

performers

The magazine from ACTRA Toronto

Volume 13 • Issue 3

ReGenesis

What kind of Gods will we be?

Peter Outerbridge speaks on acting

Metropia:
they wanted bikinis but this *is* Canada

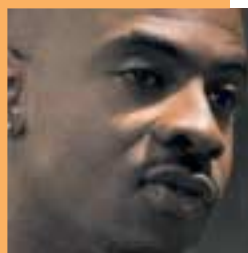
Paul Gross:
the problem with Canadian Broadcasting

The Mega Studio in Toronto... finally
Getting excited about your next conference



ACTRA
ACTRESS AND ACTORS ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO

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Fall 2004

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If you're an ACTRA Toronto member or apprentice and want to write an article, contribute original cartoons, artwork or photos – we'd love to hear from you! Send us an email.

THE NEXT COPY DEADLINE IS

November 26, 2004
The magazine invites members to submit notices of births, marriages, obituaries, and letters to the editor. Article submissions MUST be sent via e-mail (editor@actratoronto.com) or on disk with accompanying hard copy.

We reserve the right to edit or omit any material for length, style, content or possible legal ramifications.



Performers magazine is published three times a year by ACTRA Toronto Performers. The views expressed in unsolicited and solicited articles are not necessarily the views of ACTRA Toronto Performers, its Council or this Committee.

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Conrad Pla and Peter Outerbridge in Shaftesbury Films' new one-hour drama series **ReGenesis** on TMN and Movie Central.

Cover Photography Credit: Steve Wilkie, courtesy of Shaftesbury Films.



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**Visit the ACTRA Toronto website at
www.actratoronto.com!**

Taking Stock



One of the particularly interesting aspects of serving as the elected leader of our little patch of this performers' union is that I get to talk to other actors about the business of our union whenever I show up just intending to be an actor on sets and at auditions. Or rather, they get to talk to me. This always sets me to thinking...

At times I hear of frustration, as in being hindered from having opportunities, or anger at the lack of work. Sometimes I hear an understanding of what ACTRA is doing for its members, and the appreciation for that. I welcome all these snatches of conversation, and I can usually identify with all the feelings. I know their validity because I share in the precarious existence.

Where I have something to offer is that I have an insight into what is being done – a tremendous amount really – by ACTRA Toronto specifically, and in tandem with our National union, with the ultimate goal of fostering the environment for a healthier industry in which our members can grow and prosper.

I know that for ambitious, creative people with aspirations to satisfy and life's bills to pay, tangible results count most – successful auditions, job offers, and real earnings. What I humbly offer is that there are many factors at play in our business environment and also many factors at play in how our union is working to have a positive influence.

We are in a business that is brutally unfair to most of those who are in it. There are some things we cannot change. We can't control currency levels and how economically attractive Canada is for production to locate here. We can't control the momentum of a body-builder politician who rises to public office by condemning all production done outside California. We don't control the

public's appetite for reality shows and we have no control when an economy grows sluggish.

But where we have identified that we can exert a positive influence, such as with our focused and unrelenting campaign on government to promote Canadian production, and to limit the latitude of private broadcasters to loot the airwaves with simulcasting of American programs, we are doing our utmost. Where we have learned that we can serve our performers better to give them something of value with our professional development conferences, with our casting and training initiatives, with our diversity promotion, with our responsiveness to concerns, with a true, professional operation, we will continue to do our utmost.

It is essential for us to recognize a changing environment, and anyone in this business for more than a decade will have witnessed huge changes. A union's success is earned in adapting to change and driving for the success of its members.

Writing on the craft of acting, playwright and director David Mamet puts it very well:
*It is not under your control whether or not your performance will be brilliant.
The only thing under your control is your intention.*
*It is not under your control whether or not your career will be brilliant.
The only thing under your control is your intention.*

We don't have it in mind to lose sight of our goals or our intention.

Richard Hardacre, President



Dear Editor,

I read with great interest **Gloria Slades** letter in the last *Performers*. It was concerning the lack of respect actors have always encountered at the hands of bankers and all bean counters when lowly artists ask for a loan.

It reminded me of the time my wife Barbara and I were living and working in London, England. Our personal manager was Roy Fox and I was complaining about this very subject. Roy told me to tell the money meanies I was a lighthouse keeper. We did so but it turned out these poor souls were also in the bankers "grey" list.

I believe this problem, which I agree is huge for actors, is not going to change in the short or long term. Gloria said the software for calculating the worth of self employed people probably goes back to DOS – that gave me an idea. Could we tell them we are computer programmers? They are pretty hot for now. Well! Maybe lighthouse keepers are back in favour.

Cheers
Walter McMullan



Dear Respected Council Members and
ACTRA Staff,

BRAVO!!! Congratulations on organizing such an important press conference at the CBC on June 16th and representing ACTRA as one of the most fearless and respected unions in the nation! I am so proud to see so many actors passionately speaking out, creating the critical mass we need to make a difference! It makes me so proud to be participating as a member of this great union.

My Deepest Regards,

James Patrick Finnerty
ACTRA Toronto Apprentice Chair
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Bravo to **Paul Gross** and to **Stephen Waddell** for their enlightened and potent words concerning the condition of Canadian programming (in recent ACTRA *Performers* and *Playback* magazines). The time is now for the belief in our culture and industry with sustained, mandated investment by government and broadcasters. As Stephen Waddell points out, other countries like Australia (both their government and broadcasters) consistently do it better than Canada and cultural support cannot be left to 'goodwill'.

Paraphrasing **Marianne Williamson**:
Who are we not to believe in ourselves?!

Peter Keleghan



We welcome letters from readers. To allow for as many letters as possible, please limit your letter to 250 words or less. Letters may be edited. Please direct all editorial inquiries and letters to the editor: editor@actratoronto.com The views expressed in the "Letters to the Editor" are not necessarily the views of ACTRA Toronto Performers, its Council or the Editorial Committee.

GOT A QUESTION?

Who You Gonna Call?

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Kicks & Kudos

Kicks

to wannabe-movie mogul **Richard Stursberg** who left Telefilm Canada to take the head honcho English TV job at CBC-TV. Remember, he's the guy who smoothed the way for Canuck producers to access all the wonderful talent represented by the U.S. super-agency CAA – in La-La Land. Now he's the English-language head of our public broadcaster, and heaven knows what scheme he has for all the top talent that resides in Canada!!

Kicks

to **Robert Rabinovitch**, CBC Prez & CEO who hired Stursberg against all odds. Was it something in his morning coffee? Stursberg didn't even make anyone's short list – for good reason. Can we expect the bad old days when you had to be cast in L.A. to shoot in Canada? Oh, there's lunacy afoot.

Kudos

to actors **Shirley Douglas** and **Helen Shaver**, two recent (and highly deserving) 2004 inductees into **Canada's Walk of Fame**. Not eclipsed by the hoopla around "Canada's Hollywood Pioneers" (Mary Pickford and all) these two women shone incandescently.

Kudos

to the ever-cool **National Aboriginal Achievement Awards** broadcast on CBC and APTN. This annual fête from the National Arts Centre in Ottawa always does a bang-up awards show that leaves one wanting more.

Kicks

to Ontario's Minister of Culture **Madeleine Meilleur** for snubbing performers. We had asked – politely – to be involved on the spanking new Arts and Culture Advisory Council. Of the 13 appointees, none are actors. Short-sighted in the extreme.

Kudos

to ACTRA Toronto IPA Steward **Barbara Larose** for winning a prestigious PAYBACK award from the Canadian Film Centre. **Norman Jewison** gave a glowing speech about her outstanding contribution and commitment to the CFC. Brava!

Kudos

to **Gordon Pinsent** who won the 2004 Governor General's Performing Arts Award and the Banff Television Festival's Award of Excellence this year. He's our kind of guy – a multi-faceted Canadian original. A diamond, indeed.



Kudos

to actor/playwright **Michael Healey** for donating part of his liver to playwright **Tom Walmsley**. It is an optimistic act of bravery and hopefulness that leaves us breathless. The *Globe & Mail* reported that Michael wanted to set an example for his teenaged daughter "of how people should treat each other."

Kudos

to up-and-comer **Katie Boland** who won a Young Artist Award for Best Performance in a TV movie, miniseries or special for her role in *The Salem Witch Trials* (shot in Toronto in 2001, back

when Alliance Atlantis was still producing drama). *Degrassi: The Next Generation* was named the Best Family television series at the same awards in L.A. beating out high-profile American shows such as *The Simpsons*. More evidence that Canadian actors rock.

Kicks

to movie star **Ben Affleck** who spoke with such venom against US. production companies shooting in Canada. "It's criminal," Affleck told the *Hollywood Reporter*. "It makes me sick. I can't stand it." He said studios that chose to shoot in countries like Canada are giving a "slap in the face" to the motion-picture workers based in Los Angeles, the traditional capital of the entertainment world. Whoa, Ben, get a grip. Is he vying for Governor Arnie's job?

Kudos

to Universal Studios for standing by their decision to shoot the **Russell Crowe** feature film *Cinderella Man* in Toronto when Republican **Diane Watson** kicked up a big fuss. She broke many showbiz taboos and was largely ostracized for her attack.

Kudos

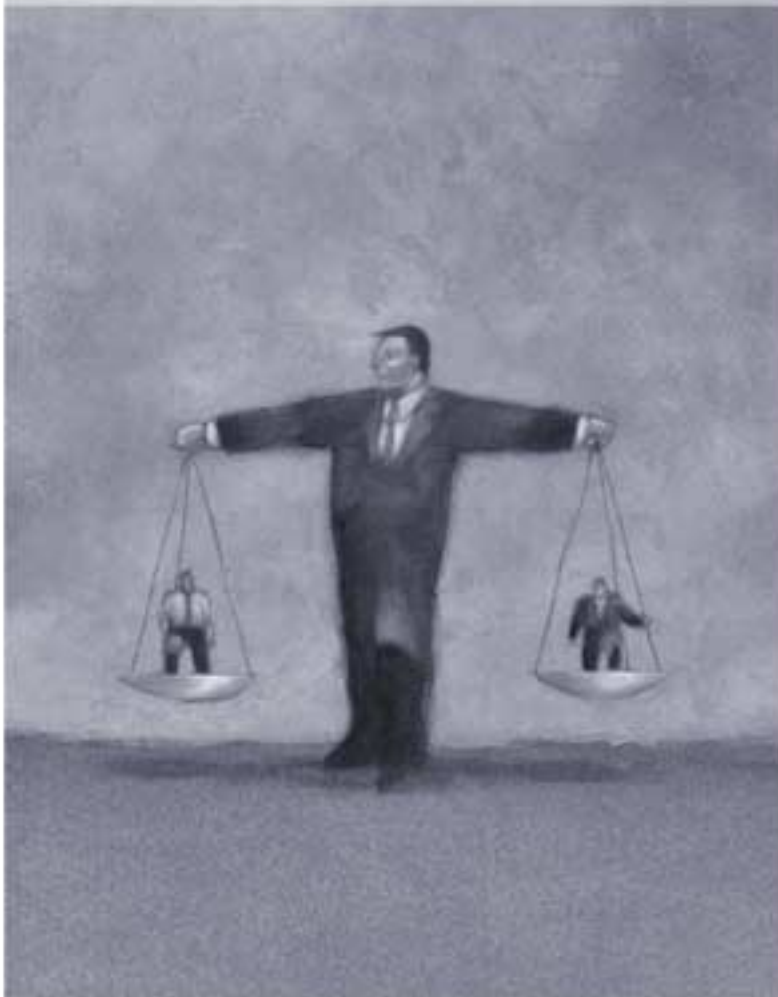
to **Bruce Greenwood**, star of CTV's *The Life*, for blowing the whistle on the network who buried the powerful new Canadian TV movie on a Labour Day weekend. It was a brave move that brought much-needed attention to a fine film.

Kudos

to TIP feature *Sugar* which won the Best Feature Award at the **Inside/Out: Gay and Lesbian Film Festival**. The leading role of Cliff was played by the gifted and promising **Andre Noble**, who met a tragic death due to accidental poisoning while visiting his family in Newfoundland; heart-breaking.

*if you
will Permit...*

...an update on Toronto work opportunities for
Canadian and foreign performers



In practice, service producers (i.e. American) frequently press for the maximum number of foreign work permits they hope they can get away with.

Here are some numbers about work opportunities in Toronto so far this year.

Between January 1 and September 1, 2004, Canadian performers earned 351 significant roles in film and television shows shot in Toronto – a “significant role” being one that provided 5 or more days on a feature or MOW, and 3 or more days on a series or pilot.

Foreign performers were cast in a total of 117 significant roles.

There were 1,168 roles for day players. Foreign performers appeared in only 31 additional day player roles, all cameos.

A total of 4,957 of 7,029 work days in this period were earned by Canadian performers – 71% of the work in town.

(Just to round out the report, on spot checks ACTRA Toronto stewards identified 39,350 work days for background performers. All went to Canadians. 60% of this work went to full ACTRA members; 33% to apprentices; 8% were “yellow vouchers”).

What do these numbers mean?

Those numbers mean there’s been a small but real recovery in work opportunities in Toronto for the first half of the year – mildly good news at a time when employment is sharply down in almost every other city across Canada. Foreign shoots in Toronto continue to trend down as the Canadian dollar trends up and more U.S. states bring in competing film incentives (41 U.S. states now offer film incentives). Canadian domestic production seems to be enjoying a small upswing. Feature and MOW work was fairly strong; television series work is very weak.

Those numbers also mean we’re having some success managing foreign employment in our jurisdiction.

Foreign work permits are almost inevitably the most difficult subject we discuss with producers – particularly foreign producers bringing service work to Toronto.

In principle, producers want to limit foreign casting. As they keep saying, in principle, foreign performers are more expensive; have to be traveled and housed; they complicate production plans.

*paid mouthpieces try to
generate leverage by
spreading the word that
“ACTRA is driving
work out of town,”*

In practice, service producers frequently press for the maximum number of foreign work permits they hope they can get away with. Non-Canadian directors and casting agents often seem to prefer casting non-Canadians. This business is about who you know – they tend to hire who they know. A bit of the flavour of the American “runaway production” campaign seems to creep into the casting process on occasion. And it seems to be viewed by some to be more convenient to run up bills traveling cast, than to go through the additional step of seriously investigating a sometimes unfamiliar Canadian talent pool. More legitimately, the story sometimes requires a regional or ethnic composition that is more challenging to find in Canada.

As always, our goal in these discussions is to hold foreign permits to the irreducible minimum consistent with getting the show to come here.

That means raising no issues about “marquee” performers attached to the production to ensure its financing. We have to be realistic about this – fighting over “A list” Hollywood performers on a Hollywood production is a formula for chasing the show out of town. We ask producers to talk to us early about their casting plans and to put their cards on the table about who they really need on the show to finance it. Most of the time, this leads to a businesslike conversation, and a quick agreement on permits.

Then there are the special cases. Every producer seems to believe their show is unique and presents special challenges. One in twenty or so really do. The martial arts movie that needs a uniquely qualified wire team from Hong Kong. The day player who’s presence on set is a contract condition for the Academy Award-winning lead. The dead ringer for Bobby Kennedy when he was 15 years old. The art of negotiating permits is to listen with polite determination to the many, many bogus pitches, looking for the occasional real issue.

Sometimes these discussions turn into disputes, leading to brief stand-offs. Once or twice a year – almost inevitably when a producer tries to bully through an inappropriate permit at the last minute, just before shooting begins – we need to resort to the dispute-settlement mechanism in the collective agreement.

You might hear about a dispute like this on set, since in these circumstances the production’s paid mouthpieces try to generate leverage by spreading the word that “ACTRA is driving work out of town,” “the producer is never coming back,” etc. In a tough year, that makes people in the industry nervous, as it’s intended to do.

That kind of buzz comes with this territory.

The alternative is an open-door policy on foreign work permits. Other Canadian jurisdictions have and continue to conduct experiments with open door policies, always and inevitably with the same result. Relations with producers are a little quieter – and substantially all of the

significant roles go to foreign performers, all the time.

We’re on a sometimes harder road, but a better one for our members. We’re friendly, welcoming and businesslike with foreign producers. We make sure every foreign work permit required to finance the show is made available with no fuss or muss. And we’re pleasantly determined to see to it that every effort is otherwise made to hire Canadian.

There’s a lot to do in the area of work opportunities for members. The real solution to ensuring that ACTRA members have a shot at challenging lead roles is to continue to press for the renewal of Canada’s broadcasting system and its indigenous film business. That has been and will continue to be the core focus of our union’s political action agenda.

In the meantime we have to manage the work that’s here, and make the best of it we can. So far so good this year: to date, three-quarters of the work in this town went to Canadians.

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Brian Linehan will be sadly missed

One of Canada's most beloved celebrity interviewers and TV personalities, **Brian Linehan** will be missed by all of us. A four-time host of the Genie Awards and an award-winning interviewer, Brian was admired by North America's biggest stars and became as famous as the people he interviewed. He was inducted onto Canada's Walk of Fame in 1998. This past year Brian donated 30 years' worth of his research material, photographs and recordings to the Toronto International Film Festival's Reference Library. He requested that donations be made to the Toronto International Film Festival, or the Canadian Film Centre.

Dear friend **Leah Pinsent** said, "Brian was a very generous man. I had the great fortune of being interviewed by Brian at the beginning of my career. Even though I felt so honoured by it, he always seemed to make me feel, and I believe others as well, that he was

the honoured one. He believed strongly in the importance of a Canadian entertainment industry and helped make us feel proud. He always made everyone feel that they were his favorite. His cheers of support and welcoming smile will be truly missed."



Priya Rao, Brian Linehan and Clair Bickley at ACTRA Toronto's Diversity poster campaign launch in October 2001.

In Memoriam

We share our sadness at the passing of the following ACTRA Toronto members

Andre Noble • John Cawthray
Claire Guinn • Paul Sutherland



Deborah Cass Behrens (née Bernice Katz) passed away peacefully at age 74 July 20 in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. Cass, a Goodman Theatre graduate, played stages across North America with the Canadian Players, and was a frequent performer on 1950s CBC Radio and TV programs, including the *Sunday Night Stage* series and *CBC Wednesday Night*.

Married in 1961 to current Shaw Festival actor **Bernard Behrens**, Cass also appeared frequently at the Stratford Festival, in Toronto's Crest and Jupiter Theatres, with Muskoka's Straw Hat Players, and was a founding member of Halifax's Neptune Theatre.

A passionate performer equally adept at comedy and drama, she left the stage for a number of years to raise three boys – Mark, Matthew and Adam – and returned to performing in 1984, appearing both at the National Arts Centre in *You Can't Take it With You* and in numerous CBC TV films, including *The Marriage Bed*, *The Canadian Conspiracy*, and *The Last Season*, for which she received a Gemini Nomination for best actress in a supporting role.

Illness forced an early retirement from performing, but Cass nevertheless cheerfully played the role of informal mentor to a new generation of young performers, and put her political passions to work, agitating with fellow ACTRA members against free trade and nuclear weapons, among many issues which inspired her.

Her family requests that donations in her memory be made to The Actors' Fund.

LABOUR DAY PARADE a huge success!

More than 120 ACTRA Toronto members, including jugglers, a stilt walker and twins, joined thousands of people in Toronto's annual Labour Day parade along Queen Street West through the Dufferin Gates to the CNE.

Bravo to our volunteers and participants for making this day a big success. See you next year!



GORDON PINSENT STUDIO OPENING!

Gordon Pinsent cuts the ribbon at the opening of The Gordon Pinsent Studio. ACTRA Toronto now hosts an on-site video recording studio FREE to members to tape auditions or rehearse on camera.

Kristen Thomson (ACTRA Toronto's 2003 Outstanding Performance Recipient) and Sarah Polley attending the Gordon Pinsent Studio opening.

Brent Carver, ACTRA Toronto's 2004 Outstanding Performance recipient, collects his statuette. Go to page 14 for details on how to submit outstanding performances entries for the 2005 ACTRA Toronto Awards.

To book, contact Jennifer McLaren at 416-642-6735 or jmclaren@actratoronto.com.

GORDON PINSENT STUDIO

ACTRA Toronto launches new Member Training Intensive

July marked the launch of ACTRA Toronto's new Member Training Intensive! This new weekend course for apprentice and full members covers the business aspects of being an actor -- audition protocols, an overview of ACTRA's collective agreements and how ACTRA works for you. The course costs \$200 and apprentice members receive one credit toward full ACTRA membership.



ACTRA Toronto's Diversity Committee bringing back "Into the Mainstream"

ACTRA Toronto is compiling a catalogue of differently-abled, visible minority and Aboriginal performers. This tool will be available to casting directors looking for a particular ethnicity or type of performer. We encourage you to submit your photo and résumé to the attention of ACTRA Toronto's Diversity Advocates for inclusion in this catalogue. For more information on the Diversity Committee please go to actratoronto.com.



Gladys O'Connor celebrates her 101st birthday!

Oh, to be so brimful of vitality – and working! Our feisty, active ACTRA Toronto member began acting later in life as a second career (her first career spanned 50 years) and she's racked up an impressive list of TV, film and commercial credits. She has always been a TTC booster, eats an apple every day and holds the secret to the fountain of youth – an open mind and a fearless heart.

Happy birthday, Gladys.



WHO'S DOING WHAT FOR YOU AT ACTRA TORONTO?

To find comprehensive reports on the goings-on of ACTRA Toronto's committees go to actratoronto.com

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Visible Minority Go-See

Stacey McKenzie, Christine Dae and Cherie Conda at the Go-See.



In July ACTRA Toronto hosted a Go-See with visible minority members for the new Touchstone Pictures series *Kevin Hill*. "Meet and greets are a great way to meet new actors in a relaxed atmosphere. We can actually have a conversation and the actor isn't under the same kind of pressure as in an audition. I met with interesting actors that I can definitely draw on for future projects," said casting director Tina Gerussi.

Who said you can't get blood from a producer?

ACTRA Toronto is challenging our big city industry partners to a BLOOD DONOR CHALLENGE!

During the week of November 15 we are challenging the CFTPA, the DGC, IATSE, NABET, and the WGC to roll up their sleeves to save a life!

Go to www.actratoronto.com for all of the bloody details.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

AJ
Dalmar Abuzeid
Mike Ackerman
Julia Alexander
Lia Michelle Alfonso
Stephen Amell
Lara Amersey
Bonnie Anderson
Trey Anthony
Susan Elizabeth Applewhaite
Rebecca Auerbach
James Azzopardi
Lanomie Baird
Danielle Baker
Parveen Bakshi
Olivia Ballantyne
Brian Bannan
Rawl Banton
Lawrence C Barry
Connie Behr
Sandie Berenger
Courtenay Betts Bittou
Ryan Blakely
Kelly Bolt
Kevin D Bowles
Jean Eunice Bradley
Mary-Frances Buffery
Boris R Buhot
Cat Calinescu
Tim Campbell
Jacob Camus
Matt Carroll
John Carson
Karen Cassie

Calvin Chan
Philip Chang
Beverley D Cheung
Donna Christo
Dario Cingolani
Patti Cipoletti
Carrie Clayton
Jen Cohen
Michelle C Comilang Jr
Michael Costas
Denis Couillard
Cameron Cowles
Susie Cox
Courtney Cunningham
Mike De Pendleton
Gerry Dee
Christopher Drogemuller
Alexander Drogemuller
Kareem Duhaney
Leonard R Dunbar
Dave Dunham
Isaac Durnford
Jade Elliott
Patricia Fagan
David Farquhar
Jebb Fink
Sean Fisher
Darryl Flatman
David Flower
Asha Forrester
Sidonie Geisweiller
Sara Gilchrist
Evan Gilchrist
Richard Dean Gilmour

Dakota Goppy
Carmen Grant
Isaiah Grant
Shenae Grimes
Christina Haley
Michelle Harding
Devon Harding
Deborah Hay
Michelle Hewitt Williams
Kate Hewlett
Mark Hobson
Babs Hopkinson
Emily Catherine Houghton
David Ingram
Nadia Jai-Mansouri
Dorly Jean-Louis
Jenna Judd
Julia Juhas
Johnny Kalbhenn
Elyssa Katz
Jay Kazim
Cathy Keenan
Louise Kelly
Lara Kelly
James M King
Paul William King
Cecilia Adjoah Konney
Hill Kourkoutis
Kathryn Kriitmaa
Kerry Laifatt
Cyrus Lane
Tyler Lange
Alex Lee
Ian Lefeuvre

Heidi Leigh
Melanie Leishman
Lisa Lennox
Frank Lepre
Jennifer Liao
Jeff Lillico
Christopher R Lindsay
Helen Faye Ling
Stephen Lobo
David Mackett
Jay Malone
Antonio (Anthony) Mancini
Janelle Mandawe
Sandra Manson
Greg Mapp
Robert Marchand
Andrew Martin-Smith
Peter John Maxwell
Melissa May
Suman Mediratta
Art Mitchell
Jorge Molina
Dwayne Moniz
Jim Monkelbaan
Jade Moore
Keri Moran
Ishan Morris
Zainab Musa
David Ndaba
Haydain Neale
Scott Neil
Victoria Nestorowicz
Kalyna Newton
Carilynn Nicholson

Colin Andrew Nimblett
Logan Norris
Sora Olah
Ren Olivieri
Leah Oster
Cherie Ouellet
Richard Patrick
Jeremiah Peats
Sean Persaud
Paul Persofsky
Nicky Phillips
Anthony Poser
Jesse Primosig
Carson Quarington
Rajkumar Rai
Jameson Ratchford
Vanessa Lee Reid
Karine Ricard
Jennifer Ricci
Malcolm Riley
Evan Rose
Lisa Anne Ross
Jill Ross
Amanda Rotko
Mario Rotundo
Sarah-Jaiyn Ruglass
Kirk Salesman
Scott Sawyer
Rohan Singh
Colleen Skull
Katherine Slater
Joanne Lynn Sleightholm
Erica Mary Smith
Daniel Speck

Sarah St Amand
Derra St Denis
Michelle Stephenson
Clare Stone
Rochelle Stultz
Kathy Swanson
Gregory Sweers
Kevin Symons
Chris Szarka
Charlotte Szivak
Jim Tatti
Matthew Thompson
Chase Alexander Thomson
Stephanie Thorpe
Alexa Torrington
Trina Trina
Andrea Tutt
Stephanie Walsh
Rebecca Warren
Christopher Weedon
Jonathan Wexler
Ken Wilden
Denise Williams
Lee Wilson
Jamie Wilson
Winson Wong
Dharini Woollcombe
Trevor Ziebarth
Jay Ziebarth

Annual Christmas Bazaar at PAL PLACE

Saturday, Nov. 20, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 21, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Performing Arts Lodge, 110 The Esplanade
(just west of the St. Lawrence Market)
collectibles, giveables, & delectables
for the festive season
For more information, call 416-363-0049



What has your DIVERSITY COMMITTEE done for you lately? Read on!

Our Advocate for actors with disabilities, **Leesa Levinson** has been both learning and sharing best practices with media organizations including the **Media Access Office** in Hollywood and the **BBC**. Leesa is also working with the **Canadian Association of Broadcasters** and the **CRTC**.

Jani Lauzon's advocacy work with **Aboriginal Voices Radio** (AVR) has led to more use of ACTRA members who are First Nations, Métis and Inuit in AVR's programming.

Sandi Ross is working on the new version of the *Into the Mainstream*, ACTRA Toronto's catalogue of 'visible minority' performers. Several organizations have stepped up to sponsor this incredible initiative. More than 250 of you have already sent in your info. But don't miss this opportunity.

As your chair, I have been assisting the committed ACTRA staff in spearheading *Into the Mainstream* and our successful casting director 'meet and greet' sessions. I also liaise with the diversity committees at **Women In Film and Television**, **CAEA** and the **DGC** to find more ways to collaborate on our mutual goals.

What do YOU want ACTRA to do for you? Send us your ideas, get involved! Full info on our initiatives are in the committees section of www.actratontoronto.com.

Priya Rao
Diversity Chair & Advocate

Performers encourage voters to ask candidates where they stand on culture

ACTRA Toronto hosted a star-studded news conference June 16 at CBC's Barbara Frum Atrium to raise Canadian culture and the threat of increased foreign ownership as election issues. Among those taking part were actors Nicholas Campbell, Wendy Crewson, Shirley Douglas, Gary Farmer, Ken Finkleman, Paul Gross, Richard Hardacre, Jessica Holmes, Peter Keleghan, Mimi Kuzyk, Rick Mercer, Sarah Polley, Leah Pinsent, Fiona Reid, Rick Roberts, Wayne Robson, Mag Ruffman, Sonja Smits, Tonya Lee Williams, Maurice Dean Wint, novelist Susan Swan and filmmaker John Greyson.



Carol Racicot

Above photo: Gary Farmer and Sonja Smits put arts on the election agenda.

The Mega Studio

– Reason for hope

By Brad Borbridge



We claw and struggle to pay the bills and keep the wolves off the doorstep... always keeping an eye on the brass ring of fame and fortune that shimmers in the distance.

“Where the hell is everybody?”

– in big white letters on a black background. That was my idea for the cover of this issue of *Performers* magazine back in June, when it seemed there was nothing to our acting industry but tumbleweeds and commiserating actors.

OK, it’s an exaggeration to say there was no work – but not much of one. Here’s why: Americans used to get forty cents on the dollar, now it’s twenty; forty-one states have enacted tax break legislation similar to ours; there’s a wind of jingoistic nationalism drifting through the U.S. that seems to think that all movies should be made on U.S. soil with American actors; reality TV has all but killed the MOW business; huge box office flops have made studio heads jittery so less projects are getting green-lit; the CRTC refusing to follow their mandate and compel indigenous production; the dearth of good sound stages in Toronto.

Add to all this the common obstacles to being a working actor and it really is damn near impossible to make a living. Not so trivial obstacles like trying to keep a joe-job and get to auditions, trying to get an audition so you don’t need to get a joe-job, very little respect from anyone, dozens of talented, hard working actors going for the same role, working in an industry where if you book one in ten of your auditions you’re doing quite well, (What other industry is there where a 90% rejection rate is successful?). It’s really hard to be an actor at the best of times. We claw and struggle to pay the bills and keep the wolves off the doorstep... always keeping an eye on the brass ring of fame and fortune that shimmers in the distance. A brass ring that would allow us the freedom to relax and the power to choose our roles. Sometimes it’s closer than others, some of us actually get to grab hold of it for a while, but it’s slippery and elusive and the phone bill is due.

So to all you brave and noble actors who, despite these dry times, have managed to keep up your faith in your talent and your joy in telling a good story, let me tell you that there are a lot of reasons to be hopeful. We have one of the deepest talent pools of actors in North America (and from all different backgrounds), our film crews are the best in the world, the CRTC is starting to acknowledge the error of their ways, the Federal government reinstated their funding to the CTF, we have the equipment, we're still cheaper and, the brightest jewel on the horizon, the mega studio is getting built.

I spoke with **Ken Ferguson**, president and general manager of the Toronto Film Studios (TFS) who, with the Toronto Economic Development Corp. (TEDCO), have partnered up to build the huge mega studio complex off Commissioners Street in the Toronto portlands. Thirteen quality, purpose-built sound stages are planned, the largest being an awesome 45,000 square feet (a specific need for the \$100 million blockbuster features).

Not so long ago, Toronto was second only to L.A. for TV and film production. Now, Vancouver has surpassed us. They have around 20 quality sound studios in the fifteen to twenty thousand square foot range; we have three. This has attracted production away from us BUT... all that is about to change.

TFS is anteing up \$120 million and betting that Toronto will always be a great place to shoot. A big investment for a company that originally didn't want to get into the film production business.

TFS was spawned from the Rose Corporation, a profitable real estate finance company interested in making more profit. They



bought the old Cinespace studios on Eastern Ave. with the idea of refurbishing it and then selling it. Well, low and behold, they renovated and made a whack of dough running it. So much so, that they decided to keep the property and jump into the film and TV production industry whole hog.

Their business concept is to create a vibrant, energetic centre of film production down on Commissioners Street. "We want to create a whole community around us," says Ken, "It's going to be a place where if you're in film, you want to be around there... We're doing a lot more than studios, we're doing a whole film media village. There will be our studio lot with production offices, a commissary, fitness and whatever amenities production people want. And then, outside the gate, there will be commercial buildings, offices, a convention centre, restaurants, perhaps a hotel, post production houses, ad agencies, animation houses. It will make for a vibrant exciting film community and a great tourist attraction."

Ken Ferguson is confident that the TFS mega studio complex will be busy and that it will tip the scales back in Toronto's favour as a favourite place to shoot. I find it comforting that a bunch of crackerjack capitalists have confidence that our industry will grow. Personally, I hope they make a lot of money. I hope we all do. They plan to break ground this spring.

Keep the faith, and keep an eye peeled for that brass ring. You never know when it's going to show itself.

TFS president Ken Ferguson in one of his jet sets. Hear him speak at ACTRA Toronto's November 13 conference.



artist's conceptual drawing of finished site



The Carlu
Friday, February 18, 2005

Submissions close
Tuesday, November 30, 2004

SUBMIT NOW!

ACTRA Awards categories:

Outstanding Performance – female

Outstanding Performance – male

Celebrating our stars and our industry, the annual ACTRA Awards in Toronto recognize performances by ACTRA Toronto members. The ACTRA Awards premiered in 2003 as part of ACTRA's 60th anniversary.

Make as many submissions as you like – but only one per performance.

Submissions for nominations email

awards@actratoronto.com

web

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ACTRA Awards in Toronto 2005,
Attn.: Nominating Jury
ACTRA Toronto Performers,
625 Church Street, Suite 200,
Toronto, ON M4Y 2G1

ACTRA Awards criteria:

- submissions to the Nominating Jury accepted from any ACTRA Toronto member (Full member, Apprentice member, ACTRA Extra)
- lead or supporting performances can be in any genre (excluding radio or voice performance)
- film or television production can be indigenous or international
- submission must be a performance by an ACTRA Toronto member in good standing, residing primarily in ACTRA Toronto's jurisdiction performance must be from an ACTRA-signatory production production must have been exhibited or broadcast between Dec. 1, 2003 and Nov. 30, 2004

Please include your name and ACTRA member number with your nomination. Full rules and regulations for the ACTRA Awards in Toronto 2005 are available at www.actratoronto.com

The ACTRA Awards in Toronto 2005 SUBMISSION FORM

SUBMISSION: _____

PROJECT TITLE: _____

CATEGORY (choose one):

OUTSTANDING PERFORMACE – female _____

OUTSTANDING PERFORMACE – male _____

PRODUCTION CO. (if known): _____

SUBMITTED BY: _____

ACTRA MEMBERSHIP NUMBER: _____

PHONE (day): _____

EMAIL: _____

GENRE (choose only one):

TV SERIES _____

TV MOVIE _____

FEATURE FILM _____

SHORT FILM _____

OTHER (enter info below)

MAKE AS MANY SUBMISSIONS AS YOU LIKE, BUT ONLY ONE PER PERFORMANCE.

SUBMISSIONS DEADLINE:

November 30, 2004

Making the Case for Canadian Drama

excerpted from a speech **Paul Gross** gave at the last members Conference on June 1, 2004.
For a full transcript of this educated and passionate address go to www.actratoronto.com



I think it would be wonderful if we had a vibrant, market driven, self-sustaining entertainment industry. But we don't. Outside of Hollywood and Bollywood there are no self-sustaining cultural industries. Art has always been sponsored by the state. There is not one aspect of Canadian television that is not regulated, sheltered, protected and supported – and this is as true for the broadcasters as it is all of us. And it is this way for a very good reason.

The wise people who wrote the *Canadian Broadcasting Act* recognized the enormous power of television and its ability to affect the fabric of a nation. Their aim was to control the airwaves so that Canadians could tell their stories to themselves. Not so they could be platforms for advertising, not so that our networks could become dumping grounds for U.S. shows. This objective seems to have been forgotten.

We cannot and must not allow decisions about our cultural future to be determined only by the balance sheets in an accountant's ledger books.

Often I'm asked: "What is the business case for making Canadian drama?" I have two answers for that. The first is that the question itself is illegitimate – there is no 'case' to be made. It is simply the cost of the licence, it is the cost of having a network, of having a protected stream of revenue – it is the cost of doing business.

The second answer is more blunt – there is no business case for making Canadian drama.

The reason for this dates back roughly 30 years when we introduced a thing called simultaneous substitution. Basically, a network can buy a show from the U.S., pull out the U.S. commercials and substitute our own and run it at the same time. It has proven to be the driving force of our network's revenues. The notion was that our networks would take this additional revenue and funnel it back into domestic production.

Essentially simultaneous substitution means that Canadian networks can buy proven American dramas more cheaply than they can ever make their own. And the fees they pay for shows are not reflective of the costs, not only to make these shows but to support the enormous developmental enterprise it takes to find one hit show. At every stage in the research and development of new dramas in the U.S. there is an 80% failure rate. Two years ago, ABC alone spent \$20 million on the development of new scripts. That's just on writing. That doesn't include production of pilots or first orders of episodes. And when one of

As long as simultaneous substitution exists there will never be a business case for making Canadian drama.

these shows finally makes it through the mill and is bought by a Canadian broadcaster, they bring with them an enormously powerful publicity and marketing machine. None of the costs of this are borne by the Canadian networks so, in effect, they're getting something like a free ride. And I have no objection to this BUT as long as simultaneous substitution exists there will never be a business case for making Canadian drama.

And this brings us back to the *Broadcasting Act* where the case for making Canadian drama is stated clearly: So Canadians can tell their stories to themselves. The Canadian broadcasting industry exists at the pleasure of the Canadian people and it can be de-regulated overnight and its protections, shelter and support would disappear and it is anybody's guess as to how long that industry would survive.

We will never have a robust national culture on a purely volunteer basis. This may sound alarming but if you think about it, that statement is equally applicable to anywhere outside of Hollywood and Bollywood. Everywhere else, the expression of a national culture is exercised by a combination of regulation and support.

The future of our culture is very much up in the air right now and a considerable part of that future rests in the hands of the commissioners at the CRTC. We cannot and must not allow decisions about our cultural future to be determined only by the balance sheets in an accountant's ledger books. Make yourself heard.

Thank you.



A host of Canadian stars joined Paul Gross for his conference speech:
left to right: Paul Gross, Nicholas Campbell, Sonja Smits, Gordon Pinsent, Wendy Crewson, Peter Keleghan, Leah Pinsent and Karl Pruner.

Casting Directors

Marsha Chesley

I think that if actors were to really sit back and think about it, they'd realize that the Casting Director is their best friend. We have very few slots to bring people in. So if I've brought you in, if I've invited you to come in and audition, it's because I really believe you can do it. I wouldn't waste the director's time and the producer's time and my own time bringing someone I didn't think could do the part.

Millie Tom

Be prepared. Commit to your choices. Own the audition. Own your choices. Don't hesitate. Sometimes reasons you book or you don't book are out of your control.

John Buchan

When I'm looking at new actors – young actors – to bring in, I look at training. I think that a classical theatre training is absolutely the best. Most of the most successful film actors were great theatre actors first.

I think that we are looking more for layers in actors and listening is just as important as when you're saying the dialogue. You are at the mercy of the script and if you've got a well-written script you're just going to be better – you're always going to be better. If it's a bad script then you just have to sort of do what you can with it!



Casting directors Marsha Chesley, John Buchan and Millie Tom.

Once you are in the room, really committing to a choice and saying 'these are the choices that I'm going to make' and if you stumble over the words then just try and move right through it and then at the end say 'can I try it again?' Rather than having a whole lot of false starts because I think producers and directors lose confidence when actors go 'Can I stop in the middle and try it again?'

Go to www.actratoronto.com for a transcript of the lengthy and highly informative Question and Answer period with these casting directors.

Director of Photography Master Class

**BACK BY
POPULAR DEMAND!**

DOP extraordinaire Packer is at the
NOVEMBER 13 MEMBERS'
CONFERENCE!

In the Director of Photography master class, actor Sarah Brown works with the camera and camera "man" Gerald Packer.



John Ly

Dr. Sandi Leibovici Cosmetic Dentistry



Dr. Leibovici has been serving the community for 20 years, offering a friendly, relaxed environment in the heart of the city.



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Crossing over to Directing

Rosemary Dunsmore

Just acknowledge what you don't know and get somebody that you trust.

I think a lot of us actors who are contemplating directing are shy about it and think – 'oh, I can't do it, no, I can't do it' – when we do have a wealth of experience. We know the artistic side and the technical is actually easier to learn.

You can make something on video to test your wings and find out if you like doing this. It doesn't need to cost a whole lot of money now to make something that's interesting.

Jennifer Podemski

Keep an open mind if you want to direct and if you want to perform. Because the more you keep it to yourself, I think the more dangerous it gets and it can't really grow.

I would recommend over everything to take the time with your project, to develop it, to workshop it, to have an open mind and work towards building it into something really beautiful and not forgetting the art of it.

I think it's really great to know about everything on set. Not be an expert, but at least understand it. I'm also a huge fan of shadowing. I've shadowed a number of directors and I hope that one day when I finally direct something that's big, I'll use everything that I've learned from those experiences.



"but what I really want to do is direct."

Fabrizio Filippo

One thing is, you'll never, ever get your vision out there. You have to create your vision, as clearly as you can because once you get there on the day, you're never going to get the shot you want. It's like being an actor really because it's an improvisational art.

I love Canada. I want the world to see Canadian stuff and I really believe that we could put ourselves on the map.

I've taken classes and all that kind of stuff but for me it's really a lot about instinct. It's possible to direct yourself, but after you've done it a whole bunch of times.

I find that with a lot of actors who cross over to directing, their first films are just great characters, and that's just not enough.

Go to school, study something, but it doesn't have to be directing. It is such a cowboy industry in so many ways that it really is all about your passion, your drive and your desire to do this thing

It's like Andrew Carnegie – I think his epitaph reads: Here lies a man who knew how to gather men more intelligent than himself – and that's the job of a great director.

Accents

Clues for sounding American with John Nelles and Diane Pitblado

Warning: don't run with scissors, and don't try to learn an accent by yourself; they can both cause a lot of pain.

General Characteristics:

the operative word here is general.

Canadian: The mouth is more closed or a smaller opening, the lips are tighter, and the tongue is up more. The speech also sounds more articulated, and clipped, sometimes seeming faster. The "r" is generally softer. (Except in more western regions, and some of the Maritimes, though that is quite a different accent altogether.) The influences of the speech patterns of the British Isles also give Canadian speech more pitch variety.

Placement: centre to forward of centre in mouth. This varies regionally.

American: The mouth is more open, with more space inside, the jaw is looser (though not as active,) and lips are also softer/looser. The tongue is more active and lower, especially in the back of the mouth. This also makes for the "harder r" sounds. This also makes some word endings seem somewhat swallowed. (ie. -er, -al, -tion)

Placement: More in the centre, to centre-back of the mouth. Also varies regionally.

Up Speak: *please note, especially in discussing this point that there is*



Up Speak, or Up Talk, is essentially the rising pitch toward the end of a sentence, and habit of making a declarative sentence sound like an interrogatory one. In other words, making statements sound like questions. It is very prevalent in Canadian speech, and occasionally in some parts of the Southwestern U.S., but in a different context. (I'm not referring to the "Valley Girl" speech, which also uses this extensively)

Canadian: this rising inflection often occurs within the statement and then always ends with rising pitch at the end of the statement. Often, where the rises occur, the last sound in the word is held during the slide up, and there is a little pause right after it.

American: the pitch goes up in earlier parts of the statement, and/or on words or points that are stressed. The pitch is then dropped or lowered sharply at the end of the statement. This may also account for the impression of aggression in some speech.

Auditors' Report

To the Members of the ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch

We have audited the consolidated balance sheet of ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch as of February 29, 2004, and the consolidated statements of operations and surplus and funds and cash flows for the year then ended. These consolidated financial statements are the responsibility of the Branch's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Branch as at February 29, 2004 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Markham, Canada
May 14, 2004


Grant Thornton LLP
Chartered Accountants

We are pleased to present the Audited Financial Statements for ACTRA Toronto Performers for the year ending February 29, 2004.

We finished the year with a surplus of \$358,210. On the income side, the dues increase more than offset the decline in non-member income. The SARS crisis and the decline of the Canadian dollar kept service productions away from Toronto for several months. On the expense side, we were able to control expenses with some spending discipline as well as with the postponement of one of our operating plan projects – the phone service initiative. Our friends at ACTRA National also assisted us by waiving their MIS service fee for one year.

Should you have any questions or would like further information about our financial situation please leave a message for Austin Schatz, ACTRA Toronto's VP Finance, at 416-928-2278 ext. 6607 or contact him via email at: aschatz@council.actratontoronto.com.

ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch Consolidated Balance Sheet February 29

	2004	2003
Assets		
Current		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 449,276	\$ 458,494
Accounts receivable	412,616	370,403
Prepaid expenses	54,486	39,289
Note receivable	-	43,511
Investments (Note 3)	263,699	-
	<u>1,180,077</u>	<u>911,697</u>
Bonds held in trust for engagers	2,310,184	1,606,816
Investments (Note 3)	10,012,768	9,763,030
Capital assets (Note 4)	283,360	439,119
	<u>\$13,786,389</u>	<u>\$12,720,662</u>
Liabilities		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 567,305	\$ 523,955
Due to members	197,121	125,000
Due to ACTRA National (Note 8)	16,360	17,769
Due to ACTRA Fraternal Benefit Society (Note 8)	1,115	24,180
Due to ACTRA Performers Guild (Note 8)	-	2,232
Due to ACTRA Performers Rights Society (Note 8)	1,725	1,757
Due to other branches (Note 8)	-	30,416
Current portion of severance payable	87,750	-
Current portion of capital lease obligations (Note 5)	59,791	54,169
	<u>931,167</u>	<u>779,478</u>
Severance payable	50,000	137,750
Capital lease obligations (Note 5)	74,185	133,975
Due to engagers	2,310,184	1,606,816
	<u>3,365,536</u>	<u>2,658,019</u>
Funds		
Externally restricted		
Toronto Action / Defense Fund	5,649,204	5,580,935
Toronto Emergency Operating Expense Fund	3,162,353	3,035,667
Internally restricted		
Computer Systems Development Fund	26,778	135,553
Invested in Capital Assets Fund	283,360	439,119
Council Surplus	167,342	167,342
	<u>9,289,037</u>	<u>9,358,616</u>
Surplus	1,131,816	704,027
	<u>10,420,853</u>	<u>10,062,643</u>
	<u>\$13,786,389</u>	<u>\$12,720,662</u>

Commitment and contingency (Notes 6 and 7)

On behalf of the Toronto Branch Council



President



Vice President - Finance

See accompanying notes to the consolidated financial statements.

**ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch
Consolidated Statement of Operations**

Year Ended February 29	Total 2004	Total 2003
Income		
Members	\$3,776,545	\$ 3,210,779
Non-members	1,276,377	1,403,925
Other	1,863,104	2,179,692
	<u>6,916,026</u>	<u>6,794,396</u>
Expenses		
Union Democracy and Advocacy	374,450	279,573
Executive Director's Office	285,335	359,368
Organizing and Communications Unit	328,182	144,362
Membership Services Unit	295,832	309,271
Film and Television Production Unit	883,778	957,409
Commercial Production Unit	711,705	807,276
Finance Unit	562,815	494,289
Reception	151,879	158,725
Occupancy and Office	724,047	789,333
Data, Statistics and Information Technology	108,775	122,045
Affiliations	6,600	6,375
Grievances, Arbitrations and Litigation	67,255	72,482
Ontario Film and Television Consortium	57,313	-
Transfers to ACTRA National	1,999,850	1,997,755
	<u>6,557,816</u>	<u>6,498,263</u>
Excess of income over expenses	<u>\$ 358,210</u>	<u>\$ 296,133</u>
Allocated as follows:		
Toronto Action / Defense Fund	\$ 68,269	\$ 80,935
Toronto Emergency Operating Expense Fund	126,686	116,983
Computer Systems Development Fund	(108,775)	(122,045)
Surplus	272,030	220,260
	<u>\$ 358,210</u>	<u>\$ 296,133</u>

See accompanying notes to the financial statements

**ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch
Consolidated Statement of Surplus and Funds
Year Ended February 29**

Year Ended February 29	2004	2003
Toronto Action / Defense Fund		
Balance, beginning of year	\$5,580,935	\$5,500,000
Allocated during the year	68,269	80,935
Balance, end of year	<u>\$5,649,204</u>	<u>\$ 5,580,935</u>
Toronto Emergency Operating Expense Fund		
Balance, beginning of year	\$3,035,667	\$ 2,918,684
Allocated during year	126,686	116,983
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ 3,162,353</u>	<u>\$ 3,035,667</u>
Computer Systems Development Fund		
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 135,553	\$ 257,598
Allocated during year	(108,775)	(122,045)
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ 26,778</u>	<u>\$ 135,553</u>
Invested in Capital Assets Fund		
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 439,119	\$ 628,312
Fund Transfer	(155,759)	(189,193)
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ 283,360</u>	<u>\$ 439,119</u>
Council Surplus		
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 167,342	\$ 167,342
Allocated during year	-	-
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ 167,342</u>	<u>\$ 167,342</u>
Surplus		
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 704,027	\$ 294,574
Fund Transfer	155,759	189,193
Allocated during the year	272,030	220,260
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ 1,131,816</u>	<u>\$ 704,027</u>

See accompanying notes to the consolidated financial statements.

**ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch
Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows**

Year Ended February 29	2004	2003
Cash and equivalents derived from (applied to)		
Operating		
Excess of income over expenses	\$ 358,210	\$ 296,133
Amortization	192,781	205,176
	<u>550,991</u>	<u>501,309</u>
Change in non-cash operating working capital		
Accounts receivable	(42,213)	30,097
Prepaid expenses	(15,197)	18,485
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	43,350	(39,250)
Severance payable	-	137,750
Due to members	72,121	(38,561)
	<u>609,052</u>	<u>609,830</u>
Financing		
Advances from ACTRA National	(1,409)	17,769
Advances from ACTRA Fraternal Benefit Society	(23,065)	24,180
Advances from ACTRA Performers Guild	(2,232)	2,232
Advances from ACTRA Performers Rights Society	(32)	1,757
Advances from other branches	(30,416)	30,416
Capital lease obligation repayments	(54,168)	(49,127)
	<u>(111,322)</u>	<u>27,227</u>
Investing		
Purchase of capital assets	(37,022)	(15,983)
Repayment of note receivable from the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists	43,511	188,000
Purchase of investments	(513,437)	(628,459)
	<u>(506,948)</u>	<u>(456,442)</u>
Increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(9,218)	180,615
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	458,494	277,879
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	<u>\$ 449,276</u>	<u>\$ 458,494</u>
Supplementary cash flow information:		
Cash and cash equivalents consist of:		
Cash on hand and balances with banks	\$ 442,627	\$ 451,914
Temporary money market instruments	6,649	6,580
	<u>\$ 449,276</u>	<u>\$ 458,494</u>
Interest paid	<u>\$ 21,910</u>	<u>\$ 26,950</u>

See accompanying notes to the consolidated financial statements.

**ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch
Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements
February 29, 2004**

1. Nature of operations

The ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch (ATP) is an autonomous branch of the ACTRA Performers Guild. The Branch represents performers in the live transmission and recorded media.

2. Significant accounting policies

General

The financial statements of the Branch have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for non-profit organizations.

Principles of consolidation

The consolidated financial statements include the accounts of ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch, and its wholly-owned subsidiary, ACTRA Toronto Sponsor Inc. All significant intercompany transactions and balances between this party have been eliminated.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, balances with banks and short term deposits with original maturities of three months or less. Bank borrowings are considered to be financing activities.

Investments

Investments are carried at cost plus accrued interest, less write-downs when any decline in value is considered to be other than temporary.

continued on page 20.

Capital assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost and are amortized on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Computer equipment	3 years
Furniture and fixtures	5 years
Leaseholds	Over term of lease
Assets under capital lease	Over term of lease

Funds**Toronto Action / Defense Fund**

This account has been established for use in times of crisis such as an actor's strike.

Toronto Emergency Operating Expense Fund

This account has been established for use only if there is a shortfall in any budgetary year caused by extraordinary events.

Computer Systems Development Fund

This account has been established for ongoing upgrades to the Branch's computer systems.

Invested in Capital Assets Fund

This Fund represents the carrying value of the capital assets held by the Branch.

Council Surplus

This account has been established for special council projects.

3.	Investments	2004	2003
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Investments are carried at cost plus accrued interest and consist of the following:

\$250,000			
Ontario Savings Bonds due June 21, 2004, 3.00% yield (Yr.1), 5.25% yield (Yr. 2) 6.00% yield (Yr. 3), 6.5% yield (Yr. 4), 7.00% yield (Yr. 5), 7.50% yield (Yr. 6) and 8.00% yield (Yr. 7), market value \$259,375; (2003 - \$259,375)	\$ 263,699		\$ 262,842
\$500,000			
Ontario Savings Bond 2001, due June 21, 2006, 4.25% yield (Yr. 1), 5.00% yield (Yr. 2), 5.75% yield (Yr. 3), 6.25% yield (Yr. 4), 6.75% yield (Yr. 5), market value \$534,512 (2003 - \$534,512)	519,849		517,260
Trimark Income Growth Fund, market value \$722,584; (2003 - \$595,174)	560,210		541,360
Royal Monthly Income Fund, market value \$1,236,783; (2003 - \$1,036,824)	1,107,264		1,059,285
Trimark Select Growth Fund, market value \$114,208; (2003 - \$93,341)	107,082		105,947
Royal Premium Money Market Fund, market value \$782,561; (2003 - \$763,596)	782,561		763,596
Templeton Growth Fund, market value \$9,200; (2003 - \$6,505)	11,178		11,178
KBSH Short Term Bond Fund, market value \$7,082,088; (2003 - \$6,563,566). At year end, the Branch owns 30% of the units of this fund.	6,924,524		6,501,462
Return on Innovation Fund Inc. (100 Class B shares)	100	100	100
	10,276,467		9,763,030
Less: Current portion	263,699		-
	<u>\$10,012,768</u>		<u>\$9,763,030</u>

4.	Capital assets			2004	2003
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value	
Computer equipment	\$ 410,468	\$ 388,710	\$ 21,758	\$ 96,751	
Furniture and fixtures	168,866	122,902	45,964	69,023	
Leasehold improvements	169,392	53,877	115,515	114,348	
Assets under capital lease	294,370	194,247	100,123	158,997	
	<u>\$ 1,043,096</u>	<u>\$ 759,736</u>	<u>\$ 283,360</u>	<u>\$ 439,119</u>	

5.	Capital lease obligations	2004	2003
	Capital leases on office furniture and equipment repayable in approximate aggregate monthly payments of principal and interest of \$5,871 and maturing at various dates to February 2006.	\$ 133,976	\$ 188,144
	Less: Current portion	59,791	54,169
		<u>\$ 74,185</u>	<u>\$ 133,975</u>

Future minimum lease payments:

2005	\$ 70,446
2006	78,015
	<u>148,461</u>
Less imputed interest at various rates, ranging from 9.6% to 10.6%	(14,485)
	<u>\$ 133,976</u>

6. Commitment

The Branch has entered into an agreement to lease its premises until August 2010. The annual rent of its premises consists of a minimum rent plus realty taxes, maintenance, heat and certain other expenses. Minimum rent payable for the premises for each of the next five years and thereafter is as follows:

2005	\$ 402,238
2006	438,373
2007	464,184
2008	464,184
2009	464,184
2010 and beyond	657,594
	<u>\$2,890,757</u>

7. Contingency**Goods and services tax**

Canada Revenue Agency ("CRA") has ruled that certain revenue streams are not taxable. Consequently, previously claimed related input tax credits may not be deductible. This ruling is currently being appealed. In the event that the appeal is unsuccessful, input tax credits along with interest would become reimbursable to CRA. Neither the aggregate amount of input tax credits to be reimbursed and interest, nor the outcome of the appeal, are determinable at this time.

8. Related party transactions	2004	2003
The Branch had the following transactions with related parties:		
(a) Transfers to (from) ACTRA National		
Per capita payments	\$ 1,999,850	\$ 1,778,900
Services agreement	-	218,855
	1,999,850	1,997,755
Other revenue	-	(150,000)
	<u>\$1,999,850</u>	<u>\$1,847,755</u>
(b) Transfers to (from) ACTRA Fraternal Benefit Society		
RRSP, health and insurance premiums	\$ 587,896	\$ 616,410
Insurance premium adjustment	-	(30,750)
	<u>\$ 587,896</u>	<u>\$ 585,660</u>

These transactions are in the normal course of operations and are measured at the exchange amount, which is the amount of consideration established and agreed to by the related parties.

The amounts due to related parties consist of deposit re-allocations and reimbursements to affiliated branches of ACTRA National, as well as amounts due to ACTRA National itself. These amounts are non-interest bearing and are due on demand.

9. Awards	2004	2003
Awards expenditures	\$ 91,242	\$ 56,062
Less: sponsorships received	(68,000)	(35,000)
Awards, net	<u>\$ 23,242</u>	<u>\$ 21,062</u>

10. Comparatives

Certain figures have been reclassified to conform with the current year financial statement presentation.

ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch Consolidated Schedule of Income

Year Ended February 29	Total 2004	Total 2003
Members		
Basic dues	\$ 1,245,884	\$ 945,508
Working dues	1,610,163	1,543,979
Initiation	178,254	186,890
Withdrawal fees	8,232	3,885
Reinstatement fees	9,883	14,983
Fines	4,550	4,396
Apprentice initiation fees	252,382	102,076
Apprentice permits	449,417	387,672
Apprentice member courses	16,600	20,400
ACTRA Extras dues	1,180	990
	<u>3,776,545</u>	<u>3,210,779</u>
Non-members (work permit fees)		
Resident	771,673	869,673
Non-resident	504,704	534,252
	<u>1,276,377</u>	<u>1,403,925</u>
Other		
Administrative fees - IPA	622,134	541,242
- Other	26,224	50,311
Contract service fees	255,971	276,622
10% service charges	428,960	404,171
Industry fines	2,794	77,921
Capital gains on investment disposal	-	23,689
Transfer from ACTRA National	-	150,000
Interest	527,021	405,736
	<u>1,863,104</u>	<u>2,179,692</u>
	<u>\$ 6,916,026</u>	<u>\$ 6,794,396</u>

ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch Consolidated Schedule of Expenses

Year Ended February 29	Total 2004	Total 2003
Union Democracy and Advocacy		
President		
Council, executive and committee honoraria	\$ 87,807	\$ 82,000
President's expenses	4,703	4,928
Council travel	7,889	-
Professional and legal fees	2,062	3,712
Council planning session	4,294	-
	<u>106,755</u>	<u>91,340</u>
Vice President (Communications)		
Performers magazine	71,968	44,829
Direct mail bulletins	11,695	-
Event, festivals and conferences	19,576	27,658
Diversity committee	6,000	-
WIDC	5,000	-
Toronto marketing initiative	-	11,496
Donations and sponsorships	-	5,000
Miscellaneous	-	19
	<u>114,239</u>	<u>89,002</u>
Vice President (Internal)		
Apprentices caucus	275	-
ACTRA extras caucus	152	-
	<u>427</u>	<u>-</u>
Vice President (Member Services)		
Membership services	68,567	61,070
Actor's gym	2,468	-
	<u>71,035</u>	<u>61,070</u>
Vice President (External)		
Canadian broadcasting campaign	40,289	17,099
Political action committee	3,454	-
	<u>43,743</u>	<u>17,099</u>
Member-at-large		
Awards (Note 9)	23,242	21,062
Discipline committee	444	-
	<u>23,686</u>	<u>21,062</u>
Council and stunt elections		
	14,565	-
	<u>374,450</u>	<u>279,573</u>
Executive Director's Office		
Salaries	194,330	253,862
General benefits	26,491	35,227
RRSP	21,220	27,104
Travel & expenses	21,700	19,339
Consultants and professional fees	21,594	23,816
	<u>285,335</u>	<u>359,368</u>
Organizing and Communications Unit		
Salaries	227,570	78,043
General benefits	45,850	13,040
RRSP	21,183	6,719
Advertising & industry marketing	5,260	13,166
Publications program	5,071	3,524
Sponsorships	15,575	12,154
Public relations	3,152	10,857
Subscriptions and periodicals	3,865	4,322
Manager expenses	541	-
Promotional items	115	2,537
	<u>328,182</u>	<u>144,362</u>
Membership Services Unit		
Salaries	210,627	217,935
General benefits	45,216	42,982
RRSP	21,002	19,284
Apprentice training program	18,987	29,070
	<u>295,832</u>	<u>309,271</u>
Film and Television Production Unit		
Salaries	622,916	699,200
General benefits	116,553	113,495
RRSP	61,700	67,657
TIP administration	22,987	16,325
Stewarding expenses	8,098	8,803
OSLO per diems	37,933	39,895
OSLO expenses	9,544	8,360
OSLO insurance expense	2,292	2,674
OSLO training	153	19
Manager expenses	1,602	981
	<u>883,778</u>	<u>957,409</u>

ACTRA Toronto Performers Branch Consolidated Schedule of Expenses (continued)

Year Ended February 29	Total 2004	Total 2003
Commercial Production Unit		
Salaries	533,110	512,875
One-time salaries	-	137,750
General benefits	115,420	90,622
RRSP	51,033	47,488
Stewarding expenses	-	172
OSLO per diems	8,155	14,602
OSLO expenses	2,458	3,178
Legal fees	-	-
Manager expenses	1,529	589
	<u>711,705</u>	<u>807,276</u>
Finance Unit		
Salaries	247,055	207,311
General benefits	53,779	38,682
RRSP	24,955	20,204
Accounting and auditing costs	49,415	49,750
Office supplies	36,410	33,169
Letterhead and other printing	5,831	10,883
Postage	41,254	43,918
GST expenses	44,286	43,870
Health benefits for retirees	16,653	9,685
Sundries	8,767	8,973
Staff development	3,452	3,739
Visa charges	15,231	11,802
Mastercard charges	6,642	4,597
Bank charges	6,399	5,154
Courier	1,720	1,909
Manager expenses	966	643
	<u>562,815</u>	<u>494,289</u>
Reception		
Salaries	120,371	126,979
General benefits	22,331	22,026
RRSP	9,177	9,720
	<u>151,879</u>	<u>158,725</u>
Occupancy and Office		
Rent and property taxes	447,080	491,106
Furniture lease interest	21,910	26,950
Amortization - leased assets	58,874	58,874
Office equipment contracts and leases	61,137	71,012
Telephone	60,354	58,370
Insurance	27,130	36,248
Furniture capital costs	3,469	1,451
Amortization - furniture and fixtures	44,093	45,322
	<u>724,047</u>	<u>789,333</u>
Data, Statistics and Information Technology		
Amortization - hardware	89,814	100,980
Maintenance	5,036	1,672
Data communications	7,759	7,215
Software	5,908	1,647
Supplies (recovery)	(3,298)	6,459
Programming	3,556	4,072
	<u>108,775</u>	<u>122,045</u>
Affiliations		
Ontario Federation of Labour	6,600	6,375
Grievances, Arbitrations and Litigation		
	67,255	72,482
Ontario Film and Television Consortium		
	57,313	-
Total Branch Expenses		
	<u>4,557,966</u>	<u>4,500,508</u>
Transfers to ACTRA National		
Per capita payments	1,999,850	1,778,900
Services agreement	-	218,855
	<u>1,999,850</u>	<u>1,997,755</u>
Total Revenues		
	<u>6,916,026</u>	<u>6,794,396</u>
Total Branch Expenses		
	<u>4,557,966</u>	<u>4,500,508</u>
Transfers to ACTRA National		
	<u>1,999,850</u>	<u>1,997,755</u>
Net Surplus	<u>\$ 358,210</u>	<u>\$ 296,133</u>



Metropia



Yasin Sheikh as Rajeev and Zaib Shaikh as Jayesh.

THEY WANTED BIKINIS, BUT THIS IS CANADA. By Lindsey Connell

When Rogers Omni station put out the call that they were looking to develop their first ever dramatic series, they talked with Montreal-based **Stephen Greenberg** and **Jean Bureau**, co-owners of JB Media and Incendo Media, about doing a Canadian version of Australia's soap opera *Crash Palace*. They wanted a hot, twenty-something soap opera set in a Youth Hostel featuring plenty of skin and angst. But Australia being Australia and Canada being, well, really cold – the bikinis were out.

Greenberg and Bureau sought out old friend **Steve Levitan** of Protocol Entertainment (producer of *Train 48*), and his partner **Paul Bronfman**, then quickly enlisted soap veterans **Paula J. Smith** and **Alex Galaitis** (Co-Creators of *Paradise Falls*) to round out the creative team and develop *Metropia*.

The marriage between soap opera and Omni, a traditional news and current affairs broadcaster that regularly reaches 40 ethno-cultural groups across Ontario, might seem an unlikely one. However, they wanted more than just a sexy show. They wanted something edgy and different, a multi-ethnic, culturally diverse soap opera that would reflect their audience. As **Madelaine Ziniak**, Vice President of Omni and Co-Chair on the diversity task force told me, "A lot of people in the industry have the notion that this kind of material won't be accepted by the community... but we've been saying for a long time, 'you know the audience is out there - Wake up!'"

The marriage works. But don't expect the characters that make up *Metropia's* world to wear their ethnicities on their sleeves. Cultural stereotypes are avoided and the characters of *Metropia* are very real – for a soap opera that is.

Metropia can be seen Monday to Friday at 10:30 pm on Omni. There are 78 episodes

Each 24 to 30 page episode is shot in a single day using two cameras.

Casting director **Sharon Forrest** used both traditional and non-traditional casting methods to tap a fount of underused Toronto talent. At some point it became clear that the word had got out and “People just started showing up. Some with experience, some with very little. A real mixed bag.” Madelaine Ziniak went on to say, “It was a great experience to be able to look at fresh talent in Toronto. We were also saying look, we want accents... It’s nice to be able to give a break to these actors and to be able to platform their talents.”

Some of the regular cast includes: **Claudio Besso, Walter Alza, Wes Williams** - aka Maestro (yes, that Maestro), **Robin Brule, Tracy Michailidis, Yasin Sheikh, Dharini Woolcombe, Danielle Hampton, Sean Bell, Silver Kim, Zaib Shaikh, Barna Moricz, Kristin Fairlie** and **Zainab Musa**.

One of the many acting finds is Yasin Sheikh, who plays nineteen-year old Rajeev with dexterity and smooth confidence. I was amazed to learn it was his first major television gig and that he hadn’t worked in nine months. Talent like this shouldn’t be wasted. When asked if there were similarities between himself and the character of Rajeev, Sheikh said: “Yeah, in the sense that Rajeev is a South Asian kid. You know, my father’s from Pakistan and my mother’s Greek and so in that respect I was lucky to even get a role this big. I just wanted a chance to play a lead character and to show him in a true representation.”

In one of *Metropia*’s more compelling plot-points, Rajeev’s parents have arranged for him to marry a woman of similar background. One problem, Rajeev is gay and everyone knows it but his parents and the bride-to-be. Oh yeah. Then Rajeev falls in love with his fiancée’s brother Jayesh (played by the very talented Zaib Shaikh). The resulting brouhaha culminates in some very steamy scenes.

The setting of the show is raw and urban. There’s a sprawling loft, a coffee shop, and a bar named ‘Bang’ that plays host to boxing matches and surprise musical guests like “Maestro” and “Raoul and the Big Time.”

One of the greatest challenges of the show (and something that would send some actors and directors running) is the pace at which it is shot. Each 24 to 30 page episode is shot in a single day using two cameras. 24 to 30 pages a day! To the actors, it’s sink or swim. As one of the more experienced actors on the set, Robin Brule (who gives a heartfelt performance as single mother Sophie) said, “It’s insane! You have to come in on your game. It’s pre-lit, so you block it, and then five minutes later you go!”

No sides in your back pocket, no cheat sheets, no naps between takes; this show moves. Their workweek is one day of rehearsal, followed by four days of intense shooting. Add to this that the actors don’t know what their character’s storyline is going to be until the new scripts arrive on Friday, and you’ve got one heck of a ride. “That makes it really interesting – to not know what’s going to happen,” Robin said.

These characters are fresh, young, and dynamic. Rogers CEO **Leslie Sole** is hopeful that *Metropia* is going to stand Toronto on its ear with lots of controversy, lots of fodder for the water-cooler, and lots of skin, with or without bikinis.

Barna Moricz as Yuri and Danielle Hampton as Jordan



Dharini Woolcombe as Maya and Zaib Shaikh as Jayesh.



Sam Elliott as Sam and Robin Brule as Sophie.



Wes ‘Maestro’ Williams as Quincy



Sean Bell as T.K. O’Neil



Peter Outerbridge (David Sandström)

ReGenesis

by
Chris Owens

FYI — ReGenesis/FeatureArticle

Frankenfoods. Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy. Ebola. Bio-weaponry. The Human Gnome Project. Stem Cell research. Cloning. Gene-doping. Designer children.

As we enter the Brave New World of 21st century science, ethical questions are raised and the answers divide us. Just how far should we go with our newfound powers?

What are the possible consequences? As we wait impatiently in the wings to assume the role of the Creator, we must ask ourselves –

what kind of gods will we be?

“Whenever science makes a discovery, the devil grabs it while the angels are debating the best way to use it.”
 - Alan Valentine

In the opening credit sequence of *ReGenesis*, a new 13-part one-hour drama series, we follow an ‘Everyman’ on his way to work; he’s standing on the subway, gripping an overhead pole, he’s going up the escalator, touching the handrail, we see him cough once or twice, he buys a newspaper, he coughs again, wipes his mouth, uses a public telephone. Intercut with his progress, we see quick shots of lab equipment, needles, microscopes, agitated cells, and bacteria. By the time the slick opening credits are over, our once healthy Everyman will be dead on the sidewalk – blood trickling from his nose, the life going out of his eyes. Is it a new virus? Is it bioterrorism? Is it something for which we can find a cure?

Five years ago **Christina Jennings**, founder of Shaftesbury Films and the creator and Executive Producer of *ReGenesis*, began the task of bringing the subject of science and its ever-increasing influence on our lives to the small screen; “I started realizing all the things I’d taken for granted: the food I eat, the water, vaccinations...I realized I wasn’t fully trusting. Genetically altered food – what does that mean exactly? I found myself questioning and I could see it was everywhere – the whole field of biotechnology. Science was giving us all these options in terms of who we were... and that led to the beginning of the series.”



Maxim Roy (Caroline Morrison)



Mayko Nguyen (Mayko Tran)



Greg Bryk (Weston Field), Conrad Pla (Carlos Serrano) and Peter Outerbridge (David Sandström) on the set of **ReGenesis**

Set in the immediate future, *ReGenesis* is a science investigation show that challenges the status quo. “We don’t conclude episodes,” says Jennings, “We have multiple story lines and they don’t resolve every week. You don’t tune in and get your issue story and 45 minutes later, it’s resolved.” While filming an episode about using the common cold virus to combat leukemia, Jennings picked up the *Sunday New York Times* and found herself reading an article “about what we were, in fact, shooting on Tuesday. It was very exciting to feel how current we really are.”

To create a distinct look for the show, Jennings collaborated with director **John L’Ecuyer** (*Queer as Folk*, *Da Vinci’s Inquest*). He directed the pilot, six episodes, the opening montage sequence, and pieces for every episode. To shoot 15 pages a day and maintain the quality they were striving for, L’Ecuyer says they needed a “top notch crew. This was the best synergy and synthesis of a lot of different people’s strengths. It’s very strong visually, the performers came

through, good scripts, great topics and ideas – a very sexy show.” Complementing the visual style of L’Ecuyer are award-winning directors **Don McBreaarty** (*The Interrogation of Michael Crowe*, *Butterbox Babies*), and **Jerry Ciccoritti** (*Lives of the Saints*, *Trudeau*).

The incomparable **Peter Outerbridge** plays ‘David Sandström’, a hotheaded but brilliant molecular biologist and the Chief Scientist at NorBAC (North American Biotechnology Advisory Commission). “I try to describe the show to people and they say, ‘oh, it’s like

CSI meets *X-Files*’ and, since I’m a big fan of templates I say, ‘it’s more like *CSI* meets *Outer Limits* - without the aliens. It’s like *CSI* meets science run amok.” NorBAC consists of an international team of scientists charged with investigating “dubious advances in biotechnology...they are the detectives in that world,” explains head writer and Executive Producer, **Tom Chehak**.

“It’s not so much about is this right or is this wrong; it’s going to happen. They are going to clone people, they are going to gene-dope – but who’s monitoring it? Who’s watching it?” queries

Director John L’Ecuyer on set. Hear him speak at the next ACTRA Toronto conference.





Peter Outerbridge (David Sandström) and Mayko Nguyen (Mayko Tran) on the set of **ReGenesis**

Outerbridge. “We are on the cusp of a new world. When my kids are having their babies, their doctors are going to say, ‘I can give you blond hair, blue eyes...I can give you exactly what you want.’ That’s kind of frightening and yet, it’s exhilarating. And I think that’s the point of the show – not to pass judgment on this new world we’re about to enter into but to present the nightmare and the cure.”

As ‘Caroline Morrison’, the Executive Director of NorBAC, recruited from Washington to run the Lab in Toronto, **Maxim Roy** (*Les Boys*, *Virginie*) says, shooting the first few episodes was an eye-opening experience; “We got really scared. We stopped eating meat on set. It was ridiculous,” she laughs, “It’s knowing that if it hasn’t happened, it could

happen. What’s written is really well researched” (by **Dr. Aled Edwards** – Chief Executive of the Structural Genomics Consortium). “I think we all became a lot smarter, we started questioning things. Did you know we could all have Mad Cow and not know? We’ll know in seven years. There’s no way of detecting it, there are no tests and there’s no known cure.”

ReGenesis is a smart, entertaining, thought-provoking, hour-long Canadian drama. It adds fuel to the debate on how far humankind should go in its quest to play God. It raises more questions than it can answer. It brings to mind a statement made by French author and biologist **Jean Rostand**: ‘Science has made us gods even before we are worthy of being men.’

Episodes 1 and 2 will premiere back to back on October 24, 2004 at 9:00 p.m. on The Movie Network and Movie Central.



“It’s not so much about is this right or is this wrong, it’s going to happen. They are going to clone people, they are going to gene-dope, but who’s monitoring it? Who’s watching it?” queries Outerbridge.

Peter Outerbridge talks acting with Chris Owens



Peter Outerbridge is the consummate professional actor. For one thing, he works. Often. The body of his film and television work is impressive: from *Kissed*, which earned him his first Genie nomination, to *The Bay of Love and Sorrows*, based on the Giller Prize-winning novel by David Adams Richards, to *Men with Brooms*, with Paul Gross and Leslie Nielson, to the critically acclaimed series *24*, starring Kiefer Sutherland. People who hire him once, have a tendency to hire him again: Anne Wheeler (*Marine Life*, *Better Than Chocolate*), Jerry Ciccoritti (*Paris, France*, *Chasing Cain*, *Trudeau*).

Before working on *ReGenesis*, he played Detective William Murdoch in two Detective Murdoch Mysteries: *Except the Dying* and *Poor Tom Is Cold*, both produced by Shaftesbury Films.

While his wife, actress Tammy Isbell (*Paradise Falls*) looks after their beautiful newborn twin boys, Thomas and Samuel, Peter and I meet at Pauper's to share a few pints and talk. What's always struck me about Peter is his passion for movies and storytelling, his generosity, his wonderful sense of humour and, of course, his absolute love of *Star Trek*.

Here are a few of his excerpted thoughts on the subject of acting:

"Acting is easy. Giving yourself permission to act is terrifying. You have to give yourself permission to pretend."

"You do whatever you have to do – to jump off the cliff. The analogy or the metaphor is cliff-diving. You have to jump. When they say 'action', you go."

"I do have a methodology. When the director says, 'action'...I start."

"When you're on an American show, you're going to do about four pages a day. And, you've got all day to sit and think about it and work it – we're going to shoot this 10 ways to Sunday. When you're on a Canadian show – I mean, we shot 15 pages a day! And everybody's going through it – the writers, the producers, the directors, the actors – everybody is going through this insanity – you don't even know what your name is anymore. The pace is way too fast and yet, at the same time, it's a wonderful way to work because everyone's involved."

"I like working in a co-operative. I'm not a method guy. I was brought up in my theatre education to believe that it's about the story – if it's about the story then let's all work together."

"I've watched a lot of movies. You get inspired by these images that become part of your subconscious and then when you're doing your stuff, you are paying homage. Even if you don't know you are, you are paying homage."

"It really has nothing to do with me – it's about the character."

"You get these breakdowns – he's a lawyer, he's a cop – they always put the job first. Breakdowns are really misleading because they talk about what the producers want. They talk about these intangible things – okay, so you're a lawyer – well, what does that mean? If you read the sides, it's a scene about a guy fighting with his wife – so it doesn't matter if you're a lawyer or an engineer – you're a guy fighting with his wife."

"Peter never stops thinking. He's always got ideas. In fact, in the last two episodes leading right into the finale...some of the twists and turns of the story came directly from him."

– Christina Jennings (creator of *ReGenesis*)



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FYI — Your Next Conference

WORKSHOPS

Learn from others in a large-class lecture format. These workshops are often hosted by a number of panelists who will discuss the topic at hand.

MASTER CLASS SESSION FORMAT

We're now offering a series of more intensive MASTER CLASSES that give selected ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS the chance to work with an industry professional. AUDITORS can watch from the audience. A selected number of participants as per the class' specs, will be chosen from applications submitted.

Participants apply at www.actratoronto.com with your photo and résumé and any other requirements for that particular MASTER CLASS.

KIDS IN THE BIZ:

If you're an ACTRA member between 8 and 17 years old, or the parent of one, this workshop series is for you!

Morning Workshops (pick one) 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

1 WORKSHOP Casting into the Mainstream

Director **Jim Allodi**, casting director **Sharon Forrest**, and producer **Paula Smith**, all currently working on the new series METROPIA, airing on OMNI, are joined by actor **Maurice Dean Wint** in a conversation on diversity casting. **Andrew Moodie** will moderate.

2 Workshop Case Study: From Script to Pilot

Actor/creator **Debra McGrath**, with co-creator/director **Deborah Day** and producer **Kathy Avrich-Johnson** discuss the experience of writing, acting in and launching their pilot project *Getting Along Famously* from script to screen. Moderator **Stephanie Morgenstern**.

3 MASTER CLASS From Acting to Writing

Actors are uniquely placed to make the transition to writing. The ability to imagine a character voice and focus on character objective are just two of the tools an actor can bring to the dramatist's craft. **Jack Blum** and **Sharon Corder**, both former actors, have written many film and television dramas. Working with material provided by the participants, they will explore ways actors who want to write can use the skills they already have.

LIMIT of 12 PARTICIPANTS. Audience limit: 50. See MASTER CLASS details on this page for how to be chosen as a participant. If you want to be a participant, apply with one scene you've written. See application details at www.actratoronto.com.

4 MASTER CLASS with director Jerry Ciccoritti

Eight-time Gemini award-winning director **Jerry Ciccoritti** will give individual direction to participants in a scene, and comment on how to build a professional working relationship with a director on set. Hosted by **Antonella LaCaprara**.

LIMIT of 6 PARTICIPANTS. Audience limit: 50. See MASTER CLASS details on this page for how to be chosen as a participant. You will be required to come with your sides prepared and ready to shoot as if you'd been cast.

12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. LUNCH:

All ACTRA members registered for the conference are invited to lunch. Courtesy of ACTRA Toronto Performers

1:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. PLENARY: Guest Speaker Ken Ferguson, President of Toronto Film Studios Inc. on Toronto's Mega-Studio Complex

ACTRA Toronto Council Report with Q&A

Afternoon Workshops (pick one) 3:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.

6 WORKSHOP Casting from the Director's POV

Join directors **John L'Ecuyer**, **Adrienne Mitchell** and **Clement Virgo** for behind-the-scenes discussions on their casting process from the director's viewpoint. Hosted by **Gina Clayton**.

7 WORKSHOP When do I Need a Publicist?

Publicist **Deborah Knight** discusses the value of a publicist and at what stage of your career you should consider hiring one.

8 WORKSHOP Two-in-a-room with Rachael Crawford

Multiple Gemini- and Genie-nominee **Rachael Crawford** currently stars in Showcase's *Show Me Yours*. Rachael starred in Patricia Rozema's *When Night is Falling* and Clement Virgo's *Rude*. Her series work includes regular roles on *E.N.G.*, *Traders*, Bill Cosby's *Here and Now*, and a starring role in the ABC series *Brewster Place*. Come and hear a rising star talk about her career in Canada and L.A. Hosted by **Sharon Lewis**.

9 MASTER CLASS with DOP Gerald Packer

Director of Photography **Gerald Packer** is back by popular demand. Build your knowledge on how to work with the camera and the camera "man". Hosted by **Nick de Kruyff**.

LIMIT of 6 PARTICIPANTS. Audience limit: 50. See MASTER CLASS details on this page for how to be chosen as a participant. You will be required to come with your sides prepared and ready to shoot as if you'd been cast.



Face to Face Online:

A **Face to Face** workstation will be set up throughout the day for demos and assistance. Bring your photos and résumé for addition to your Face to Face portfolio.

Forgot your password? Don't have one? Staff will be available to help you out.

Sat., Nov. 13, 2004

* 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

5 KIDS IN THE BIZ FOR PARENTS AND CHILD PERFORMERS Keeping Them Safe

Moderated by ACTRA Toronto children's advocate **Theresa Tova**, this panel of experts includes **Detective Sergeant Steve Irwin** (Intelligence & Safety Toronto Police), on-set tutor **Laurel Bresnahan**, child advocate **Murray Shukyn** (alternative school system & safety programs for the Toronto School Board), agent **Mary Swinton** (representing children & child liaison for TAMAC), and *Degrassi* producer **Nicole Hamilton** whose team developed hands-on workshops for their celebrity child performers.



10 KIDS IN THE BIZ FOR CHILD PERFORMERS AND PARENTS Preparing for an Audition Hosted by **Zachary Bennett**

Child actors will experience hands-on direction and advice from three of the city's top acting coaches followed by an all important Q & A.

For parents of child actors, this is your chance to be a fly on the wall and watch your child prepare for an audition.

Please choose one session according to age category:

8-11 year olds: Hosted by **Jill Frappier** (Dragontrails Theatre School for Kids) Limit: 4

12-14 year olds: Hosted by **Michael Caruana** (Bongo Productions) Limit: 6

15-17 year olds: Hosted by **Marvin Karon** (ShakespeareWorks) Limit: 8

To participate, apply at www.actratoronto.com.

See MASTER CLASS details at left.



Your chance to share and build on the experiences of fellow professional actors

HOW TO REGISTER

* the fastest way to register is online at www.actratoronto.com

* by fax (416) 928-0699

* or drop off your workshop choices at ACTRA Toronto at 625 Church St.

To register, we require your name, membership and telephone numbers, email address and the workshops you would like to attend. To qualify to attend, please have your dues up-to-date and bring your member card.

All workshops and master classes are subject to change. Check for conference updates at www.actratoronto.com. Free to ACTRA Toronto members who register

Please register by November 9, 2004.

Master Class participants must apply by November 4, 2004.



GUEST SPEAKER: KEN FERGUSON

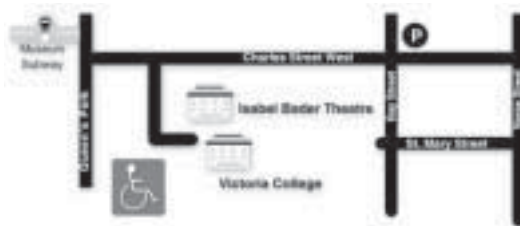
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You must register by Tuesday, Nov. 9

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Ken Ferguson, president of Toronto Film Studios Inc. speaking on Toronto's new Mega-Studio complex

9:00 a.m. Registration and Breakfast

Victoria College - 93 Charles St. W. (behind Isabel Bader Theatre)

The fastest way to register is online at www.actratoronto.com

See page 30 for more information

Lots of workshops to choose from:

Master Class with **Jerry Ciccoritti**

Rachael Crawford: two-in-a-room

DOP Gerald Packer is back

Kids in the Biz: audition & safety workshops

Casting from the directors POV

When do you need a publicist?

Diversity casting

Script to Pilot: a case study



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Toronto, ON
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Publication Mail Agreement No.
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