



ACTRA

WINTER 2014

magazine

MADE IN CANADA

ACTRA LEADS
THE FIGHT FOR
MORE CANADA
ON ALL OUR SCREENS



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YOUR UNION MAGAZINE



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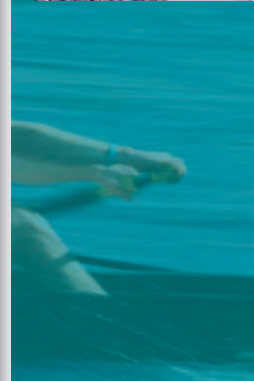
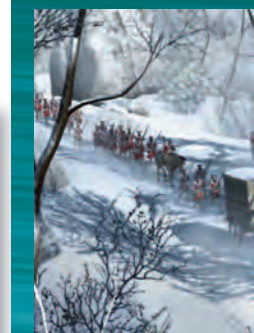
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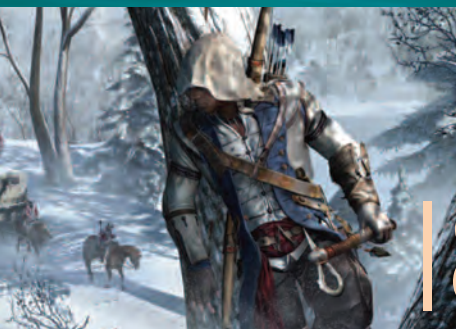
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ACTRA

magazine

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Gordon Pinsent
in front of Parliament Hill, Ottawa
Photo: Fred Chartrand

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ACTRA National President
Ferne Downey

President's Message

Working Together

by Ferne Downey

This magazine is full of stories about synergy. Simply put, working together. In the past year both at home and abroad I've had the opportunity to see the power behind that idea in action.

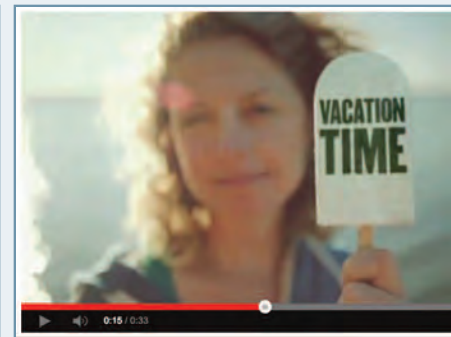
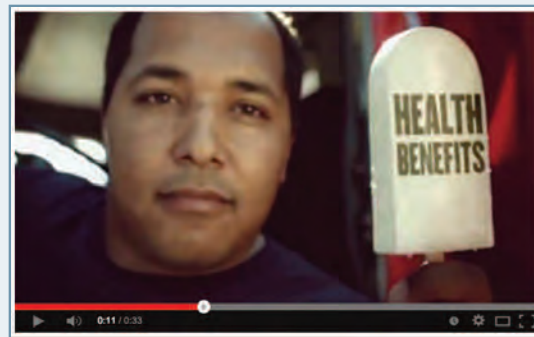
In September ACTRA VP **Alvin Sanders** and I had the good fortune to attend SAG-AFTRA's inaugural national convention. The theme "United for our Future" acknowledged their year of transition to ONE merged union of more than 165,000 members. It was a major cultural shift. To paraphrase a comment made during merger talks; 'SAG came to the dance in heels, AFTRA came in flip-flops.' But it turned out the speed bumps hit along the way were mere molehills in comparison to the energy unleashed and focused at the first convention. The united union hit the floor in high-heeled sneakers and danced up a storm. The commitment to the future health of the membership was inspiring. Even the grumbles that always exist in a democratic organization were modest. The vision was too compelling: building something new, something with the potential of magnificence. As President Howard said in his opening speech; "Unity is our greatest strength. We are stronger together – and we have made an abiding commitment to making member service our #1 priority." Evidence of the merged union's strength could be seen in their negotiation of a first contract for dancers in the music video industry, another leap or – dare I say – jeté into new and exciting territory freed from the jurisdictional battles that set the two unions apart. As Secretary-Treasurer **Amy Aquino** wrote in the fall 2013 edition of the SAG-AFTRA Magazine, "With our first convention, we tried something brand new. I believe it was a wonderful fit."

Another inspirational example of synergy at work at both SAG-AFTRA and ACTRA can be found in our work with the union movement. It was great to hear **Richard L. Trumпка**, President of AFL-

CIO (largest labour federation in the U.S.) talk about the big themes in the broader labour community. He helps lead a movement for social and economic justice in the U.S. and SAG-AFTRA is an important partner in that work. Here in Canada ACTRA is a proud member of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), the federation that represents more than 3 million workers. Congress President **Ken Georgetti** has summed up our shared goals in simple terms; "What we wish for ourselves, we desire for all. We believe that unions are a positive force for democratic social change – and that by working together we can improve Canada for everyone."

At ACTRA we have been inspired by the big tent of the CLC and have stepped up our game to further our shared goals. Labour Day marked the auspicious launch of the "Together Fairness Works" campaign. ACTRA members all across the country donned their neckerchiefs and joined in labour-positive celebrations in their communities. This marks a pretty big change for us – to have a national manifestation of our relationship as self-employed artists in alignment with the labour movement. It's cool to watch as ACTRA members start to really feel the inclusiveness of this broader community. And finding partners who hold similar values is massively important.

When we invited members to be part of our Together Fairness Works poster campaign, **Katie Boland, Enrico Colantoni, Shawn Doyle, Demetrius Joyette** and **Tatiana Maslany** were happy to take part. And though we may not be used to seeing their faces in front of the cameras, highly respected and award-winning stunt performers and co-ordinators **Colin Decker** from Vancouver, **Angelica Lisk-Hann** from Toronto and **Mike Scherer** from Montreal stepped up in full support of our campaign.



“Together we stand, divided we fall
 Come on now people, let's get on the ball
 And work together
 Come on, come on let's work together,
 now, now people 'Cause together we will stand'
 Every boy, girl, woman and man” by Wilbert Harrison

By October 7th we had expanded the Together Fairness Works campaign with the launch of a TV commercial (*Popsicle Power*) aimed at creating a more positive public perception of unions. Check it out on CLC's YouTube channel or home page. It proved to be a very popular spot. Positive and upbeat, it was catchy; visually and vocally. The soundtrack “Sunny” was recorded by English and French singers in Montreal where the spot was shot with our ACTRA Montreal members. And by the time ACTRA lobbyists hit Parliament Hill in early November, we began to hear references to the broader labour movement in positive language that was uncannily similar to that of the commercial.

One doesn't have to look very far to understand why we need to work together. We have all observed how the Conservative Party tries to frame unions in a negative light. It's not so different from their attacks on the environmental movement or, for that matter, the CBC. It suits them to target unions for the same reason it suits them to target the arts; both offer resistance to the implementation of their anti-democratic right-wing agenda.

Having hostile forces working against us helps coalesce our resistance. Together we are stronger. All across Canada ACTRA has joined other unions, starting a conversation about the union advantage and why it not only helps our members, but makes Canada better for everyone. It can never be said too much that without unions there would be no Medicare; for that matter there would be no weekend, and more and more we are learning that the ongoing collapse of the middle class coincides with the shrinking of a union presence in the economy.

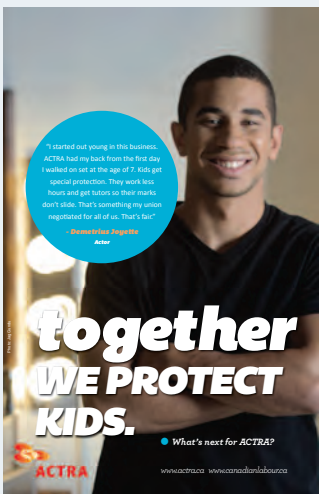
Unions have made life better for everyone. We performers compete with one another every

day for jobs, but through ACTRA we worked together to negotiate safe sets. We worked together to protect child actors. We worked together to speak up for the government support we need to make great Canadian film and television and transmedia.

Of course, working together to achieve positive goals is not an impulse unique to our country or the U.S.. We see the trend globally, and as performers we work together through our partici-



By October 7th we had expanded the **Together Fairness Works** campaign with the launch of a TV commercial (*Popsicle Power*) aimed at creating a more positive public perception of unions. Check it out on CLC's **YouTube channel or home page**. It proved to be a very popular spot.



Here are a just few of our union members that helped build our **Together Fairness Works** poster campaign: actor **Katie Boland** (shown on previous page), actor **Demetrius Joyette**, stunt performer **Angelica Lisk-Hann**, actor **Enrico Colanoni**, and stunt performer **Colin Decker**.

As President Howard said in his opening speech; “Unity is our greatest strength. We are stronger together – and we have made an abiding commitment to making member service our #1 priority.”

pation in the International Federation of Actors (FIA). We work in concert to set high standards for performers worldwide. Our many relationships with international artists and unions bind us and help give us the strength to execute strong collective agreements. FIA performers understand that a race to the bottom benefits no one. So as President of FIA, I was particularly proud when U.S. Vice-President **Joe Biden** addressed the SAG-AFTRA Convention via video link and spoke proudly of his government's strong support for WIPO's Beijing Treaty, which has set international standards for performers' intellectual property rights. FIA played an active role in this great accomplishment that shows us how essential our international relationships are in a global context. It is increasingly clear that as Canada's biggest and most important trading partners sign the Beijing Treaty that Canada will need to follow suit – and that's good for performers.

So to end as I began with my quote from the great, often covered, soulful Wilbert Harrison hit of 1962: “*Together we stand, divided we fall... So come on, come on, let's work together.*” ☆



SAG-AFTRA President **Ken Howard** and ACTRA National and FIA President **Ferne Downey**.

BANKING ON OUR FUTURE

Creative Arts Savings and Credit Union – CASCU **Serving Creators**

By Stephen Waddell

ACTRA National Executive Director



JOIN CASCU TODAY, AND APPLY FOR A LINE OF CREDIT OR MORTGAGE.

In hard times, performers have been known to cash in their RRSP's – a big and expensive mistake. Performers now have another option - a Line of Credit at Creative Arts Savings and Credit Union - CASCU.

CASCU was formed in 2008 by creators for creators, and is now a national credit union. With CASCU, a new opportunity has been created for artists and other industry workers to obtain mortgages and loans at competitive prices. CASCU is a cooperatively-run banking institution that caters to the specific needs of professional entertainment workers represented by ACTRA, NABET, IATSE, DGC, WGC, and CAEA. Unlike the big banks, CASCU is member-owned and democratically-run with its successes shared with credit union members. CASCU's elected board of directors is continuously examining product offerings that directly benefit cultural workers.



CASCU is open
for business
across Canada



ACTRA FRATERNAL BENEFIT SOCIETY – TAKING CARE OF OUR OWN

AFBS is another concrete example of how the creative community takes care of its own. In a business filled with risks, Canadian creators

have built some the best safety nets in the world. AFBS is one of the top 200 financial service organizations in Canada; and is composed of more than 17,000 performers and writers who have pooled resources to ensure our financial security.

Keep an eye on key AFBS deadlines - for voluntary RRSP contributions; for voluntary health & dental insurance maintenance payments; and submission of expense claims.

And, by the way, Tax Free Savings Accounts (TFSA's) are also available at AFBS. Open a TFSA at AFBS today.

AFBS UPCOMING DEADLINES:

- 1) Voluntary RRSP contributions - end of February 2014;
- 2) Voluntary health & dental insurance maintenance payments - end of March 2014;
- 3) Submission of expense claims - end of May/14.

SOUND ADVICE

“If you get jammed up with terrible cash flow, turn to our Creative Arts Savings & Credit Union for a Line of Credit. Leave that RRSP money invested at AFBS. The value of compound interest can't work in your favour if you use your RRSP like a savings account.”

- **Ferne Downey,**
ACTRA National President

OUR TRIP TO THE HILL

By Gordon Pinsent

Will our 'next generation' of creators make top-notch shows treasured by Canadians and audiences around the world? After 50 years in this business, I think we are still working up to this.





It's been fifty years since we shot *Quentin Durgens MP* in the halls of Canada's Parliament Building. Prime Ministers have come and gone. Governments have risen and fallen. Last week, I had the great pleasure to join my fellow actors in visiting those hallowed halls once again, and found some things new, some things ever familiar.

Importantly, I was pleased to help introduce our 'next generation' of Canadian stars to the joys of speaking with elected representatives about the importance of our Canadian shows. I'm pretty sure it was an eye-opening experience for young guys like Demetrius Joyette and Munro Chambers of *Degrassi*. Not only was it their first time on Parliament Hill, it was their first lobbying experience—and certainly won't be their last.



For a brief moment we connected over a shared experience, a shared understanding of what it means to see ourselves, as Canadians, reflected on our screens.



Above L to r: Munro Chambers, NDP MP Rathika Sitsabaiesan and Jesse Camacho Photo: Fred Chartrand

The Prime Minister was good enough to grant us a meeting during this visit, and I was able to present him with an autographed photo of the cast of his favourite childhood show, CBC's *The Forest Rangers*. For a brief moment we connected over a shared experience, a shared understanding of what it means to see ourselves, as Canadians, reflected on our screens. Me, poured into the sharp Mountie uniform, surrounded by young freckle-faced actors -- it was a time when our cast and crew had the privilege of sharing that history making Canadian adventure with children from coast to coast. It became part of who we were, of what it meant to be Canadian at that time.

In the '90s came *Due South*, our first home-grown hit to land on a major American network. It was admired world-wide and paved the way for us to demonstrate our Canadian production expertise around the world. More recently *Flashpoint*, *The Bridge* and *The Listener* have followed suit. But still, thousands of talented Canadians are not getting a shot on their own airwaves and are forced to head south to seek opportunities. The fact is that it is so much easier for big broadcasters to fill our screens with cheap U.S. programming, even though we have proven over and over again that we have the skills and talent right here. Just give us some airtime, decent time slots and proper promotion and we'll succeed. [continues on page 12](#)

“I was pleased to help introduce our 'next generation' Canadian stars to speaking with our elected representatives about the importance of our shows.”



“With stability, strength and sound leadership, artists will build an even stronger economy.”

Photo: Fred Chartrand

Canadian performers met with PM Stephen Harper, Opposition Leader Thomas Mulcair and a host of other MPs and Ministers during ACTRA's two day lobbying blitz on Parliament Hill in November.

L to R: Ferne Downey, ACTRA National President, Gordon Pinsent, Leah Pinsent, Peter Keleghan, Maria Del Mar and UBCP/ACTRA President Alvin Sanders.

Photo: Fred Chartrand

OUR TRIP TO THE HILL continued

With stability, strength and sound leadership, artists will build an even stronger economy. The federal government needs to fuel this \$85 billion cultural industry, and recognize it as an increasingly critical part of Canada's future. Canadian programming can pay its own way, BUT like any industry, it needs support. Wasted moments are creatively and economically bad for business.

Hats off to our new generation of actors, directors, writers, crew – they are gathering strength and finding new ways to tell their stories. For those of us who have steered our career paths into this industry, the key is making sure our work gets seen. This new generation are standing up for the Canada that they believe in and want to work in. This trip to the Hill was again worth it. We are working together on behalf of this generation and the next, to make sure there's a *Forest Rangers* to inspire some future Prime Minister... **Gordon Pinsent**





For almost 50 years Gordon Pinsent has acted, written and directed in every medium there is. His TV credits include *The Republic of Doyle*, *The Pillars of the Earth*, *Due South*, *The Red Green Show*, *Babar* and *the Adventures of Badou*, along with Canadian classics such as *The Forest Rangers*, *Quentin Durgens*, *MP* and *A Gift to Last*. Feature films include *The Grand Seduction*, *The Shipping News*, *Sex After Kids* and *Away From Her*. Gordon's novels *The Rowdyman* and *John and the Missus* were adapted for film

and stage. Gordon has earned the Earle Grey Award and the John Drainie Award for Lifetime Achievement, two ACTRA Awards, eight Gemini, four Genies, as well as honorary doctorates at Queens, P.E.I., Memorial and Lakefield Universities and Humber College. Gordon became an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1979 and was elevated to a Companion of the Order of Canada in 1999. In 2003 Gordon was awarded ACTRA Toronto's inaugural Award of Excellence. Gordon's new book "Next" is a must-read account of his fascinating life in show business.

"Whenever I am with Gordon Pinsent in public, I feel invisible. He is such a great presence. People seek him out from across streets. Literally. MPs were stopping, and getting out of their cars to introduce themselves to him. I razz him mercilessly about being in the shadow of an icon. While we were standing in front of the Peace Flame for photos, I spied a woman staring at me from a distance. When we made eye contact, she made a bee-line directly towards me. Really? She was coming straight to ME, NOT Gordon? She stopped and said, "I am such a huge fan, I just wanted to say hi and say how great an actor I think you are!" I was gob smacked. I was standing right beside Gordon and she was saying this to ME! First! Anyhow, taken so off guard, I said, while giggling, "uhhhh, thanks so much... uhhhh... but did you know Gordon Pinsent is right here?!" She answered, "Oh, yea, I'm just working my way up." Sigh.

- Peter Keleghan

IT'S THE FOREST RANGERS 50TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY APPLAUDING OUR INDUSTRY MILESTONE

The Forest Rangers ran for three seasons from 1963 to 1965, and was seen in more than 40 countries, including Hong Kong and Australia. The 50th anniversary of the CBC show included a celebration reunion on June 15, 2013 in Kleinburg, Ontario where the series was shot. With many special guests in attendance, including Gordon Pinsent who played Sargent Scott, it was a first-time reunion to include all the junior *Forest Rangers*. Said Cinespace CEO Steve Mirkopoulos on the first Canadian series to be shown in colour, "The series helped to build Canada's domestic television industry. The producers, cast and crew deserve our thanks and recognition."

Back L to R: Ronald Cohoon as Zeke, George Allan as Ted, Topper (Dog), Michael Zenon as Joe Two Rivers, Ralph Endersby as Chub Stanley.
Front L to R: Graydon Gould as George Keeley, Gordon Pinsent as Sgt. Scott, Peter Tully as Mike Forbes, Susan Conway as Kathy. Photo: ASP Productions/CBC



REMEMBERING THE “BAD OLD DAYS” CELEBRATING THE NEW

In front of and behind the camera, these days ACTRA kids are seen and heard.

By Theresa Tova



Demetrius Joyette and Clara Pasieka take a stretch and grab some air between meetings on Parliament Hill. Photo: Fred Chartrand

There are almost 2,200 ACTRA members 17 years old and under working across this country. Many of these kids shoulder the demands of starring roles in series, feature films and commercials and are taking on increasingly larger roles in Animation voice work and Web series. These kids, whose performances we have admired for years, are growing up and are now speaking out for their fellow actors, for our union and what it stands for.

When ACTRA really needed her help at the 1996 IPA bargaining table, **Sarah Polley** spoke out whole heartedly on behalf of child actors. It was her personal experiences as a child star that provided the negotiation team with the examples and recommendations we needed to achieve a comprehensive and expanded minor's section. Those negotiations are still referred to as a 'watershed' moment for ACTRA, achieving huge improvements in protections for minors.

Happily, the next generation of ACTRA members are also speaking up for the issues they believe in, as Sarah did. **Jodelle Ferland**, **Mpho Kayo** and **Michael Seater** stepped up to take part in our **IWorkACTRA** campaign. Cle Bennett and Sarah Gadon got behind our biggest collective agreement as part of our IPA bargaining team. Meeting with Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2011, **Jay Baruchel** lent his voice in support of our industry; "For me it was important to let the Prime Minister know how much I love this country. I asked him to keep giving us the tools we need so my generation can make a real contribution to Canada's creative and economic future."

Recently, a new crop of activists took part in our Canadian Labour Congress **Fairness Works** campaign including **Katie Boland** (*Reign, Looking is the Original Sin*) and **Tatiana Maslany** (*Orphan Black*). *Degrassi* star **Demetrius Joyette**, who grew up working on the shows *Wingin' It* and *The Latest Buzz*, also pitched in. On our protection for working children, he says, "ACTRA has protected me since the first day I walked on set at the age of 7. I didn't have to work the same hours as adults and my tutors never let me fall behind in my school work. My union had to negotiate for all of that."

In November Demetrius joined **Katie Boland**, **Jesse Camacho**, **Munro Chambers** and **Clara Pasieka** for ACTRA's Lobby Day on Parliament Hill in Ottawa to deliver a strong message to our government – that they must pay attention to the economic future of our Canadian entertainment industry. These successful performers started out as "child actors", and now they are stepping up as ambassadors for their entire union. They are savvy about copyright, piracy, multiple platforms and tracking payment for the use of our work in this ever expanding online world.



“I have seen, first hand, great parents unable to protect their children on sets.” - Sarah Polley

This past December in support of the “Protecting Child Performers” Bill, NDP MPP Paul Miller’s private member’s Bill 71, fellow child advocate **Tabby Johnson** and I appeared before the hearing committee. We brought along *Copper* child star **Kiara Glasco**, **Clara Pasiaka**, Co-Chair of the Young Emerging Actors Assembly, and **Shirley Douglas**, one of the architects of ACTRA’s minors’ protections.

The Bill is critical. Currently, Ontario law (as in many other provinces) turns the other cheek when it comes to child workers. If it passes, the Bill will establish minimum standards to help protect our child performers, like requiring tutoring so they don’t fall behind in school, ensuring parental supervision, age-appropriate work hours, and health and safety protections.

Sure, ACTRA has negotiated many provisions in our collective agreements, but all children deserve these minimum protections whether on a union- or non-union shoot. Said Sarah Polley on the importance of making this bill law, “The primary focus of any film production is not the welfare of children but the headlong race, usually under pressure, to bring complicated projects to completion on time and on budget. In such an environment, a child’s best interests are all too often sacrificed to the tyranny of the clock and other priorities. Even the most loving, responsible parents have a difficult time standing up to the relentless pressure and power of a production when things get out of hand for their children. I have seen, first hand, great parents unable to protect their children on sets. That is why we need as many protections as possible for child performers.”

The “bad old days”:

It’s great to see our young activists all fired up about cultural issues. The truth is that when they started out they already had the benefit of our hard-fought-for and effective minors’ protections. They came to acting long after the “bad old days” when kids were not yet very well protected by our agreements. I am so glad to see that they don’t take what we have for granted: safe sets, strong health and safety standards, good benefits and decent pay are improvements we continually fight for.

When Sarah Polley stepped up to share her disturbing experiences as a child actor, she helped us change the landscape for all child performers. Unlike Sarah, who found herself lost in the Brussels airport, children are no longer allowed to travel alone to distant locations. Unlike Sarah who was kept on set for 12-14 hour days – shouldering her starring role on a TV series – today young performers on sets like *Degrassi* are tutored within the work day and sent home after 9 hours to enjoy some semblance of a normal childhood.

Reflecting on our union’s history is one way for all of us to understand the role of an activist. The fact is, we go to bat for the issues that matter to us. It’s the stories we hear, as performers working in this industry, that compel us to make change. Take for example, what happened to **Julie McNall**. As a child performer on CBC’s *Program X* and numerous commercials, Julie worked non-stop in the ‘70s and ‘80s; “I am so glad the Minor’s Trust provisions are now enshrined in our union’s agreements. When I worked, my parents would sometimes put a dollar in my bank account, or buy me a toy. When I turned 18 I had just over \$100 in that account.”



Sarah Polley played Sara Stanley *The Road to Avonlea*.
Photo courtesy of Sullivan Entertainment.

Stories like these compelled us to set up the ‘minor’s trust’. Unlike the old days when the kids of *Degrassi High* had little to protect them, the new kids of *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, not only have agents representing them and negotiating fair contracts but they have 25% of their earnings set aside by PRS in a protected trust fund.

On saving for our working kids’ futures, **Charlotte Arnold** also speaks up to help everyone understand the importance of ACTRA’s Minor’s Trust; “When I was a lot younger I remember working with a kid who was looking forward to cashing his paycheque and going out on a shopping spree with his parents. I remember thinking it’s a good thing they’re putting away some of your money because you never want to end up bankrupt before you’re even 18.”



ACTRA's November lobbyists included first-timers **Demetrius Joyette, Clara Pasioka, Katie Boland, Munro Chambers** and **Jesse Camacho**. Photo: Fred Chartrand



Julie McNall was a child performer on CBC's *Program X* and numerous commercials, Julie worked non-stop in the '70s and '80s; "When I worked, my parents would sometimes put a dollar in my bank account, or buy me a toy. When I turned 18 I had just over \$100 in that account."

Julie McNall at age X on xxxxxxxx.
Photo: XXXXXX

William Ainscough is 10 years old and frequently travels with his parents from his home in Vancouver to Halifax for his work on the TV series, *Seeds*. His mother **Nicole Oliver**, who just won the 2013 UBCP/ACTRA Best Voice Award for her work in *The Littlest Pet Shop* animated series, thinks more can always be done to help our working kids; "As an actor who also wears the "stage parent" hat, I am experiencing firsthand how much important information needs to be processed on behalf of your working child. I'm thankful that ACTRA has set such high standards with clear parameters. It helps to keep all of us, agents, producers and parents, on the same page and working towards the common goal of ALWAYS doing what is in the best interest of our young performers."

My children entered 'the biz'; I became an activist

I've been an ACTRA member for many years and began my activist work as a parent of young actors. I already knew firsthand that ACTRA members are treated with respect, but had mistakenly thought that working kids would be treated as well or better. Producers, thinking I was "just a mom" lied to me about our own agreements and offered me bribes to have my kids work overtime. With ACTRA and on behalf of child actors I grieved every case of abuse I came across, and won.

As a child advocate the work never stops. I've witnessed a mother sitting in a warm tent while her pre-teen son was shooting a scene high up in a tree house that production was about to set on fire. I reminded her that, she must be in sight or sound of her child at all times. There is no one better to tell production that a young child is scared, cold and hungry or needs a break, than their parent. Too often parents need to be reminded that rules are only as effective as our ability to enforce them.

Behind each and every rule and protection in our collective agreements, there is a story of abuse. Most of them will shock you. Such as when a 4 year-old, with cameras rolling, had a gun put in her hand (by an actor she did not know) and with no warning was forced to 'kill' the woman playing her mother. The child was traumatized. A brave crew member pulled the plug on the generator and called ACTRA.

Our fight is for everyone. We know that if we don't continually exercise our rights, we'll lose them. I am proud to say, this union is protecting all children in film and television. We keep our standards high and we'll continue to be a leader for this industry for years to come. ★

Theresa Tova is a Gemini nominated actor, a Governor General Award nominated writer and an international cabaret diva who has headlined festivals in Amsterdam, Warsaw, Vienna and Buenos Aires to name a few. She is ACTRA Toronto Vice President Internal and National Treasurer and National Children's advocate of ACTRA National.



L to R: **William Ainscough** and his younger brother **Gray** with their parents **Nicole Oliver**, holding her UBCP/ACTRA Best Voice Award and **Chris Ainscough**, a Genie nominated and Leo Award winning composer.

Sarah Polley was honoured in 2008 by ACTRA Toronto with the Award of Excellence for her ongoing advocacy work for child performers and for ACTRA.

Photo: Jag Gundu



ASK TABBY X TOVA

For frequently asked questions about child performers check out the **Ask Tabby & Tova** series of videos on ACTRA Toronto's YouTube channel. In November the Ontario Federation of Labour presented **Tabby Johnson** and **Theresa Tova** with the Cliff Pilkey Cultural Award for their advocacy on behalf of the entertainment industry's most vulnerable workers - child performers.

Theresa Tova (left) and Tabby Johnson (right). Photo: Tricia Clarke



A hooded archer in a forest aiming a bow. The archer is wearing a dark hood and a detailed, layered tunic with leather straps. He is holding a bow in his left hand and an arrow in his right, aiming it towards the right. The background is a sunlit forest with tall trees and a hazy sky.

Our magnificent role in epic games

ACTRA signs new agreement with video game industry giant Ubisoft entertainment

By Jacob Leibovitch, Director of Research

There were many levels (pun intended) to the recent negotiations between ACTRA and multinational video game giant Ubisoft Entertainment. On one level it would seem ACTRA was seriously out-gunned. Ubisoft is based in France and operates in 28 countries, bringing in worldwide revenues of \$1.8 billion* and capturing 11% of the global market share in 2012. Ubisoft is also one of the largest producers of video games in Canada with a recently opened production studio in Toronto, a production studio in Quebec City and both a production studio and the Ubisoft Canadian head offices in Montreal.

It was there on November 13th that ACTRA's negotiating committee met for the first time in Ubisoft's sun-drenched boardroom. It soon became clear that ACTRA had evened the playing field when the performers on the committee were greeted by the Ubisoft executives: **Shawn Baichoo** (*Assassin's Creed II, Deus Ex Human Revolution*), **Kate Drummond** (*Splinter Cell Blacklist*), **Holly Gauthier-Frankel** (*Assassin's Creed II, Splinter Cell Conviction*), **Amber Goldfarb** (*Assassin's Creed II, III & IV*), **Carlo Mestroni** (*Assassin's Creed II, III & IV, Deus Ex Human Revolution*), **Simon Peacock** (voice director on *Assassin's Creed* franchise & *Deus Ex 3: Human Revolution*) **Alvin Sanders** (*Watch Dogs*), **David Sparrow**, **Elias Toufexis** (*Deus Ex: Human Revolution, Splinter Cell: Blacklist, Assassin's Creed Franchise*), Negotiating Committee Chair **Ferne Downey** and Chief Negotiator **Stephen Waddell**. Their committee immediately acknowledged our shared desire to conclude an agreement that would improve the experience of the valued performers and further strengthen the ACTRA/Ubisoft relationship. That first bargaining day at Ubisoft was a positive one from the start. Our solid bargaining team combined with the hard work and preparation culminated in a long list of yes'es and a tentative agreement.

It was this preparation and understanding by the performers that made that day of bargaining such a smooth and mutually respectful one.

ACTRA's relationship with Ubisoft is a long one, especially considering video games only recently moved into the realm of dramatic performance using a technology known as "motion capture". Motion capture is when performers are suited up in a leotard-like "onesie" covered in little ball receptors that translate the physical motion of the performance into a digital form that becomes the movement of the characters in the game. Of course voice work has been a staple of games for much longer.

The first ACTRA/Ubisoft agreement was signed way back in 1997 with a contract governing only voice work. Since that time a patch-work of Letters of Understanding and contracts specific to certain games governed the wages and working conditions of performers. By all accounts, it was working reasonably well. However one of the top priorities of the performers, and Ubisoft as it turned out, was to create a single contract that would clarify and simplify conditions for all those involved in production — from performers to directors to producers. The list of additional improvements sought by ACTRA was a long one and represented months of focus groups with performers familiar with Ubisoft's production environment. It was this preparation and understanding by the performers that made that day of bargaining such a smooth and mutually respectful one.

It's not hard to see why Ubisoft is anxious to work with professional talent. All you have to do is look at the video game sector's place in the overall entertainment industry. *Thor*, the top grossing theatrical release in North America, earned \$108 million in its first week. Compare that to the video game blockbuster *Grand Theft Auto 5* which pulled in \$1 billion in its first five days of release. One of Ubisoft's top grossing titles, *Assassin's Creed 3* (by the way the *Assassin's* franchise includes performances by five of ACTRA's bargaining committee members) has earned over \$1 billion in revenue since its release.



Top photo:
ASSASSIN'S CREED IV:
BLACK FLAG
L to R: Carlo Mestroni,
Matt Ryan, Richard Néron
(Cinematic Director),
Teale Bishopric (bottom),
Kama Dinsmore (Animation
Director), Amber Goldfarb
and Shawn Baichoo



Photo at right:
ACTRA bargaining committee
member Shawn Baichoo in a
motion capture suit.

Our magnificent role in epic games

... continued

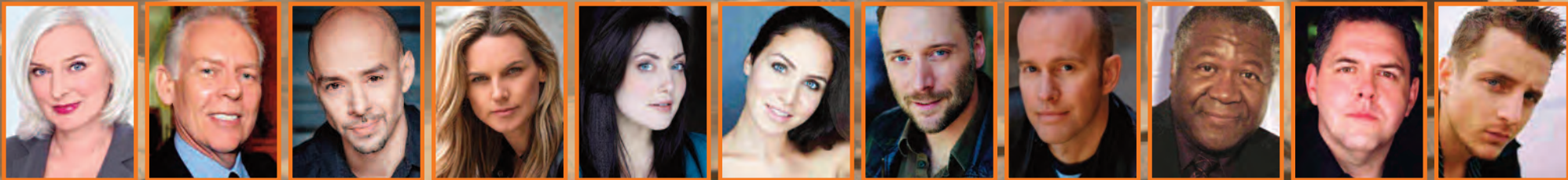
In an industry well known for flame-outs by previously profitable producers, any advantage in attracting gamers is highly coveted. Rapidly evolving technology serves as a catalyst to showcase the performer's talent on screen. Ubisoft's CEO Yves Guillemot noted in their 2012 financial report, "The next generation [of games] is going to be so powerful that playing a game is going to be the equivalent of playing a CGI (Computer Generated Imagery) movie". Gamers are a sophisticated bunch and they seek high quality performances and entertaining narratives when they lay their cash on the counter. Ubisoft recognizes that ACTRA performers deliver, and in the highly competitive and lucrative environment of today's video game products, they need that advantage.

In the end, the new collective agreement between Ubisoft and ACTRA represents real improvements, increased compensation and some innovative projects to increase work opportunities. The three year deal started January 1, 2014 and will expire December 31, 2016. As well as rationalizing the rate structure, we negotiated yearly increases of 2.5%. We agreed to pilot a project that should lead to performers being engaged on handheld and mobile game platforms that would normally use animated characters. The pilot will allow for discounted Use rates; and is timely as industry trends point to a rapid expansion of these types of games. Stunt performers and coordinators came out ahead as well and new language helps make the work safer and more predictable. In the spirit of the talks it was agreed Ubisoft and ACTRA would meet to assess the new initiatives and monitor the progress of the new agreement in an annual review.

This collective agreement is a key one for ACTRA performers. In a study released by the Entertainment Software Association of Canada we learned the industry generated over \$2.3 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) in 2012. Major investments by the Quebec government are helping to cement Ubisoft and the wider video game industry as a key source of employment in Canada. In the end it's the performers and their talent, commitment and professionalism that gives these video game producers a highly desirable product. It's that same talent, commitment and professionalism by those same performers at the bargaining table that produced our new agreement.

In the end, the new collective agreement between Ubisoft and ACTRA represents real improvements, increased compensation and some innovative projects to increase work opportunities.

OUR BARGAINING TEAM



Left to right: Ferne Downey, ACTRA National President & FIA President Negotiating Committee Chair; Stephen Waddell, ACTRA National Executive Director & Chief Negotiator; Shawn Baichoo; Kate Drummond; Holly Gauthier-Frankel; Amber Goldfarb; Carlo Mestroni; Simon Peacock; Alvin Sanders, ACTRA National Treasurer & UBCP/ACTRA President; David Sparrow, ACTRA Toronto President; and Elias Toufexis.

CASTINGDIVERSITY CASTINGBACKGROUND CASTINGSTUNTS

ACTRA's new online searchable databases give partner agents, Casting Directors, Producers and Stunt Coordinators access to our ACTRA Member professional talent.



ACTRA Magazine sat down with ACTRA National President Ferne Downey and National Diversity Committee Chair Jani Lauzon to talk about ACTRA's new searchable casting sites:

So, what's the purpose of these sites? What sparked the initial idea?

Jani: The creation of CastingDiversity.ca was in direct response to comments made by U.S. producers. They wanted proof that we – ACTRA – had great diverse talent, because they believed otherwise. And we all know that production in Canada is good for everyone, not just the diverse community. In addition to changes made to our existing online database, **Face to Face**, we needed a designated site that was easy to navigate and that championed our diverse membership. So ACTRA Toronto's Diversity Committee created **CastingDiversity.ca**. It has been so successful, used equally by large and small production, that the ACTRA National Diversity Committee made it a priority to expand the site to include diverse ACTRA members coast to coast.

Who should be registering with CastingDiversity.ca?

CASTINGDIVERSITY.CA

Jani: It's intended for ACTRA members who are what we call "physically or culturally diverse". This includes performers living with disabilities (i.e. those who speak American Sign Language, who are Deaf, have different mobility challenges or are blind), Aboriginal performers and performers who are non-white in race. The ACTRA Diversity Committee has worked hard over the years to advocate for inclusivity in casting. While we are making progress the stats still prove we have a ways to go. This database is just one more way we're helping to increase opportunities for the diverse members of our union who continue to struggle for a place within our industry.

What about CastingStunts.ca?

CASTINGSTUNTS.CA

Ferne: We saw how the CastingDiversity database evolved and our fabulous stunt community felt there was a real need for a similar space where Stunt Coordinators could seek out professional stunt talent. ACTRA Toronto started the ball rolling and

then everyone decided it made sense to make this a national database. So now ACTRA stunt performers from St. John's to Victoria will be able to register and use this site. It's been a long road to get here but we have a database that's searchable and easy to use.

Are there any restrictions to who can register on the CastingStunts database?

Ferne: We have some conditions in place. Performers need to have at least six stunt credits under their belts to register.

Okay, last but definitely not least... tell us about CastingBackground.ca.

CASTINGBACKGROUND.CA

Ferne: Once you start talking about stunt databases and diversity databases... well, there's another group of performers in our union that is pretty distinct, and was looking for a way to showcase their talent; Background Performers. It was a natural next step to develop **CastingBackground.ca**. We're really

excited that ACTRA Performers from across the country will be able to register for this.

Speaking of registering.... any tips for developing a good profile in these databases?

Jani: Make sure you fill in all the required fields and don't forget to update your profile regularly. And I always tell performers to protect their privacy. For example, if you have an agent, list their contact information only.

Ferne: I find it really helps if you use a colour photo. Also, don't overstate your skills. Tempting though it may be, your profile is only useful if it's accurate.

What's next?

Ferne: We recommend that all ACTRA members sign-up for **Face to Face On-line**, if you haven't done so already. Face to Face Online already showcases thousands of ACTRA performers. And stay tuned... there are big improvements coming for everyone. In coming months, Face to Face Online will be revamped and will launch as CastingACTRA – Canada's premier union talent database.

SYNERGY

Synergy [noun]

- the interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects

Origin:

- mid 19th century: from Greek sunergos 'working together', from sun- 'together' + ergon 'work'

Source: Oxford English Dictionary

By **Marit Stiles**, ACTRA National Director of Public Policy and Communications



Without each one of us taking an oar, the boat won't row forward.

Nature is chock full of examples of synergy. Geese flying in a 'V' formation can fly 71% farther than a goose alone. The oxpecker cleans bugs off the zebra -- the zebra's clean and the bird is fed. The sea anemone repels the predators of the clownfish by stinging them with their tentacles and the clownfish, immune to the stings of anemone, scare off other fish looking for a little lunch.

The human body is another example of synergy. We are a sum of our parts, each working to support the other; stepping in to help carry the extra load when one part shuts down.

Synergy also exists in human and organizational relationships: hockey teams, choirs and casts. Without each working to support the other, the game falls apart, the choir sounds terrible, the cast, the crew ... well, you get the picture.

ACTRA's relationships with our industry partners are much the same. Though each partner has its own interests, that from time to time cause debate, negotiation and compromise, there is a growing recognition that the industry as a whole benefits when we speak together with one voice on the issues that matter to us all. Without each one of us taking an oar, the boat won't row forward.

UNIONS ARE PART OF THE SOLUTION, NOT THE PROBLEM

There's a lot of anti-union talk happening these days. In Ottawa the Conservative Government takes frequent pot shots at the labour movement. They've introduced bills that, should they pass, would make our job serving members much harder to do. In some provinces we've recently taken a hit... and hard.

In Ontario for example, Conservative Leader Tim Hudak has made it his personal mission to undermine unions. Why? Because we are the democratic voice of the working person sometimes alone against the powerful corporations that fund his party. We can organize and mobilize our members around issues that matter to us.

Meanwhile, anti-union folks are appealing to what they see as an underlying mistrust of unions among the public. When times are tough -- and they certainly have been -- people might look at the achievements of others in a more negative light. The decent pay and working conditions that union members have achieved through collective bargaining, might make people think, "Why don't I get that? Why should they have those benefits and not me?"

It's time to change that way of thinking. Pull the rug out from under those arguments. We have to start talking about why unions -- like ACTRA -- matter. Not just to our members but to ALL Canadian workers and to our industries that drive the Canadian economy.



SYNERGY ... continued

'THE WEEKEND' - BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

First, consider the obvious answer to the complaint, 'He gets more than me.' The fact is, unions have always raised the bar for everyone. When unions negotiate decent pay, it helps everyone. It raises the bar so that non-union employers have to pay a little more to attract workers. Furthermore, it was unions – negotiating case by case – that set the bar such that other Canadians were able to benefit from vacation leave, maternity and parental leave and unemployment insurance. Hell, who do we have to thank for 'The Weekend'?.... you got it.

SYNERGY BOOSTS OUR ECONOMY

Those who want to undermine unions also tend to (conveniently) overlook our ability to promote our industry and create stability. Just look at the synergy within our film and television industry in Canada. It's a unionized industry, every which way you look at it. Writers Guild, Directors Guild, ACTRA, IATSE, NABET, Canadian Media Guild, you name it. The majority of workers in this industry support and are represented by a union or guild.

And many, many years ago, those unions recognized that we had to be part of the solution to the problems our industry faced. Production declining? Form a coalition with producers and go to Ottawa to call for greater tax incentives for production; seek funding and support to build studios; create training programs; and in the process, become a premier world destination for film and television production. If a Government falters and tax credits are threatened, unions have the unique ability to kick in and mobilize large numbers of people – members, friends and families – to speak up. There's nothing like a few hundred emails or phone calls to make an MPP or MP think twice about the way she or he will vote on legislation that is destructive to our industry.

ACTRA has sought out coalitions – often building them from the ground up – to help our entertainment industry on a number of key issues. The Creators' Copyright Coalition (CCC) came together to help ensure that the 'creators' of content – authors, screenwriters, actors, etc. – were protected when the Government sought to make changes to Copyright legislation a few years ago. It was a long, difficult battle and one we didn't win. But the process of working closely together was essential. The Canadian Film and Television Industry Coalition (CFTIC) united producers with unions and guilds to appeal for greater support for our industry. The Canada Media Fund (CMF), Telefilm and tax incentives are some very successful examples of what we can achieve together.

Today, we are further united with our industry by joining – along with WGC, DGC, ReelCanada, First Weekend Club, TIFF, The Academy of Canadian Cinema and TV and many others in our industry – the Canadian Media Production Association (CMPA), CMF and Telefilm's #EyeOn-Canada initiative. Together we are seeking new ways to promote Canadian production overseas and here at home. And we are working with our fellow creators to found a new coalition to talk about creators' rights through the Canadian Creators' Coalition.

TALKIN' TV



We're also lending our voices to the call for 'More Canada on All Our Screens' in the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission's (CRTC) Let's Talk TV consultation. This is our next big hurdle. The CRTC is asking Canadian citizens, consumers and creators to join this important conversation.

THE ISSUE: MORE CANADA ON ALL OUR SCREENS

Television in Canada is highly regulated through the CRTC which has ensured that, with Hollywood looming large on our screens, Canadians are guaranteed that a certain percentage of their viewing will include Canadian content. The CRTC's 2010 Television Policy set out the rules that broadcasters must follow to keep their licences. For one, they now have to spend 30% of their revenues on Canadian programming. Even better, they have to spend a percentage of that revenue on 'programs of national interest', which means drama, comedy and awards shows. In other words, they can't just spend that money on cheap reality programming, but must spend it on programming that creates the most jobs for Canadian performers: drama. Not to mention all of the other jobs the our industry contributes to our economy. Because of the new policy that our industry fought so hard for (remember ACTRA's decade long "drama crisis" campaign?), Broadcasters spent \$2.9 billion on Canadian programming in 2011 – 2012, including \$411 million on Canadian dramas and comedies.



NEW TV POLICY ALERT!

The 2010 policy is 'under review' again! For 10 years we protested the CRTC for their 1999 decision to loosen up the rules. We experienced a massive decline in Canadian television production. The industry learned an unfortunate lesson: when left to their own devices broadcasters will choose the easiest and cheapest options: buying U.S. shows and cheap reality series. ACTRA and our industry partners are determined to NEVER let that happen again.

We're also talking about the changing landscape of TV. My kids get a chuckle when I tell them about growing up in Newfoundland watching the CBC on a black and white TV with rabbit ears. They rarely watch television on a 'traditional' screen. It's all about accessing content online, including Netflix, YouTube and a host of other "Over the Top" or OTT services. The CRTC needs to get in the business of regulating the delivery of TV content on ALL our screens: big, small and mobile. These work opportunities matter to performers, producers, writers, directors, you name it. Expect to hear this refrain again and again over the year as we attempt to influence the direction the CRTC will take.

In the first phase of this consultation, ACTRA members wrote emails, participated in online discussion forums and in 'flash conferences' with the CMF, Academy, producers, writers, directors and others who work in our industry. We knew that our voices needed to be heard and we made it so. Over the next year we'll be looking for other ways to work together to get the message out.

"It's critical that we can share our own Canadian stories on our TVs. I'm proud that my union is leading that fight for Canadian culture." – Donnelly Rhodes

IT'S ABOUT FAIRNESS

Enrico Colantoni said it best when he lent his voice and image to our Fairness Works campaign: "I'm lucky to be a series lead. I'm more than lucky that my union fights for government support that helps us make great shows in Canada. That's good for actors and good for our economy. That's fair."

MORE THAN THE SUM OF OUR PARTS

The fact is, our partners make us stronger, as each brings something new to the table. We each have our particular strengths. I've often said that ACTRA's strength is in our members -- when ACTRA speaks out on an issue, your voices, and frankly your public profiles, help draw attention to the cause. Other unions have bright, talented activists who join them on Parliament Hill to talk with MPs. Our bright, talented activists have something extra: TV shows, fans and followers -- that matters to politicians. They know that actors have influence and are trusted by the public. Performers also have a terrific ability to connect their personal stories with our policy objectives. When actors like Colin Mochrie or Maria Del Mar talk about the problems they sometimes face with their fluctuating incomes, or the way the income tax system is unfair for artists, politicians sit up and listen.

Our industry knows performers command attention. They have seen what we bring to the table. They know that ACTRA's contribution has been critical to sustaining our sector. They also know that we lend stability to this industry that is built on temporary or short term contracts -- a workforce of self-employed professionals, behind and in front of the camera. Without union contracts providing safety, benefits and decent wages, workers would not be able to survive between gigs. The result? There would be no pool of talent for producers to draw upon.



"I'm lucky to be a series lead. I'm more than lucky that my union fights for government support that helps us make great shows in Canada. That's good for actors and good for our economy. That's fair."

- Enrico Colantoni
Actor

together
WE SPEAK UP
FOR CULTURE.

What's next for ACTRA?

The notion of stability and certainty is not something that people usually associate with an industry like ours. Unions, like ACTRA are essential components that keeping our industry engine running. Without us, the industry falters. The oxpecker starves. The clownfish is eaten. The geese can't make their journey south... and the boat goes in circles.

Synergy works. Governments that attack unions often overlook the crucial role we play in maintaining stable and profitable industries. And with our industry partners on-side to help us out, we will continue working together, for the good of our industry.



Labour Day

At Labour Day parades and events across the country, ACTRA launched our "Fairness Works" poster campaign to remind Canadians of all the positive work that unions do. We joined this Canadian Labour Congress initiative because we believe in fair treatment and getting paid for our work. Not just for us, but for all Canadian workers. And we've spoken up on behalf of the industry for funding for Telefilm, NFB and Canada Media Fund, as well as working hard to secure tax incentives to attract production in jurisdictions across the country.

That's Fair. And it Works.



Toronto

ACTRA Toronto member Richie Lawrence holds the poster with B.C. stunt performer Colin Decker.



ACTRA Alberta members Don Ast and XXXXXX.

Alberta



ACTRA Newfoundland member Laura Marie Smith sporting her ACTRA swag.





Ottawa



UBCP/ACTRA Life Member Kay Alsop is 93!



"I've seen the work my union does to get a deal at the negotiating table, first hand. Whether I'm coordinating a stunt or stunt driving, I know ACTRA makes sure I'll get paid, and protects me. That's fair."
- Mike Scherer
Stunt Performer

together
WE'VE GOT DECENT WAGES AND WORKING



ACTRA Manitoba members Kevin Longfield and Judy Cook. Photo: Claude Dorge

UBCP/ACTRA President Alvin Sander and Teamsters 155 member Lorrie Ward.



Maritimes



Saskatchewan

From Coast to Coast Your Efforts WERE Noticed

APPLAUSE

VICTOR GARBER & ALAN THICKE RECEIVE STARS ON CANADA'S WALK OF FAME

Victor Garber and **Alan Thicke** are among the 2013 Canada's Walk of Fame inductees. With six Emmy® and four Tony® nominations to his credit, Victor Garber has been seen in some of the most memorable works of film, television and stage. Alan Thicke is well-known for his TV hits including *The Alan Thicke Show* and his starring role as psychiatrist and father Jason Seaver in ABC-TV's sitcom hit *Growing Pains*. Also inducted are the late Canadian hero Terry Fox and the late jazz pianist Oscar Peterson. The 2013 honourees will be added to Canada's Walk of Fame, which annually recognizes individuals for their achievements in various fields, who have been born in or spent their creative or formative years in Canada.



Victor Garber



Alan Thicke



Winners **John Dunsworth**, **Shelley Thompson**, **Thom Fitzgerald** (accepting for **Jane Alexander**) and **Christopher Shore**. Photo: Samson Learn

ACTRA MARITIMES AWARDS

ACTRA Maritimes ACTRA Awards honoured a talented quartet of local performers on October 5, 2013 at the Maritime Museum of The Atlantic. **Jane Alexander** won the Outstanding Female Performance Award for the pilot *Forgive Me* and **John Dunsworth** the Outstanding Male Performance Award for *Forgive Me* episode 1. For Outstanding Performance in a short film, **Christopher Shore** took home the Award for *The Long and Short of Barry Small* and **Shelley Thompson** for *Two Penny Road Kill*.

The event also celebrated 100 years of film in the Maritimes with the screening of *Evangeline*, Canada's first feature-length dramatic film. ACTRA Maritimes President **Jamie Bradley** addressed the packed party, "Tonight we celebrate our own. And we have great cause to celebrate. Exactly one hundred years ago, Nova Scotian actors stepped in front of film cameras. They were making history about history." *Evangeline* was shot almost entirely on location in Eastern Passage, Cow Bay, Annapolis Royal and Grand Pre.



David Rigby
photo by ??????????

ACTRA AWARDS IN MANITOBA

The Golden Boy Award for the Most Outstanding Member Initiated Production (MIP) was given to *The One*, directed by **Sean Skene** and produced by **Rob Borges, Sean Skene, Bryan Verot** and **Mike Bell**. Actor and director **Louis Kliman** was honoured with the Victor Cowie Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Performing Arts. A new award was given out this year, the Crocus Award for the Most Outstanding Single-Shot MIP. It went to **Ti Hallas**, producer and director of *The Swimming Lesson*, a film shot in one take, starring veteran actor and swimming instructor, **Doreen Brownstone**.

THE UBCP/ACTRA AWARDS

The UBCP/ACTRA Awards honoured performers from across British Columbia on November 24, 2013 in Vancouver. **Gabrielle Rose** won the Best Actress Award for her work in *Crimes of Mike Recket* and the Best Actor Award went to **John Pyper-Ferguson** for *Motive*. The Best Newcomer Award went to **Tyler Johnston** for his work in *Motive* and the UBCP/ACTRA Award for Best Voice went to **Nicole Oliver** for *The Littlest Pet Shop*. The Best Stunt Award went to **Colby Chartrand** for his work on *True Justice*. In addition to the five performance awards, the John Juliani Award of Excellence was presented to **Ben Ratner** and the Lorena Gale Woman of Distinction Award was presented to **Carmen Moore**.

Hosted by **Ellie Harvie**, the Awards Gala evening took place at the Vancouver Playhouse. Said **Alvin Sanders**, President of UBCP/ACTRA, on the success of the big event, "This is our second year of the UBCP/ACTRA Awards and the response in the community has been great - we have almost doubled the number of guests - and we are thrilled."

CELEBRATING THE ACTRA MONTREAL AWARDS

ACTRA Montreal's award gala took place July 6, 2013 in Montreal at the Rialto Theatre. Five juried awards were presented: **Lucinda Davis** for Outstanding Voice Performance, **Patrick Kerton** for Outstanding Stunt Performance, Outstanding Performance in a Video Game, **Christina Broccolini** for Outstanding Female Performance and **Christopher Heyerdahl** for Outstanding Male Performance. **Lea Rondot** received the Best ACTRA Short Award for *Good Coffee* and **Julian Casey** for Outstanding Videogame Performance in *Far Cry 3*. **Susan Glover** presented **Emma Stevens** the Community Builder Award for her outstanding contribution to the development of the industry.

David Rigby was honoured with the ACTRA Montreal Award of Excellence. He was applauded for his four decade-long career, as both a stunt performer and coordinator, amassing nearly 200 credits. On presenting the award Montreal President **Don Jordan** said, "The measure of anyone's success in any industry is the legacy they leave behind. Dave helped build the foundation for the world renowned stunt community we have in Montreal today. That is his legacy and that is why he is so deserving of this honour."



L to R: **Louis Kliman** was honoured with the Victor Cowie Award and **Doreen Brownstone** who spoke about him with ACTRA Manitoba President **Talia Pura**.
Photo: Alf Kollinger



*Photo by Ben Nelms

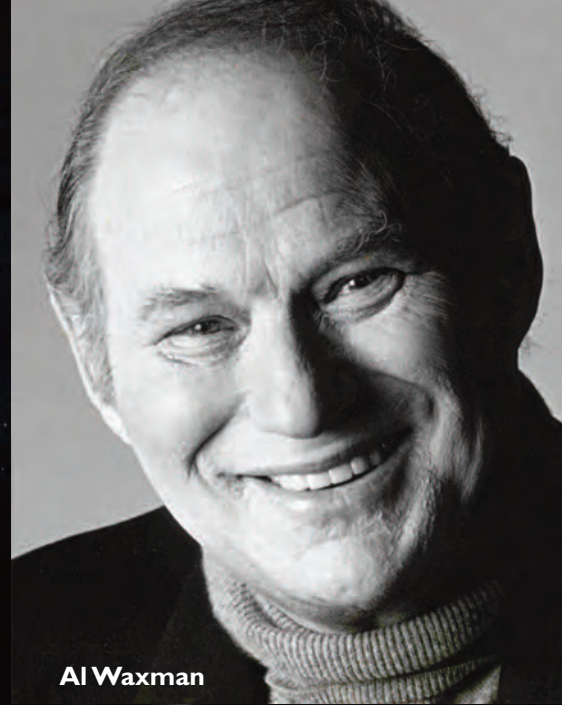
From Coast to Coast Your Efforts WERE Noticed

APPLAUSE

...continued

SALUTING PLAYBACK'S HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Canadian entertainment plays a critical role in shaping our collective stories and the 2013 **Playback Hall of Fame** demonstrated just how pervasive that influence can be. **Al Waxman** in *The King of Kensington* showed the rest of Canada what life was like in a multicultural enclave of Toronto. **Colm Feore** has an amazing presence on our screens with roles including former Canadian PM Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Glenn Gould and the straight-laced investigator in the bilingual hit feature film *Bon Cop, Bad Cop*. David Suzuki, recipient of Playback's Swarovski Humanitarian Award, is known to audiences worldwide for holding governments' feet to the fire for a lack of action to protect the environment and for his longstanding CBC television series, *The Nature of Things*. Also recognized were Playback's 10 to Watch honourees who include ACTRA members **Katie Boland** and **Michelle Latimer**. Playback's Canadian Film and Television Hall of Fame launched in 2007 with the goal of celebrating Canada's amazing talent and sharing the stories of our industry's founders. ACTRA is a founding sponsor.



Al Waxman



Colm Feore

R. H. Thomson will be honoured by ACTRA Toronto this year for his body of work and his outstanding service to ACTRA. His film honours include a Genie Award for *If You Could See What I Hear* and nominations for *Ticket to Heaven*, *Samuel Lount* and *The Lotus Eaters*. His television awards include a Gemini Award for playing Dr. Frederick Banting in *Glory Enough for All* and nominations for *The Englishman's Boy*; *Canada's Sweetheart: The Saga of Hal C. Banks*; *Ford and the Machine*; *Screen Two*; *And Then You Die* and or his continuing role as Jasper Dale in *Road to Avonlea*. His theatrical acclaim includes a Dora Award for *Hand to Hand* and a nomination for *Someone Who Will Watch Over Me*.

R.H. trained at LAMDA and the National Theatre School, which honoured him with the Gascon-Thomas Award in 1997. He developed work for television, winning a Gemini for Best News and Current Affairs in 2003 for *Lost Boys* based on his great-uncles' experiences in World War I. His historic installation, *Vigile 1914-1918 Vigil*, commemorated the 68,000 Canadians who lost their lives in that war.

R.H. was made a Member of the Order of Canada in 2010 and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Toronto, Trinity College. He has defended Cancon numerous times on behalf of ACTRA, including presentations before the CRTC and at meetings with Ministers and Members of Parliament. R. H. continues to be a leader in our industry's fight for Canadian culture.



**R.H. THOMSON TO RECEIVE
ACTRA TORONTO'S 2014
AWARD OF EXCELLENCE**

PAL TORONTO CELEBRATES 20TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Twenty years ago, a group of Toronto performers were struck by the number of artists who, after a lifetime of work, found themselves facing poverty. They got together and dedicated themselves to providing care and affordable housing for older members in the industry. By then a national organization, Performing Arts Lodges (PAL) Canada received its official charitable status and tax number on January 1, 2009. With a current total of six chapters in Halifax, Toronto, Stratford, Winnipeg, Calgary and Vancouver, PAL has had a profound effect on the well-being of so many. Congratulations PAL Toronto and THANKS. For more information visit palcanda.org.

Photo:

Dan MacDonald, former PAL President and champion of PAL expansion from coast to coast, with Joy Coghill, co-founder of PAL Vancouver. To keep up with PAL news read Palingenesis, by editor Dan MacDonald.



The 1991 ground-breaking ceremony for the Performing Arts Lodge in Toronto, Clockwise, from back row: Bill Copeland, Vaclav Kuchar, Fred David, George Dick, Pierre Berton, Vic Bridgewater, unidentified, Ian Mathews, Ed Bissinger, Robert Latimer, Ann Mirvish, Patty Gail Peaker, unidentified, Rosemary Galloway, unidentified, Dinah Christie, Peggy Mahon, Don Cullen, Theresa Kowall-Shipp, Vivienne Muhling, Elsa Franklin, Desmond Scott, Sheila Waengler and Patricia Carroll Brown.



Inset: Founding President Roy Wordsworth – without this enterprise and dogged determination PAL would not exist.

GET ON BOA



Don't wait for your PRS money.
Fill out the e-form at actra.ca and
send it back to us. If your cheques
come to you via your agent, there's
no need to take any action...
TAMAC agencies are ON BOARD.



RD!



Performers'
Rights
Society

A DIVISION OF ACTRA



WONDERING WHETHER A PRODUCTION HAS PAID OUT? NEW PRODUCTION TRACKING TOOL LAUNCHED!

Ever wonder if you'll see another dime from Cool Runnings? Or whether Dead Silent is, well, ever going to rise again? If you have, you're in luck! ACTRA PRS has made it easier than ever to find out what productions have 'paid out'. Just visit the website to browse the full list of titles ACTRA PRS has recently distributed use fees on. Click on the button titled "MOST RECENT PRODUCTIONS PRS HAS PAID OUT!" You'll have a choice of 'disbursement periods' to pick from, and the list is alphabetical.

Can't find the title you were curious about? Wondering if Avalanche use fees will ever roll in? No need to worry! After every disbursement period ACTRA PRS staff will promptly update the website to display all of our latest paid productions. Current lists are retroactive to August 2013 so you can easily surf the last few payment periods.

Getting performers their hard-earned money quickly is a priority at ACTRA PRS. This new tool is just another way to make sure that every cent is exactly where it should be – in your pocket!

DID YOU KNOW?

- ACTRA PRS disbursed \$9,055,086 in 2012/13.
- ACTRA PRS tracks 13,000 active titles in our databases

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STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR UNION

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UBCP/ACTRA

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The noble art of acting has been around for many many years...
We've been around to support actors for 55 of those years.

THE ACTORS' FUND'S FILM AND TELEVISION RELIEF PROGRAM

provides financial aid to entertainment industry professionals who work in all aspects of film and television production.

THIS YEAR HUNDREDS OF ACTORS, OTHER INDUSTRY WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES WILL RECEIVE ASSISTANCE with rent or mortgage payments, grocery money, utility payments and other basic living expenses when their health, housing or ability to work are at risk.

Without your support that lifeline would be lost.

THANK YOU ACTRA!

The Actors' Fund of Canada thanks ACTRA, and all its members, for 55 years of support.

"Were the Fund not there, our community would stand to lose a wealth of talented people." Shawn Doyle, ACTRA Member

You can do your part to help a friend bounce back by raising money on set through the Film & TV Charity Challenge and by joining the Reel Friends Plan (a voluntary payroll donation program). Go to actorsfund.ca to learn more.



Passings

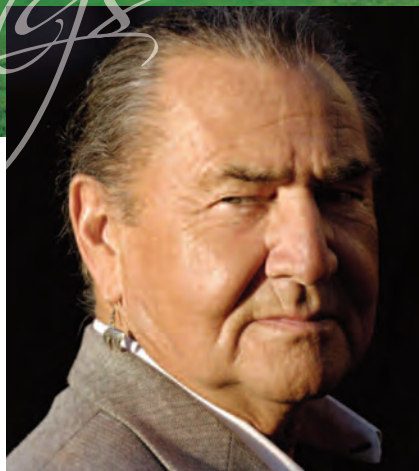


Bill Buck

1931 - 2013

I worked with fellow thespian Bill Buck in Vancouver's commercial, film and television industry. It was during the 10 year run of the highly acclaimed CBC radio program Dr. Bundolo's Pandemonium Medicine Show, along with our comedy partners Marla Gropper and Norm Grohmann, that Bill became a star. Our much loved "straight man", and foil to me, had a wonderful facility for British dialects which he used to great comedic affect. Bill trained at the respected London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts and worked in England for seven years before returning to Canada in 1967. In the 1980s he displayed his talent in several Hollywood North productions. Bill chaired the UBCP Sam Payne Awards committee for many years. Many of his fans never knew that Mr. B narrated textbooks for visually impaired students at the Charles Crane Memorial Library UBC and at Langara College. He regularly served as Lector at the United Church of Canada and would lend his mellifluous voice to services presented by the River City Gospel Jazz group. This "most beautiful man" and talented actor will be missed by his many pals and fans.

-Bill Reiter



August Schellenberg

1936 - 2013

When the news of Augie's passing hit social media the depth of his impact on the industry unfolded like a big cozy blanket. There were messages in several languages along with stories of the joy he brought to set. Many spoke of his infectious laugh and how he was extremely dedicated and hardworking. And there was one profound story of Augie making production provide better accommodations for his fellow actors. That was Augie. Thinking of his fellow cast members, looking out for us all. In fact, the first time I heard him speak at an ACTRA Toronto event in the early 1990's he spoke of the importance of inclusivity and working together. His words stuck with me then, as they do now. We need more actors like Augie, for our warrior, our champion is soaring high above us.

He will remain in the hearts of those dearest to him: his wife XXXXX, XXXXX, XXXXXXXX, XXXXXX and XXXXXXXX.

-Jani Lauzon



Cory Monteith

1982 - 2013

Cory Monteith was well-known for playing the singing jock Finn on the TV series Glee. His film credits Monte Carlo and Final Destination 3 and his TV credits include roles on the series Kaya and Kyle XY and guest appearances on Smallville, Supernatural, Stargate SG-1, Flash Gordon and Interns. Cory had recently returned to Canada to star in Gia Milani's indie film All the Wrong Reasons. "It is one of the benchmarks of success as a Canadian actor, to be able to return and to work in your homeland," Cory told Playback while on set in Halifax. Cory was an avid supporter of Project Limelight, a Vancouver charity that offers a theater and arts programs to at-risk youth. "I think kids really need a place to go and feel like they belong," he said in the video in support of the charity when it was launched last year. Cory was born in Calgary, Alberta.

"I am an actress working in my hometown. I rely on ACTRA to have my back no matter where in Canada the job takes me. If an issue comes up on set I know I can call ACTRA and that's important so I can focus on my work. I know they look out for me. That's comfort. That's MY union."

- Tatiana Maslany

Actor

together
WE'RE PROTECTED
FROM COAST TO COAST.



Orphan Black star **Tatiana Maslany** stepped into the international spotlight in 2013 winning the Critics' Choice TV Best Actress Award and ACTRA Toronto's Outstanding Performance Award. Season 2 premieres in April on Space in Canada and BBC America in the U.S.

