape on its own when you're inspired by a new idea. It's an indispensable tool for Casting Directors and, thereby, an irreplaceable asset for performers! It's imperative that ACTRA members complete their profile listing and keep it up-to-date!

ANDREA KENYON, CASTING DIRECTOR

Andrea Kenyon's casting credits include *19-2*, *X-Men: Days of Future Past*, *The Smurfs 2*, *Warm Bodies*, *The Art of More* and *White House Down*.



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“Keep learning.
Never stop searching
for inspiration. You
will never be perfect
and that's the beauty.
You can always
become better.”

Neve Campbell, 2016 ACTRA National
Award of Excellence Recipient

Our Path Forward

Canadians went to the polls in record numbers and voted for “real change” on October 19. They did so with a desire for a new beginning in Canadian politics—one reflective of long-held Canadian values: tolerance, a progressive voice on the international stage, and, one hopes, support for Canadian artists knowing the crucial role culture plays in shaping our national identity. The new government has made solid commitments to the arts in Canada with promises of increased funding to the pillars of our publically-funded cultural industries: The Canada Council for the Arts, Telefilm Canada, The National Film Board and the CBC. Changes in the long-fractured relationship between our diplomatic corps, traditionally a key player in the export of Canadian cultural products, and the government also bodes well for the future. We do indeed have a fresh start, but

with this breeze of hope our government and industry must first face a list of challenges before aspiration can become reality.

Nearly two-thirds of the current members of Parliament are rookies. These newly-elected representatives face sharp learning curves in the months ahead and most certainly will need our help in getting up-to-speed on the crucial cultural issues before us. ACTRA must and will take a leading role in their education. Much of the damage to our cultural institutions wrought during the Harper era needs to be repaired, including the rebuilding of our national cultural institutions; the re-definition and revitalization of the CRTC as a viable, high-functioning guardian of our broadcasting industries; and taxation reform reflective of the cyclical nature of artists’ income flow. Additionally, a commitment to extend the same protection enjoyed by audio artists under the

“The list goes on... our first step to form a strong and positive relationship with our new government.

Copyright Act to audiovisual artists when the Act goes under review also remains a prime issue for ACTRA. The list goes on, but certain concerns will take priority in our first step to form a strong and positive relationship with our new government.

Despite our own struggles—even in 2016—to achieve greater gender equality and cultural diversity on our screens, we were happy to see the federal government foster gender balance in Cabinet and Parliament, and recognize the legitimate rights and historical injustices faced by First Nations peoples. These actions reflect and will help bolster the work ACTRA has undertaken on these issues in our own industry. Through the work of CUES (Canadian Unions for Equality on Screen), and our Women’s and Diversity Committees, we have and will continue to steadily fight for diversity and inclusion both on our screens and in our union.

The government’s role in fostering content creation is another primary interest for all of us. The rise in disruptive technology as a force in our industry is, by turn, equally inspirational (offering artists the chance to seize the opportunity to create via the production of web series, etc.) and deeply disturbing. The CRTC has seriously dropped

the ball on “over-the-top” content providers, like Netflix, that have been allowed to abrogate a responsibility to invest in Canadian content via funding instruments, such as the Canadian Media Fund. Despite commitments by the government to increase funding to some of Canada’s cultural organizations, it is still crucial in this time of unprecedented change to set policies to assure the survival and ongoing growth of our industry. To build for the future, we need to formulate policy based on non-partisan, reasoned and positive interactions between business, content creators, labour and the government.

As we look forward, we are also committed to the welfare and growth of the custodians of our future—our young performers. ACTRA has a vital role to play in the protection of child performers and the education of the next generation of artists to ensure they are able to avail themselves of both work opportunities, and the protection and strength afforded by our union. YEAA Committees are taking leadership roles across the country, and their engagement

“It is still crucial in this time of unprecedented change to set policies to assure the survival and ongoing growth of our industry.



“What was once called “New” Media is now a dominant force in our industry.

as actors, activists and networkers is one of the most thrilling aspects of serving as your President.

I must also mention one of the best pieces of news for our members: the conclusion of negotiations for the excellent 2016–2018 Independent Production Agreement. This three-year contract builds on the work of previous Negotiating Committees to reinforce many of the significant aspects of past agreements. Moreover, it looks ahead to address the exploding importance of what was once called “New” Media but is

now a dominant force in our industry. It was an honour to Chair a bargaining team that was completely and fiercely committed to harnessing future exploitation of our work while retaining fair rates of pay (see NED and Chief Negotiator Stephen Waddell’s article on the IPA).

The year ahead holds real opportunity and we at ACTRA are happy to work with our government to help achieve its promise for real change in our country because, of course, through all the struggles of the last ten years, we never went away.

Ferne Downey
ACTRA National President



Clockwise from top right: *Odd Squad* stars Joshua Kilimnik and Filip Geljo at the 2015 Toronto Labour Day parade with Saige Aurora (*Reign, Hannibal*) and Bianca Traitsis (*Odd Squad*). Remember our ‘90s TV shows—such as *Are You Afraid of the Dark* and *Popular Mechanics for Kids?*—featuring Ryan Gosling, Neve Campbell, Jay Baruchel and Elisha Cuthbert, to name a few of our budding stars at that time. Current children’s shows, including *Odd Squad*, *Degrassi*, *Some Assembly Required* and *The Next Step* have built audiences and fans all over the world. Photo: Andrew Ahmed; Ferne Downey on Parliament Hill. Photo: Fred Chartrand; ACTRA Montreal member Alison Louder with her election message for gender equality. Photo: Tony Walsh.

The Future is Secure

ACTRA's IPA bargaining team approached this year's negotiations as we always do—with determination to secure the best deal possible for our hard-working Member Performers. A deal that would provide improved wages and Use fees, better working conditions, and a safe and healthy workplace.

This time, however, something else had to be addressed. An issue that made us feel that history might repeat itself. That issue was New Media. Not since the contentious and conflictual 2006/07 round of IPA bargaining had New Media been a major issue in negotiations. Late in 2006, ACTRA Members voted overwhelmingly in favour of a strike mandate as a result

“No matter where we work—our ACTRA Agreements protect all professional performers.

SARAH GADON

of the position taken by Producers with respect to New Media production. You'll recall that Producers then wanted you, our Member Performers, to work in New Media virtually for free.

In response you stood shoulder-to-shoulder with your ACTRA Negotiating Committee and took job action. You struck the Producers for seven weeks. As a result of your solidarity, ACTRA's bargaining team was then able to secure a fair deal. And since then, you have been paid ACTRA minimums for your work in New Media.

This time around, the Producers again proposed you should not be paid fairly for your work in New Media. The Producers claimed their slice of the media “pie” is shrinking: while DVD sales are decreasing dramatically, sales of permanent downloads are not replacing these losses in DVD revenue. In response, we presented facts to show them the “pie” is in fact growing (see side bar). We also took the opportunity to remind them of the consequences of the past; and told them we would not hesitate to re-approach our membership to support a strike mandate if the Producers were unwilling to recognize Performers need to be compensated fairly for work in New Media

Happily, we eventually came to an equitable deal—a deal that continues to pay you for your work in what is now a not-so-“new” form of media. Your IPA bargaining team stood firm, and bargained well and late into the night. As a result, ACTRA Members will now enjoy the best contractual minimum fees and Use rights for New Media production in the world—including a brand new 105 per cent Prepayment option for “made for New Media” productions.

“We are in this together and together we preserve our achievements, honour our present and imagine our future.

GRACE LYNN KUNG

A few other highlights of this new deal include a pay increase of six per cent for ACTRA Performers over the next three years; increased work opportunities and improved conditions for Members working as Background Performers; the establishment of a day rate for ACTRA Members engaged as Choreographers; and improvements for Performers working in animation.

With healthy working protections for our Performers always top of mind, we were also happy to secure, for the first time, a



Despite shifting audience habits and revolutionary technological upheaval, our industry continues to flourish across all screen-based platforms. Total worldwide entertainment and media revenues are expected to rise by 29 per cent between 2014 (\$1.7 trillion) and 2019 (\$2.2 trillion).

The Home Entertainment sector, which includes sales from DVDs, Blu-ray, SVOD and EST, still has a good story to tell. As consumers continue to add digital resources to their menu of entertainment options, the industry continues to innovate to meet this growing demand.

In North America, overall OTT revenue is predicted to surge to \$9.8 billion by 2019 from \$6.9 billion in 2014. This will comprise of North American SVOD revenue growing from \$4.46 billion in 2014 to \$6.7 billion in 2019 and North American EST revenue hitting \$2 billion from \$1.2 billion over that same time period.

1 The Global entertainment and media Outlook 2015-2019, PwC;
2 Americas OTT TV and Video Forecasts, Digital TV Research Ltd;
3 North America to Add 7.1 Million SVOD Customers in 2015, Home Media Magazine.

“It is vital, in this rapidly evolving world of New Media, that we establish a solid framework to ensure that we will be compensated fairly now and in the future.

CATHERINE DISHER

10-hour Turnaround (Rest between Days) for Performers in the Stunt Coordinator category. As well, we were able to address dignity and respect issues, including concerns related to discrimination based on gender identity, and a shortened time period for the payment of fees to Performers.

As Chief Negotiator, I have to say this excellent new IPA settlement was a terrific team effort. First, I want to thank the ACTRA Members who took time from their busy schedules to participate in the IPA process. A process that began a year ago with focus groups at your local Branch level, then continued through the development of proposals stage before culminating in the final stage, the actual negotiations, which took place from October to December 2015.

I would like to specifically thank the

members of ACTRA National’s IPA Negotiating Committee, and their Alternates and Observers, who proudly sat at the bargaining table and tirelessly advocated for the rights of their fellow Members: Ferne Downey (National President, and IPA Bargaining Committee Chair); Carlo Mestroni (Montreal); Blair Young (Alberta); David Sparrow (Toronto); Grace Lynn-Kung (Toronto); Julian Richings (Toronto); Amber Goldfarb (Montreal); Aaron Zeffer (Alberta); Catherine Disher (Toronto); Rick Howland (Toronto); Sarah Gadon (Toronto); Shawn Doyle (Toronto); Mike Scherer, Stunts (Montreal); Angelica Lisk-Hann, Stunts (Toronto); Constantine Meglis, Background (Toronto); Alvin Sanders (UBCP/ACTRA); and Keith Martin Gordey (UBCP/ACTRA).



With our new 2016–2018 Independent Production Agreement now in effect, you can continue to focus on what you do best—telling great Canadian stories—knowing you will be compensated fairly, and your rights will be protected by one of the best agreements for performers in the world.



Stephen Waddell, ACTRA National Executive Director and Chief Negotiator.



Clockwise from top: Team ACTRA on the first day of IPA negotiations with bargaining members and supporters: Left to right, front row, sitting: Rick Howland, Shawn Doyle, Heather Allin, Blair Young, Stephen Waddell, Ferne Downey, David Sparrow, Amber Goldfarb, Farah Merani, Julian Richings, Carlo Mestroni; Back row, standing: Aidan Devine, Mike Scherer, Ron Lea, Alvin Sanders, Huse Madhavji, Art Hindle, Katie Uhlmann, Amanda Brugel, Kristin Booth, Jim Codrington, Kyra Harper, Richard Young, David Gale, and Angelica Lisk-Hann. Photo: Jag Gundu; Grace Lynn Kung; Sarah Gadon; Catherine Disher.

A man with a mustache and grey hair, wearing a light-colored cowboy hat, a blue and white plaid long-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, and a brown leather belt with a large silver buckle. He is holding a yellow mug with a silver design. He is standing outdoors, leaning against a wooden post, with a blurred background of green trees and a bright sky.

If you're
so damn
good,
what are
you doing
here?

Q&A WITH HEARTLAND'S
SHAUN JOHNSTON & AMBER MARSHALL

Confession: I first came to Alberta from Montreal for theatre school (sometime after the Cretaceous) because everyone in my theatre-obsessed family—and their theatre and film friends—all said the same thing: University of Alberta was THE university-based acting conservatory in Canada. I had no idea where Edmonton was. When I checked my atlas—ignoring the scale—Edmonton... looked pretty close to Vancouver. It was in Canada. Beyond that, I hadn't a clue.

And while I gestated in the cocoon of theatre school, I didn't think much about where Dan-the-butterfly would land. I'd follow the work. Immediately upon my graduating, SCTV set up in Edmonton, and I—somewhat versed in things technical—got a job doing “daytime staging.” It was a great gig with plenty of time hanging with that talented crew—John Candy, Eugene Levy, Andrea Martin, Catherine O'Hara, Rick Moranis, Dave Thomas, Joe Flaherty—and the writers.

But it was there I first encountered a bigotry that still exists in Film and TV today. In theatre, nobody much gave a damn about where you lived. From Alberta, I've worked in theatres across Canada. But one day on set I heard this sarcastic comment about an Edmonton actor, ‘Ooh... he's the best actor in all of Edmonton’. They were actually talking about a really fine actor who worked regularly at the Citadel and many other theatres in town. But they were clear: he must suck. Because he lives here.

And not in Toronto.

And not in Vancouver.

I was... surprised. It had never occurred to me that anything beyond talent and suitability mattered. But it mattered.

The question is, does it still?

Most of us who toil in relative regional obscurity know that when projects come in, we ain't at the top of the heap. Sometimes can't even see the heap. But what about our Alberta stars?

So... I went to Shaun Johnston and Amber Marshall, Jack and Amy on *Heartland*—two bona fide stars.

Shaun and I worked together a number

of times, including my guest starring on *Heartland*, but Amber and I had barely met. So it was time to reconnect. I live in Calgary; Shaun in Edmonton and Amber just south of Calgary. We met separately.

Okay, Shaun: why did you stay?

I studied at University of Alberta. I like to say I'm classically trained. There were three programs at that time touted as the best training facilities in the nation. I, being an Albertan, didn't want to go away. I threw all my eggs into the UofA basket and I got in. And I tell you that because it has to do with why I'm here almost 30 years later. It boils down to not looking for fame, not looking for fortune, as much as this: it doesn't matter where you live if you continue to grow and continue to set the goal of being better tomorrow than you are today. It doesn't matter; you could live in Timbuktu.

The problem with being in Alberta was there was not much work here, and when producers came from out of province to shoot a project here, we didn't get much of a look. It didn't mean that I wasn't going to work but I wasn't going to get the 'hero' roles. So I spent a lot of time on spec away from home.

Did you ever feel you should permanently relocate to where there was more opportunity? Did you feel you were being fair to your career by staying here?

I did feel a ton of pressure to not be here. When I became an actor, my first professional gigs were on stage. Edmonton has always had a vibrant theatre community.

But I did go to Toronto on an audition tour with our graduating class. At the end of it there was a big line-up of people to give me their cards. I went to meet all of them. Some were to audition for a theatre seasons. Some were to audition for television programs. Some were agents who wanted to sign me. But every person I met said ‘You can’t do it unless you move here.’

Then have you come face-to-face with, “if you’re so good, what are you doing here?” Or have you smelled that what’s available to you here are lesser parts than would be available if you live in TO or Van?

Yeah! I’ve felt many, many times that the better roles are not considered here. They do a Canada-wide casting call; they’ll cast in Toronto, Vancouver and then they’ll go to the region where they’re shooting. By the time they get there (to cast in those other cities) and are setting up shop, they already have their ‘heroes’ from the major centres because that’s where ‘heroes’ come from. So yeah, I have felt that a LOT.

I combat that by going ‘there’ before they come here. Most of my career has been built on jobs I earned elsewhere. I had a high-octane agent based in Vancouver. Oddly enough, he never said that I had to live there. When I entered the profession you really needed to have an agent, but you didn’t HAVE to have an agent. I got lucky. I did a play and a television producer saw me and asked me to audition. I did; I got the series. It was called *Destiny Ridge*. So I got that job without an agent. Just good luck.

I’m thrilled that I’ve spent my entire



career with the same agent; I love the guy to death. But he took me as a client because I was going to benefit him before he was going to benefit me. So he’s no fool. And he ended up realizing that I could be a working client without living there. I had some good luck on the way and I continued to work, but not necessarily from here. I travelled on speculation. I would say goodbye to my wife and eventually my kids, and I would spend two, three weeks away from home, sleeping on couches, auditioning... and when I booked something that was the big halleluiah and I was able to come home with success.

With tax credits, an Albertan creates a problem for a producer in TO or BC.

I’ve lost jobs because of it.

With the success of *Heartland*, do you still feel that you carry an Alberta asterisk on your name?

I don’t think I’m completely immune. Nobody is going to be able to sell a product on my back. Or at least, they didn’t used to be able to. But Canadian culture is expanding globally. So my image today is way bigger than it’s ever been. *Heartland* is now



Heartland is the longest-running hour-long drama in the history of Canadian television. Amber Marshall in left photo and opposite page; Shaun Johnston on horseback; and bottom photo left to right: Chris Potter, Amber Marshall, Shaun Johnston, Graham Wardle and Nicholas Campbell.

played in over a hundred countries. I’ve heard we might have trouble going to the store in some of these countries in terms of getting recognized. I’m even getting recognized here now. Though I’m told I still look younger than Grandpa Jack. And I say, ‘thank you for noticing!’





Do you feel now that you are a mentor to younger actors?

I do. I think it's a responsibility, first of all. Secondly, I love sharing knowledge. I've gotten to a point with my skill set where I can be confident in sharing or instructing. And I do.

So, do you tell them to stay in Alberta or do you tell them to look "away"?

I absolutely encourage younger actors to leave Alberta. But here's why: it's because you can do it from here—and I'm not going to tell you that you can't, because I did it from here—but... it was hard, man, it was really, really hard. In a nutshell, Dan, I don't think I've ever felt disrespected as an Albertan, but I have felt I'm not going to be considered. I've felt that a lot.

So Shaun stayed. But he travelled. What about someone from Ontario who CHOSE Alberta as home? Here's Amber Marshall. She moved from Ontario to Alberta. To live.

Why are you now an Albertan?

I love Alberta for so many reasons. I feel like it adopted me, as soon as I came here. I came out to film *Heartland* nine years ago. I fell in love with the people, the scenery, the culture. *Heartland* allowed me to set up base here and I've been so fortunate to be on such a long-running show. But I knew when I got here that this was going to be my home.

How long have you officially called yourself an Albertan?

Well, I bought my first place here six years

ago. So that would probably be when I became an official Albertan, but I moved out permanently seven years ago. The first two seasons *Heartland* put me up in a condo in Calgary and I felt that this was where I needed to be. I decided that if we come back for a third year, I was going to rent further out. I found an acreage and I rented that. I heard later they thought, 'No, she'll be there a month and she'll be lonely and scared living in the middle of nowhere and we'll have to find her a place in Calgary.' I was there a year and then I needed to find a place of my own, to call home.

What did your agent say when you announced, "Now I'll be based in Alberta"?

He wasn't happy at first. He said, 'You know, there's really no work in Alberta, other than *Heartland*.' And I said, 'What do you mean there's no work? There are lots of different projects and besides, right now, I focus all my time on *Heartland*. I can always put something on tape.' Since then he's been really supportive. He now says to me, 'You're my breath of fresh air because you're not based in the city.'

Do you think that basing yourself here has hurt you professionally?

One thing I've always thought about is the typecasting that happens when you've been on a show for many years. I don't think that being in Alberta would hurt me in the long run but it definitely sets a tone for casting directors, 'Well, she's not in the centre hub,' so they don't think about me as much.

You've already smelled the "If you're so good, why are you here?"

Yeah. A little bit. But I always reply, 'This is my life. Acting is my career. And I want to live where I want to be happy.'

Have you ever regretted not being in the hub when something came by?

It hasn't happened. But I think that might be different if *Heartland* didn't shoot for seven or eight months of the year. Typically, from January to April, when we have our time off, I don't really want to look at other projects. And I have no desire to go to L.A. whatsoever. I will go where the work is if needed, but it's not something I'm going to go hunt for.

The part you play, horsey, rural Amy, is impossibly entwined with who you are. Do you ever feel the desire to crack out of that?

Desire? Yes. Need? No. I think that all actors crave something new and fresh and a character they've never tackled. But when you've been the same character for ten years, it's hard to get out of it. Especially when that character is so much of my own self. So when I tackle new auditions I say 'how can I not be Amy?' And that's sometimes difficult.

Do you feel that your life here in public is different than it is in Toronto?

I feel a sense of community I don't feel in other places. Example: I hardly ever go out. I'm not much of a partier. But on Friday I went with friends to the Longview Bar—in Longview, a very small town—

and everyone knows each other. It was packed. As opposed to people coming up like they would at Ranchman's (a large Calgary club) and saying, 'Oh my God I need a picture of you!' and just being hands-down sloppy... I had a few gentlemen (at the Longview Bar) come up and say, 'I would love to take you out for a dance'. And they were extremely polite; they'd take me out for dance, never ask for a photo or an autograph, not be in my space. And then it was done and they would move on.

What would you say to actor X who comes on the show... who ends up thinking about living here?

I've already had Actor X come up to me, and I encouraged them to stay. Some people just feel that they need to be in the centre of everything and that will never change. If I can say one thing to an actor starting out it's to never compromise yourself for your career. If it's something that you love but you are struggling with it, go do something else. If you can find that second career, then you can do this because you love it.



Daniel Libman is a Calgary-based actor and playwright, with more than 50 productions of his plays across Canada and the U.S. (including three in NYC). He also writes corporate and political speeches, magazine features and teaches writing at Mount Royal University.



2016
ACTRA NATIONAL
AWARD OF
EXCELLENCE
RECIPIENT

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Neve Campbell

Hollywood seems to love Canadians, including yourself. Do you have a theory about this?

I'm not sure Hollywood necessarily loves Canadians. I think Hollywood loves the right talent for the right role, and it just so happens that many Canadians have found themselves to be that [talent]. In Canada, obviously we have a vastly diverse culture that influences our sense of selves through different kinds of music, dance, theatre and literature. We're lucky to be exposed to wonderful arts while growing up, and perhaps this is why we've had a good amount of talent come out of our country.

Is there a particular audition experience you can share where you feel you made a bold choice to help you nail the part?

I remember auditioning for *Pearl Harbor* and there was a scene in which the character was giving a tour to a group of Japanese business people. I decided to translate some of the lines for the audition into Japanese. I got the role. Unfortunately, my schedule on *Party of Five* at the time conflicted with the schedule for the film so I wasn't able to make the movie. However, it was a good acknowledgement that being bold in an audition can be a good thing.



The ACTRA National Award of Excellence recognizes a member's career achievements, and contribution to their fellow performers and Canada's entertainment industry. Past award recipients include Leslie Nielsen, Lloyd Bochner, Tonya Lee Williams, Kiefer Sutherland, Sandra Oh, Eugene Levy, Bruce Greenwood and Jason Priestley.

What was the best piece of advice or most important training you received?

I think my training as a dancer at the National Ballet School of Canada was great preparation for me to be disciplined and committed to my work. It also taught me to be humble and open to a teacher's or director's guidance. As a dancer you never expect to earn great money or many accolades but you do learn to truly appreciate the art itself and the process of creativity.

When you're not on a set, what's your favourite place to be?

My favourite place to be is with my son Caspian and my partner JJ. Nothing has given me greater joy in life and a greater learning curve than being a mother.

From being a Canadian ballerina starting at age nine, to the youngest cast member in the Toronto production of *The Phantom of the Opera*, to your lead role in *Party of Five*, you've grown up working in the entertainment business. Do you have any advice for young performers who are just starting out?

If I were to give advice to young artists striving to enter the industry I would say, first of all, you'd better be darn sure you want to do this. You need to be so passionate about it that you couldn't stand to do anything else. The reason being is this is a really tough industry to crack. It's tough to earn a living and very unpredictable. At the same time it can be incredibly rewarding. You must love the creative process and make sure to train. Make sure you garner the tools you need to feel confident going in. Surround yourself with artists who inspire you in some way and love the process of your art without too much focus

on the outcome. Try to enjoy the audition process. Think of it as another opportunity to get to act and to learn. More likely than not, you won't get the job—so you'd better try to like the process in and of itself. Keep learning. Never stop searching for inspiration. You will never be perfect and that's the beauty. You can always become better.

Neve Campbell made her stage acting debut in the Toronto production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera* in 1988 before transitioning to television in Canada's *Catwalk*. This was followed by her breakout role in the critically-acclaimed and Golden Globe-winning U.S. series *Party of Five*. Neve is also well-known for her work in the *Scream* movies—one of the highest-grossing horror franchises of all time. Her other screen credits include *The Craft*; *The Canterville Ghost*; *Three to Tango*; *Drowning Mona*; *Panic*; *Manhattan* and *Wild Things* for which she received a MTV Movie Award nomination. In 2016, Neve joins the cast in the fourth season of the Netflix series *House of Cards* opposite Kevin Spacey and Robin Wright.

BFF, or heading down the aisle?

What does ACTRA and Equity's renewed reciprocal agreement mean for our future?

Utilizing the high-tech innovation of Skype, I am sitting down with Canadian Actors' Equity Association Council President Allan Teichman and ACTRA National President Ferne Downey. They are inches apart in the ACTRA Boardroom in Toronto. I am on vacation in the U.K., but happy to interrupt the family time to hear straight from the top what's going on with our two organizations.

In December 2014, the reciprocal agreement between Equity and ACTRA was updated, renewed and essentially overhauled. Both organizations released a statement to their members explaining the renewed agreement and their decision to 'explore closer ties.'

So with both Allan and Ferne facing the computer camera, I am going to get to the bottom of this new relationship and see

where we're heading. Are we dating? Or are we heading down the aisle?

Allan Teichman kicks things off. "We'd been talking for a while in general terms about a closer alliance between the two organizations."

A good starting point, it seems, was looking at the pre-existing reciprocal agreement, "which is about 40 years old."

Ferne Downey jumps in and gets even more specific with the number. "Forty-three," she says.

"There you go. It needed updating," Teichman acknowledges. The Equity President points out a 43-year-old agreement will have some cracks in it. "We wanted to fix that first before moving on."

The ACTRA President sums up the flavour of the changes to the agreement: "A



bit more modern, a bit more streamlined." She offers massive kudos to Allan for first attempting what a cleaner, simpler agreement would look like.

"That's the tough part! Equity did a wonderful dive into the deep end," she says.

I ask the two Presidents what does this agreement actually mean to members and why is it important to us? Ferne Downey is first out of the gate.

"Professionalism," she explains. "To me it's about a mutual respect and formal understanding of performers in our country."

The worlds in which we live are compatible yet still very different it seems. We are all performers but in two very different mediums.

"There was a fair amount of crossover,"

Teichman says. "You want to come up with a good neighbour policy. Part of a good neighbour policy is good fences and part is the gate. So you build both of them."

It seems for both Presidents, that's what the reciprocal agreement was about. How do we define our jurisdictions? How do we connect across them? All in a way that respects the professionalism of both unions.

I ask Downey and Teichman to explain, in a nutshell, the changes they've made to the reciprocal agreement.

"The biggest change," starts Teichman "is previously there was a requirement that if you worked in the other jurisdiction you were expected to join the other organization."

That requirement is now gone. "Now there is an obligation to be properly contracted as a professional performer," he

says. “That was one of the cracks that had shown up over time.”

Teichman chuckles as he recalls the work, “the rest of it was cleaning up the language and (making it) less ponderous . . .”

“Well, making it more active and dynamic,” adds Downey. “That was a massive thing. So now you aren’t compelled to join. You work on a permit if you are going to work in the other jurisdiction.”

The Equity President acknowledges the work his union has been doing to modernize its approach: “after 43 years the world has moved on. We need to catch up with it sometimes.”

Downey agrees ACTRA has been doing the same. “We’ve been adapting our low-budget agreements. Both organizations have adapted quite a bit to better serve their members. To play in the world in which we live.”

As a working member of BOTH unions, I explain to my new Skype buddies that I am curious about one issue. I explain that I spotted the phrase, ‘we are exploring closer ties,’ in the formal release announcing the reworking of the reciprocal agreement.

I look right down the camera at the two Presidents. “Discuss that phrase,” I say. “Does that mean we’re merging?” They both chuckle.

“It’s a good question,” says Teichman, speaking first. “What’s on the table is everything from BFF to marriage.”

They laugh again. I can’t help thinking it looks to be a happy relationship, wherever it’s heading.

“We haven’t decided where things stand,”



On stage ACTRA Maritimes Councillor Francine Deschepper points her blade at Equity Atlantic Councillor Karen Basset in Basset’s play, *Heroine*. (Neptune Studio Theatre, Halifax photo: Stoo Metz); ACTRA Maritimes National Councillor Jeremy Webb sings ‘Don’t Stop Believing’ with Equity/ACTRA Toronto member Stacy Smith in Webb’s internet dating comedy, *Fishing*. (Neptune Studio Theatre, Halifax photo: Hal Tatlidil); ACTRA Toronto/Equity member Stacy Smith on stage in Webb’s play, *Fishing*. (Neptune Studio Theatre, Halifax photo: Hal Tatlidil)



he continues. “Our two jurisdictions have made different choices. Both of them are right. Can you find a middle ground? Can you find a way in which both can operate in their sphere? That’s where we’re at right now. Is there a way to bring this together? That’s the process right now.”

They explain the joint committee will do the math to find out how it all adds up. Perhaps an expanded alliance? Maybe a merger? Or do we continue as we are?

“We don’t know the answer to that yet,” starts Teichman. “We are open to all the options. Nothing’s off the table. That’s important for people to know. Nothing is decided.”

“That’s beautifully said, actually,” nods Downey. “Conceptually, when we look from 30,000 feet, we look at the mutual benefits we could create for our members.”

She expands. “Member services, member contracts, member research, member insurance & retirement: the big things that might improve our members’ lives. What would that look like? It has to be better for everybody or there wouldn’t be any point.”

“What I like is nobody is shirking,” she continues. “Everyone is rolling up their sleeves. We’ve never had such a close relationship with Equity.”

“Ultimately, the end goal has to be improvement,” adds Teichman.

I wonder if putting a statement out like they have has generated feedback from the membership and what the response has been.

“We’ve only heard from a few of our members at this point. Questions for the most part. And expressions of support,” says Downey.

“That’s true,” Teichman nods.

The Equity President talks about interest from his members. “There has been interest over the years from dual members in bringing the two organizations together. The challenge for both of us is dual members are in the minority. What do you say to the rest of our memberships to help them say, ‘I can see myself in this and how this helps me.’ That’s what will come next.”

Again, I look right down the lens and ask “So, I’m allowed to use the ‘M’ word...?”

“For my money say it,” says Teichman.

“It puts it out there as a possible outcome of this.”

I will be interested to see what both unions’ memberships make of this conversation. Having you two chatting makes it real, I suggest.

“It is real,” my ACTRA President confirms.



Jeremy Webb is an ACTRA National Councillor and a Maritimes Councillor based in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He is Artistic Producer of Eastern Front Theatre.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



If an ACTRA Member is offered a role in a Fringe Festival production, what happens?

Anyone can work on any of the festivals listed on the Festival Waiver or on an Artist’s Collective regardless of their membership status. Only Equity Members are required to have insurance premiums paid on their behalf.

What happens to permit fees paid by an Equity member when working in ACTRA’s jurisdiction?

An Equity Member in good standing working in ACTRA’s jurisdiction can choose to apply for Full Membership or Apprentice Membership, or purchase permits and work as a Permittee.

If an Equity Member has an ACTRA contract, and chooses to join ACTRA as a Full Member, their initiation fee is reduced by \$475 to a fee of \$1,125.

If an Equity Member has an ACTRA contract, and chooses to join ACTRA as an Apprentice Member, permit fees must be paid for each engagement. After the third qualifying permit, the Apprentice Member can join ACTRA as a Full Member. Their initiation fee is then reduced by \$475 plus the total amount paid for the three qualifying permits. A surcharge is applicable to each permit fee after the third qualifying permit fee when an Apprentice Member does not join as a Full Member.


When working as a Permittee, any paid permit fees cannot be applied to a reduction of the membership initiation fee.

I am an ACTRA Member and have been offered a role in an Equity production. Do I have to join Equity?

No. You can work as a Permittee or join as a Full Member.



Allan Teichman, Equity President and Ferne Downey, ACTRA National President.



It's a family business! The Camacho family has signed up for direct deposit! Their Use Fee payments for productions, such as *The F Word*, *Arthur* and *The Rudy Guilliani Story*, go directly into their bank accounts. No hassles or time delays that can come with cashing a cheque. So spend more time doing what you love—sign up for direct deposit with ACTRA PRS!

For those still getting cheques in the mail, on March 1, 2016, ACTRA PRS will begin issuing cheques just once per year. So sign up for direct deposit now at actra.ca/prs to get your money faster and directly into your account!

If you receive your cheques through your agent, don't worry as agents can sign up for direct deposit too.

Questions?
Email us at prs@actra.ca

ACTRA Montreal members Sarah and Jesse Camacho with their ACTRA award-winning parents Pauline Little (2010 Outstanding Voice Performance Award) and Mark Camacho (2015 Outstanding Male Performance Award).

Photo: Derek Dugas

PRS Direct
Deposit
=
Money
in the bank!

Show Me the Money

As performers, we understand the minimum payments our Independent Production Agreement (IPA) guarantees us for shoot days or the above-minimum fees our agents help negotiate. But Use fee payments in the back end are a bit more complicated.

I asked Max Wagner, Assistant Director and a 15-year veteran of ACTRA Performers' Rights Society (PRS), to sit down with me to help explain how ACTRA PRS tracks and distributes Use fee payments to performers. Max started by outlining the basics every member should know.

The amount ACTRA PRS is able to collect on your behalf has a lot to do with how you are paid at the time of production. For those who like to dig into the details, the formulas that regulate the Use fee structure are laid out in the "B" section of the IPA but, basically, include two options for use of a production in media and territories outside the declared use: producers can choose either a prepayment option, or, an advance payment option.

Prepayment option

With the new IPA having come into effect on January 1 this year, a producer can now pay an additional percentage of the performer's net fees as follows: 135% for all media including New Media and Theatrical; or 130% for all media including Theatrical but excluding New Media; or 110% for all media including Television and New Media but excluding Theatrical; or 105% for all media including Television but excluding Theatrical and New Media. In all cases the prepayment option gives the producer four years of unlimited use in the designated prepaid media. This means there are no further Use fee payments until after the four year prepayment period has expired, or, if the production

is used in media that is not included in the prepayment option declared by the producer.

After the four-year prepayment period expires, the producer is obligated to pay ACTRA PRS 3.6% of Distributor's Gross Revenue (DGR), i.e. all revenue earned from the exploitation of the production. The DGR is then distributed to eligible performers according to established formulas.

Advance payment option

The producers can choose to pay one of the following advance payment options: 25%; 50%; 75%; or 100% of the performer's net fees in addition to their daily fee. This non-refundable advance paid to the performer at the time of production allows the producer unlimited use worldwide. However, all sales made from day one must be reported to ACTRA PRS (i.e. there is no four-year grace period). The revenue is tracked against the total amount of those advance payments. Once the producer makes sales past the advanced payment amount, the producer is obligated to pay performers the percentage of DGR that corresponds to the percentage the producer opted to pay up front. The smaller the advance, the higher the DGR percentage paid to the performer. For example, with a 25% advance, the DGR percentage to be paid is 6.6%, compared to a 100 percent advance where the DGR percentage to be paid is 3.6%. With the new IPA New Media sales are now included in this formula.

No matter which option producers choose, there is money in a performer's pocket right away.

“The money has started flowing, and will increase as more treaties are signed.

The Sultan of Brunei buys everything!

DGR license fees depend on the market and the age of the production. After four years of use, a production will not be worth as much as it was in year one. Max did share this one juicy tidbit: the Sultan of Brunei buys everything! Laugh if you will, but he has a huge family and, over the years, has put a lot of money in your pockets. License fees can range from hundreds to hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Sultan may pay a smaller fee than Italy, but all the money adds up.

Global partnerships

Tracking your money internationally has become a focus for ACTRA PRS. Through its international work with the Societies' Council for the Collective Management of Performers' Rights (SCAPR) and the International Federation of Actors (FIA), ACTRA PRS has signed agreements with collecting societies around the world. The money has started flowing, and will increase as more treaties are signed.

The data keeper of everything

The ACTRA PRS Claims team keeps and



Smurfs (2012). In 2014, 46 artists shared approximately \$90,000 in Use fee payments for distribution in New Media.



Resident Evil: Afterlife (2010). In 2014, 82 artists shared in approximately \$72,000 in Use fee payments for distribution in New Media.



White House Down (2012). Use fee payments for distribution in New Media amounted to approximately \$71,000 shared by 201 artists in 2014.

tracks data on all Canadian productions made over ACTRA's almost 75-year history. There are over 15,000 active files in the system and that number grows every day. The Claims team pores over producers' reports using everything from audits to forensic accounting to get you your money.

How is your share calculated?

Units are assigned to ensure there is a fair allocation of Use fees. What you may not know is there is a minimum of one unit for day-players and a maximum cap of 20 units for all performers. Therefore, a lead performer who had a 45-day shoot cannot swallow up the entire DGR. A percentage will go to all the day-players as well.

How do performers get their money?

There are big changes afoot. We have been educating members for two years about our now-imminent move to direct deposit. As of March 1, 2016, ACTRA PRS will begin issuing paper cheques only on an annual basis. To ensure that you receive any eligible Use fee payments throughout the year, you must be signed up for direct deposit. You will receive an e-mail with an attached report outlining the details of the payment. Direct deposit allows performers to get their money faster regardless of where they are based, it's environmentally friendly, and will save performers and ACTRA PRS money. Did you know that it costs an average of \$14.00 to process each cheque? This adds up when you issue more than 50,000-60,000 cheques per year. These cost savings will free up a lot of resources that ACTRA PRS can

“There are over 15,000 active files in the system and that number grows every day.

reinvest in pursuing more claims. Please make sure ACTRA PRS has your current e-mail address. If you are not signed up for direct deposit, your money will be mailed to you by cheque only once a year.

Thanks to the diligence of our team members who prod producers to comply with timely and proper reporting, in the last fiscal year ACTRA PRS distributed over \$13 million in Use fees to performers. ACTRA PRS will also investigate when contacted by a performer regarding a production in which they performed if, for example, they saw a broadcast in China or Poland. But please remember, seeing something internationally does not automatically result in a Use fee payment as that exploitation, or broadcast, may fall within the Prepayment period or Advance, and therefore may have already paid.

The changing media landscape

The way our performances are viewed is rapidly changing with the availability of Over-the-top streaming and video-on-demand services.

The emergence of New Media has brought with it an inherent challenge

in how to monetize worldwide Internet usage, and find ways to track and collect Use fee payments for this still relatively new medium. In the recent IPA negotiations, we focused our efforts on establishing boundaries and rates with our industry partners. We have learned from our past. This is an important fight for performers. In 2007, ACTRA initiated its first-ever strike mandate to protect its members' rights in this ever-growing sector. Performers do not work for free. We don't ever give up, and we won't back down. For more information on our new IPA, please read Stephen Waddell's article, "The Future is Secure."



Award-winning actor, writer and singer, Theresa Tova is a multiple Dora- and Gemini-nominated actor, a Governor General Award-nominated writer and an international concert diva. Tova's new musical *Bella: The Colour of Love* played to SRO audiences in Warsaw, Brussels, Philadelphia and Toronto. She serves as ACTRA National Treasurer and as ACTRA National Children's Advocate.

Demolished Film Communities

In the words of Yogi Berra, it was “déjà vu all over again” for us TV and film types in Nova Scotia when our government made the sudden and short-sighted decision last spring, without consultation or warning, to virtually destroy our Film Tax Credit.

We saw our colleagues in Saskatchewan suffer a similar fate in 2012. The headlines from that time would be the same for our own province: “Film Producers Abandoning as Tax Credit Ends,” “Premier Won’t Reverse Tax Credit Cut,” “Film Industry; An Implosion in Progress.”

To say we were shocked is putting it mildly. After all, this system had worked here for two decades helping to produce TV shows and movies seen all over the world: *Trailer Park Boys*; *Haven*; *This Hour has 22 Minutes*; *Book of Negroes*; *Call Me Fitz*; *Hobo with a Shotgun*, to name just a

few. Aside from badges of cultural pride, this was also big business. Projections for 2015 suggested we were on track for a \$160-million-dollar year.

Yet in April 2015, when the Nova Scotia Liberals announced their budget, it took just 20 minutes to undo what had taken 20 years to build.

The real slap in the face was this: when Preemie (because he’s clearly not ready to be Premier) Steven McNeil was running in 2013, he’d said the only problem with the Tax Credit was that its yearly renewal caused unnecessary anxiety for such an

important sector of the province’s industry. If elected premier, he’d renew it for five years to signal a long-term commitment to this booming industry.

This long-term commitment meant stability for our industry. We could buy houses! We could buy cars! We could enroll our kids in activities and be part of our communities! We bought it and we bought in.

Then he sold us out.

“This business isn’t growing,” the Liberals claimed, seemingly based on nothing but the most recent economic impact assessment, which had been done over 10 years ago.

“Companies that make films don’t pay taxes,” they said, in puzzling political patois.

“We had to choose education and health-care over the glitzy Hollywood film business,” they said, flagrantly ignoring that our industry helps support those vital services.

They didn’t calculate profits made by ancillary businesses. Nor did they calculate income tax paid by the people working on these films and TV shows. Strangely, they didn’t even count the revenue they

would’ve generated from projects that were already on the books for summer 2015.

Instead, they rushed an implementation date of July 1, just a mere few weeks after this jaw-dropping decision was made.

We saw how fast the wheels came off the bus in Saskatchewan so we actors acted fast. Shoulder-to-shoulder with our crew colleagues, we mobilized and rallied, fought fiction with fact, and petulance with patience, but to no end. The premier and his finance minister dug-in their heels and refused to budge.

Frankly, the term “tax credit” is misleading. “Labour incentive” is much more accurate. In geographically-disadvantaged places like Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan, this labour incentive was designed to lure movies and TV shows.

On paper, there are a lot of reasons why shooting elsewhere is easier. Toronto, say. There’s no extra flight required from L.A. There’s a deeper pool of actors and crew from which to choose.

But NS and SK have advantages too. Less “red tape” for permits; it’s easier for a big film crew to make a unit move across town. Stunning geography allows these places to double for cities all over the world, both period and contemporary.

The analogy is, there’s cinematic oil in these here parts. We just need a pipeline to help producers access it. Our Tax Credit was that pipeline.

This worked for producers and it worked for us. Producers were getting more bang for their buck. Our actors and crews were getting trained on high-end shows, paying their mortgages and—best

In the blink of an eye, in one ill-conceived budget, we were rendered non-competitive by a group of people I’m still not convinced could explain how the system even worked.

It took just 20 minutes to undo what had taken 20 years to build.

of all—developing skills we could use to tell our own stories. That’s the macro.

Here’s the micro: I live near Truro, Nova Scotia. It’s a small, blue collar town that you might only know if you wear Stanfield underwear. It’s a lovely place to raise a family but it’s also a place that could use a win in these difficult economic times.

Trailer Park Boys has been shooting here for the past two years. In that time it has pumped \$12 million into the local economy. Aside from sets, props, costumes, trailers, hotels and vehicles, our crew has eaten at local restaurants, done laundry at local laundromats and bought gas for our cars at local gas stations. People from all over the world come here to see where TPB is shot. That’s just one example of one show that is filmed in one town.

But in the eyes of the NS government, it somehow didn’t count.

The worst part is, like Saskatchewan, there is a young, skilled, artistic population that wants to stay when there are so many reasons to leave.

Film and TV has a complicated and skittish financing structure. Imagine the difference in your bottom line if you were a producer paying 200 people on a crew and you got even one percent extra back on those wages. You’d go anywhere for that kind of savings! That’s why we tried to explain that even a small reduction is the equivalent of eliminating it altogether.

But in the blink of an eye, in one ill-conceived budget, we were rendered non-competitive by a group of people I’m still not convinced could explain how the system even worked.

ACTRA Saskatchewan’s past-president, Alan Bratt, says that the Saskatchewan industry is slowly picking up the pieces. There are a few small features being made, under the new granting system, by a dedicated community that’s weathered the storm. But they are still underfunded and not able to sustain a vital industry without additional government support. Who knows how long that could take?

In Nova Scotia, the government has reluctantly succumbed to enormous pressure from all corners of the country and we’ve clawed our way back to a 25 per cent all-spend model that could work in time.

How much long-term damage has been done still remains to be seen. Before the budget there were 12 projects in the works for fall 2015. After the budget, exactly zero.



Jonathan Torrens has been a proud ACTRA member for more than 25 years. He lives in rural Nova Scotia with his wife Carole and their two young daughters.



Margot Kerr and Cathy Jones at the 2015 rally in front of the Nova Scotia Legislative Building. Nearly 5,000 people expressed their anger over the sudden and unexpected changes to the film tax credit program. Photo: Stoo Metz; Shannon Jardine and Kim Coates at the 2012 'Culture Cruise and Rally' for the Saskatchewan Film and TV industry. More than 400 industry workers took part in the well organized resistance. Kim led the way for the 80 plus motorbike trek from Saskatoon to Regina, to the Saskatchewan Legislative Building. Photo: Mike Burns.

Our Political Landscape

The October 19, 2015, federal election was not only one of the most anticipated elections, but one of the longest in Canadian history. After having a good, long look at the options, Canadians voted for change.

As it was such a critical election, we wanted you, our members, to head out to the polls with all of the information you needed to help cast our next government. We wanted you to know how decisions from governments' past have affected our industry today. We wanted you to know the challenges and opportunities currently facing our industry and other cultural industries in Canada. We also wanted you to know what commitments each of the four main parties made to you and our industry.

In addition to providing you with information to help you make your decision, we also wanted to encourage our membership—especially our youth members—to go out en masse and VOTE October 19. Vote for our industry. Vote for our jobs. Vote for our future. And you did.

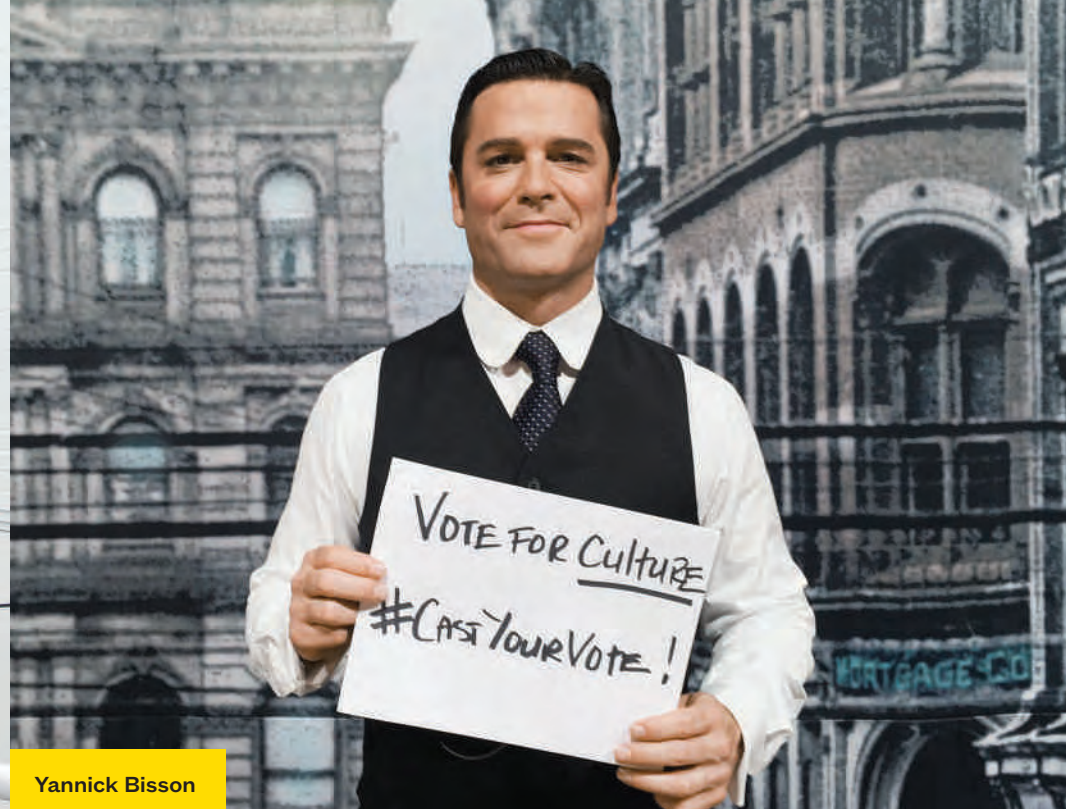
Did you know that in the 2011 federal election, just a handful of voters (6,201 to be precise) made the difference in electing a majority government? In that same election, almost 9.5 MILLION eligible Canadian voters DIDN'T even cast a ballot. This is why your vote mattered.

This election saw a huge increase in voter turnout—from 61.1 per cent in 2011 to 68.5 per cent in 2015. In fact, over 2.7 million more Canadians cast ballots in this election than in 2011 even though the number of eligible voters had only increased by 1.4 million. This made it the highest turnout in a federal election in over two decades.

In the end, the Liberal party swept to a majority government, albeit with only 39.5 per cent of the popular vote. Unlike the outgoing Conservatives, the Liberals articulated a progressive and thoughtful



Sandra Oh



Yannick Bisson



Sarah Gadon



Warren Scherer



Maika Harper



Travis Turner & Dylan Playfair

commitment to Canadian culture and our industry. Now we begin the task of holding them to it.

The party’s arts and culture platform committed increased funding to the CBC, Telefilm and the NFB—and Liberal MP Stéphane Dion reiterated this commitment on more than one occasion throughout the screen-based industries panel discussion ACTRA co-hosted with DGC, IATSE, CMPA and other industry partners on October 7 in Toronto.

The LPC provided additional commitments in its response to ACTRA’s election survey, which asked the four main political parties to outline their commitment to issues related to Canadian content creation, Canadian content viewing and respect for Canadian creators. We were pleased the LPC understands Canadian content rules are essential to helping our artists succeed. We were also pleased the LPC understands the need to modernize the CRTC’s approach to the technological changes our industry is undergoing. It does appear, however, that some education may still be required on the necessity of instituting income tax-averaging for Canadian artists, which will allow you, our artists, more long-term financial stability to balance your often cyclical work opportunities. Clearly, we have more work ahead of us but at least this party appears to be listening and be open to change.

As I write this article, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his gender-balanced cabinet are being sworn into office. Mélanie Joly, a rising young political star from Montreal, has been appointed minister for

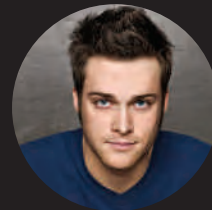
Canadian heritage. On her first day of taking office, Joly dubbed her new ministry, the “ministry of progressive symbols.” She recognizes the past government’s obvious differing vision and values on what constitutes Canadian heritage resulted in a tarnished relationship between artists and the cultural milieu—this and the many budget cuts. Joly has already put the promise of additional funding to the CBC, Telefilm and the NFB into action by stating publicly that “the money promised during the campaign is on the way.” This is indeed a good start. We look forward to a positive and productive relationship as we share the task of rebuilding Canadian culture together.



Jacob Leibovitch is ACTRA National’s Director, Public Policy, Research and Communications.



Ferne Downey, then Liberal MP Justin Trudeau and Jamie Johnston meeting during ACTRA's 2010 Lobby Day on The Hill.



Jamie Johnston played Peter Stone in *Degrassi: TNG*. His credits include *Zixx: Level One*, *Jesus Henry Chirst*, *Wet Bum* and *Love Me*.

October 20, 2015

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

It's your old buddy Jamie here. I have enclosed a photo of us from the day we first became friends. It was taken back in 2010 the one (and only) time we met when I was in Ottawa for ACTRA's Lobby Day.

Congrats on your new job—I hope you're up to the challenge! I've looked over the Liberal Party's arts and culture commitments and let me tell you, it's like a breath of fresh air after choking on Harper's old socks for a decade. It's been tough for many Canadian artists over the past 10 years, so financial support for the CBC, Telefilm and the NFB will really help us produce some great work, just you wait and see! I know you've got a lot on your plate at the moment, but I want to *respectfully* remind you why our industry and artists are in need of long-term, stable funding and support. Stable funding allows the production of Canadian shows to live longer than one season. Support for artists means understanding the cyclical nature of our work and how income tax-averaging could provide stability for the years in which our income is lower (or nil) than other years. We need you to help stop the cycle—bad decisions are bad for business and for Canada. Good TV shows and movies are good for business and for Canada.

Please know Canadian artists, producers and directors—everyone with whom I work in this industry—are dedicated and trained professionals who believe in the future of our industry. The culture business breeds creators who contribute to our national identity and who are responsible for creating good-paying jobs for Canadians.

As our country's new leader, please know we've already got the 'best of the best' in this multi-billion dollar industry right here in Canada. We just need to be able to count on someone with a real understanding of our industry to steer the course.

Sincerely,
Jamie Johnston



Sarah Gadon to receive 2016 ACTRA Toronto Award of Excellence

Sarah Gadon is being honoured this year by ACTRA Toronto for her body of work and outstanding service to her union. Best known for appearing in David Cronenberg films, Sarah broke out in her role in *A Dangerous Method*; won a Vancouver Film Critics Award for *Cosmopolis*; and, most recently, appeared in *Map to the Stars*. She also won a Canadian Screen Award in 2014 for her performance in Denis Villeneuve's *Enemy*. Other film credits include Hollywood blockbusters *Dracula Untold* and *The Amazing Spiderman 2*, and her many TV credits include *Murdoch Mysteries* and the new Stephen King mini-series *11/22/63*, which was shot in Toronto in summer 2015.

Sarah is determined and willing to speak out on behalf of Canadian artists and her industry. She appeared with ACTRA Executive Director Stephen Waddell at the 2015 Heritage Committee hearings on feature film and served as member of ACTRA's Independent Production Agreement bargaining team.

Sarah has been a working actor since the age of 10. She is a Dean's List graduate of the University of Toronto's Cinema Studies Institute.

Photo: Fabrizio Maltese, Getty Images



Greg Malone honoured with 2015 ACTRA Newfoundland Award of Excellence

As part of its 50-year anniversary celebrations, ACTRA Newfoundland presented Greg Malone with the 2015 ACTRA Newfoundland Award of Excellence. Greg is well-known for the *CODCO* TV series as well as his impersonations of Barbara Frum, Jean Chrétien and Queen Elizabeth II. His TV credits include *The Root Seller*, *The S and M Comic Book* and *Republic of Doyle*. Film roles include *The Adventure of Faustus Bidgood*, *The Untold Story of the Suffragists of Newfoundland* and *Rare Birds*. Greg has also been presented with The Earle Grey Award; 10 Gemini Awards, including a Lifetime Achievement Award; Memorial University's Honorary doctor of letters degree; and a Queen's Jubilee Medal.

Andy Jones, Amy House, Greg Malone and Ferne Downey. Photo: Dave Andrews

Canada's Walk of Fame!

Wendy Crewson, Don Cherry and Ron MacLean were among Canada's 2015 Walk of Fame inductees. Lorne Greene, known for his role in the TV western *Bonanza*, was the 2015 Cineplex Legends Inductee, which is given posthumously to a Canadian pioneer in film and television, music, sports, arts or innovation. Jason Priestley hosted the star-studded inductee ceremony, which was broadcast on Global TV December 17. Since 1998, Canada's Walk of Fame annually honours individuals for their achievements in various fields. For a complete list of inductees, please visit: www.canadaswalkoffame.com.

THIS YEAR THE ACADEMY'S EARLE GREY AWARD WILL BE PRESENTED TO WENDY CREWSON AT THE 2016 CANADIAN SCREEN AWARDS!

Photo: George Pimentel photography





Tantoo Cardinal receives the imagineNATIVE inaugural August Schellenberg Award of Excellence

Tantoo Cardinal, a 40-year film and TV veteran, is a member of the Order of Canada and a passionate activist on behalf of Aboriginal people and culture. The August Schellenberg Award of Excellence will be presented annually to a gifted Indigenous actor based on the longevity and impact of their career, as well as their professionalism and involvement in mentorship and community work. Montreal-born Mohawk actor August Schellenberg performed in hundreds of theatre, film and television productions, including *Saving Grace*, *Free Willy*, *Black Robe* and *North of 60*. He was nominated for an Emmy Award for Best Supporting Actor in his role as Chief Sitting Bull in *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*. Initiated by the late actor's wife, Joan Karasevich, and spearheaded by ACTRA member Jani Lauzon, award sponsors include ACTRA and ACTRA Performers' Rights Society.


Tantoo Cardinal and Joan Karasevich. Photo: Dominic Chan.

UBCP/ACTRA Awards

The UBCP/ACTRA Awards honoured performers from across British Columbia this past November. Camille Sullivan won the Best Actress Award for her work in *Ally Was Screaming* and the Best Actor Award went to Michael Eklund for his performance in *Eadweard*. The Best Emerging Performer Award went to Dakota Daulby for his role in *Black Fly* and the Best Voice Award went to Brian Drummond for his performance in *Nerds & Monsters*. Leif Havdale won the Best Stunt Award for his performance in *Arrow*. In addition to the five performance awards, the John Juliani Award of Excellence was presented to Brent Butt and the Lorena Gale Woman of Distinction Award was presented to Marny Eng.

Michael Eklund. Photo: Geoff Howe



A portrait of Rick Mercer, a man with dark curly hair and blue eyes, wearing a black suit jacket over a white button-down shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a colorful, abstract pattern of geometric shapes in shades of green, brown, and white.

Rick Mercer, Sarah Polley & Eleanor Wachtel named Officers of the Order of Canada

Rick Mercer, Sarah Polley and Eleanor Wachtel are our latest ACTRA members to receive one of the country's highest civilian honours. Established in 1967, the Order of Canada is the cornerstone of the Canadian Honours System, which recognizes Canadians who have demonstrated outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation. For a full list of Canadians who have been appointed to the Order of Canada, please visit www.gg.ca/honours.

Rick Mercer photo courtesy of CBC



PAL Canada honoured by Academy with Humanitarian Award

The *Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television* selected The Performing Arts Lodge (PAL Canada) as the recipient of the 2016 Humanitarian Award. The PAL Canada Foundation has had a profound effect on the well-being of Canadian entertainment industry members. PAL Canada is a national charitable organization whose mandate is to create and encourage programs and services for senior and disadvantaged members of Canada's professional artists' community, specifically in the areas of affordable accommodation and overall well-being. Support is typically offered through the volunteer-driven team, known as "Supporting Cast," that provides personal assistance to PAL members so they can continue to lead independent lives in their own homes. PAL Canada is continually expanding, with a current total of eight individual chapters across the country: Halifax; Ottawa; Toronto; Stratford; Winnipeg; Edmonton; Calgary; and Vancouver. Interested in joining the Supporting Cast? Visit palcanada.org.



ACTRA Ottawa honours Florence Moore

Florence Moore received the ACTRA Ottawa 2015 Lorraine Ansell Award of Excellence at a gala reception in November. Florence's career has spanned over 40 years and she has appeared in numerous local stage, film and TV productions. Florence is a founding member of PAL Ottawa, serves on a number of boards and is active in local charities. Said ACTRA Ottawa President Paula MacPherson, "Her work in front of the camera and on stage is matched by her dedication to her community and fellow performers—making her one of Ottawa's most appreciated performers."



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Farewell



Leon Bibb
1922–2015

The man who marched alongside Dr. King from Selma to Montgomery, helped break racial barriers on Broadway and television, the renowned artist and humanitarian with his magnificent baritone voice, Leon Bibb, died in Vancouver at the age of 93. Born in Louisville, Kentucky, Leon moved to New York at age 19. He became a folk legend, hosted a TV show on NBC, played on Broadway, appeared on *The Ed Sullivan* show numerous times and received a Tony nomination. He worked beside Belefonte, Baez and Poitier among others. On moving to Vancouver, Leon enlivened theatre, producing and starring in the hit, *Jacque Brel*. He developed the anti-bullying, anti-racism program, *A Step Ahead*, which played for 20 years in schools across Canada. Leon, you have made an extraordinary contribution to us all. We will miss you, dear friend. We will miss you.

Ann Mortifee

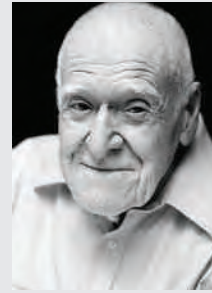


Michael Green
1957–2015

When you had Michael's attention, you had the power of nature in your corner. Michael taught me, and so many others, to attack life with passion and abandon. Canadian theatre lost a force this year.

Michael Green was a prolific contributor and leader of the Calgary theatre scene: a co-founder and co-artistic director of the One Yellow Rabbit theatre company; founder and curator of the High Performance Rodeo arts festival; and curator and creative producer of Calgary 2012, the city's arts initiative for when it was named cultural capital of Canada. Michael's collaboration with Making Treaty 7 legacy project was a special and inspiring project for him. On the set of *Young Drunk Punk* with his old friend, Bruce McCulloch, I witnessed his joyful passion for all art forms and mediums, and his fearlessness as an actor. Always remembered.

Chantal Perron



Anthony Holland
1920–2015

Anthony Holland, writer, actor, teacher, Member of the Order of Canada, mentor and my good friend, passed away on July 29 at the age of 95. Anthony's career spanned over seventy years. He was a force of nature. From writing and acting in plays for the troops during World War II in North Africa to producing plays, up to his dying day Anthony dedicated his life to the theatre. He came to Canada in the '50s and started a theatre program at Haney Correctional, which won several awards. Anthony leaves a legacy of one of best theatre schools in Canada, Studio 58 at Langara College in Vancouver, B.C. Anthony's many screen credits include, *The Grey Fox*, *Battlestar Galactica* and *Supernatural*. One of the last professional shows in which he performed was *Tuesdays with Morrie* for which he won a Best Actor award.

Anthony leaves a legacy tied to the hundreds of well-known actors across the country whom he taught and encouraged. He will be missed.

Garry Chalk



Mike O'Brien
1963–2015

After lengthy struggles with cancer, diabetes and escalators, Mike O'Brien succumbed to a shotgun blast from a jealous husband. He was 92. Mike's accomplishments are too numerous, and also too fictional, to list here. But as an actor, he made you feel like he was standing right where the director told him to stand; a skill he shared with Olivier, Brando and many puppets. As a radio producer, he is credited with boosting television ratings. As a comedy writer, he was tall. For his entire life, Mike followed his personal motto: "That one's mine, get your own." His hobbies included reading the television listings and translating books from English to English. He enjoyed weekends alone at the cabin and was always saddened when the cabin owners returned unannounced. By Mike's request, outstanding bills are gratefully declined.

**Mark McKinney
and Dean Jenkinson**

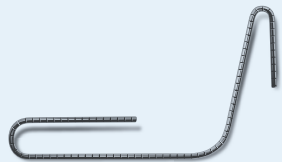
Veteran Stunt Coordinator Shelley Cook was one of the first performers to join Creative Arts Savings & Credit Union. In stunt work, it's about physical flexibility and managing risks. That's the way it is with Creative Arts too. The banking needs of entertainment professionals can require more flexibility than our competitors as it doesn't view self-employment and fluctuating incomes as high-risk. Creative Arts understands the arts industry.

Shelley has been in the business for more than 30 years. She recalls one of her first experiences talking to a bank about a mortgage, "I told them I was a stunt girl and they said, 'Do you have a real job we can put on our application?' Imagine that—a 'real' job. I had been in the business for 15 years." Banks are still reluctant to view the self-employed as mortgage material.


Shelley now has her mortgage with Creative Arts, along with chequing and savings accounts. It's the sound advice that makes it her first choice to meet her banking needs, "I can be working non-stop for months, then off for just as long. I really appreciate our credit union's banking advice—their honesty and approachability."

Creative Arts Savings & Credit Union is a cooperatively-run banking institution that caters to the specific needs of professional entertainment workers such as ACTRA, NABET, IATSE, DGC and WGC members and their families.

Are you getting the level of care you deserve from your bank? Get Creative Arts Savings & Credit Union's advice by giving us a call at 1 877 643 3660 and visit creativeartscu.com.



CREATIVE ARTS
SAVINGS & CREDIT UNION



As a stunt performer and coordinator, I don't take risks on set or with my banking.

SHELLEY COOK

“If you want to know what benefits are covered, how to make a claim, or you just want to know more about AFBS—the new AFBS website is easy to use.”

WENDY CREWSON



The new AFBS website has been completely redesigned to improve your experience: simpler navigation; an optimized search engine; mobile device options; and revitalized helpful tools.

Mark your calendars with these important AFBS deadlines!

FEBRUARY 29, 2016

RRSP contribution top-up

MARCH 31, 2016

Selecting an insurance program option

MAY 31, 2016

Claims submission for prior Benefit Year

AFBS.CA



ACTRA

