

The magazine from ACTRA Toronto

Volume 19 • Issue 2 • Summer 2010

performers



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Miraculous Cure's*
Mayko Nguyen

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President's Message

Back to business

The phones are ringing. The trailers are out on the streets. Is business back to the way it was in 1999? Not yet. But it is clear there is activity in our town. The Ontario government's virtual doubling of the tax credits has put this province, and Toronto, back into action. Domestic productions like shooting here. And why not? Great crews, cutting edge productions and talented performers make good shows. We are still battling with issues and bottom line realities that a global marketplace brings. We are subject to the pressures of a high

Canadian dollar yet, despite that, foreign productions are still coming here to shoot. We continue to build relationships with the Ontario and Toronto governments to keep our city a film friendly town. We continue to put pressure on the Canadian Media Fund (CMF) to ensure Toronto is fairly treated in the awarding of greenlight monies. And we continue to talk with the feds to make sure Toronto and Ontario are fairly apportioned in policies, production incentives, domestic tax credits and CMF funding.

The election campaigns for mayor of Toronto are also heating up. ACTRA Toronto will be looking for a mayor with a platform supportive of film and television work in this city. ArtsVote, the committee behind supporting arts friendly political candidates, is gearing up to help make that a reality. With them we'll be asking all the candidates what they are going to do to help our industry. So, when a candidate knocks on your door, be sure to ask them what they will do for the film and television industry in this city.

On the Canadian drama campaign front CRTC Chair Konrad von Finckenstein has recognized what we've been saying all along, that broadcasters and telecommunications are interwoven and therefore need to be governed by the same content regulations and ownership rules. He's stated there must be a cap on foreign ownership, which ensures that the ownership majority is Canadian. He's asked that the CRTC be able to impose fines should a broadcaster or telecommunications company not play by the rules. He has ruled that Broadcasters put 5 per cent of their gross revenue into domestic production, drama and comedy, awards shows or programs of national interest. He got that part right.

However, von Finckenstein failed to hold steady, let alone act, on our demands to increase dramatic production airing in prime time. And we have yet to see what will happen as a result of his ruling allowing broadcasters to air their original programming on any of their stations or cable channels – no longer requiring them to broadcast on their main over-the-air network. His decision relaxes the rules, so that broadcasters can make their quotas by airing the programming “on whatever platform Canadians choose to consume their media.” But we will keep up the fight and make sure Canadian stories have a future. So when the broadcasters proudly announce their fall line up of shows, and brag about how much money they spent on American programming, we want you there to say Canadian drama on Canadian TV is what we need and what Canadians want.

In solidarity,

Heather Allin
President, ACTRA Toronto



ACTRA Toronto's president lends her voice to the cause at a Queen's Park rally in support of striking Steelworkers. Photo: Janesse Leung

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Performers

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(COVER PHOTO)
Mayko Nguyen
Photo:
www.mckennaphoto.com



Mayko Nguyen
Photo:
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Collective bargaining: Time to think very carefully about broadcasters

by Brian Topp



One of the more interesting developments to occur in the Canadian film and television industry recently is a quiet tweak being implemented to the Canadian Media Fund — a \$350 million a year grant program that underwrites most Canadian television production. A growing share of the fund, up to 30%, may be set aside in coming years for in-house production. In other words, intending to help fund shows that networks like CTV and Global produce themselves, rather than through independent producers.

This is familiar ground for ACTRA. Between the 1950s and 1980s most productions were done by broadcasters (the CBC, later joined by private broadcasters). The transfer of production to independent producers is a relatively recent phenomenon. As broadcasters and cable companies merge, morph and explore new distribution channels like the Internet, it wouldn't be surprising to see them experiment with producing more of their own shows themselves.

There are counter-pressures. For example, it is more difficult for in-house productions to qualify for tax credit programs. We'll have to see how that works out. But prudence suggests that this would be a good time to ensure that our collective agreements with broadcasters are in good order, in case they become more important direct engagers in coming years.

ACTRA recently gave all of Canada's broadcasters notice to bargain. We will be pursuing updated agreements with all of them in coming months. The good news is that ACTRA already has collective agreements with most of Canada's broadcasters, including CTV, Global, Vision and Citytv. The bad news is that many of these agreements are badly out of date and need some serious updating. Quite possibly, a pattern will be set at the largest broadcaster — CTV.

There is a lot to like about starting with CTV. We have a relatively good agreement with them already. And, we recently concluded an interim agreement in which the network agreed that scripted dramas, MOWs and other forms of production, usually produced under the Independent Production Agreement (IPA), would be shot by CTV under similar terms and conditions — in other words, parity with independent productions.

But there are some big issues that need to be dealt with. Here are a few:

- The last time ACTRA and CTV seriously talked about our agreement, that thing called the Internet wasn't on anyone's minds. We now need to have a careful talk about new media, including terms and conditions for conventional productions moved over to Internet use; productions made for new media; and other issues familiar to all of us from our watershed 2007 IPA negotiations (yes, THOSE negotiations, the ones with all the fireworks). We're looking forward to a more amiable conversation on the same issues here.
- CTV has become a sprawling, multi-channel broadcaster, as have most of the major players. We would like an agreement that covers all of CTV's channels and affiliates, not just its over-the-air channel.
- The IPA contains some good language designed to promote the use of ACTRA performers in reality and lifestyle productions. We would like to see CTV take up this offer throughout its network. We would also like to reinforce and renew the terms and working conditions for ACTRA voice performers used throughout the network.
- ACTRA has made an important commitment to promoting diversity in Canadian production. We might want to take advantage of our negotiations with the network to address this topic.

ACTRA Toronto has been consulting with members who have worked recently for CTV to be sure we understand all of the issues. We'll keep working with performers, agents and other stakeholders to identify priorities and to make our case effectively. We'll be doing the same with all our other broadcaster agreements.

When we're done, which looks like it may take a fair bit of time, we'll have a solid set of modern, updated agreements in place to help ACTRA members pursue work opportunities in the industry - no matter who is shooting the show.

If you have any thoughts on these issues, please share! There is a spot for member feedback on bargaining on our website, www.actratoronto.com.



Brian Topp is the executive director of ACTRA Toronto. He co-chairs FilmOntario, chairs the board of Creative Arts Savings and Credit Union, and is a member of the Toronto Film Board, the board of directors of ROI Fund, and the board of directors of Pinewood Toronto Studios.



Welcome new members!

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Yasmin A | Greg Ireland |
| C Dennis Airth | Layah Jane |
| Shadia Ali | Alison Jantzie |
| Pauline Anderson | Connor Jessup |
| Sarwar Arman | Alana Johnston |
| Sabrina Armani | Kristian Kadrigamar |
| Jonathan Baldock | Sam Kalibar |
| Stephen Timothy John Bell | Jordan Kanner |
| Carmina Bernhardt | Emily Kassie |
| Joanne Bernier | Aaron B Kohn |
| Spencer Birman | Sophia Kolinas |
| Jeremy Birrell | Travis Kuhne |
| Philip Borg | Patrick Kwok-Choon |
| Shauna Bradley | Leedine Lah |
| Samantha Cade | Greg Lanzillotta |
| Claire Calarco | Ron A. Laugher |
| Diego Campos | Scott Leaver |
| Rod Carley | Emily Alyn Lind |
| Kevin Caudle | Natalie Alyn Lind |
| Richard Cazeau | David Louie |
| Tara Chase | Allie Macdonald |
| Maggie Connelly | Esther Maloney |
| Alessandro Costantini | J.P. Manoux |
| Bernadette Couture | Rebecca Marshall |
| Dawn M Cox | Nick Mckinlay |
| Steve Cranwell | Matti Mclean |
| Shannon Crawford | Edsson Morales |
| Kitsym Currie | Art Mullin |
| Andrew Cymek | Matthew Nette |
| Mike Dagostino | Danielle Nicole |
| Robert Dayton | Emily Nighman |
| Davian Den Otter | Shane Nuttley |
| Holly Deveaux | Douglas Nyback |
| Claudia Difolco | Bola Raymond Olubowale |
| Lisa Marie Diliberto | Simone Osborne |
| Martin Donovan | Alain Patry |
| Sandy Duarte | Shane Pollard |
| Julia Duncanson | Meghan Roberts |
| Lexa Edelstein | Andrea N. Roberts |
| Mathew Edmondson | Manuel Rodriguez |
| Phyllis Ellis | David Roth |
| Peter J Evans | Tristan Samuel |
| Aaron Eves | Pamela Scott |
| Mackenzie Fahie | Matt Selby |
| Benny Feng | Molly Shanahan |
| Erin Fisher | Stephanie Sim |
| Robbie Fitzroy | Brian G. Smith |
| Alastair Forbes | Andrea So |
| Katherine Forrester | Scott Speedman |
| Heather Fox | Caitlin Stewart |
| Leah Gallant | Kolton Stewart |
| Darren Gallo | Edane Marie Tobias |
| Gabriel Giuliani | Genevieve Trilling |
| Hannah Goodjohn | Alexandra Trimble |
| Gabriel Grey | Vlada Verevko |
| Qaseem Gul | Ashleigh Warren |
| Brendan Halloran | Jenna Warren |
| Kyle Harrington | Michaela Washburn |
| Claire-Marie Dongying Harrower | Sarah Wilson |
| Donovan Harty | Thet Win |
| Jordan Hayes | Andrew Wright |
| Janick Hebert | Alexander Yarwood |
| David Hein | Josh Young |
| Chiharu Hibino | Nova Zatzman |
| Ava Himmel | |
| Riccardo Iannello | |

ASK A STEWARD

Making sense of life on set by Karen Woolridge

Q: What should I do when I'm asked to provide copies of personal identification?

A: One of the chief ways that productions are financed is through tax credits provided by the federal and provincial governments. The tax credits are only paid on workers who reside in Ontario. Consequently, companies are being advised to collect personal information for all of their crew, cast and employees in order to verify their residency qualifications. ACTRA advises that you provide the minimum amount of personal identification necessary to prove your residency.

To start, simply show production some government issued identification, if possible. You can even bring a photocopy of your most recent income tax Notice of Assessment with the financial information blocked out, or a utility bill with your account number and any bank information blocked out. The provision of a Social Insurance Number is required in order for you to be paid. You should be informed in advance if you'll need to bring this documentation to set. If you would like to learn more about privacy and the law go to www.priv.gc.ca. ACTRA is committed to investigating all complaints.

Q: What do I do if I'm being harassed?

A: There are three types of harassment covered by the Independent Production Agreement (IPA) which you might experience on set; racial, sexual and personal. Personal harassment covers comments which threaten your livelihood i.e. 'You'll never work again.' One of the first things you should do if you are the victim of harassment is to tell the person to stop. This can be said in any number of ways, both confrontational and non-confrontational.

As an example of a non-confrontational way to tell someone to stop offending you, you might say, 'You know, I appreciate you have a job to do, but you've offended me and I'm asking you to not do that any more.' If the behaviour persists you should call your steward and tell a member of the production team that you trust. New Ontario legislation, Bill 168, requires all employers to have a policy which provides for a workplace free of harassment. If you'd like to know more, visit the Ontario Ministry of Labour's website at www.labour.gov.on.ca and search for a document called *Workplace Violence and Harassment: Understanding the Law*.

Q: How and when do I check disagree on my voucher or work report?

A: When you sign a work report or voucher you are legally agreeing to what the document says. This is why it is important to read it over carefully before you sign it to see



that the times, performance category and checkmarks are true. Unfortunately, we too often hear of situations where performers are under the gun, not having enough time to determine if what is written on their voucher or work report is correct.

Here are a few suggestions to help you to deal with this situation: First, familiarize yourself with the 24 hour clock. Times are often recorded using the 24 hour clock. Then write down your times elsewhere in both the 12 and 24 hour clock so that you can check them quickly against what is on the form. The most important times to be recorded correctly are your call time, the time you were broken for meals and your wrap time. Remember, you can always politely ask the assistant director to give you some breathing room. Being pressured to sign off on something quickly could be a sign that something is incorrect. Finally, when in doubt, check 'disagree' on your voucher and leave your options open. Then, contact your steward.

Ask a steward welcomes all your questions. Please email them to info@actratoronto.com.



Karen Woolridge is a steward in the IPA department. She can be found at kwoolridge@actratoronto.com.

Did You Know?

The origin of Steward

The job title of Steward comes from the labour movement, as in a shop floor steward. This meaning of the word was first recorded circa 1300 as an overseer of workmen. The legal definition is a union member elected or appointed to serve as the representative of the union in a plant, department, or shop and charged mainly with negotiating the settlement of grievances of employees with employers, maintaining compliance with the collective bargaining agreement, recruiting new union members, and collecting union dues.

Wardrobe payment

The correct payment for a wardrobe call is currently \$79.25 per hour, with a two hour minimum. There is no such thing as a two hour wardrobe call at the Actor rate.

Payment for audition readers

Performers who are readers at other performers' auditions are currently paid either \$27.75 per hour or \$138.00 whichever is greater. Engager contributions to Insurance and Retirement are payable on these fees.

Breakfast

Performers who are called in before the general crew call may be fed a first meal. This allows production to calculate the meal penalty according to the general crew call, not the performer's first call. This is called a non-deductible meal.

No work report?

Production must ensure that a work report is available each time you report for work, not just on shoot days, but also for wardrobe calls, voice recordings, rehearsals etc. If a work report is not available, the IPA says that a performer may get a representative of production to sign their daytimer.



Mayko Nguyen

Athena Karkanis sits down with **Mayko Nguyen** to chat about *Bloodletting & Miraculous Cures* and the difference between acting onstage and onscreen.

AK: Hi Mayko.

MN: Hi Athena.

AK: So, I was just wondering about your career the other day...

MN: Were you?

AK: I thought I might ask you some questions, if you don't mind. For instance when did you first know you wanted to be an actor?

MN: Apparently when I was a kid, about six or seven, I wanted to be Bill Cosby. I actually don't recall ever wanting to be an actor until I hit grade 11 and I did my first play in high school.

AK: What was it?

MN: *A Midsummer's Night Dream*. I had so much fun doing that, but also, I was good at it. I think it was just something that came fairly easily for me.

AK: How did you go from being a kid in a high school play who thinks it's fun to someone who says, *this is how I will make my living, this is what I will pursue as a career?*

MN: I think honestly after doing that one play I just knew that's what I wanted to do. I just loved it that much.

AK: Recently, you've started doing more theatre. How do you feel switching between one medium to the other, do you find it difficult?

MN: It's been seven years since I've done a play. I hadn't realized that I'd developed so many bad habits from film, like becoming a soft talker. I don't have a problem being loud. I don't have any issues with projecting and with being heard. But as a film actor I guess I've got-

ten used to this sort of toned down quiet style. Rhythm and pacing in theatre is such a huge deal. And it's because there's nobody there to edit you and construct a rhythm for you. In film you can take long pauses and all of that stuff gets snipped out in the editing room. So I had a really hard time with pacing and that sort of thing onstage, because I had lost my innate sense of rhythm and flow.

AK: Very interesting.

MN: In my regular life I'm quite empathic and quite expressive and I feel like there's a huge part of me that still, after eight years of working in film, is really afraid of letting that bigness out. I find it really hard to tap into my bigness in my characters. Even when I was doing *ReGenesis*, that character called for a bubbly, feisty, fun character and I had a really hard time. I don't think it was until the last two seasons where I got a bit more comfortable with it and settled into the character a bit more. I just have a really hard time being big on camera. I always feel really restricted to this little box. For me, I think the really great actors are able to do that well, to bring that large expression without being over the top.

AK: But with theatre...

MN: With theatre you feel like you can flail around and do whatever you want and it's never big enough. I think that's

why I want to go back to the theatre because I feel I don't bring enough of myself to my work. I think that theatre is probably a safer, easier place to do that.

AK: So you've been lucky, you've worked a lot. You've been on three series as a regular. What do you consider the secret of your success?

MN: I feel like I'm really very lucky. I honestly think that I'm fairly good at being a natural actor. And I feel like that's obviously an asset in film. But there's so much more to being a good actor than being able to speak naturally. The next part of what I'm trying to do as an actor is allow myself to get out of that naturalism, be bigger, be more expressive and be more of me. I also feel that in Toronto, it's different from Vancouver. Vancouver is always looking for fresh faces. Toronto likes to use the same actors. Once you start working in the film scene, you always see the same actors over and over again. I don't know if it's a safety thing. I've just been lucky to be in that circle.

AK: Most recently you did *Bloodletting & Miraculous Cures* and I know that was a really important project to you.

MN: I think I auditioned five times, which was really nerve-wracking, because I'd been thinking about it for so long. *Bloodletting* is this miniseries based on a book. It's about these three young



"In my regular life I'm quite empathic and quite expressive and I feel like there's a huge part of me that still, after eight years of working in film, is really afraid of letting that bigness out."



Mayko at the 6th annual ACTRA Awards in Toronto as a nominee for Outstanding Female Performance.

Photo: Jag Gundu



Mayko and Peter Outerbridge in *ReGenesis*, as scientists who investigate radical biological events.

Photo: Stephen Scott, courtesy of Shaftesbury Films.

doctors and it takes you through ten years of their lives, from being students, going through residency and becoming doctors. There's sort of this love triangle between the three of them. It was a really difficult role because so much of what I'm trying to do as an actor right now is to bring myself to my roles and have people see more Mayko. And I felt like there are so many similarities between myself and Ming. But I was in a place where I wanted to be bigger and more expressive in my work and that character calls for the opposite of all that, because she's really self-contained. There's definitely a lot of emotional life but it's all sort of kept under wraps. And that was just really difficult for me to do. Because I was in a place where I felt like I wanted to be big and I couldn't do that with that role.

AK: *What has been your favourite role to date?*

MN: It would be a toss up between my character on *ReGenesis* and Ming on *Bloodletting*. I think in retrospect now that the show is done, and it's too late, if I could go back and do Mayko Tran on *ReGenesis* again...

AK: *Her name was Mayko?*

MN: It's weird to not have that separation, I mean a name is such a huge thing. I really loved that character. I think that if I could go back there would be so much more that I would inject into her. It's funny because when I was doing that I thought it was so awful. And I really spent so much time hating myself and hating my work and feeling like I just wasn't putting enough into the character and I was doing a disservice to the writing. And now several years later I think I have enough space and remove from it that I can actually watch the show. And it was this huge revelation to realize I'm not actually terrible. There's so much that I could have done, but that's always the case. You always feel that way after you see your work.

AK: *How do you balance your personal life and your career and do they overlap? Do you find that a challenge at all?*

MN: I don't find that I'm very good at balancing my personal life and my career. I keep them separate. When I'm working there is no personal life. I don't see any of my friends. I don't talk to anybody. I hide out in my home. I try to

sleep as much as possible to recoup from the day. I think I'm still an angsty actor. It's funny because when I'm not working I feel so resentful for not having lived my life like normal that I finish a job I don't even want to think about acting. I just want to feel like I have my friends and family. Your personal life is so huge. What you do as an actor is you bring in all of your 'stuff' and when you don't have that, and it's dead, you don't have as much to work with. So I feel like once I finish a job, so much time is spent on getting that all back together and building that all up again.

AK: *So you were part of the IPA negotiating committee, before the current agreement was rolled over, what made you take the plunge into the political aspects of ACTRA?*

MN: I'm not a very political person and I feel like I'm incredibly ignorant when it comes to what goes on in our business and our industry politically, and what our union is all about. So I was very scared when I was approached to be a part of that committee, I actually said no initially. I think what ultimately made me change my mind was that I felt like I was just afraid I was going to come off



Shawn Ashmore, Mayko Nguyen and Byron Mann, three young doctors fresh from medical school in *Bloodletting & Miraculous Cures*. Photo: Christos Kalohoridis, courtesy of Shaftesbury Films.

as being ignorant and uninformed and I felt like it was a good opportunity to address those things and actually inform myself.

AK: *Not so long ago you also did some lobbying at Queen's Park on behalf of ACTRA, what did you take away from that experience?*

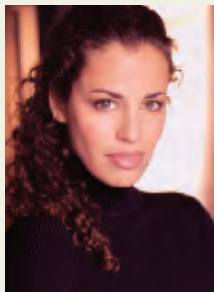
MN: It was really nerve-wracking because I had no idea what I was doing there. I had no idea whether I had anything important to say. It ended up being a really great experience because I had great people to guide me and lead me. **Art Hindle** was lovely. It was a good group of people and everybody understood that I had no clue and that I was very new to this. They all sort of took me under their wing and there were no huge expectations as far as what I had to do there. I got to sit back and watch everybody else do their thing.

AK: *Why is it important to have Canadian stories?*

MN: I think it's important to have Canadian stories because we have our own identities as Canadians. That identity needs to be reinforced. You want audiences to be able to watch shows or to see

stories that they actually relate to. We have a different thing up here in Canada than anywhere else in the world. And I think that often we're trying to copy what is put out there in the States. And I think that it's important that we reinforce what our identity is and what is different about us.

"I think it's important to have Canadian stories because we have our own identities as Canadians. That identity needs to be reinforced."



Athena Karkanis lives in Toronto and works in film, television, theatre and voice. She was most recently seen as a lead on season three of *The Border*, surviving George Romero's *Survival of the Dead*, and is very happy to be



Photo: www.mckennaphoto.com

friends with Mayko.

Selected film and television credits

Bloodletting & Miraculous Cures
The Listener
Being Erica
Rent – A – Goalie
ReGenesis
Tilt

A photograph of two men, Fred Ewanick and Jeff Bates, dressed in campaign attire. Fred Ewanick, on the left, is wearing a dark brown button-down shirt and blue jeans, pointing towards the camera with a slight smile. Jeff Bates, on the right, is wearing a blue and black striped sweater and blue jeans, holding a large yellow campaign sign that says "VOTE FOR DAN" and a blue and white portable toilet. The background is plain white.

Baby Steps, Baby Steps...

by Paul Constable

DAN FOR MAYOR

Fred Ewanick and Jeff Bates.
Photo courtesy of CTV

The phone rings. It's your agent. You have an audition for something, a new TV pilot from three of the same guys who wrote on *Corner Gas*, **Mark Farrell**, **Paul Mather** and **Kevin White**. This could be big, maybe even life-changing. I mean, *Corner Gas* was one of the most successful sitcoms in Canadian history, so this next offering must be pretty darn good right?



Fred Ewanuick plays Dan Phillips, the mayoral hopeful of the fictional City of Wessex. Photo courtesy of CTV

It was. *Dan For Mayor* can be seen regularly now Monday nights on CTV, but for awhile it wasn't known if this little show with a few familiar faces was going to make it on to the air. Playing the title role of aspiring mayor Dan Phillips is **Fred Ewanuick** (uh-WA-nik). The writers knew Ewanuick from his work as Hank Yarbo on *Corner Gas*, and created this role with him in mind. But what about his co-stars, would they have the right chemistry to make this pilot sizzle? Who would fill in the role of Dan's campaign manager, his ex-girlfriend Claire, and her fiancé Mike?

Eventually these parts would go to, respectively, **Paul Bates**, **Mary Ashton** and **Ben Ayres**. But this was not a simple decision. This was a casting for a new major show. They had to make sure they got it right.

"I think I had three call-backs, four auditions total," said Bates. "I did the pre-screen first, so I was just in the room with the casting director." Bates kept going back, sometimes with a couple of writers in the room, and then all of the writers, and then the executive producers, the director and some network people. "Each time was no less stressful than the time before."

Mary Ashton had a similar experience. "I've just always been bad at auditions," said Ashton. "I'm pretty open about that. I think with *Dan for Mayor* I got loose enough and I was able to relax enough." Ashton reminded herself of a quote she had heard about preparing for auditions, that you had to 'care enough not to care'. Using this philosophy she was able to make it to the final round of auditions, where she was tested for chemistry with Ewanuick and potential Mike candidates. She read with future co-star Ben Ayres, and remembers that it was a long process, longer than anyone thought it would last. Fortunately Ayres had brought

some almonds to share with a starving waiting room. Since each of the actors had to cross-read with each other the final call-back lasted a few hours.

For Bates the process was a bit faster. "I was only there for twenty minutes. I guess it was a different deal for the Jeffs. It was a chemistry read with Fred. There was no matching because they obviously had their lead already."

With the auditions behind them, and their leads now in place, the pilot was ready to be shot. This was back in October of 2008. Bates was working as a writer on CBC's *The Hour* and had to request the time off work. Like Ashton however, this was his first time as a lead in a television series, so nerves were high. "I remember taking solace in Paul," Ashton recalls. "I would ask him 'Do you know what's going on?' and he would say 'No, do you?'"

Bates added "For me it was a first day of school sort of feeling, where you're trying to get to know everything, and also get up to speed in terms of your chemistry and relationship with everybody on set, not just the actors."

Shooting went very well, with the cast clicking nicely and everyone having the feeling that they wanted this show to work. Still, with a pilot in the can, the actors had to wait until June of 2009 before they found out if *Dan For Mayor* was going to be picked up as a series or not. And since CTV had waited so long to make their decision, the cast had to wait another three months before a crew would become available to shoot the series.

And so, on September 14th, 2009, shooting began on the remainder of the first season of *Dan For Mayor*. With almost a year between shooting the pilot and these new episodes, one would think it might be daunting trying to recreate a character you had not touched in months.

"It would seem like it would be scary," said Ashton. "But because the writers had all the characters fleshed out and



Fred Ewanuick and **Jeff Bates**. Photo courtesy of CTV

Mary Ashton plays Dan's ex-girlfriend Claire and Paul Bates is Jeff, Dan's mayoral campaign manager.
Photo courtesy of CTV

DANFORMAYOR



they were really well developed it was easy to jump in to it again. It was a little scary but it was a little exciting as well." They would shoot the series in two episode blocks, so the actors had no idea where the series was going. Ashton had no idea she would be kissing Ewanuick in episode five until she read it. For Bates, "Every moment was a surprise, as soon as you read it you were thinking 'What?!?'" The actors started to get used to the 15 hour days, actually welcoming a day without work, as they continued to expand and grow in to the characters they were portraying. "I started to become more like Claire," said Ashton.

Some of the characters took a turn towards the people who were playing them. "I feel that happened with **Laurie Murdoch**, who plays Alan Duffy," said Bates. "That is an example of a character that really grew based on the personality the actor playing him, because things just got goofier and goofier with Laurie as the series went on." When the show's 13 episodes were in the can, the actors had to play the waiting game again. When was the show going to be on? What time? How would CTV promote it? Fortunately the show was slotted to appear right behind the other *Corner Gas* follow-up, *Hiccups*, with **Brent Butt** and **Nancy Robertson**. With CTV also carrying the highly popular 2010 Winter Olympics, both sitcoms were getting

much attention and fanfare from their parent network.

And so, on Monday March 1st, 2010, almost a full year and a half since shooting the pilot, *Dan For Mayor* premiered. Almost two million viewers tuned in to see this new cast of characters, about an ordinary guy who works in an ordinary bar in the ordinary city of Wessex.

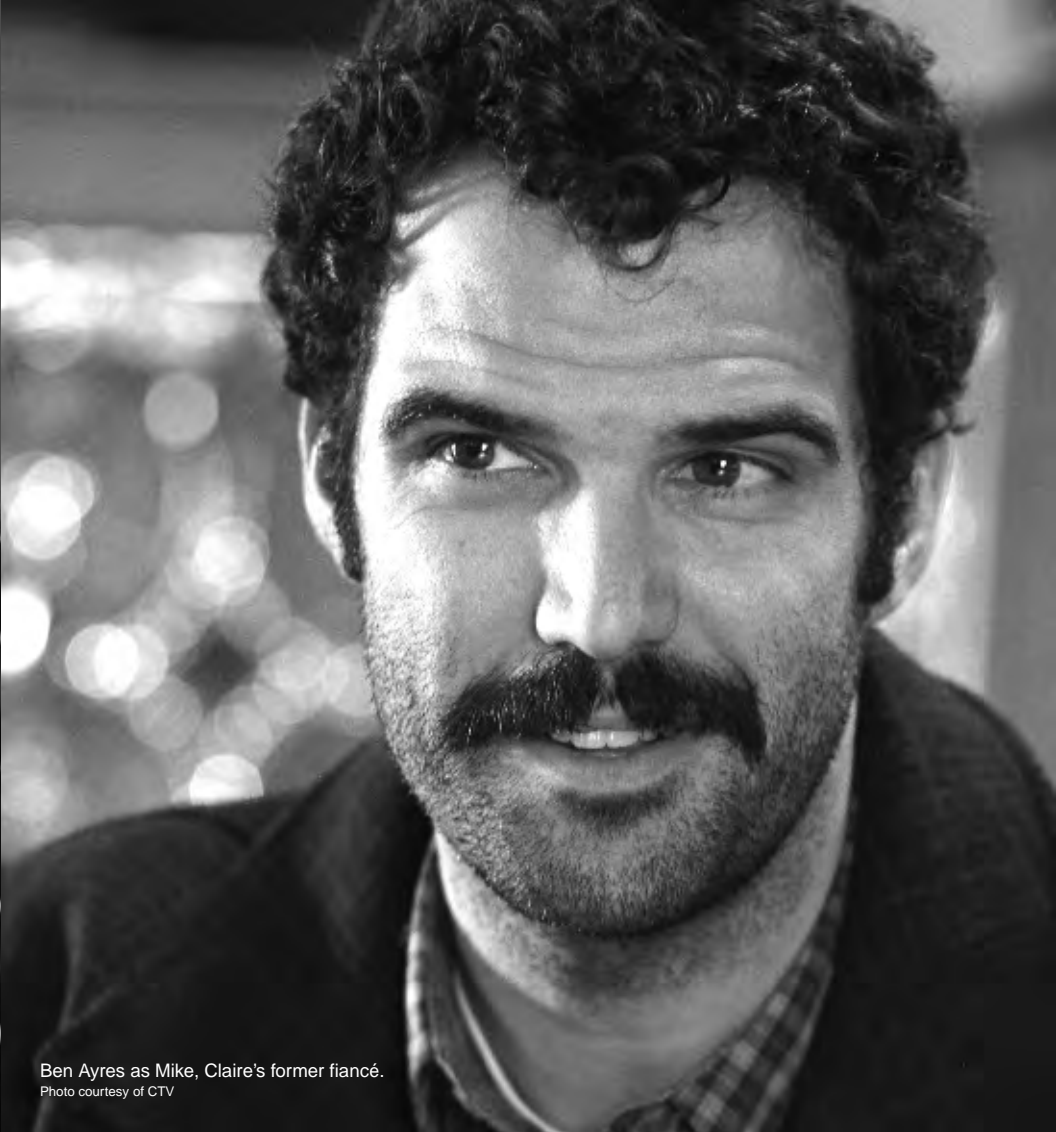
Perhaps the most important viewers are the ones closest to the stars themselves. "I've got aunts and uncles, neighbours of aunts and uncles, neighbours of neighbours that are just loving it," says Ashton.

For Bates, his dad really likes it. "My dad calls me as soon as the show is over and lets me know what his favourite parts were. And my five year old nephew plays *Dan For Mayor* role-playing games."

As of this writing, *Dan for Mayor* has been renewed for a second season. Perhaps your agent will be calling soon, asking you to audition for this funny little show. For Bates and Ashton, and the rest of the cast, they've played enough waiting games. They just want to get back to work.



Paul Constable is currently shooting *She's the Mayor* for Vision TV, after having played Bob in an episode of *Dan For Mayor*. He is an Alumni of Toronto's Second City and, despite the title, had nothing to do with their current production of *Second City For Mayor*.



Ben Ayres as Mike, Claire's former fiancé.
Photo courtesy of CTV

Sue Murdoch for Mayor



One of the early jobs for *Dan for Mayor* producer Sue Murdoch was to keep the possibly slightly eccentric star of *Kung Fu: The Legend Continues*, a Warner Brothers television series shot in Ontario, on an even keel. It is a mark of her elegant professionalism that she rarely gets into the details —

describing this as another of her many "interesting experiences". Ms. Murdoch has been one of this province's leading producers and show runners for many years. It is not as widely appreciated as it should be that she is also one of this province's leading — and successful — advocates for our industry. As chair of the Toronto Film Board she has led the quiet work of making Toronto one of North America's most film-friendly cities. As co-chair of FilmOntario,

she has helped lead industry lobbying that has, in the past five years, made Ontario one of the most cost-efficient, fiscally competitive jurisdictions in the world. She has gotten more done in these roles in a few years than was achieved by our industry in any prior decade you might care to look at. And as *Dan For Mayor* demonstrates, she hasn't lost her touch as a producer in the chaos and madness that is the Canadian broadcasting industry. Sue for Mayor, next.

Brian Topp

If you've never been to an ACTRA member conference, what the heck are you waiting for?

Three directors walk into a bar - you'd think the 1st AD would have warned them the bar was there!

When iconic directors **Atom Egoyan**, **Patricia Rozema** and **George Romero** walked onto the stage of Ryerson's Ted Rogers School of Management largest lecture hall in February it was clear our member conferences had come of age. The significance of their participation cannot be ignored. We invited three leading directors working in Canada to participate in our event, by showing up they acknowledged the importance of the ACTRA conferences, to them and to our members.

The directors workshop entitled *You Got the Part (Want to Know Why?)* played to a rapt and fulsome crowd at our highest attended members' conference. ACTRA Award nominee **Ennis Esmer** opened with a cheeky mock question referencing the director's notorious casting couch. With one well placed query, Esmer put the directors at ease and set the tone for the panel discussion. What ensued was a candid, insightful, funny, surprising, illuminating and very entertaining two hours on how directors make their final casting choices.

The directors admitted afterwards they got as much out of the event as our members. It showed a clear partnership - we need directors, but directors need us just as much. It was movie magic.

The magic moments were abundant at our second ever three day conference. From **Elvira Kurt's** hilarious opening *Breakfast With...* interview with 2010 ACTRA Award of Excellence winner, and new ACTRA Toronto councillor, **Colin Mochrie**, to the stand up comedy of **Jean Paul** wrapping up the conference at the *Young Money Forum*, the buzz was palpable. From **Kate Ashby's** impressive session, Improv for auditions, to director **Gail Harvey's** *Women Working with Women* and casting director **Marsha Chesley's** cold read party. Our members were treated to outstanding workshops from leaders in our industry. We watched the cast of *Cra\$h & Burn* eat and act while in another classroom casting director **Lisa Parasyn** and director **Michael Kennedy** allowed 250 members to be a fly on the wall of a casting session. And there were stars galore: **Chris Potter**, **Kristen Thomson**, **Linda Kash**, **Nigel Shawn Williams**, **Rachel Crawford** and the 2010 ACTRA Award nominees to name a few.

This is what the conferences can do for you. They connect you with your industry and offer you a chance to be part of something bigger than yourself: your union. (And it's free and friggin' entertaining.)

For images from the three day conference visit www.actratoronto.com/members/conferences.html



David Gale is the Vice President – Communications on the ACTRA Toronto council. If you have any questions, concerns or feedback regarding the member conferences, he can be reached at dgale@council.actratoronto.com.

Conference Highlights: (facing page)

1. **Shelly Cook** and **Shane Cardwell**, recipients of the Lifetime Achievement in the Stunt Specialties award.
2. **George Romero**, ACTRA Toronto president, **Heather Allin**, **Atom Egoyan** and ACTRA Vice President – Communications, **David Gale**.
3. **Kate Ashby** teaches the value of improv in commercial auditions.
4. Producer/performer **Michelle Latimer** talks about where to find the money to fund your own projects.
5. **Ron Graner** tests out his vocal cords during the *Step up to the Mic!* acting class.
6. **Elvira Kurt** and **Colin Mochrie** take aim at the audience during the early bird session.
7. Director **Gail Harvey**, **Samantha Kaine** and **Jocelyne Zucco**.
8. Some of the cast and crew of *Cra\$h & Burn*. (L – R) **Art Hindle**, **Judah Katz**, **Alan Van Sprang**, **Rosemary Dunsmore**, **Carlos Diaz**, **Paulino Nunes**, **Malcolm MacRury** and **Ken Girotti**.

All Photos: Jag Gundu



1.



2.



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7.



We Work ACTRA

66 years ago artists in this city banded together against employers who used their power and their pocketbook to ensure performers remained poorly paid. Fed up with the injustice of the situation a group of performers got together to form the beginnings of what we now call ACTRA. These visionaries knew that together they could do more than they could ever dream of doing alone.

That's what the **I Work ACTRA** campaign is all about, continuing the work begun by those early trailblazers and ensuring that the basic rights we've negotiated, fought for and struck for remain protected from those who would seek to roll back the clock.

Visit the campaign website at www.iworkactra.ca. There you'll be able to access information about what it is we're doing, why we're fighting and view video testimonials about the importance of working union.

Working ACTRA means we get paid better. Performers earn a fair wage for their work. ACTRA makes sure that we can't get ripped off, that members promptly receive the money they're owed.

Working ACTRA means not having to worry about our retirement. Every time we work on set a little something gets put aside for when we choose to retire.

Working ACTRA is good for the entire family. The health benefits we acquire as members means if we get sick, or need special medication, we'll get the care we need without our families worrying about how to pay for it.

Working ACTRA gets us more work opportunities, not less. Our union card tells the industry that we are professional performers.

Working ACTRA means when we step on a set, we'll be safe. There are rules in place to protect us. Rules that shield us from harassment and insure that our work environment is safe and secure.

Working ACTRA means continuing to lead the fight in getting more Canadian culture in our movie theatres and on our television screens. When ACTRA fights for Canadian programming it's fighting for our culture and our jobs.

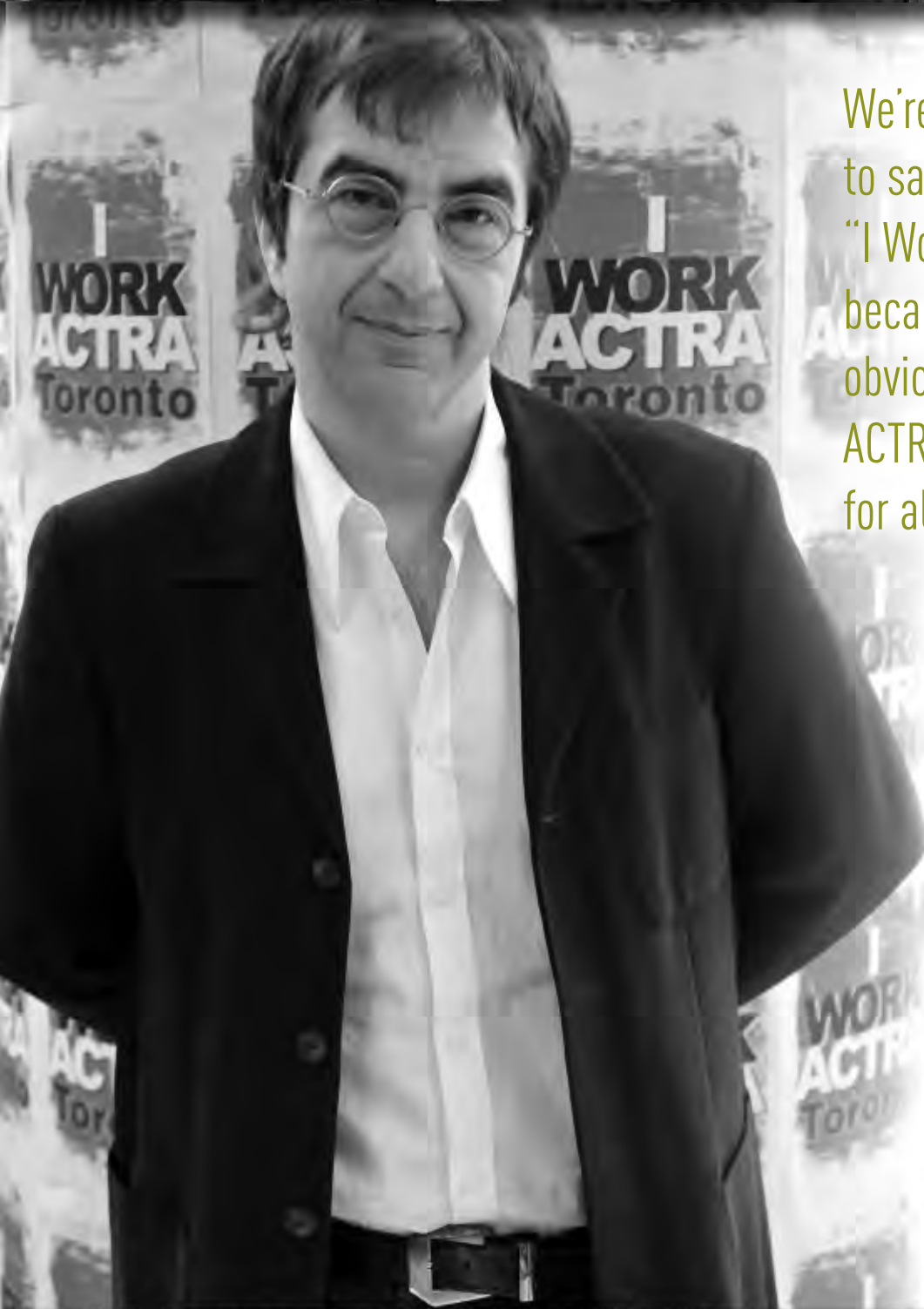
We work ACTRA:

top row (L. to R.): Joanna Bennett, K.C. Collins, Kateri Walker, Paul Constable, Lisa Jai, Alan Van Sprang, Carlos Diaz, Chris Owens, Elizabeth Morris, Sheila Boyd, Chris Potter.

Vertical row (top to bottom): Ennis Esmer, George Romero, Shelley Cook, Richard Hardacre, Julie Lemieux.

bottom row (L. to R.): Linda Kash, Robert Raki, Ron Pardo, Rosemary Dunsmore, Wayne Robson, Daniel Kash, David Hubbard, David Sparrow, Eli Goree, Elvira Kurt and Jane Luk.





We're proud to say that "I Work ACTRA" because it's obvious that ACTRA works for all of us.

Director and member, Atom Egoyan



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ACTRA Toronto

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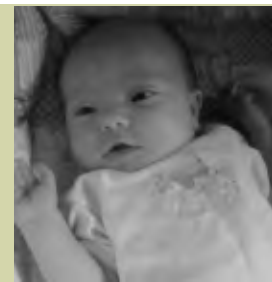
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Membership Department Dues & Permit Payments

Contact: Membership Department Tel: 416-928-2278
Karl Pruner, Director

Announcements

ACTRA members **Emma Campbell** and **Brian Bisson** are proud to announce the arrival of **Tessa Rose Campbell Bisson**, who was welcomed into the world on March 30th, 2010. The family would like to thank friends and family for all their love and support.



Equity Showcase Theatre
is excited to announce a
20% DISCOUNT for members of ACTRA.

Equity Showcase Theatre is a not-for-profit professional development centre that has been serving the Toronto arts community for Fifty Years! Recognized as one of the top training centers in the city, the classes cover a wide range of arts specific disciplines including on-camera, writing and audition courses. Visit www.equityshowcase.ca for more details, to view the latest course offerings and to take advantage of your exciting ACTRA member discount.



Equity Showcase Theatre

You've played a breathy
siren, but have you
played a refreshing
breath mint?

Commercial voice work is a wonderful way to make ends meet between gigs. With professional workshops and one-on-one training from professional voice actor, director and instructor Tracey Hoyt, that's just what you'll do. If you're ready to make your first voice reel or refresh your current one, Tracey can help you with that, too. To learn more, visit piratevoice.com or call 416-594-4357 today.

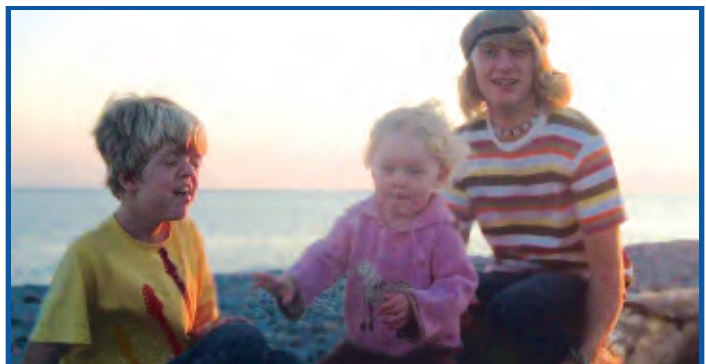
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GLAMOUR PATROL

Outstanding Female Performance winner, **Kathleen Munroe.**

Photo: Jag Gundu

The passion of the 8th annual ACTRA Awards in Toronto!

Tongue-in-cheek reportage by Karen Ivany

Kittens, was it my tight, hot pink cocktail dress that ignited your collective passions at our ever-fabulous ACTRA Awards this year? Or, was it the intoxicating smell of all those blossoming, multicoloured roses infusing the air of the Carlu? Whatever the source, Poodles, we got our party on, bigger and better than ever!

It's true we exceeded last year's attendance, once again, and glossy heads of hair were turning to catch glimpses of **Veronica Tennant**, **Nicholas Campbell**, **James McGowan**, **Jason Jones**, **Luba Goy**, **Jack Layton**, **Olivia Chow**, **Maury Chaykin**, **Mark Taylor** and **Shauna MacDonald**. I'd like to send a special shout-out to beautiful actress and entrepreneur **Amanda Brugel** of The Red Carpet Room for outfitting all our outstanding female nominees, as well as several other guests and myself! The gals were all gorgeous and our male nominees, who dressed themselves, were looking mighty snaky.

The show opened with a wonderful montage featuring passionate acting moments from over 50 ACTRA Toronto members, whose performances you submitted for consideration. I loved host **Geri Hall** most of all and almost took her home in my pocket! Planting her box of wine on the podium, she promptly encouraged Jack Layton to, "kick Stephen Harper's ass" and generally tickled us senseless with her trademark squeaky-voiced delivery and overflowing ebullience. Hugs to returning show writer **Steve Shehori** for creating a playful script perfectly suited to our bubbly host.

Also kicking it up onstage were **Jason Chesworth and The Pocket Co.**, featuring vocal accompaniment from venerable **Don Francks** and newcomer **Nico Simbananyie**. They rocked two original tunes; a funky, country soul mix, with an awesome harmonica solo in *Buy Low & Sell High*. Emotions ran high among the winners, starting

with a shocked **Julie Lemieux**, winner of the Outstanding Performance - Voice award. Next up was, Outstanding Performance - Male winner, **K.C. Collins**, who stopped several times during his acceptance speech to compose himself, but managed to wrap it all up with a rousing "I work ACTRA!" cry of victory. Lastly, our Outstanding Performance - Female winner, **Kathleen Munroe**, touched us all with her humility and grace.

Award of Excellence Recipient, **Colin Mochrie**, did not magically appear from **Peter Keleghan's** beard, as many of us had hoped, but Peter still did a fantastic job introducing him. And, if you weren't in the house to hear Colin's acceptance speech, then you have another huge reason to kick yourself for not attending this year. Let's just say, Mr. Mochrie is the only person I know of, who can thank himself for receiving an award, and it just seems right!

The dancing and drinks that followed the show were, predictably, a blur. I don't recall Carlu security pulling a tambourine-playing **Jason Jones** away from the DJ table any time, so I'm pretty sure things ended well, sometime around two in the morning.

Our awards night is only as divine as the folks who show up. And it's still growing! *The submission page for the 9th annual ACTRA Awards is now live and awaiting your submissions.* So visit www.actratoronto.com and start submitting your favourite performances of this year right now. See you on the dance floor.

Karen Ivany is currently serving her second term as an elected councillor for ACTRA Toronto. She is chair of the Awards Committee and producer of the annual ACTRA Awards in Toronto. Some of Karen's recent credits include *The Two Mr. Kissels* and *Hard Boiled Eggs*.



Photos (top to bottom):

2009 Award of Excellence recipient, **Peter Keleghan**, takes a moment onstage to setup **Colin Mochrie**; **Don Francks** and **Nico Simbananyie** of *The Pocket Co.* help with the evening's musical entertainment; Awards' host, **Geri Hall**, films the audience for posterity. All photos Jag Gundu.





ACTRA Toronto President, **Heather Allin**, famed zombie director, **George Romero**, and Vice President - Internal Affairs, **Teresa Tova**.
Photo: Jag Gundu



Outstanding Male Performance winner, **K.C. Collins** and Outstanding Male Performance nominee, **Daniel Kash**.
Photo: Janesse Leung



Jason Jones and **Rob Tinkler**. Photo: Janesse Leung



Nicholas Campbell and **Angela Asher**.
Photo: Jag Gundu



(L - R) **Doug Hughes**, **Jason Chesworth**, **Don Franks** and **Nico Simbanyie**.
Photo: Janesse Leung

The 8th annual ACTRA Awards winners

Outstanding Performance – Male – K. C. Collins

Won for: His performance as Derek Wilmot on the CBC miniseries *Guns*, a show that explores the issue of gun violence in Canada created by the husband-and-wife team of Sudz Sutherland and Jennifer Holness.

A few random facts about K.C.:

His first love is baseball.

He began his career doing background work.

The night he won was the first time he'd been to the ACTRA Awards.

He's playing a basketball player in his next project, *Sons 2 the Grave*.

On winning the award:

"You almost don't know how to react, it's that overwhelming. All I keep thinking is: can I top the last job that I did? It's very motivational. When you get that accolade, that recognition from your peers, you want to turn it up a few notches."

On being an ACTRA member:

"When I was an apprentice it didn't really hit me but when I became a member I really felt like I was a part of something."

Outstanding Performance – Voice – Julie Lemieux

Won for: Her performance as Fuzzy Snuggems on *Spliced*, a Canadian animated series about mutants created by a mad scientist and living together on an island in the Pacific.

A few random facts about Julie:

She also works as an independent film director.

She was nominated for this same award in 2008.

The first time she saw what Fuzzy Snuggems looks like was at the ACTRA Awards. She has voiced more than 75 animated projects.

On work:

"I'm proud to be working in Toronto. We have one of the strongest talent pools for animation in the world and to be part of that is very exciting. I feel blessed everyday to work at what I love to do."

On becoming an ACTRA member:

"It's a no-brainer. It's what anybody worth their salt would want to do. It's where all the talented people are. The truth of the matter is: you get value for your money working with an ACTRA member. We're skilled and we can save you time in the studio."

On winning the award:

"It means so much largely because you're being judged by your peers. It's a huge honour to be nominated. I can't say enough about the evening. It was pretty fantastic!"

Outstanding Performance – Female – Kathleen Munroe

Won for: Her performance as Laura Scheinmann on *Flashpoint*, recent Gemini Award winner for Best Dramatic Series.

A few random facts about Kathleen:

She studied cinema at U of T.

A long time fan-girl of George Romero, she was thrilled to work with him on his latest film, *Survival of the Dead*.

She speaks fluent French.

On becoming an ACTRA member:

"I really felt welcomed in a community that I couldn't believe wanted to have me. It's such a great feeling."

On winning the award:

"It's really an amazing thing that ACTRA does in looking so deep at performances - to be nominated alongside other women who were in everything from short films to features to episodics. It's amazing that they are willing to dig and find these performances. I was very touched to be included in that group and really, really honoured to win."

Award of Excellence recipient – Colin Mochrie

(L – R) Outstanding Male Performance winner, **K.C. Collins**, Outstanding Voice Performance winner, **Julie Lemieux**, Outstanding Female Performance winner, **Kathleen Munroe** and 2010 Award of Excellence recipient, **Colin Mochrie**.

Photo: Jag Gundu



In Memoriam

We share our sadness at the passing of our beloved colleagues

Jackie Brown • Fred Caplan • Daniel Cole • Brenda Devine
Claire Drainie • William Dunlop • Paul Firestone
Peter John McConnell • Mike Merian • Andre Noble



James B. Douglas

1930 - 2009

Much beloved James B. Douglas passed away on December 29, 2009. An artistic director once said, "In the theatre there are gardeners and florists." If this was true then Jimmy Douglas was truly a master gardener. A graduate of Amherst College, MA, and the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School he launched his career in Britain before returning to North America where he pursued a career in both theatre and film on both sides of the border. From the NFB's *Drylanders*, *The Dawson Patrol* to Colonel Merrill in *Mash* and *Men With Brooms*, his film work spanned 50 years. His stage work, even longer. A passionate supporter of Canadian culture, he chose to be based in Canada where he was one of the three founding directors of the Tarragon Theatre. He went on to become the artistic director of the Gryphon Theatre where his gardening launched the careers of many young theatre practitioners (technicians, writers, and performers). His deep commitment to young people had the Gryphon Theatre being referred to as 'Ryerson North'. Over his career he also produced several musical adaptations, *Gift to Last* and original pieces *War Brides*. In the last decade he wrote and performed one-man shows, first a W.O. Mitchell piece and then, *Sunshine and Shadows: An Evening with Stephen Leacock* which toured Canada, Britain, and the U.S. After a rich and prolific career and life that produced abundant yields, Jimmy is now performing for the angels, a gig, he wittingly observed, for which he did not have to audition.

— Neil Dainard



Ed Fielding

1943 - 2009

Ed Fielding took a circuitous route to a career as a performer. Born in California, Ed was trained as a visual artist, and showed his paintings and sculptures at galleries and art fairs in North America and Europe. He got involved in dance and alternative theatre in Toronto in 1980, first as a designer (David Earle, Robert Desrosiers, Claudia Moore), then as a technical director (Toronto Dance Theatre, Skylight Theatre, Toronto Workshop Productions) and finally as an actor. Ed performed twice at Le Festival du Théâtre des Amériques in Montreal with DNA Theatre and toured Argentina with Theatre of Change. As an actor in film and television, and a proud ACTRA member, Ed's credits included films produced by Twentieth Century Fox and Universal Pictures; television shows such as *Earth: Final Conflict*, *Psi Factor*, *Due South* and *Wind At My Back*; independent films by Cynthia Roberts; and numerous commercials. Ed was an enthusiastic supporter of the work of his fellow performers and will be much missed.

— Ariel Fielding



Ian Thurbide

1935 - 2009

Most of us who were close to Ian Thurbide can't believe he's gone. He died too quickly at age 74 after a short bout with cancer. Born in Florence, Nova Scotia, Ian made his way to Toronto where he held a number of jobs, including salesman, book-keeper and construction-equipment supervisor. When he retired in the mid-1990s, he became a background performer. "This career was his destiny," said his good friend and ACTRA member Gina Sylvester. "He just came alive on set. Ian was thoroughly respected by all who knew him." Whenever I went to an ACTRA production, I wanted to be around Ian the whole time, because he was a close friend of mine, was passionate about the industry and knew what was going on. Ian had time for other people on set and fought for those who should get upgraded for work they had done beyond the ordinary. Ian phoned Gina Sylvester one day to see if she would agree to have her hair dyed blue for a production with the bonus being that she would obtain her first ACTRA credit. She said yes real quickly.

— Danny Gallagher



Patricia Gage

1940 - 2010

An excerpt from Eric Fink's remembrance read at the Niagara-on-the-Lake reception for Patricia Gage.

Patricia's work spanned her early days on stage in Vancouver; her years at both Stratford and Shaw Festivals; Off-Broadway, Broadway, and the soaps in New York; national touring companies; guest starring, regular, and recurring roles in episodic TV; numerous roles in MOWs, and so many features; and regular voice work in animated series. She really did do it all.

On her first film back from New York, Patricia and I met. We were candid, open, honest from the start — hallmarks of who Pat was. Her personality was dramatic, extravagant, a little eccentric, yet she was the most practical, pragmatic, realistic person I've known. She cared about the world and the people around her. She was open to who you were and what you thought, even if she didn't get it or like it. Whether triumph or tragedy in life and love, Patricia always moved on and forward. Patricia loved her home, her feline friends, her work, and those she worked with. And she most importantly loved her daughter, Heather. Our loving thoughts go out to Heather, Heather's husband Peter, and Patricia's special friends and neighbours in Niagara.

Patricia loved to laugh. In one of our last visits, we had been chatting for maybe 30 minutes. Patricia was tiring, she closed her eyes and said, "I think it's time to go." For that momentary millisecond, I genuinely wasn't sure what she meant. I leaned closer to her and asked, "Patricia, did you mean you or me?" She opened her eyes slowly, and with the limited strength she had, laughed heartily, pointed in my direction, and said with authority, "I meant you." God bless you, Patsy. — Eric Fink

MEMBERS' NEWS

Artists rally in support of Canadian television

When Global Television unveiled their fall schedule in June, they found angry performers massed outside to protest the dearth of Canadian programming in the broadcaster's schedule. Some of the biggest names in Canadian show business, including **Eric Peterson**, **Colin Mochrie**, **Leah Pinsent** and **Wendy Crewson**, came out to speak about the shameful way in which Canada's broadcaster's are gorging themselves on American shows. "We're challenging Global and CTV to start acting like Canadian broadcasters. Stop shipping our jobs south and instead 'Buy Canadian,'" said Eric Peterson. "Shows like *Corner Gas* and *Flashpoint* prove when broadcasters make room for Canadian programs, Canadians watch. I'd like to think broadcasters have learned that they can be leaders in creating original programming and not just branch plants of big U.S. networks." Figures from the CRTC show that private broadcasters spent a record \$846.3 million U.S. on foreign programming in 2009. At the same time, private broadcasters spent a paltry \$75.4 million on Canadian drama.



REEL FRIENDS PLAN

Actors' Fund launches Reel Friends Plan

Due to an increasing demand for its services the Actors' Fund of Canada has recently launched a voluntary payroll donation program, the *Reel Friends Plan*. The goal of the plan is to ensure the long term survival of the Actors' Fund. During the time you're enrolled in the plan, a tax deductible donation, of an amount you choose, will be deducted from your paycheque. You can donate as little as half a per cent a week. Members can set up their personalized plan to make donations to the Fund when they're working and stop when they're not. At the end of the year you'll receive a tax receipt for the total amount of your payroll donation. For more information, or to enrol online, visit www.actorsfund.ca/reelfriends. The Actors' Fund of Canada is the lifeline for Canada's entertainment industry, it receives no major government funding and is sustained by support from individuals and entertainment industry organizations.

ACTRA Toronto teams up with Equity Showcase Theatre

Equity Showcase Theatre (EST), now celebrating its 50th anniversary, is a not-for-profit arts school established by the Canadian Actors Equity Association (CAEA). Now, thanks to a partnership between ACTRA and EST, ACTRA Toronto members can take advantage of a 20 per cent discount on all EST class tuitions. This is the same discount that Equity offers its own membership. EST has provided acting, voice, audition, scene study, on camera, writing and many other classes to Toronto area artists throughout their history. Most EST instructors are working or former performers, many of whom have run sessions at ACTRA Toronto member conferences. So if you're looking to upgrade your skills, or just want to find more about which classes are available, check out www.equityshowcase.ca for more information.



Eric Peterson stokes the crowd with a fiery speech at the release of Global's fall TV schedule. Photo: Peter Baker





NDP Leader, Jack Layton, speaks to gathered workers outside of Queen's Park calling on MPs to support striking Vale workers. Photo: Carol Taverner



Eda Zimler, ACTRA Toronto's former IPA director, regales attendees at her retirement celebration with stories of her over 30 years with ACTRA. Photo: Tricia Clarke

ACTRA Toronto stands in solidarity with USW

On Thursday, April 29th, members of ACTRA Toronto took to the streets for a protest march and a rally in solidarity with our strategic alliances partners, the United Steelworkers. The protest was a response to a nearly year long strike by over 3,000 Steelworkers in Sudbury and Port Colborne at Vale Inco Ltd, the world's second largest mining company. The march snaked along Queen Street before ending up at Queen's Park. Speakers, including NDP leader Jack Layton and Ken Neumann, the Steelworkers National Director for Canada, asked MPs to pass anti-scab legislation and encourage Vale to bargain a fair deal with its striking workers. Some of the issues the Steelworkers are currently striking over include pensions, seniority transfer rights and contracting out. For more information about the strike visit www.fairdealnow.ca. Twitter users can also stay in touch with the latest developments by following the Steelworkers twitter account at www.twitter.com/steelworkers.

IPA director Eda Zimler retires

Eda Zimler tells some wonderful stories. Like the one about how she demanded a production company, that she knew was about to go under, disburse a payroll owed to members directly to ACTRA. And then she sat in front of the office door first thing in the morning to get the cheque. Eda then raced to the bank to get it certified before all the other cheques appeared and started to bounce. Everyone on that show got paid. And everyone on almost all shows shot in Toronto gets paid — in no small part because for three decades Eda insisted, as ACTRA Toronto's best steward and then as our IPA manager, that they do so. On April 6th, Eda's colleagues and friends from across the industry joined her in ACTRA Toronto's boardroom to celebrate her "retirement". "Retirement" because she remains a consultant on the ACTRA staff, busy with many files. "Retirement" because her friendly, hard-nosed, scrupulously honest, industry-savvy approach to contract administration and enforcement is now ACTRA standard and industry standard. She has "retired". She will always be here. — Brian Topp

HST has come to Ontario

The province of Ontario has enacted legislation to implement the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST), which has replaced the existing Provincial Sales Tax (PST) and the federal Goods and Services Tax (GST). The new HST rate of 13 per cent came into effect in Ontario on July 1st, 2010 and is administered by the Canada Revenue Agency. Businesses that are registered for the GST are now required to collect the HST and report their HST according to their current GST filing frequency. For additional information on Ontario's sales tax reform, visit the Ontario Ministry of Revenue web site at www.rev.gov.on.ca/en/taxchange/index.html.

MEMBERS' NEWS

New publisher for *Performers* magazine

Performers magazine welcomes **David Gale** onboard as he takes over the role of publisher. David is perhaps best known as the irreverent host of TV's *Loving Spoonfuls*, a role which won him both Gemini and Galaxi awards for his humorous and heart-warming work. An ACTRA member for 30 years, David has a long history of union activism. He has proudly served on the ACTRA Toronto council as Executive Member-at-Large, as well as chairing the conference committee. David takes over the position from **Lyn Mason Green**, who oversaw the publication of *Performers* for five years. *Performers* would like to thank Lyn for her enthusiasm and dedication and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

CRTC decision fails artists

A recent CRTC decision in late March does a lot to address the concerns of Canadian performers, afraid that their stories were disappearing from their own airwaves. Some big wins for ACTRA included a ruling that broadcasters must spend at least 30 per cent of their gross revenues on Canadian programming, the elimination of the priority programming category and a decision that requires conventional television services to spend a minimum of five per cent of their revenues on programs of national interest, a category which includes scripted drama, comedies and award shots. Ultimately however the CRTC let down artists by failing to require broadcasters to air Canadian programming during primetime. ACTRA had previously lobbied the CRTC to require broadcasters to air two hours of scripted programming, out of a possible 18 hours, in prime time each week. The concern is that without sufficient regulation, broadcasters may air Canadian dramas and comedies on their specialty channels and bypass conventional stations, which have larger audience numbers. Fortunately, ACTRA has a chance to rectify this oversight at the 2011 CRTC broadcaster licensing hearings, urging the commission to require broadcasters to make room for Canadian stories in prime time.

What's new at your Credit Union

At this time last year, Creative Arts Savings & Credit Union had just opened their virtual doors and begun taking new members, after getting past some regulatory hurdles. This spring they completed their first year of operations, grew their membership, held their first annual general meeting and paid their first dividend.

The first anniversary was celebrated with a successful member appreciation cocktail reception on the Ryerson campus as part of the ACTRA member conference festivities in February. "We were delighted to see so many familiar faces drop by to say hello," said **Steve Mumford**, the credit union's CEO. "The ACTRA membership got a chance to meet our board of directors and managers, and learn more about how Creative Arts is helping performers get their finances in order."

The credit union's inaugural annual general meeting was held on April 30th, where members learned that the board of directors had declared a share dividend of \$64,348 for the holders of Creative Arts' series of investment shares. They also heard that Creative Arts was able to pay back a loan worth over \$800,000 to ACTRA Toronto for its start-up capital.

In May, the credit union launched a bold new marketing push, with contests and other special promotions. They began with the Fiesta Siesta travel contest for a trip to the Caribbean, followed by a time-limited invitation for a no-fee chequing account. In the months to come, ACTRA's membership can expect to see a series of video messages from all stripes telling their credit union stories.

"We're going to have a lot of fun with these promotions and stories," Mumford explained. "But there's a serious side to it, too. We're going to sprinkle in some valuable financial advice and education. We made a commitment at the outset to help our members understand their finances better. That's part of what makes credit unions so different from banks, we look out for our members' best interests."

Looking down the road, Mumford would like to see everyone in the entertainment industry bring a portion of their banking to Creative Arts. "If you're not yet banking at Creative Arts, I urge you to give us a try. We think you'll be delighted with our low fees and attentive, personal service. If you're one of the early adopters who have already joined, tell your colleagues about your experience with us and invite them to join the credit union. Let's spread the good news."

For more information about the Creative Arts Savings and Credit Union visit www.creativeartscu.com or call 416.642.6749.

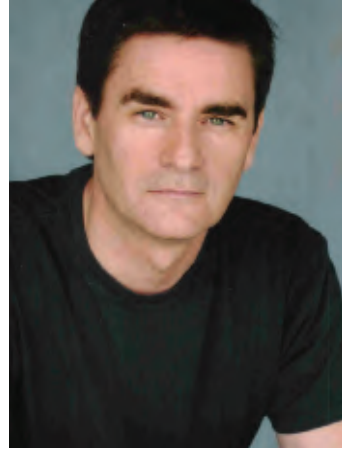
What a difference a year makes

by George Scott



Creative Arts Savings and Credit Union founder **Peter Keleghan** and Chief Executive Officer, **Steve Mumford** celebrate the credit union's first anniversary.

Photo: Jag Gundu



"After the way I was treated by the banks earlier in my career, I couldn't wait for the chance to do my banking at Creative Arts. It has everything I need, including people who treat you right."

Peter Keleghan

I joined. What are *you* waiting for?

You probably know that Peter Keleghan earned ACTRA's Award of Excellence in 2009 in recognition for his storied career in stage, television and feature films—not to mention his passionate defense of Canadian culture.

What you may not know is he was one of the first performers to join Creative Arts as a Founding Member, and now relies on the credit union for his mortgage, business account, personal chequing account and line of credit. Oh, and his daughter in university also has her account with us.

Nice. After all, we're part of the ACTRA family.



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Our Strength Is in Numbers

Labour Day Parade

Monday, September 6th

Calling all ACTRA Toronto members! Come out and march in the annual Toronto Labour Day Parade on Monday, September 6th. ACTRA Toronto is proud to join other area unions in this parade in celebration of the history and struggle of working people, and the achievements of organized labour.

Meet us on the corner of University Avenue and Queen Street West. The parade marches along Queen Street and south on Dufferin Street to the Canadian National Exhibition.

Don't forget to bring your friends and family along as everyone marching in the parade will get into the Exhibition for free.



For more information, check out
www.actratoronto.com



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