

The magazine from ACTRA Toronto

new performers

Volume 16 • Issue 1 • Spring 2007

New Media
FAIR FEES



STRIKE!

ACTRA WINS FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE

INSIDE

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President's Message



ACTRA's strike demo outside the offices of the CFTPA. Photo: Peter Baker

“Life is what happens when you’re busy making other plans.”

John Lennon

When we gave notice to bargain the Independent Production Agreement (IPA) last spring, we knew it was going to be a tough round. We had been following the negotiations between the Canadian Film and Television Production Association (CFTPA) and the other unions and guilds and the news was not promising.

The producers’ trade association had set an aggressive tone, playing the technical unions off against one another, bullying them into concessionary deals. They were saving us for last, hoping that an established pattern of rollbacks, particularly with our branch in British Columbia, would soften us up.

They tied other unions up in bargaining for 18 months. We gave notice that we would not bargain beyond the expiry of the IPA. Only when the Union of British Columbia Performers (UBCP) rejected the engagers’ outrageous proposals, did the CFTPA agree to give us bargaining dates, consenting to begin negotiations on October 23 for an agreement that would expire on December 31.

With 160 proposals on the table, we were given 15 days at the table to negotiate the IPA that we will all have to live with until 2010. Even the CFTPA conceded that getting a deal on time was going to be a challenge.

ACTRA was well prepared. We had reached out to the membership through focus groups to create proposals written by members, put these proposals into enforceable language and assembled a strong negotiating committee.

We were prepared to answer ridiculous demands for deep cutbacks that would have set performers back 15 years. We were prepared to make the case for a fair and reasonable industry-standard increase for performers’ pay and to argue for the improvements to the contract our members had told us they required.

But there was a fly in the ointment. The CFTPA negotiators weren’t consistent. They weren’t reasonable. And they wanted the internet for free.

Which gets me back to John Lennon.

Because the internet is what’s been happening to our industry while we were busy making other plans. The internet is everything we’ve ever done, everything we’re doing now and everything we are going to do.

“The CFTPA negotiators weren’t consistent. They weren’t reasonable. And they wanted the internet for free.”

Read the news. Steve Jobs. Bill Gates. The CEO of Motorola. All the studios. The kids in the cyber cafés. Folks in the street. They’re all saying the same thing. The internet is everything.

As the internet replaces familiar distribution models,

ACTRA'S FIRST-EVER STRIKE

by Karl Pruner



Bargaining team members Ron White and Alberta Watson in a tense period of bargaining during IPA negotiations. Photos: Kim Hume

“Because the internet is the past, present and future of everything we do, it is vital that we set good terms for the recording and use of performances in the digital frontier.”

businesses built on those models are under intense pressure to adapt. There is a lot of flailing around and gnashing of teeth. The Hollywood studios are like a bunch of angry, frightened dinosaurs as they try to come to terms with the digital world.

It is good advice to stay out of tight places with dangerous animals – places like the bargaining table. Which explains our approach to bargaining and the internet.

Because the internet is the past, present and future of everything we do, it is vital that we set good terms for the recording and use of performances in the digital frontier. We cannot afford to make a bad deal on this stuff because performers will have to live with this deal for a long time to come.

All the work that migrated to DVD on such terrible terms for creators is set to

migrate again to the net. The studios want to keep their dragon's hoard of DVD earnings and watch it grow through exploitation on the internet.

Whether we like it or not, we find ourselves on the front line of the most important battle performers will fight in the next 25 years. It is as big a fight as the original fight for television rates, as the fight for residuals, and it is bigger than the continuing fight for a fair share of DVD revenues.

As I write this, we are five weeks into the first strike in our union's 64-year history. On February 9, the producers walked out on negotiations with us for the third time and our industry struggles as Hollywood withholds work from Canada in an effort to extort a bad deal. This isn't good business practice or even real capitalism at work. It is exploitation and

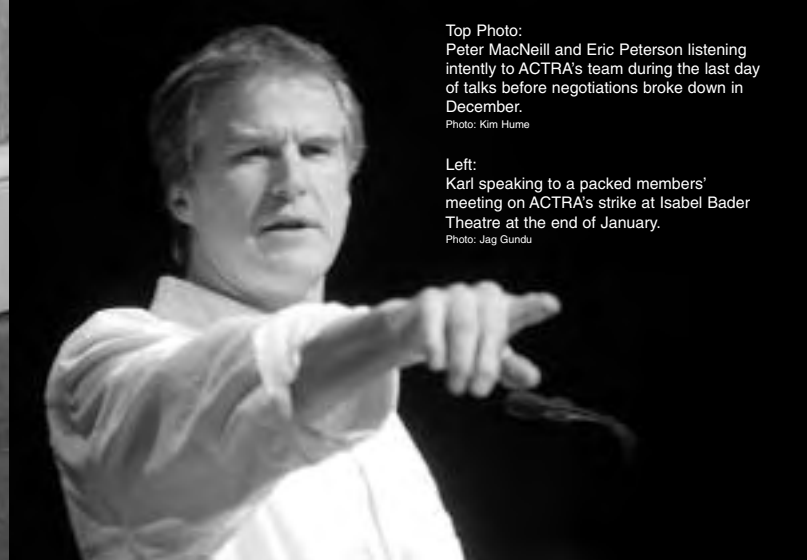
brute economic force in the service of greed. The claws of the dinosaurs are sharp. They hurt.

Such work as there is continues only because of ACTRA's interim agreement strategy, allowing productions to continue during the strike so long as they meet our pay demand. The legality of these agreements (and of our strike itself) is being challenged by the CFTPA in the courts, in an effort to shut the industry down completely. All in all, the situation would seem to be grim. And yet...

For the first time in 10 years, performers across Canada are sending the same message to engagers. Our brothers and sisters in UBCP have refused to knuckle under to the Hollywood studios. In mid-February, they left their bargaining table to join us at ours.



Top Photo: Peter MacNeill and Eric Peterson listening intently to ACTRA's team during the last day of talks before negotiations broke down in December.
Photo: Kim Hume



Left: Karl speaking to a packed members' meeting on ACTRA's strike at Isabel Bader Theatre at the end of January.
Photo: Jag Gundu

Other unions have suffered internal divisions under the pressure ACTRA is now facing, yet our unity is becoming stronger. Many of our brothers and sisters in other unions and guilds are frightened at the prospect of a protracted work stoppage. Their jobs are on the line with ours and in their anxiety to get back to work, some will inevitably blame ACTRA for their troubles.

“Other unions have suffered internal divisions under the pressure ACTRA is now facing, yet our unity is becoming stronger.”

This is why the leaders of DGC and IATSE and NABET are invited to attend our bargaining sessions, to observe our deliberations and negotiations. In spite of their frustration with this dispute and their eagerness for a resolution, they understand the issues and ACTRA's position.

Most importantly, they have heard our

repeated proposals to move the internet issues off the table into a side committee so that everybody can get back to work. This has been our position from the beginning.

It took six years to reach an agreement with the National Film Board on internet terms and after six years, negotiations with the CBC are still continuing. The CFTPA's notion that we could conclude a deal on the internet in 15 days was never realistic.

During one of the last round of talks, the producers took eight hours negotiating with themselves to prepare a proposal on the internet. We offered a counter proposal, which they ignored, preferring to resubmit their initial proposal formally so they could catch planes and send a press release. This seems like a manipulative manoeuvre but I think the real problem is much simpler. In the end, I believe that they just didn't have sufficient consensus in their own room to have a dialogue with us.

The IPA negotiations were hijacked by the sudden arrival of the future. Our plans had to change because life happened. Because the net happened.

Suddenly, we were asked to bargain the terms that will govern how all performers are to be paid in the future. Or else.

“Give us the net for free,” said the engagers,” or else there will be no American work.” “Give us the net for free,” said the engagers, “or we will attack your union and the validity of the contract in the courts.” More claws. More teeth. We bargained patiently, working for a fair settlement. During the strike we fought to keep productions up and running while working out the terms of a fair and reasonable deal. And we got one. ACTRA's first-ever strike ended on February 21 after six weeks.

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ACTRA Award winners
Maria Del Mar, Gordon Pinsent
and Wendy Crewson.
Photo: Jag Gundu



THE ACTRA AWARDS in Toronto 2007

February 23 • The CARLU

ACTRA Toronto's 2007 Award of Excellence

Wendy Crewson
*see our profile of this
Canadian culture champion
on page 10.*

Award nominees

ACTRA Award for Outstanding Performance – Voice

Len Carlson, *Atomic Betty* (posthumous nomination)
Ellen-Ray Hennessy, *Di-Gata Defenders*
Tajja Isen, *Atomic Betty*
Ron Rubin, *Erky Perky*
Adrian Truss, *Jane and the Dragon*

ACTRA Award for Outstanding Performance – Female

Martha Burns, *Slings & Arrows*
Maria Del Mar, *Terminal City*
Deborah Grover, *11 Cameras*
Martha Henry, *At The Hotel*
Kristen Thomson, *Away From Her*

ACTRA Award for Outstanding Performance – Male

Chris Bolton, *Rent-A-Goalie*
William Hutt, *Slings & Arrows*
Don McKellar, *Monkey Warfare*
Gordon Pinsent, *Away From Her*
Michael Therriault, *Prairie Giant:
The Tommy Douglas Story*

The winners of the award in each category have been highlighted.

A Victory for Voice

The new ACTRA Award for
outstanding voice performance

by Tracey Hoyt

Voice acting requires great talent and skill – whether the medium is narration, radio drama or animation.

ACTRA Toronto member Adrian Truss, a gifted voice actor and series regular on the animated series *Ruby Gloom*, *Erky Perky*, *Totally Spies* and *Atomic Betty*, felt it was high time that The ACTRA Awards recognized the talented voice actors, “who not only specialize in it but excel at it here and abroad.”

Adrian wrote a letter to the editor of *Performers Magazine*, and later voiced his concerns in an article. The response was positive. Finally, as a member of the ACTRA Awards committee, Adrian spoke up.

His efforts – and those of other like-minded members – paid off. 2007 will be the inaugural year for the ACTRA Award for Outstanding Performance – Voice at the ACTRA Awards in Toronto.

In the fall of 2006, ACTRA Toronto members nominated voice performers for the first time in the awards' five-year history. In early January of this year, the voting juries, made up of ACTRA performers, narrowed each performance category down to five nominees, and the finalist jury, including high-profile voice performers, made their decisions.

On February 23 at The Carlu, ACTRA members and staff will celebrate and applaud the efforts of the 15 talented nominees for the ACTRA Awards including, at long last, the voice award.

There could very well be some extra hooting and hollering for this new award, so be sure to warm up your voice.



Two-time Gemini Award nominee Tracey Hoyt acts with her voice a good deal of the time. Currently, she has recurring roles on the animated series *6Teen*, *Delilah & Julius* and *Bob and Margaret*. Tracey has also voiced hundreds of commercials for radio and television.

The ACTRA Awards in Toronto took place Friday, February 23, at The Carlu in Toronto. The Awards Gala was hosted by Patrick McKenna. Paul O'Sullivan was the scriptwriter. The awards show featured a performance by ACTRA member and singer Amanda Martinez. The ACTRA Award statuette is by Adrienne Alison. Many thanks to the generous sponsors of The ACTRA Awards in Toronto 2007 (see page 17).

ACTRA Award for Outstanding Performance – Voice

Len Carlson

Atomic Betty posthumous nomination



Len Carlson's long acting career for film, TV and stage started in Seattle, Washington and included principal acting roles ranging from *The Verdict*, *Race For The Bomb*, *The Henry Ford Story* and *The Deejay*, for which Mr. Carlson received an Emmy nomination. As a highly sought-after male voice in both Toronto and New York, he appeared in more than 2,000 animated cartoon episodes juggling as many as eight different characters per show. His vast body of work also included directing and voicing 300 animated shows for CBS-TV's *Captain Kangaroo*, *The Undersea Adventures of Captain Nemo* and several episodes of Disney Channel's *The Raccoons*. Voice animation credits include *Beetlejuice*, *Carebears*, *Raccoons*, *Roboroach*, *Beyblade*, *Berenstain Bears* and his ACTRA Award-nominated *Atomic Betty*. Mr. Carlson passed away in 2006. His agent Richard Menich says, "I think Len felt his job was never quite done until he'd made you laugh." He is much missed by friends and family.



Ellen-Ray Hennessy

Di-Gata Defenders



In the past 30 years of her career, actor/director/teacher Elley-Ray Hennessy has performed in more than 180 theatrical productions across Canada, the U.S. and Europe with multiple awards and nominations for acting and directing. Ms. Hennessy plays Mme. Liezelle in *Di-Gata Defenders*, who she describes as "A crazy, witch-y, psychic, morphic thing that never dies. She predicts the future, and she's possessed." Recent voice credits include *Spider Riders*, *The Very Good Adventures of Yam Roll in Happy Kingdom*, *Harry and His Bucket Full of Dinosaurs*, *Rolie Polie Olie*, *Sons of Butcher* and the voice of the Nicorette monster. Ms. Hennessy is a sought-after voice instructor and is creating a voice school. "There's a real need for animation teachers. It's a very specific form, very different from the rest of our working body." She recently directed an animation production in Berlin, Germany, and just curated the gala for the International Interior Design Show.

Tajja Isen

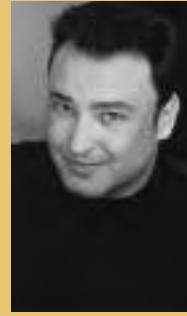
Atomic Betty



With such a strong-voice industry in Canada, 15-year-old Tajja Isen takes great pride in this nomination for ACTRA's new voice award. She landed her first voice role as 'Sister Bear' (*Berenstain Bears*) at age 10. Since then, she has voiced lead roles for more than 20 animated series, including *Atomic Betty*, *Jane and the Dragon*, Disney's *Jojo's Circus*, *Weird Years*, *Time Warp Trio* and *Meteor*. Ms. Isen can be heard singing the themes for seven animated series and has released an album with KOCH (U.S.) for *Atomic Betty*. She won the Young Artist Award for Best Voice Performance two years in a row. Ms. Isen also appeared on stage as Young Nala in Disney's *The Lion King*. Currently, Ms. Isen is combining her classical piano training, singing and writing talents to launch her own pop-rock album with production set to begin early in 2007.

Ron Rubin

Erky Perky



Winnipeg-born veteran actor, writer, and voiceover performer Ron Rubin's versatility and range is recognized throughout Canada and the United States. He feels extremely fortunate and honoured to be among those nominated for the first ACTRA Award for outstanding voice performance. Over 25 years, Mr. Rubin's vocal characterizations on countless animated series include principal roles in the Emmy Award-winning *Beetlejuice*, *Angela Anaconda*, *X-Men*, *Flying Rhinos*, *Kratts Creatures*, *Sailor Moon*, *C.O.P.S.*, *Police Academy*, *Avengers* and the recent *Care Bears "Big Wish" Movie*. Current animated projects include *Friends and Heroes*, *Harry and His Bucket Full of Dinosaurs*, *Captain Flamingo*, *Di-Gata Defenders* and *Erky Perky*. Mr. Rubin studied acting at the Neighbourhood Playhouse, has appeared with Second City and toured North America as a featured stand-up performer.

Adrian Truss

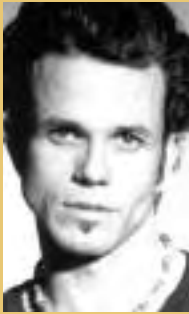
Jane and The Dragon



Actor/writer/director Adrian Truss's eclectic career has included live performances with Second City and episodes of *SCTV*. He helped form the infamous improv troupe Illustrated Men which toured throughout North America and staged a highly successful production of *Waiting For Godot* at CanStage. Trained at Ryerson Theatre School, Mr. Truss has written and directed several stage plays including *Dragonhead*, *Retribution* and *Tale of the Scorpion* which were well received in both Toronto and Los Angeles. He has also written episodic TV (*Puppets Who Kill*) and for the last three years has written the well-received ACTRA Awards in Toronto. In voice, Mr. Truss has performed original roles in many highly popular animated series including *Bob and Margaret*, *Mischief City*, *Atomic Betty* and the Emmy Award-winning *Rolie Polie Olie* among many others. He is nominated for his work on *Jane and the Dragon*, a Nelvana/Peter Jackson's WETA Studio co-production.

ACTRA Award for Outstanding Performance – Male

Chris Bolton
Rent-A-Goalie



Chris Bolton stars as Cake in *Rent-A-Goalie* which he co-writes with Graeme Manson. Thrilled to be nominated, he says, “It made me realize we’re doing it right. This is an ensemble nomination for sure. I play the straight man to a bunch of lunatics. So long as I can keep from laughing...” Shooting for the second season began in February, and in the spring, Mr. Bolton is one half of a two-man team cycling 5,000 kilometres in Race Across America raising funds for

the Sick Kids Foundation. Georgian Entertainment, Chris’ production company with ACTRA member Chris Szarka, has a number of projects in the works. *Rent-A-Goalie* was profiled in the Fall 2006 issue of *Performers Magazine*.

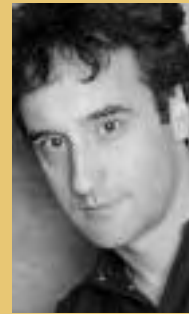
William Hutt
Slings & Arrows



Actor/director William Hutt’s extensive, award-winning career has included appearances on Broadway, London’s West End and across Canada, the U.K., Europe, Australia, and the U.S. He is best known for his work at Stratford, from which he recently retired. Upcoming, he will be appearing in the sequel to *H2O*, *Trojan Horse*. Past awards in film and television include James Tyrone in *Long Day’s Journey Into Night* (Genie Award), Sir John A. Macdonald in *The National Dream* (Genie and ACTRA Awards) and Bernard Shaw in *The First Night of Pygmalion* (Prix Anik Award). He is a Companion of the Order of Canada, was

the first recipient of the Governor General’s Lifetime Achievement Award, English Stage, and received the Shakespeare Globe’s Sam Wanamaker Award for contribution to Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre. Mr. Hutt believes it’s time Canadian actors stood up for what is necessary in the recent IPA negotiations saying, “Listen folks, I do enough of this (performing) for the love of it, but there’s very little of that left.”

Don McKellar
Monkey Warfare



Don McKellar is thrilled to be nominated by his actor peers. “How cool! And particularly so in this case, with *Monkey Warfare*. As many ACTRA members know, when you commit yourself to a small film, the recognition it receives (if any) is often more satisfying than what you can eke out of those big-money gigs. Thank you.” Mr. McKellar has won Genie awards for each area of his work: acting, writing and

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directing. Recent acting credits include *Slings & Arrows*, the voice of Jack in the animated series *Odd Job Jack* and the upcoming miniseries *The Englishman's Boy* based on Guy Vanderhaeghe's novel. He won a Tony award with Bob Martin for *The Drowsy Chaperone*, now playing on Broadway and soon to appear in London's West End. Selected acting and writing combo credits include *Twitch City*, *The Red Violin*, *Thirty-Two Short Films About Glenn Gould* and *Highway 61*. Mr. McKellar is currently busy writing screenplays, including an adaptation of Jose Saramago's novel *Blindness*.

Gordon Pinsent

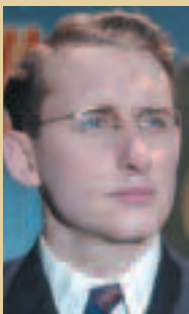
Away From Her



Canadian icon Gordon Pinsent is well known and loved by Canadian audiences for his decades of work in theatre, film, television and radio as an actor, writer and director. Mr. Pinsent earned high praise for his recent made-for-TV movie *Heyday!*, which he wrote, directed and performed in. Mr. Pinsent played Billy Pretty in the critically-acclaimed feature *The Shipping News*, Morley Callaghan in the mini-series *Hemingway vs. Callaghan* and Al Purdy in *Yours, Al*. He starred in the '60s CBC television series *Quentin Durgens, MP* and wrote and starred in the 1972 film *The Rowdyman*, which CBC's *Life & Times*' profile of Mr. Pinsent calls "a turning point in Canadian film, and in his career." Mr. Pinsent's many honours include ACTRA Awards, ACTRA's John Drainie Award, the Earle Grey Award, Genie and Gemini Awards, as well as honorary doctorates from Queen's University, P.E.I. University and Memorial University, Newfoundland. He is a Companion of the Order of Canada. He received ACTRA Toronto's inaugural Award of Excellence in 2003.

Michael Therriault

Prairie Giant: The Tommy Douglas Story



Star of Stratford, Broadway and Toronto Mirvish Productions, Michael Therriault has already won a Soeul Drama Award for his portrayal of Tommy Douglas in *Prairie Giant*. "I'm shocked and honoured to be nominated. It's an honour to be nominated by your peers. That means more than anything, I think." Of Tommy Douglas, he says, "He's an important person in history to take pride in. We have to honour our heroes. He did so much for our country." Mr. Therriault played Gollum in Toronto's

theatre production of *Lord of the Rings*, and will be in London to reprise the role there. He earned a Dora Award for his work as Leo Bloom in Toronto's version of *The Producers*. He's appeared in Stratford and on Broadway in *Fiddler On The Roof*. Upcoming, he's in *The Englishman's Boy* with co-nominee Don McKellar.



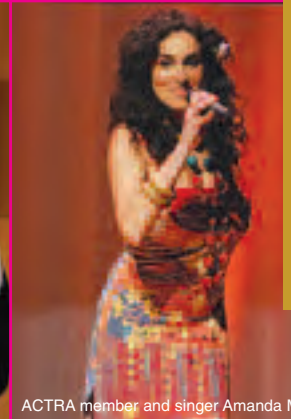
ACTRA Award winners Maria Del Mar and Gordon Pinsent with ACTRA Toronto's 2007 Award of Excellence recipient Wendy Crewson.

Photos: Jag Gundu

The ACTRA Award Nominees



ACTRA Awards host Patrick McKenna.



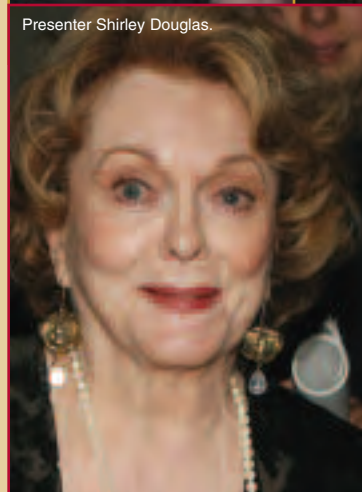
ACTRA member and singer Amanda Martinez.



Daughter of ACTRA Award winner Len Carlson, Corinna Carlson.



Nominees Martha Henry and William Hutt.



Presenter Shirley Douglas.



Nominee Ellen-Ray Hennessy.

The ACTRA Award Nominees

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"I think it's very important in our Canadian industry that we recognize each other and our talents."

Wendy Crewson has an amazing résumé on both sides of the border – she is greatly respected for her complex soulful portrayals and her earthy, wicked sense of humour keeps her very real. (Apparently, she is also quite a good kisser.) What we also adore about Wendy is she's not afraid to put her money where her mouth is – sticking up for actors, sticking it to the CRTC, moderating panels with her own brand of feisty grace, taking ACTRA's position to Ottawa. I talked to Wendy about beginnings...

Wendy Crewson photographed on the set of *ReGenesis* by Jag Gundu.

Wendy Crewson

Culture Champion

An interview with the winner of ACTRA Toronto's 2007 Award of Excellence

by Ferne Downey

Ferne Downey: *October 2003, you rocked the world of Canadian television. Your devastatingly moving performance as Jane Doe earned you a Gemini Award. You rose to the stage in your glamorous white gown and planted a big juicy kiss on CBC anchor Ian Hanomansing. Then you went on to give a rousing speech asking audiences to stay tuned to homegrown TV, 'We have a sea of talent out there and I'm looking at it.' And the place went insane! What inspiration moved you to stir things up that night?*

Wendy Crewson: Poor Ian was so terrified when I went up to kiss him – the stricken look on his face. Didn't they call him 'Ian Handsome Man-sing' – Mary Walsh told me that. It was fun. I think it's very important in our Canadian industry that we recognize each other and our talents. Part of being Canadian is to underplay all that we do, and especially as a Canadian actor, there is something about us that is so willing to downplay, dismiss, set aside our accomplishments. We really see it as a little distasteful, you are not supposed to trumpet your own – it's not in good taste.

There's a great story about Bill Hutt's parents coming to see the first show he did at Stratford, and he said, 'you could tell who my parents were because they were the only two that didn't stand up to applaud.'

We fight the CRTC for some piece of our cultural voice and are dismissed out of hand.

Then we have the whole American cultural giant overshadowing us. Look at the Geminis, how maligned they are... you pick up the papers and 'Oh dear,' says all the press, 'here come the boring old Geminis again,' and you just want to bury your head and go 'Oh!' I can't stand the idea that we can't just celebrate our own. Before those Geminis I read John Doyle's column who said, Enough of all this worrying about our ratings... I'm not interested in TV ratings on the Geminis, I'm interested in us celebrating ourselves in this industry. If we don't nobody else will. That wasn't exactly what he said, he was more succinct, but when I read it a penny dropped. And I thought, damn it, we're supposed to be having fun here. We need to stand up and applaud each other for the fabulous work that we do.

FD: *What tipped you into pursuing acting as a career?*

WC: You know, I had a sort of epiphany when I was about four. Mom was dropping off some food for a potluck at our local United Church and all the women were in the kitchen. I was cross-eyed and wore huge, pink, cat-eye glasses. I was big and tall with these big glasses, I'm all mouth and skinny hair and I walked into the church gymnasium in the late afternoon and the light was streaming in – it was really beautiful – and I walked up on the stage by myself, looked around and thought, 'Wow, this is nice, I like the view from here,' and I started to imagine

things. Honest to God, I knew right then, 'I want to be an actress.' It's never changed. I remember my mother looking at me like, 'Alright, dear, or teaching... teaching is always a good profession,' and I thought, 'Nay, I'm going to be an actress.'

"And I thought, damn it, we're supposed to be having fun here. We need to stand up and applaud each other for the fabulous work that we do."

FD: *You graduated from Queen's University and then went off to England to the Webber Douglas Academy. How did you get so smart to realize that England might be a good place for technical training?*

WC: The National Theatre School was in Montreal and my parents lived in Montreal and I didn't want to go back home to live!

FD: *In 1984 you received the Best Acting Performance in a Continuing Role in Television for your work as Kate in Home Fires. An ACTRA Award for your first series is an auspicious beginning.*

WC: Yes, an ACTRA Award. The original ACTRA Award – The Nellie – sits proudly in my living room.

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Mark Lutz
as Victor
Davis in
Victor.

Photo courtesy of
Indian Grove
Productions.
Photo: Ken Woroner

For the past seven years, Mark Lutz's life has been consumed by telling the story of Canadian Olympic champion Victor Davis.

'I think it's all within yourself. Whatever you want. Whatever satisfies you. Personally, being second or third doesn't satisfy me. I have to be the victor or I'm not going to be satisfied.'

– Victor Davis

by Chris Owens



1982. Guayaquil, Ecuador. The World Swimming Championships. Canadian Victor Davis is appearing in his first major international competition. As the other swimmers limber up, Davis shadowboxes an unseen opponent, letting loose a flurry of punches. He is the last to take his position on the starter blocks. When the pistol sounds, he explodes into the water. Four lengths of the pool later, he emerges as the new World Record holder of the men's 200-metre breaststroke.

During his career, Davis won 29 national titles and 16 international medals. He captured a gold medal at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. He became a member of the Order of Canada and was inducted into the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame. Tragically, only a few months after his retirement, Victor Davis died in Notre Dame Hospital, Quebec, the victim of a hit-and-run driver. He was just 25 years old.

On March 26, CBC will air a two-hour movie, *Victor*, based on the life of this remarkable athlete written by and starring Canadian actor Mark Lutz.

Mark has done what many actors only dream about: he has written a starring role for himself in a story he has longed to tell; he has sold a screenplay and had it produced; he has paid homage to a childhood hero and created work for fellow Canadians. **Not bad for a first attempt.**

Before he became an actor, Mark spent many years pursuing his own dreams of swimming glory, competing from the age of six. His swimming career included an appearance at the Olympic Trials. It would remain an unfinished chapter, however, due to chronic shoulder problems and several surgeries. "My body gave out before my heart did."

As a performer, Mark has appeared in more than 40 film and television shows. You may have seen him on *ER*, *Friends*, *Power Play*, *Earth: Final Conflict* or as a regular on the WB series *Angel*. But for many years, he has wanted to create his own work and tell Canadian stories. "They always say write what you know, so having spent 15 years waterlogged in a pool, swimming was something I knew about." Initially, he thought of writing "a sort of fictionalized Rocky in the pool," and then, he turned to childhood swim hero Victor Davis. "Here's an amazing journey of a kid from Guelph, Ontario, who had a lot of knocks against him, in terms of finances and a broken home, wrong side of the tracks, hyperactive, not the best student, and then he reaches the pinnacle of Canadian sport. In the early '80s it was like a new beginning in Canadian athletics. He was sort of on the cusp of people discovering that, hey, we can win in something besides hockey."

continued on page 24

Members' News

Canadian stars demand action from the CRTC

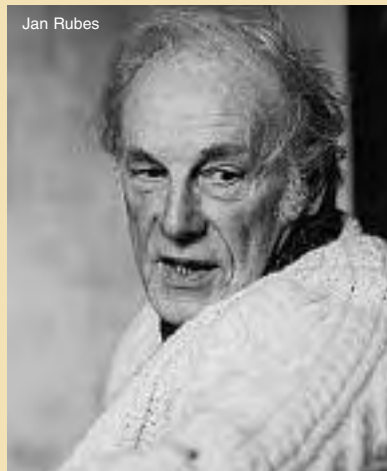
Stars were out in force for ACTRA's news conference in Ottawa at the start of CRTC hearings into the state of over-the-air television in November last year. Toronto members Wendy Crewson, Fiona Reid, Sonja Smits and R.H. Thomson called on the CRTC to impose spending requirements on private broadcasters to stop the disappearance of Canadian dramas. ACTRA wants broadcasters to spend 7% of advertising revenues on Canadian dramatic television shows and to broadcast the shows in real primetime – Sunday to Thursday, 7-11 p.m. The news conference was widely covered in print and television, and led to Sonja writing an article for *The Ottawa Citizen*. ACTRA returned to Ottawa in early December to make a full presentation to the CRTC. A transcript of ACTRA's presentation is available at <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/transcripts/2006/tb1204.htm>.



Wendy Crewson and Sonja Smits speaking to media after ACTRA's CRTC news conference.
Photo: Jonathan Hayward

Rolling: Archives project

Adrienne Clarkson, Ernie Coombs, June Callwood, Douglas Campbell, Susan Douglas, William Hutt, Charmion King, Barry Morse, Jan Rubes, Ruth Springford, John Neville. The Ben Lennick Archives at ACTRA Toronto videotaped interviews with these and countless other stars capturing their thoughts and stories on performing, their careers, the industry and ACTRA. These treasured records are now being transferred to media that won't deteriorate. And to build the library and continue recording ACTRA's and actors' oral history, councillors Theresa Tova and Wayne Robson have begun capturing new interviews using our very own Gordon Pinsent studio. If you're interested in assisting with the archives project, contact Wayne wrobson@council.actratoronto.com or Theresa ttova@actratoronto.com.



Jan Rubes



Adrienne Clarkson

Photo courtesy
CBC Still Photo Collection

No more Blue Man Group

The stage show *Blue Man Group* shut its doors in January after just over a year's run in Toronto. ACTRA Toronto and the United Steelworkers joined the Blue Man Coalition, established by Equity, IATSE and the American Federation of Musicians, to pressure the New-York-based worldwide production to honour our professional theatre community and negotiate union contracts for its performers, musicians and stage technicians. *Blue Man* was expected to play Toronto indefinitely, but announced in September, 2006, that it would be closing in January, 2007. It's a bittersweet conclusion – the closing represents a successful boycott, but the boycott's unions and supporters would have preferred union contracts and a long-running show.

The band in June 2005 at the Blue Man Group protest.



Members' News

Genie Award nominations for Toronto members

Congratulations to the ACTRA Toronto members who earned Genie nominations. Because our film industry is so successful in Quebec, many of the nominated films are Quebec-based, and thus many of the nominated ACTRA members come out of ACTRA Montreal. Congratulations to all ACTRA member nominees. The Genie Awards were presented by the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television on February 13. ACTRA Toronto nominees are:

Performance by an actor in a leading role

Colm Feore, *Bon Cop, Bad Cop*

Performance by an actor in a supporting role

Hugh Dillon, *Trailer Park Boys: The Movie*

Robert Joy, *Whole New Thing*

Stephen McHattie, *Marice Richard / The Rocket* (winner)

Performance by an actress in a supporting role

Emily Hampshire, *Snow Cake*

Colm Feore was a Genie Award nominee for his role in *Bon Cop, Bad Cop*. Photo courtesy Park Ex Pictures. Photo by Attila Dory



Gemini Award winners

Congratulations to all ACTRA Toronto members who won Gemini Awards. The Geminis were held in October and November, 2006.

Winners in performance categories (alphabetical order)

Martha Burns *Slings & Arrows*

Maury Chaykin *At The Hotel*

Susan Coyne *Slings & Arrows*

Gavin Crawford and Shaun Majumder, with ACTRA Newfoundland & Labrador members Cathy Jones and Mark Critch *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*

Wendy Crewson *The Man Who Lost Himself*

Sean Cullen *What Were They Thinking?*

Linda Kash *At The Hotel*

Judah Katz *Canada Russia '72*

k.d. lang *Words to Music: The Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame*

Ron MacLean *CBC's Hockey Day In Canada*

Tom McCamus *Waking Up Wally: The Walter Gretzky Story*

Mark McKinney *Robson Arms*

Paul Soles *Terminal City*

Ksenia Solo *renegadepress.com*

Winners in directing and writing categories

James Allodi (direction *Naked Josh*)

Susan Coyne, Bob Martin, Mark McKinney (writing *Slings & Arrows*)

Production categories

Gisèle Corinthis (with Marie McCann, Pat Ellingson, Ericka Evans)

Gisèle's Big Backyard: Here, There and Everywhere

Viewers' Choice Award

Marilyn Denis *CityLine*

Martha Burns won a Gemini Award for her role as Ellen in *Slings & Arrows*. Photo courtesy Rhombus Media. Photo: Ken Woroner



Crewson receives ovation at NDP convention

Wendy Crewson spoke to an Emergency Resolution on ACTRA's strike at the Ontario NDP convention at the end of January and received a standing ovation for her efforts. United Steelworkers National Director Ken Neumann introduced the resolution that recognized the role of film and television in our culture, that professional performers deserve to be paid fairly for their work, and that asked for the Ontario NDP's support for ACTRA's strike. The resolution passed and the Ontario NDP called on the Canadian Film and Television Production Association to reach agreement with ACTRA and resolve the strike.



Members' News

Top-10 Canadian films for 2006

Good luck finding these films in the theatres, but if they do make it to a multiplex near you, go and see these great Canadian films!

In alphabetical order.

Away From Her
Congorama
Un Dimanche À Kigali
The Journals of Knud Rasmussen
Manufactured Landscapes
Monkey Warfare
Radiant City
Sharkwater
Sur La Trace D'Igor Rizzi
Trailer Park Boys: The Movie

Canada's Top Ten films are chosen by a 10-member, national panel of filmmakers, journalists, programmers, and industry professionals convened by the Toronto International Film Festival Group (TIFFG). www.tiffg.ca.

Julie Christie and Gordon Pinsent in Sarah Polley's film *Away From Her*, one of Canada's top-ten films of 2006.
Photo courtesy Capri Releasing



CMG makes donation in support of ACTRA's strike



The Canadian Media Guild's (CMG) National Executive Committee voted unanimously to donate \$5,000 to the Actors' Fund in support of ACTRA's strike. Lise Lareau, CMG's National President advised ACTRA of the donation during the third week of ACTRA's strike.

CMG is the union representing 6,000 members who work in the Canadian media. ACTRA supported CMG during the CBC lockout in the summer of 2005 and joined their picket line on several occasions during their seven-week lockout. www.cmg.ca

AFBS announces new benefits program

After much consultation with members, AFBS has launched a new insurance benefits program. You should have already received a booklet previewing the new benefits called *Options & Decisions*. This publication contains information on the new plan and outlines choices for members and decisions members need to make immediately. The new insurance program is effective from March 1, 2007. The most important change is that seven classes of insurance coverage have been compressed into three levels: bronze, silver and gold. See Ferne Downey's article on AFBS' new insurance plan in the Winter 2007 issue of InterACTRA (p. 7). Read your mail and contact AFBS with any questions.

(416) 967-6600 1-800-387-8897 benefits@actrafrat.com

Shaw, Vidéotron jeopardize CTF

In December, Shaw Communications, followed by Vidéotron Ltée, announced they would immediately withdraw their support from the Canadian Television Fund, (CTF), jeopardizing the most important source for greenlighting Canadian drama, comedy, documentaries and kids' shows.

Globe and Mail TV columnist John Doyle wrote on January 30: "It's really rather simple. Cable companies in Canada exist in a privileged, protected position that allows them to make vast amounts of money, and now some want to renege on their regulatory responsibility and thus crush Canadian-made TV."

Parliament's Heritage Committee began hearings on the CTF in early February, and the CRTC's new Chief Commissioner, Konrad von Finckenstein, announced a task force to look into the CTF after Shaw and Vidéotron's complaints. Both companies have resumed their monthly CTF contributions.

ACTRA has been a strong supporter of increased funding for the CTF and spearheaded a successful fight against impending government cuts in 2003.

U.S. company funds CanWest takeover of Alliance Atlantis

Alliance Atlantis Communications is embroiled in controversy once again as CanWest Global Communications' announced it is buying AAC with U.S. investment bank Goldman Sachs footing 90% of the \$1.5 billion deal that includes AAC's 13 specialty cable channels.

The AAC takeover falls close on the heels of another giant media takeover in Canada - the purchase of CHUM by CTVglobemedia.

Both deals will be examined by the CRTC. The CHUM purchase leads to ownership of multiple TV stations in a single market; the AAC deal tests Canada's foreign ownership limits of telecommunications companies.

ACTRA lobbies against further media concentration and the relaxing of foreign ownership rules. Both weaken our already threatened cultural sovereignty and lead to reduced opportunities for Canadian programming.



Do We Have Your Money?

Attention all performers who have earned royalties, residuals and use fees under an ACTRA agreement (film, TV, documentary or commercial production).

Have you moved and not kept a current address with ACTRA? Are you holding on to an uncashed cheque from the ACTRA Performers' Rights Society (ACTRA PRS)?

If you answered "Yes" to either of these questions, ACTRA PRS may be holding an unclaimed residual payment for you.

For information, please visit the ACTRA PRS section of www.actra.ca, or go to www.actra.ca/actra/control/prs_payments, to see a list of performer names under **ACTRA PRS NKA Payments** to see if your name or a performer you know is listed. If it is, contact ACTRA PRS at (416) 489-1311 or prs@actra.ca.

We'd be happy to hear from you and arrange for payment!

LET'S TALK ABOUT MONEY

GET PAID FOR YOUR PLAYS.

416-489-1311 • 1-800-387-3516 • srd@actra.ca • www.actra.ca/srd



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Serendipity



BY GEORGIAN

The Fall 2006 session of the ACTRA Toronto Members' Conference drew hundreds of members for a full-day of workshops and master classes. The fall conference is the one conference each year held on a Saturday, and ACTRA Toronto has been offering unique sessions for child performers and their parents so that kids can attend without missing school. For the first time, kids got their own Master Class, to work on auditions. Here are highlights from some of the workshops.



Child performers attending the **Master Class for Kids: Great Auditions** session at the October conference. Photos: Jag Gundu

Nailing the Part: Casting for TV

Actor Jennifer Wigmore moderated a panel including Shaftesbury Films producer Suzanne French, casting director Marsha Chesley and producer Jamie Paul Rock to provide help to actors on the casting process and how to 'nail the part.'

The difference between now and 10 years ago is the lack of work, which has increased the competition level, not just for actors, but for casting directors.

Most of the actors will be off book, so bear that in mind, though it's okay to bring the sides in with you. Don't count on the reader to help you out. It's not their audition, it's yours. The safest thing to do is say "Line," and it's okay to ask to start again.

Be careful of asking questions before you start. While the sides aren't the whole picture, you've had to do a lot of work to answer questions for yourself about what happened before, where the character is emotionally, and you want to show the preparation you did. If it's wrong but done well, that will still impress them.

Just because you didn't get it doesn't mean you didn't make an impression. They may have liked you, but felt you didn't fit. The CD may have said "They're reading for this part, but I also thought they'd be good for this other part." before you even get in the room. They may cast you elsewhere in the project or keep you in mind for others. A good audition will be remembered and is never a waste of time.

Don't rewrite, ever. If you get sides that have a little interchange that doesn't involve your character, perse, don't cross it out and skip it, it's there for a reason. And don't re-write words or jokes or leave things out. If there's a writer in the room, they can tell if dialogue isn't working, they don't need you to tell them that. It will mean more if it's bad dialogue, and you make it work anyway.

The audition is not a scavenger hunt for props. Never, ever bring a gun, even a fake one, to an audition. The audition is about what you look like, what you sound like, and can you act and connect.

A self tape won't get you the part, but it may get you a callback (for ACTRA members, there's the Gordon Pinsent studio that has a camera, great sound and great lights – all for free.)

A headshot should be a headshot (no preference for colour over b/w, though colour seems to be prevalent these days.) So many submissions are electronic now, and they come in as a thumbnail, so if you've got a body-shot, your head is minuscule and they usually won't take the time to click on it.

Marsha doesn't like to get e-mail or faxes, but doesn't mind postcards or phone messages, just don't expect to get her on the phone for a response.

Jamie doesn't want postcards, it's just more mail. He loves it when agents call and offer him tickets to see their clients in a show.



Bruce Hunter, Fab Filippo, Luba Goy and Gordon Paynter in *From Sketch to Screen*.



Peter Keleghan speaking to members at the conference plenary about ACTRA's plans to start a credit union for artists. Photo: Kim Hume



Neil Whitely at the October Members' Conference, sending a letter on Status of the Artist to his MPP.

Mirror, Mirror

Older actors, people of colour, people with disabilities... are they seeing themselves on TV? Are Canadian screens inclusive? Producers Shernold Edwards (Epitome Pictures), Laura Miliken (Big Soul Productions), Sadia Zaman (Vision TV), Sarah Crawford (Chum) and actor/producer Tonya Lee Williams tackled these questions in a lively workshop.

What is diversity?

It's a synonym for people of colour but it also includes age, gender, socio-economic backgrounds, aboriginal peoples.

The panel discussed how broadcast mergers such as CTV buying Chum can threaten diversity. Will distinct programming be retained? Homogenization becomes a greater risk. The Canadian Association of Broadcasters reports that aboriginal people and those with disabilities are under-represented and it's because of societal attitudes and lack of understanding

How are productions that do include diversity achieving that?

North/South did open casting calls, went to high schools and created a multicultural canvas. They found incredible young actors and knew they would flourish if given the opportunity. It requires more outreach, building talent pools of diverse groups. Chum, Global and Vision are on track to be the next leaders to commission the next show for a diverse person.

Advice to performers

- Go to the film festivals
- Educate yourself in this business
- Know what the broadcasters want
- Pitch to the programming executive
- Get a business card and a website
- Every person you meet is an opportunity
- Get yourself on film/video so people can see it

Useful websites – or find these through the LINKS page on www.actratoronto.com

www.torontoartscouncil.org
www.arts.on.ca/scripts/index.asp
www.canadacouncil.ca
www.telefilm.gc.ca
www.nsi-canada.ca
www.wift.com
www.lift.on.ca
www.canadianactor.com

The Background on Background

Casting agent Zameret Kleiman, talent agents Tricia and Melissa Lee and performers Stephen Graham Simpson and ACTRA Extras Chair Shereen Airth shared their advice and experiences. Jack Newman moderated.

Some advice: always show up on time, have the proper wardrobe with you on set, and be diverse in your look. Consider having multiple agents, though avoid being contacted by two agents for the same production. Preference of engagement for background performers means Full Members are considered first, then Apprentice members, then ACTRA Extras. Make sure your agent knows that you are an ACTRA Extra, so you should be called before the cash extras.

Advice for Background Performers

- Be on time, with wardrobe
- Be accessible on your phone numbers
- Have up-to-date photos with your agent
- Don't cancel at the last minute
- If you are going to be late, call your agent to explain why
- Work together with different categories of actors
- Don't believe or share on-set rumours
- If you have health problems bring what you need to look after yourself (food, medication, water)

February Members' Conference

The February 2007 members' conference included several new features: an early-bird breakfast session with a star, a panel with the nominees for our newest ACTRA Awards category – voice performance, and a new all-day workshop. Breakfast with Kenneth Welsh started things off for the early bird conference goers. The all-day stream, Idea to Screen, offered a writers' boot camp with Rick Green, Diane Flacks and a clinic on how to pitch your project. Auditions 201 continued with popular host David Gale and actors Wayne Robson, Rick Howland, Jennifer Podemski and Cayle Chernin. The Master Class with a Director featured *Little Mosque on the Prairie* director Michael Kennedy. With Respect to Swords and Guns featured experts in these areas showing us proper technique and safety.

Mark your calendar

learn • network • connect • act
 upcoming dates for ACTRA Toronto Members' Conferences at Victoria College, University of Toronto

Wednesday, June 27, 2007

Saturday, October 20, 2007



Producers Sarah Crawford (Chum), Sadia Zaman (Vision TV) and Shernold Edwards (Epitome Pictures) of the *Mirror, Mirror* panel exploring diversity on television.



Nathaniel Stephenson and his mother at our **Just for Kids** workshop.

This Bud's For You

By Shawn Lawrence, ACTRA Toronto's Ombudsman



Since my last column, many of the issues I have dealt with have been regarding upgrades, visible minority status, late payments, cancelled memberships and disciplinary action. New issues included answering questions about the Ontario's government's plan to introduce Status of the Artist legislation. The government was going to deal with this in their last legislative session and didn't. We are still hopeful that they will address it sometime this year. I spoke with a member who was convinced

that an A.D. was bad-mouthing him to casting agents and preventing him from getting auditions. Unfortunately, the incident happened two years prior to his contact with me, and there was no real proof, so there was nothing I could do. I'm best able to help when people contact me in a timely manner. I was able to resolve a problem an agent was having with coverage from AFBS. Bob Underwood, as always, took my call and resolved the problem. I've also had a couple of requests for help from members from other branches. I've tried to assist them but suggested they look into establishing an ombudsman position in their branch. In all cases, I have done my very best to assist the members, unfortunately not always to their satisfaction and I have suffered a few flesh wounds! However, I've survived so far. **Until next time, I wish you work!**

contact Shawn Lawrence at 416-928-2278 ext. 6604

Correction:

Last column, I mentioned ACTRA PRS had disbursed \$10.3 million. I was mistaken. That was ACTRA PRS' previous year's collections. Overall performer disbursements are much higher: ACTRA PRS has issued an impressive \$35 million on behalf of performers in the last five years. Kudos!



more news

More news and ACTRA Toronto Committee reports at

www.actratoronto.com www.actra.ca

ACTRA strike news

Highlights of IPA Terms of Settlement

www.actra.ca/actra/control/hotnews1?category=hn&id=10558

An update on FilmPort

www.actratoronto.com/home/filmportupdate.html

Send a letter to your MPP for Status of the Artist

www.actratoronto.com/ccp/soa_o6.asp

ACTRA Toronto Stewards at work

Under the Commercial Agreement, internet ads are a separate payment

Ad agencies and companies know that contracting for the internet requires additional payments for the performers, but too often ads shot for radio or television are just posted without payment or contracting for web use. Our eagle-eyed staff and stewards with the help of performers and agents are catching unauthorized web ads and pursuing payments on behalf of performers. Recently, additional performer payments including I & R and late fees were pursued and collected for web ads by more than five engagers totaling almost \$90,000.

Not so fast

Two versions of a fast food television commercial aired within the same broadcast cycle but didn't comply with the editing provisions in the Commercial Agreement. Commercial Stewards filed a successful grievance collecting more than \$20,000.00 in session and residual payments for several performers.

Weather hazards

A three-day campaign by a U.S. advertising agency was shot in torrential rainfall, high winds and freezing temperatures. Our members were required to perform long hours in intolerable conditions. ACTRA acknowledged the difficult weather situation faced by production, but little was being done to ensure performers were kept safe and warm. In addition to demanding immediate consideration for our members, ACTRA Toronto found the agency to be in violation of multiple working condition provisions and collected \$3,000.00 in fines.

We did very well indeed.

We bargained the largest wage increase ACTRA members have had since 1999, and achieved fair terms on the internet. The new IPA has the three pillars ACTRA was seeking to resolve the strike.

PAY

A fair wage increase of 9% over three years plus 1% into benefits

INTERNET

Canadian producers pay 3.6% of any internet revenues from first dollar – the first clean, unqualified residual in our agreement. We got a 'wait-and-see' status quo from the U.S. studios with the undertaking they'll track internet revenue and pay retroactively when we finalize terms with them in 24 months.

PEACE

An end to the litigation and a stronger, clearer negotiation protocol for the next round of talks.

More information on the IPA terms of settlement is posted on www.actra.ca and www.actratoronto.com. I was proud to be a part of such an exceptional bargaining team. Your negotiators and your National Council are recommending acceptance of these terms.

There is nothing inevitable about the future of the global film and television industry. We have the capacity to determine our own future if we use our collective strength to good advantage and take action to improve the terms and conditions under which we work.

One thing is clear. We do not have the option to stand still or go to sleep while the industry is undergoing a major change. We were making other plans and then... life happened. Now let's embrace it. Let's live it as fully as possible.

In solidarity,
Karl Pruner



Our cause is just

Our cause is just. Artists, performers and unions from around the world have shown their support for ACTRA's position in this strike.

See all the support for ACTRA
www.actra.ca/actra/control/feature21



President's Message continued

Top photo:
ACTRA Toronto President Karl Pruner in a media scrum on January 8 following ACTRA's news conference announcing our first-ever strike.
Photo: Jag Gundu

Above:
Sonja Smits and Lorne Cardinal speaking to media on the first day of ACTRA's strike.
Photo: Jag Gundu

Left:
Shereen Airth at ACTRA's strike demo.
Photo: Peter Baker

ACTRA Award for Outstanding Performance – Female

Martha Burns

Slings & Arrows



Martha Burns won a Gemini Award for her role as Ellen Fanshaw in *Slings & Arrows*. Originally from Winnipeg, she's known for her leading roles at the Stratford and Shaw Festivals. Ms. Burns is a recipient of the Barbara Hamilton

Award for excellence and professionalism in the performing arts, as well as two Dora Awards for *Trafford Tanzi* and *The Miracle Worker* and a Genie Award for *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. She is a founding member of Soulpepper Theatre Company and has worked extensively as an instructor for Soulpepper's youth outreach programs as well as George Brown Theatre School and Ryerson Theatre School. Film credits include *Siblings*, Jerry Cicoritti's *The Life Before This*, the short film *Hindsight* and Francois Girard's *Silk*. Upcoming, she plays Mary Miller in *H2O II: The Trojan Horse*.

Maria Del Mar

Terminal City



In *Terminal City*, a 10-part TV series, Maria Del Mar plays Katie Sampson, a woman with breast cancer who becomes host of a reality TV series while she's undergoing cancer treatment. It's a tough role, and she's earned accolades for

her performance. Next, Ms. Del Mar will be off to Uruguay for the premiere of a Bill Marks comedy, *14 Days in Paradise*. For an actor accustomed to dramatic roles, the film gave her "a chance to be my silly self." She's excited by her ACTRA Award nomination. "Yay! A completely and entirely Canadian crew and cast. That was the most rewarding." Maria is known for her roles in *JAG*, *24*, *Monk*, *The Practice*, *Frasier*, *Blue Murder* and *Street Legal*.

Deborah Grover

11 Cameras



Deborah Grover is enjoying her 'character years.' She plays the chain smoker mother Gladys in *11 Cameras*, and her son is in Iraq, working for the security forces. *11 Cameras* was shot on webcam. Ms. Grover says it's "One of the

most amazing things I've ever done. A gift. A great character part on the screen, and I got to work with these wonderful young actors." Ms. Grover played the mother of the murdered young woman in Atom Egoyan's *Where The Truth Lies*. Other credits include appearances on *This Is Wonderland*, *Jeff Ltd.*, *The Murdoch Mysteries* with Peter Outerbridge, and a small independent film that did very well on the festival circuit, *Six Figures*. Ms. Grover started out in theatre and recent credits include the two-hander *Sexy Laundry* and a bilingual play, *Beau Gestes & Beautiful Deeds*.

Martha Henry

At The Hotel



Martha Henry is a revered stage performer, and a multi-award winning film and television actor. In Ken Finkleman's *At The Hotel*, she plays Lucy Knowlton, the owner of the celebrated and mysterious Chateau Rousseau hotel. "I

loved doing it. I adore Ken Finkleman. He's one of the most original minds." Well known for her many years at the Stratford Festival, Ms. Henry is also a respected director with credits such as *Richard II* and the premiere of Timothy Findley's *Elizabeth Rex*. She has won five Genie Awards for *The New Comers*, *The Wars*, *Dancing In The Dark*, *Mustard Bath* and *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. She has three Gemini Awards, and a Gemini nomination for her performance as the mother of the Prime Minister played by Paul Gross in *H2O*. She is a Companion of the Order of Canada and recipient of a Governor General's Award. Most recently, Ms. Henry starred in *Retreat From Moscow* at Theatre Calgary. Upcoming, she's directing *Of Mice and Men* at Stratford.

Kristen Thomson

Away From Her



To be an ACTRA Award nominee, Kristen Thomson says she "was blown away. It's an incredible award. It's affirming, in terms of the work that one's doing." An award-winning actor, Ms. Thomson has two ACTRA

Awards for her performances in the short film *I Shout Love* and the film adaptation of the award-winning one-woman play she also wrote, *I, Claudia*. In *Away From Her*, Ms. Thomson plays the non-sense nurse Kristy, who befriends Gordon Pinsent's character, Grant, as he visits his Alzheimer-afflicted wife. "I found it imaginative and emotionally engaging to play someone so straight up." Currently writing a new play, Ms. Thomson's other film credits include Deepa Mehta's adaptation of Carol Shield's novel *The Republic of Love*, *Flower & Garnet*, *The Matthew Shepard Story* and *The Law of Enclosures*.

Status of the Artist appears to be Status Quo

Ontario artists are still waiting for legislation

by David Sparrow

ACTRA Toronto President Karl Pruner joined other arts unions and the Ontario Federation of Labour at a Queen's Park news conference in December calling on the government to take action on its promise of Status of the Artist legislation in Ontario.



ACTRA would like to see all child performers receive basic protections under the law.

Status of the artist is a category of legislation and programs that would improve the economic and social status of artists.

While Canada (federally) has recognized this important initiative, labour falls within provincial jurisdiction. Since 1988 only Quebec and Saskatchewan have enacted SOA legislation. The Ontario Liberals promised to bring in SOA legislation during their first term. That was in June 2004, and as of March 2007, no progress has been made. ACTRA has been to the Ontario Legislature to lobby for this issue on three occasions. The Minister of Culture, Hon. Caroline Di Cocco, has repeatedly promised there will be action, yet so far... status quo ante.

ACTRA has lobbied Queen's Park along with other arts groups requesting that the following five agreed-upon ideas be used as a foundation from which to build:

Protection for Child Performers

While ACTRA has many safeguards for children working under our Independent Production Agreement, some child performers in Ontario work without these terms. Protect all child performers under the law.

Career Transitioning and Training

Performers are not entitled to Employment Insurance (EI) or EI-funded provincial training programs. Provide equal access to such programs for artists.

Dignity for Older Artists

Many older performers are without pensions, health benefits or affordable housing. Income averaging, inclusion under EI and support for more housing would provide security and dignity for artists.

Income Averaging

Provincial income tax averaging would recognize that artists' incomes fluctuate from year to year.

Collective Bargaining

ACTRA insists that any new legislation in the area of collective bargaining must first do no harm to the rights of artists under existing agreements. Create a stakeholder committee to discuss this issue with strict timelines for legislative action.

The heart of SOA legislation is to provide artists with the legal tools to enjoy a safe and dignified life before and after retirement. The time has come for the Liberals to fulfill their election promise by recognizing the special status of artists in Ontario.

Email the Minister of Culture, the Hon. Caroline Di Cocco, at cdicocco.mpp@liberal.ola.org with your desire to see Status of the Artist legislation in Ontario.



David Sparrow serves as ACTRA Toronto Council's Executive Member at Large. An actor for more than 16 years, he has appeared in film and TV roles, commercials, and has voiced both cartoons and radio spots. As a writer, David is currently in post-production on his first feature, *Teddy Bear*, co-written and produced with ACTRA member Yuval Daniel and shot under ACTRA Toronto's TIP Agreement.

SOA Sub-committee report discovered

In early January, Minister Di Cocco's Sub-committee's report on Status of the Artist was spotted on their website. This report received no announcement, no news release, and is not linked from the Culture Minister's website. Though the sub-committee's recommendations could be termed vague, they largely reflect the measures ACTRA Toronto has been fighting for.

www.macac.on.ca/forums/ReportPDF/macac_eng_web_Dec_6_06.pdf



Mark Lutz as Victor Davis.
Photo courtesy of Indian Grove Productions.
Photo: Ken Woroner



Mark Lutz as Victor Davis,
Ron Lea as swimming coach Clifford Barry.
Photo courtesy of Indian Grove Productions. Photo: Ken Woroner



Canada's Victor Davis celebrates his gold medal win at the 1984 Olympic games in Los Angeles.

Photo courtesy Canadian Press/Canadian Olympic Committee.
Photo by Ted Grant

Victor continued from page 13

"They always say write what you know so having spent 15 years waterlogged in a pool, swimming was something I knew about."

In 2000, Mark was able to arrange a meeting with Victor's father, Mel Davis. Mark's brother, Steve, also a serious swimmer in his youth and now a lawyer, accompanied him. Steve drafted an agreement and the two presented it to Mel. They didn't have any money to offer but they made it clear that they were willing to do whatever it took to tell Victor's story. Mel responded to their determination and passion by signing the two-year agreement within half an hour. They then spent the next five or six hours talking. "Mel was really great. From the moment we walked in the door, he was very welcoming. I cannot say enough great things about him. He was generous to a fault, accommodating, frank about his son and he didn't pull any punches."

Almost two years of research and interviews followed. Mark learned that there was a distinct advantage to knowing your subject. "The more I showed that I knew what I was talking about, the more comfortable they felt and the more forthcoming they were." At a certain point, the information he was gathering began to repeat itself and he knew that it was time to start writing. He wrote all day, every day and late into the night for three solid months.

The first draft was well received, albeit with a few surprises. "I'd sent it to a producer on a top-10 show in L.A. and he said, 'Dude, I like this. I'm very interested in making this movie. There's only one thing I would change: you've got to make him from Texas, make him a cowboy.' And I said, 'Well, it's a true story.' Then he said, 'Listen, we make him from California, a California surfer-boy.' 'Uh, it's a true story.' 'I got it: we make him a brash kid from New England, Boston or something, you know?' Finally, I said, 'Dude... It's a true story!' And he said, 'You mean, a true-true story?' 'Yeah.' 'Aw, dude, you'll never sell it down here.' He loved the story but the fact that it was Canadian somehow made it 'unmakeable.'"

It certainly wasn't unmakeable in the eyes of Canadian producer Bernie Zuckerman. He saw its potential right away and committed himself to the project, teaming up with Gemini Award-winning director, Jerry Ciccoritti. On the set, each actor was given a copy of the 'director's bible,' a collection of notes written by Ciccoritti outlining his thoughts on the story and welcoming performers to expand and contribute to them. The first note in the bible is: 'This is not a sports movie. I have no interest in making a sports movie. This is a movie that investigates the question: what makes a hero?' When Mark read that, it confirmed that Ciccoritti was the right man for the job.

While conducting his interviews, Mark was told a story about Victor Davis that stuck with him the entire time he penned the first draft. It goes something like this: some friends were picking Davis up at a university hospital and when they arrived, they were surprised to find him in a water treadmill swimming with a seal. "What kind of person says, 'I'm going to get in this pool with this wild animal, I don't know if it's going to bite me or what, but I'm going to get in the pool and swim with it and mimic its motions and see if I can learn anything from it? Who thinks like that?'" Mark wrote the seal scene into the script. Zuckerman told him, 'We can't afford to spend a day of shooting with you and a seal and a water treadmill – you'll have to lose it.' But, Mark was determined and each time he turned in a new draft, he would sneak the seal scene back in. Finally, Ciccoritti came to the rescue. "Jerry hated to lose the scene but he also agreed that it would be too expensive to shoot, so he came up

with the idea to have someone tell it as a story – and, I’ve got to say, it’s one of my favorite scenes in the film. Adam (MacDonald) and Jeff (Mallory) knocked it out of the park.”

According to Mark, stepping onto the set for the first day of principal photography wearing two hats – as the writer and lead actor – was one of the most challenging aspects of the project. “Taking nothing away from anyone who worked on the film in any capacity, they were coming to it, at the most, within the last year and I had already spent four or five years committed to the story. It was difficult to let go on that first day and let everyone else take the reins. My head was definitely split – cleaved down the middle.” As the days went on, he found it easier to let go, to focus on his acting and enjoy the contributions of the first-rate cast and crew. “I’d been carrying an enormous responsibility, self-inflicted to a certain extent, to do it right. I mean, there are people who lost their son, their brother, their grandchild, their best friend, their swim-buddy. It was important to tell the story right and as accurately as possible and not to try to canonize the guy or water things down.”

What about the physical challenge of playing a world-class athlete? Mark has been a swimmer and scuba diver for most of his life, but to play Victor, he literally transformed his body. He began his work with a trainer in San Diego who used ‘active release therapy’ to alleviate his shoulder problems. It was a painful but ultimately successful process. Between the gym and the pool, he worked out an average of three hours a day, every day, for five months. He also hired a personal trainer/body builder who knew all about manipulating your body to get it down to its lowest fat content while retaining as much muscle mass as possible. And he didn’t stop there. During the shoot, as demanding as it was, he still ran for at least half an hour before going to set and then hit the gym at the end of the day. “It’s amazing the discipline you can have knowing you’re going to be walking around in a Speedo for 20 days.”

Just before shooting the film’s first swimming sequence, Mark stood on a starter block and led the other actor-athletes in a raucous cheer, their voices bouncing off the tiled walls. He then produced a bottle of water taken directly from the USC Olympic pool, site of Davis’ swims dur-

ing the ‘84 Games and poured it into the Etobicoke Olympium, ceremoniously blessing their undertaking and connecting history with the present.

“It’s amazing the discipline you can have knowing you’re going to be walking around in a Speedo for 20 days.”

At a time when our film and television industry is under siege and our stories are increasingly in danger of being lost, Mark Lutz has accomplished a rare feat: he has brought a Canadian hero to life from the page to the screen. Watching Lutz’s progress over the years, the meticulous research, writing the screenplay, finding a producer and director, pounding his body into peak condition and taking on the starring role, Victor Davis may not be the only hero of this story.

Victor airs March 26 at 8 p.m. on CBC.



Chris Owens is editor of *Performers Magazine*. He has a role as journalist Dave Stubbs in *Victor*. He plays hockey in Toronto.


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In Memoriam

Ivor Barry, Peter Brierley, Dennis Doherty, Norma Edwards,
Thomas Gillie Fenwick, Celia Franca, William Martin Keen,
Charmion King (see page 32), Frank Mullen, Jackie Rae, Donald Zale

Patricia Rideout

1931-2006

There are so many wonderful things I feel and remember about my dearest friend Pat. We met in the early 1950s as students at The Royal Conservatory of Music (Toronto) where our friendship began and grew throughout the years. We performed together in many Canadian Opera Company and CBC opera productions and concerts, and Pat was always the consummate artist. The things I will treasure the most are the times we spent together at her cottage, New Year's Eve at her home, and waking up to the aromas of her fabulous brunches. Pat was always there for me through some tough times in my life and I will always be grateful for all her love and caring. "Best Friends" forever. Miss you!

Angela Antonelli



Patricia Rideout performing in *The Art of Fugue*, 1963.

Photo courtesy CBC Still Photo Collection. Photo: Albert Crookshank

Mavor Moore

1919-2006



Excerpted from **Dave Broadfoot's** tribute delivered at the memorial for Mavor Moore at the University of Victoria Faculty Club, January 6, 2007.

When I left North Vancouver for Toronto in 1952, I obtained an on-camera audition at CBC-TV. The chief CBC-TV producer was Mavor Moore. He and his mother Dora had an annual satirical revue called *Spring Thaw*. I appeared in that *Spring Thaw* and in 10 different productions of the show in the years that followed.

Mavor organized his life so that he was able to produce and direct *Spring Thaw* every year. Under his guidance, each new show became more exciting, better written, better costumed, better everything, with writers such as himself and others, from Wayne and Shuster to Pierre Berton,

composers from Godfrey Rideout to Raymond Jessel and Marion Grudeff.

We were all very lucky. Watching Mavor direct and produce, I learned to become a director-producer. In fact, everything I learned from Mavor, I used until the day I retired.

Mavor persuaded Gratien Gélinas, the multi-talented theatre giant of Quebec, to let us use the theatre he was in charge of, La Comédie Canadienne. Our show had never played Montreal. At the end of the opening night performance, we had taken 11 curtain calls. Then Mavor walked on stage, and the crowd went wild. But the only reason Mavor had come on stage was to publicly thank Gratien for letting us use the theatre. Then Gratien decided to come on stage. The crowd went absolutely crazy.

Just when it seemed that Mavor might finally be on the brink of some time off, he was dragooned, or brow-beaten, or bullied or bulldozed into creating for Toronto the St. Lawrence Centre for the Performing Arts. Getting that centre up and running was a huge challenge. The Mayor of Toronto, who must remain nameless, was not a theatre fan. Fortunately, it wasn't long until Mayor Lamport retired.

One can't help but hope that we will continue to produce those creative artists who can relate directly to their fellow Canadians the way Mavor did, with all of his plays and sketches and books and operas from *Abracadabra* to *Louis Riel* and his individual songs and musicals and festivals.

I never lost touch with Mavor. Nor did I lose my respect for his amazing attributes: his hard work, his talent, his dedication and his humanity.

Mavor Moore's family, with the assistance of Jim Betts and Script Lab, are commencing pre-production for a show of the words and music of Mavor Moore: *The Last Best Spring Thaw*. The show will be sometime in late April or early May. The family is calling for reminiscences and memories of Mavor to be sent to mavormoorememorial@hotmail.com or by mail to Mavor Moore Memorial, 312 Wright Ave., Toronto, ON, M6R 1L9. <http://mavormoorememorial.spaces.live.com>



Photo courtesy CBC Still Photo Collection.

Percy Saltzman

1915-2007

Percy Philip Saltzman died quietly in his sleep on January 15. In his career, he did more than 9,000 weather forecasts on television and radio and conducted more than 1,000 interviews for CBC-TV, CTV, Global, CityTV and others. He used no notes or teleprompters, relating his forecasts entirely from memory. At the end of each performance, he tossed his chalk into the air. He was a member of the Order of Canada and was inducted into the Broadcast Hall of Fame. He served as President of ACTRA Toronto.


ACTRA member and CTV News Anchor Lloyd Robertson remembers Percy Saltzman: "He was the original. The first TV weatherman. The first host of a national colour television breakfast magazine show, CTV Canada AM. And he was the first human face on television in Canada [September 8, 1952]. He had a great sense of humour. He was a very passionate man, full of life, a character. We worked together covering the moon landing in 1969. I asked Percy what it would be like to toss a piece of chalk if one were on the moon, and he said 'It's all magic you know, Lloyd. Television is all magic'."



Photo courtesy CBC Still Photo Collection.

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Lister Sinclair

1921-2006

Lister Sinclair will be remembered as the all-knowing voice of CBC radio's *Ideas*. He had several careers in broadcasting before his *Ideas* role began. He was a founding member of ACTRA and active in radio in its heyday, before television came along in the '50s. Lister wrote, directed and acted in radio plays, working with such radio legends as John Drainie and Andrew Allan. He was prolific, writing more than 700 radio plays in all. He hosted *The Nature of Things*, appeared on *Front Page Challenge*, *Wayne and Shuster* and *Morningside*. In 1971, Lister won the award ACTRA instituted in John Drainie's name, recognizing his contribution to Canadian broadcasting. His contributions would continue for decades. In addition to his radio work, he performed and wrote for television, eventually becoming a CBC executive before going back to writing, performing and producing programs. Lister Sinclair was named an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1985.



Welcome new members

Rebecca Addelman
Anousha Alamian
Allan Matthew Alexander
Angel
Glen Anthony
Janae Armogan
Crystal Ash
Dylan Authors
Andrew Badali
Christy Battell
Serge Bennathan
Jamie Bloch
Daneen Boone
Hannah Brigden
Brock Andrew Stephen
Nicholas Brown
Jason Brown
Nicholas Castel
Vanderburgh
Antonio Cayonne
Lisa Chang
Paul Chaput

Blake Chorley
Olivia Clark
Lindsay Cole
Mika Collins
Frank Cox-O'Connell
Andrew William Craig
Tricelle Cummings
Arnold D'Julius
Dennis D.
Kyle Dadd
Edward Daranyi
Tenika Davis
Melinda Delorme
Jason Derosse
Nicole Divinal
Michael Dufays
Candace Edwards
Phillip L. Ens
Dean Epifano
Angelica Escudero
Dylan Everett
Abigail Falle

Stacy-Ann Fequiere
Michael Ferfolia
Rebecca Fisseha
Katherine Flores
Siera Florindo
J D Fortune
Inessa Frantowski
Alyssa Fraser
Lindsey Frazier
Shamus Fynes
Gail Gabrielle
Tye Gnass
Ana Golja
Eli Goree
Mandi Gosling
Nadine Gravis
Whise Green
Ingrid Haas
D.Shon Henderson
Joni Henson
Allison Hogg
Christine Horne

Ryan Horwood
Herb Irving
Sarah Jackson
Sarah Jackson
Vanessa James
Dani Jazzar
Brent Jones
Miranda Jones
Paulette M Joseph
Tabitha Keast
Justin Kelly
Bob Kerr
Robert James Kinar
Mary Kitchen
Daphne Kostova
Aniela Kurylo
Perry Kwan
Troy Langstaff
Laura Lawson
Sophie Lemay
Patricia Leung
Richard Little
Taunya Lucas

Darryn Lucio
Sarah Machin-Gale
Orville Maciel
Alexandra Maclean
Pamm Malcolm
Chelsea P Manders
Micheline Marchildon
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Jane McClelland
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Tony Medici
Muriel Miller
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Joan Barbara Moore
Karen Musey
Laura Nason
Danya Nearon
Thyrza Ogiemien
Bridget Ogundipe
Sabrina Paganelli
Kevin Parkin
Claude Payne
Lukas Penar
Amanda Perreira
Bridget Perry
Ryan Persaud
Richard S Peters
Clyde Phillips Sr
Adrienne Elise Pieczonka
Sebastian Pigott
Bianca Pisciola
Ari Pollack
Allyson Pratt
Holly Prazoff
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Rachael-Lea Rickards
Jessica Rimmer
Marc Robillard
James Rogers
Joanne Rukiange
Marina Salsa
Bianca Santos
Frank Schiavone
Peter Wm Schoelier
Christopher Seivright
Kaitlind Shaw
Evan Steingarten
Aaron Stern
Conroy Stewart
Alisha Stranges
Christina The
Sierra Alexandra
Thomson
Sinjin Thorpe
Terry Tompkins
Puja Uppal
Chantal Vachon
Nick Vezeris
Urs Villiger
Rachel Vroom
David Waddleton
Deanna Wales
Xin Wang
David Gordon Ward
Brittany Watson
Horace A Watson
Ari Weinberg
Laura Whalen
Shannon Whelan
Lawrence J Wiliford
Ellen Wong
Scott Yamamura
Norman Yeung
Dale Yim

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jorja Rae Lardy

ACTRA member Edie Inksetter-Lardy and her husband Stephanie Lardy are thrilled to announce the safe arrival of their first child Jorja Rae Lardy on November 8, 2006, in Sechelt, British Columbia.

Alexander William Szarka

ACTRA members Michelle Nolden and Chris Szarka are delighted to announce that Alexander William Szarka is in the house. Born January 11, 2007, Alex weighed in at just under 8 lbs. and 22 inches long.

John and Nancy wed

John Connolly and Nancy Kenny are happy to announce their elopement and marriage in Las Vegas, September 12, 2006.

We Made a Baby II, The Sequel

Anne Marie Scheffler and Dave Libbey are proud to announce a new brother for Nathan. Born on January 29, 2007, Jake Robert Mark Libbey weighed in at a modest 9 lbs. 1 oz. Lights, camera, action and push! And scene! The casting for this family is complete.



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Wendy Crewson, Culture Champion continued from page 11

FD: *What was your impetus to go to the States?*

WC: It was one of those moments that happen in your life and you suddenly go 'Oh, my God, I see clearly now.' I'd done *Home Fires* for all those years with producer Bob Sherrin and he was doing a movie about a con artist named Betsy Bigley (*Love and Larceny*, CBC-TV). I'm good friends with Bob, I liked him and I remember going into Bob's office all very excited about this movie. I'm in this plaid flannel muumuu thing and I said, 'So, the Betsy Bigley story, I really want a chance at this.' I had a little campaign all worked out and Bob sort of listened, 'Well, Wendy,' he said, 'What part are you thinking of?' What part am I thinking of? I'm thinking of Betsy Bigley, I'm thinking of the lead. His question brought my world crashing down and I went away with my tail between my legs. I decided right then and there that if I wanted to get parts in Canada, I'd better get myself down to the U.S. and get myself some work and get it together and really sort of push it. I moved down to New York right after that meeting.

FD: *I have terrible stories of friends from the '80s who couldn't get an audition at CBC television in Toronto for a project shooting in Canada but could get the audition in L.A. for the same role.*

WC: Absolutely, and I heard it right out of the casting agent's mouth that I needed to get a bigger name in the States if I wanted to get these leading parts at CBC. And everybody in the States was so enthusiastic – you went in for an audition, they couldn't believe somebody could act.

FD: What brought you back to Canada?

WC: Perry Zimel. When Sue Rodriguez came up, he called and said 'This is a great project.' He had just become my agent. He sent me the script and some research. I was so bowled over by her. I started reading about her, 'Oh, wasn't she born in Hamilton too, wasn't she the same age as I was, hadn't she moved down to the States and married an American?' I thought 'I know this woman.' As Meryl Streep said, 'She lives in me. I know her, I understand.' And I thought, 'I have to do this story.' You come in and audition like everybody else and then you hope and pray. But I started preparing for it way before I heard I'd got the job. I thought, 'Because if I get this job, I'd better be ready. I've told

them I can do it.' And then I get up to Fredericton and I'm working with all these people that I know and understand, in a place where I feel so comfortable, it was really all those elements that gave me that great momentum, that big boost to do something.

FD: *Do you have any favourite projects. You have quite a big body of work.*

WC: Ferne, I have a big body of work because I am paranoid and because I take everything, anything that comes down the pipe! Lot's of people don't and they have a very select and lovely body of work and I've got a lot of things that I'd never want anybody to see... ever.

FD: *But you have some favourites?*

WC: Oh, sure, I have my favourites. Jane Doe, Sue Rodriguez, Louise Arbour. I really liked Lorraine Evanshen in *The Man Who Lost Himself*. My Canadian movies are my favourites. You know, everybody goes, *Air Force One*... not one of my favourites, *Santa Clause*, no, not at all, *Bicentennial Man* – I don't think so. Just let me say right now, I don't think so!

FD: *Is there anything you had hoped I would have asked you that I didn't?*

WC: I have so much admiration for the artists that we have here in Canada and I have seen some riveting performances recently that have inspired me. I feel fortunate to be part of this group – everybody's maturing into their talent and it has been really, really remarkable – especially the women. Martha Burns in the play *Mathilde* was breathtaking; Vicky Snow in the *Walter Gretzky Story*... just fantastic! Cynthia Dale in *South Pacific*. God Almighty! I was just knocked out at the skill of that woman! Sheila McCarthy, everybody just thrills me. I can't wait to go see the girls do whatever the girls are going to do next: Fiona Reid, Susan Coyne, Rachel McAdams, Allison Pill.

I always feel there is a tremendous kind of support and empathy, considering how tiny this place is, and how few jobs there are. And truly, that's the difference. I feel like I've come home.



Ferne Downey is a Toronto Councillor and ACTRA's National Treasurer. She co-chairs the ACTRA Awards committee and is smitten by Wendy Crewson.



Wendy Crewson as Dr. Anne Packard and Dennis Haysbert as President David Palmer in *24*. Photo courtesy Global Television.

Wendy Crewson selected credits

ReGenesis

Away From Her

The Robber Bride

The Man Who Lost Himself (Gemini Award)

Hunt For Justice:

The Louise Arbour Story (FIPA D'or Biarritz Award)

Niagara Motel

24

At The End of the Day:

The Sue Rodriguez Story (Gemini Award)

Sex Traffic

Perfect Pie (ZIFFT International Film Festival Award)

Between Strangers

Suddenly Naked

Better Than Chocolate

The Many Trials of One Jane Doe

(Gemini Award, Manitoba Motion Picture Blizzard Award)

A Killing Spring

Due South (Gemini Award)

Getting Married in Buffalo Jump

Home Fires (ACTRA Award)

Special Honours

Gemini Humanitarian Award

WIFFT Crystal Award

ACTRA Toronto's Award of Excellence



As Jane Doe in
The Many Trials of One Jane Doe.
Photo courtesy Muse Entertainment



As Sue Rodriguez in
At the End of the Day;
The Sue Rodriguez Story.

Photo courtesy Bama-Alper Productions.
Photo by Ava V. Gerlitz



As Lorraine Evanshen and David James Elliott as
Terry Evanshen in *The Man Who Lost Himself.*
Photo courtesy CTV.



Speaking to media following ACTRA's
2004 election news conference to put
culture on the federal election agenda.



Kisser Crewson at the 18th Annual
Gemini Awards with her Gemini for
Best Performance by an Actress in a
Leading Role in a Dramatic Program or
Mini-Series for *The Many Trials of
One Jane Doe.*

Photo courtesy Academy of Canadian Cinema &
Television. Photo by Kodak Canada Entertainment
Imaging / Narvali Digital Photography

Wendy Crewson Culture Champion

Charmion King

1925-2007



Charmion King's career spanned almost 60 years. Though she appeared in countless film, television and radio shows, the Grande dame of Canadian Theatre always returned to the stage. "There is an excitement in live theatre that doesn't exist in other media," she told the *Toronto Star* in 1986. Born in Toronto, Charmion began her career at The Crest Theatre. She worked at the Stratford Festival, on Broadway and, most recently, with the Soulpepper Theatre Company. She will be dearly missed by her daughter, Leah, and by her beloved husband of 44 years, actor Gordon Pinsent. At the request of the family, donations in lieu of flowers may be made to the Actors' Fund of Canada.

Charmion King! What to say about Charmion King? That she was a queen? Many certainly would say so – I among them. She was the best of friends to me and an ever-present help in time of trouble.

We met in the late '40s when she was on tour in a revue called *There Goes Yesterday*. The company was in Toronto for the Christmas break and I was just back from England for my first Christmas at home in several years.

For some inexplicable reason, the stage manager did not come back to resume the tour, and as I had just finished a show in London in which I was both ASM and understudy, I was able to replace him. So, some 50 years later, these are a few things that I vividly recall about Charmion.

I know that she performed in 21 productions at the Crest Theatre between 1954 and 1962, the most significant to her future life being *The Madwoman of Chailot*. Kate Reid, Barbara Hamilton and I were the supporting females. Who should appear among us and unknown to any of us, but a dashing, attractive young buck whose name we were told was Gordon Pinsent. Very shortly, it became obvious that vibrations had begun to simmer between the Madwoman and the Newcomer. We began to cluck about like overly protective mother hens as we all knew that Charmion had been badly hurt on a previous occasion and none of us wanted to see a repeat performance.

Well, so much for our concerns. Today's Gordon and Leah Pinsent bear witness to that!

As for me, I shall sorely miss those telephone calls: "Hello darling, It's Charm. Are you alright? I worry when you don't answer the phone."

Love to you, dear one, from all of us.

Barbara Chilcott



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