

# performers

## THE SKINNY ON SKIN

the naked truth  
on sex scenes

- Getting personal with Maria del Mar and Mpho Koaho
- ACTRA crashes The Hill — meets with 80 MPs!
- **GET EXCITED ABOUT FEB. 24!**  
Your next conference & ACTRA Toronto Awards Gala



Your Conference  
Keynote Speaker  
Toronto Mayor  
David Miller



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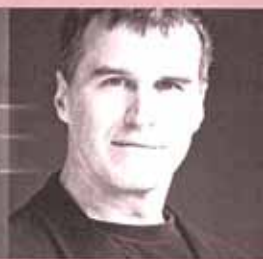
## We Want You To Yell At Us!

(though hugs are good too)

This is your magazine from your union. What do you like? What do you hate? What do you want more of? Less of? Your editor is begging for feedback! Help get him off his knees and send us your thoughts in a quick email to:  
[whatperformersshoulddo@actratontoronto.com](mailto:whatperformersshoulddo@actratontoronto.com)

If you exist in a world without computers, you can write to:  
Performers Feedback, ACTRA Toronto Performers  
625 Church Street, Toronto, ON M4Y 2G1

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By the time you read this, winter will have us all securely in its grip, and the days will be lengthening towards spring... and a new awakening. The new council will be hard at work shaping the roadmap that we will follow in the year ahead: our new ACTRA Toronto Performers operating plan for 2006! Preparations will be well underway for our members' conference on February 24 where the new operating plan, the budget, and the new council will be introduced to the membership for your approval.

But all of that is still in the future. As I write this, we have only just had our first big snowfall and the days are still getting shorter. The old year is dying and it's a time to pause and reflect; to look back on what we've done and look forward to what lies ahead.

A year ago, 14 months of lobbying culminated in our rally outside Queen's Park. Shortly after that, the Ontario Government announced a significant improvement to the film and television production tax incentives. A month later, ACTRA Toronto participated in a FilmOntario marketing trip to Los Angeles. The result? Near record levels of production returned to our city. We have demonstrated our commitment to one of our three key strategic objectives: **to compete successfully for our share of a fully globalized film industry.**

In April, ACTRA signed a strategic alliance with the United Steelworkers that created a framework for cooperation

*How will we realize our objectives? How can we make our vision real? The answer is simple. We can make all these good things happen by staying focused and working together.*

between the two organizations. Immediately, plans were drawn up for joint political action. Last November in a three-day marathon of lobbying Parliament Hill, ACTRA and USW members teamed up and presented our message to 80 M.P.s on the eve of the election - a stunningly successful proof-of-concept for the alliance. We demonstrated our commitment to a second key strategic objective: **to push hard for the regulatory and legislative changes needed to nourish and protect our Canadian industry.**

Since September, we have been busy preparing for the next round of bargaining for the Independent Production Agreement (IPA) that is expected to start in March. In an increasingly "scale only" environment, members have realized that the only way they can make more money is if ACTRA negotiates effectively for them at the bargaining table. With input from member focus groups from across the country and interpreted by ACTRA National's research staff, the IPA negotiating committee will determine the final list of our bargaining priorities. We are demonstrating our commitment to a third key strategic objective: **to negotiate effectively at the bargaining table in order to improve wages and working conditions for all of our members.**

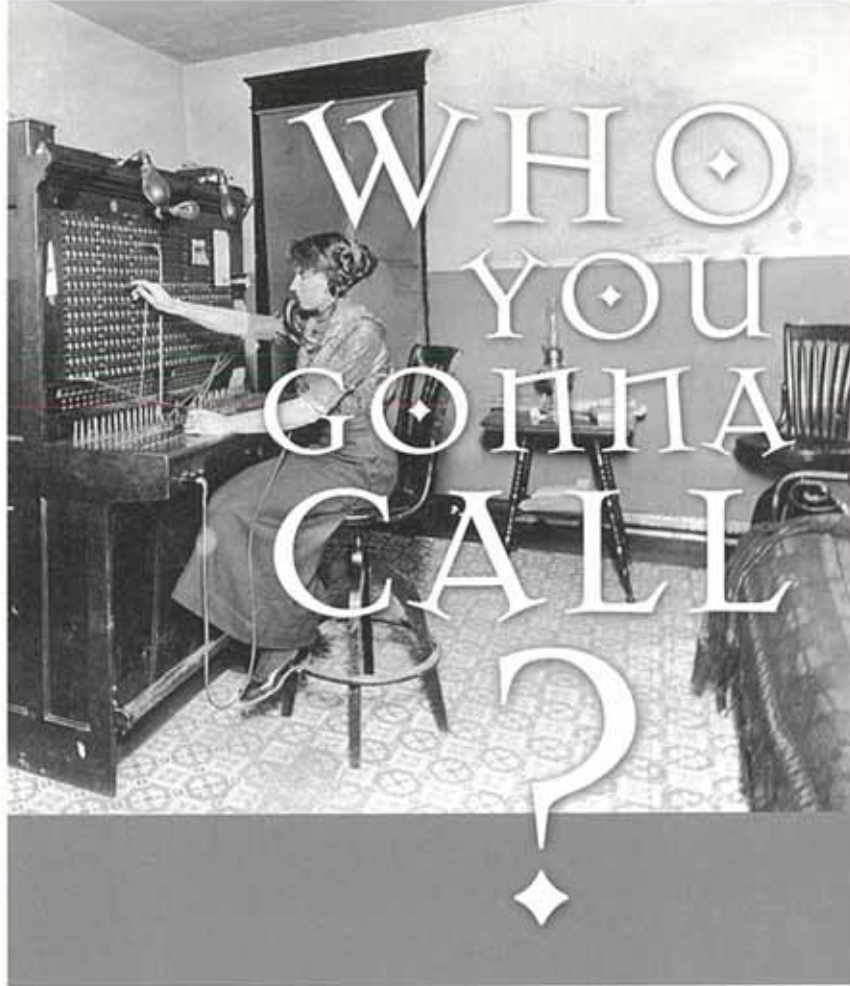
I have no doubt that these three strategic objectives will find expression in our operating plan for 2006 along with many other wonderful initiatives. But how will we realize these objectives? How can we make our vision real?

The answer is simple. We can make all these good things happen by staying focused and working together. We elect the council to steer but the engine is you, the membership. That is where ACTRA's considerable power comes from. From us.

If we are going to have a fair share of international service production work, if we want to have a strong, vibrant, and independent Canadian film and television industry and, above all, if we want to win at the bargaining table, then we all need to do our part to make it happen.

The new council and I are doing everything we can to help us achieve our goals. How do *you* want to go? What are you going to need your help with this year? What's your vision? What will you say?

Karl Pruner, President



**GOT A PROBLEM?  
ACTRA TORONTO STAFF IS HERE FOR YOU.**

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**Who's doing what  
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To find comprehensive reports on the goings-on of ACTRA Toronto's committees go to  
[www.actratortoronto.com](http://www.actratortoronto.com)



# performers

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#### JOIN THE TEAM

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

#### THE NEXT COPY DEADLINE IS

April 1, 2006

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

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



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

www.actratontoronto.com



Brigitte Bako (as Gigi) in *G-Spot*

A Serendipity Point Films/  
Barna Alper Production

Photo credit: Alex Dukay



# Tooned In! > @ Studio 306

## ANIMATION

### voice-over WORKSHOPS

with Emmy Award winning Casting & Voice-over Director  
Stevie Vallance(Madeline)

Next 2-Day Workshop:  
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Audition Etiquette  
How to MARKET yourself  
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Industry Guest • Contact List  
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Available for short/long term counselling and consultation. Flexible hours and rates.



## We Need A Canadian Star System ACTRA Toronto visits the *Globe and Mail*

On December 5, a mighty team of ACTRA Toronto members and staff kicked off our "Campaign for a Canadian Star System" and met with three members of the *Globe & Mail* Editorial Board; Marcus Gee (editorial board manager), Warren Clements (editorial board writer), and Doug Cudmore (associate editor; *Globe Review*).

Our meeting was cheeky but successful. We asked them to consider their role in the marketplace of our industry and how an attitude of *if you build it they will come* will generate more readers and contribute towards building a stable indigenous film and television industry.

Our challenges to them: be part of creating a Canadian star system and turn the review section into a "Report On Culture"; cover the CRTC relaxation rulings of 1999 and detail the devastating results for the Canadian industry (a topic particularly current as the broadcasters head towards license renewals); and to debate the issues of stable funding for the Canadian Television Fund (CTF) and the CBC.

Before we left, Doug Cudmore said he'd love to receive our suggestions for stories.

Special thanks to those who carried this message: Karl Pruner, Peter Keleghan, Fiona Reid, Heather Allin and Brian Topp.

## In Memoriam

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

James Alan Lancaster  
Kay Tremblay

# Welcome New Members

- |                        |                       |                         |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Clara Adams            | Hayley French         | Melissa Peters          |
| Shawn Ahmed            | Brian Froud           | Ronnie Phillips         |
| Kevin Achele           | Cynthia Gagne         | Mike Plume              |
| Robert Allan           | Alyssa Gagne          | Paul Pogue              |
| Louwen Allen           | Chris Gallinger       | Elana Post              |
| Marc Apollagan         | Wendy Gardner         | Gregory Priest          |
| Phoenix Am-Horn        | Bessie Gian           | Katlyn Price            |
| Jonathan Arsenault     | Ryan Gieson           | Katherine Proctor       |
| Jonathan Aune          | Sally Gifford         | Brett Reason            |
| Jamaine Baird          | Valeska Gonzalez      | Matt Richardson         |
| Amy Barantyne          | Jeananne Goossen      | Cara Ricketts           |
| Bojana Bata            | Venice Grant          | Tyson Riley             |
| Selwin Baeghia         | Sharon Grech          | Logan Riley             |
| Ame Banks              | Virginia Grig         | Ali Rizvi               |
| Mackenzie Beattie      | Leo G Guylab          | Stephen Roberts         |
| Kirsten Beattie        | Michy Gustava         | Alan Roberts            |
| Mavy Beatty            | Andrew Hachey         | Kassius Robertson       |
| Bert Bech              | Kristen Hager         | Adrienne Rogers         |
| Clairisa Begin         | Medina Hahn           | Rebecca Rosenblatt      |
| Mike Bernier           | Jane Hales            | Chris Rouse             |
| Jennifer Bertram       | Joette Halpert        | Christina Ruddock       |
| Jerat Bezner           | Meredith Haron        | Chris Russell           |
| Andrew Bianchi         | Michael Hine          | Roula Said              |
| Zachary Bloch          | Dylan Heerner         | Al Saewenna             |
| Lisa Bohm              | Clia Ileson           | Paul Schuck             |
| Jeffrey Bornstein      | Elliot Kazam          | Monika Schermann        |
| Mark Bowden            | Tuesday King          | Geoff Scott             |
| Kelly Bradshaw         | Sophi Knight          | Melanie Neige Scotlano  |
| Wendy Brathwaite       | Ash Knight            | Hila Sagan              |
| Catherine Brizard      | Chavella Kobiuk       | Nakul Shah              |
| David Broadman         | Paul Kozar            | Rajan Shah              |
| Tevor Brookes          | Jack Kwaiter          | Haley Shannon           |
| Craig Brown            | Kirk Lackenbauer      | David Shelley           |
| Yuri Browns            | Alison Latchana       | Pablo Silveira          |
| Andre Busalero         | Laura Lawson          | Eva Simon               |
| J Alexander Campbell   | Alysa Lescock         | Philip Simpson          |
| Christina Cardoso      | Patricia Lee          | Natalie Sky             |
| Allister Carl          | Vivian Lee            | Douglas Alexander Smith |
| Krysta Carter          | Anita Wai Ngar Lee    | Alison Somerville       |
| Dillon Casey           | Celine Lepage         | Matt Sternberg          |
| Paul Chorley           | Guy Letourneau        | Amber Steerman          |
| Kaylen Christiansen    | Chris Lightfoot       | Richard Stewart         |
| Charolotte Chung       | Natalie Lushka        | Bruce Stuart            |
| Isaac Clark            | Stephen Livingstone   | Stephen Suckling        |
| Masimba Marlon Clarke  | Arthur T Lo           | Wayne Supo              |
| Chanel Cole            | Adela Mackenzie       | Sam Tabar               |
| Amelia Cooke           | Kristina Mahoraj      | Gary T Tait             |
| Anthony Cornelius      | Darryl Mahoney        | Louca Tassone           |
| Sarah Cornell          | Maxamillion Mancuso   | Sachi Thorpe            |
| Nicola Correia-Damude  | Morgan Marchant       | James Vail              |
| Karen Coughlin         | Chris Mark            | Peter Valiron           |
| Suzanne Courtney       | Claire Marshall       | Jackson Valentine       |
| Katie Crown            | Kayla Maccalla        | Chris Van Dyle          |
| Romina D'Ugo           | Ryan McLernon         | John-Philip Vazquez     |
| Brad Davis             | Jason Mercury         | Steliana Vonmaro        |
| Jessica Dawson         | Donna Flora Milburn   | Meredith Waldock        |
| Robert Dell'Anno       | Lawrence Jacob Milman | Debra Jean Wales        |
| Roger Doche            | Cheryl Mullings       | Rob B Walker            |
| Madelaine Donohue      | James Murray          | Robert Watson           |
| Andrea Drepaul         | Andrew Musselman      | Gregory Patrick Weedon  |
| Oloren Eccleston       | Tammy Neca            | Marilla Wax             |
| Patricia Echeverria    | Selena Nj             | Shane Wilder            |
| Jazzmine Edwards       | Jennifer Nichols      | Colin Williams          |
| Anwan Ekpo             | Daniel Nimmo          | Geoffrey Williamson     |
| Moody El-Karassunt     | Ndidi Onukwulu        | Tom Wilson              |
| Dorrit Emanuel         | Daniela Ouchanski     | Cindy Won               |
| Kylee Evans            | Aissa Ourakova        | Emerson Wang            |
| Marianthi Evans        | Mitchell Pady         | Richard Wright          |
| Hannah Fleming         | Elsa Paganelli        | Steven Yaltes           |
| Christine Marie Flores | Molissa Papay         | Kevin Sarnaul Yee       |
| Michael Follett        | Nedra Pavlov          | Clem Zee                |
| Semi Follett           | Tina Pereira          |                         |



## DOUBLE BORBRIDGE DEBUT!



**Helen Rudin** and **Brad Borbridge** are proud to announce that they are now sleep deprived, shell shocked and overjoyed parents of twins.

**Riley Bradley Borbridge** and **Charlotte Helen Borbridge** were born at Mt. Sinai on December 21st at 7:40 and 7:41 pm. Riley was 6lbs 9oz and Charlotte was 5lbs 4oz.

Mother and babies went home on the 24th of December. A wonderful Christmas gift to husband Brad, who is extremely proud of his new family.

# CALL FOR ALL ASPIRING Creators Producers!

Do you have a great idea for the next big show? Then you've got to enter...

## ACTRA Toronto's Pitch the Networks Contest

At the Wednesday, June 28, 2006 Conference, FIVE finalists will stage their dramatic series pitches live before a panel of network representatives and our member audience.

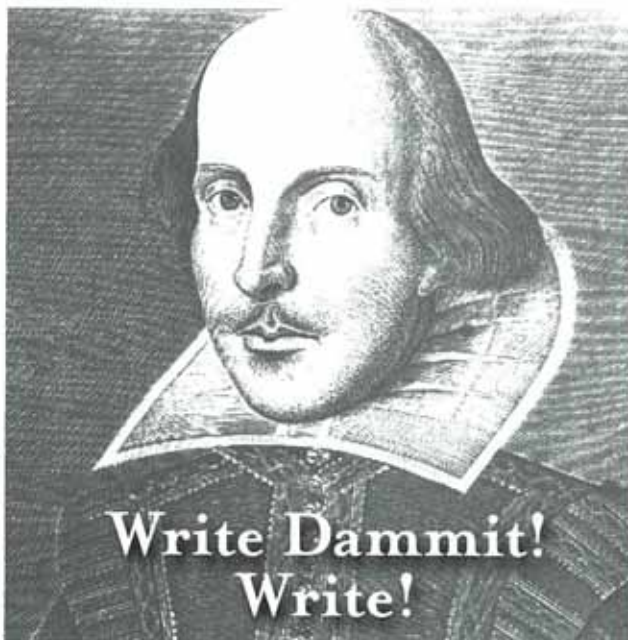
*Anything could happen & there are prizes!*

\*\* Participants must attend the **Creating/ Producing Your Own Show** seminar at the February conference for official entry and to get full details and rules.

Deadline for pitch package submissions will be 5:00 PM on Thursday, May 25, 2006...

*So start Writing!*

(Note: Drama includes Comedy but does not include Lifestyle or Reality programming. And, at least one member of each creative team must be an ACTRA member in good standing.)



## 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 productions).

- 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, the ACTRA PRS may be holding an unclaimed residual payment for you.

For info, please visit [www.actra.ca](http://www.actra.ca) and locate the ACTRA PRS section 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: 416-489-1311 or [prs@actra.ca](mailto:prs@actra.ca).

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



## Goodbye Possum Lodge!

*The Red Green Show* wraps after 15 years of making Canadian TV history.

The show created a host of memorable characters, including the straight-man nephew Harold, played by Patrick McKenna, and the light-fingered Mike Hamar, played by Wayne Robson. It attracts about one million viewers a week and has an international following.

The final show is scheduled to air April 7, 2006 on the CBC.



# ArtsWEEK 05

SEPTEMBER 22-OCTOBER 2

Thanks to all of our wonderful Artsweek volunteers and everyone who dropped by our ACTRA Toronto booth. Hope to see you next year!



L to r: Austin Schatz, Toni Ellwand, Anne Marie Scheffler, Christie MacFadyen and Lyn Mason Green.

## Canada's *The Newsroom* and *Dark Oracle* win International Emmys

On the heels of winning a Gemini for Best Comedy Writing, *The Newsroom* brought home an International Emmy Award in the comedy category, beating out the UK hit *Little Britain*. YTV's live-action-plus-animation show *Dark Oracle* also took home an Emmy in the children and young people's program category.

## IMPORTANT: Membership Changes for Apprentice Members and ACTRA Extras

1. Effective immediately, one of the required credits to qualify for Full Membership, for all members over the age of sixteen, must be obtained through the ACTRA Toronto Member Training Intensive course.

2. As of February 28, 2006, only ACTRA Extras will be eligible to obtain their first credit by acquiring two hundred days or 1600 hours of background work over two years and completing the ACTRA Toronto Member Training Intensive course.



## Khanjian wins Crystal Award

ACTRA Toronto member **Arsinée Khanjian** received a 2005 Crystal Award for Creative Excellence from Women and Film and Television at the organization's annual Crystal Awards.

## Abilities Festival a Big Success

The Abilities Festival, an international artistic and cultural event showcasing excellence and the talent, vision and passion of artists with disabilities, took place October 27th to the 30th at the Glenn Gould Theatre and The Columbus Centre. ACTRA members **Joe Coughlin** and **Sheila Boyd** performed at the gala performance, *Art with an Edge*. **Leesa Levinson**, actor and diversity advocate for ACTRA Toronto, was also a participant.



L to r: Karl Pruner, Leesa Levinson, Sheila Boyd and Joe Coughlin. Photo taken by Jo Bennett.

## A Standing Ovation for "More Than Applause"

### Actors' Fund of Canada campaign raises \$75,000

The theatre and film & television communities have come together to raise \$75,000 for the Actors' Fund during its "More Than Applause" fundraising campaign held in October.

The Actors' Fund of Canada is a registered charity that provides short-term financial aid to entertainment industry professionals working in film & TV, music, theatre or dance. For more information visit [www.actorsfund.ca](http://www.actorsfund.ca)

# 20 20 gemini gemini



Master of Ceremonies Graham Greene

For a complete list of winners visit [www.geminiawards.ca](http://www.geminiawards.ca)

## ACTRA Toronto applauds 20th Annual Gemini Awards winners!



**Brendan Fletcher** - *The Death And Life Of Nancy Eaton*, Winner For Best Performance By An Actor In A Leading Role In A Dramatic Program Or Mini-Series



Presenters Mag Ruffman and Bridget Gall

Best Performance by an Actor in a Continuing Leading Dramatic Role winners are **Michael Riley** and **Cara Pitko** both for *This Is Wonderland*.

The cast of *Trailer Park Boys* wins Best Ensemble Performance in a Comedy Program or Series.

Best Dramatic Series is *The Eleventh Hour* and Best Dramatic Mini-Series is *Sex Traffic*, with Best Comedy Program or Series being *Corner Gas*.

*The Eleventh Hour* was the contender with the most nominations at 15, including best drama series. The series had already been cancelled by CTV.



Humanitarian Award Winners Roger Abbott, Luba Goy and Don Ferguson of *Royal Canadian Air Farce*



Presenters Jayne Eastwood and Jeff Seymour



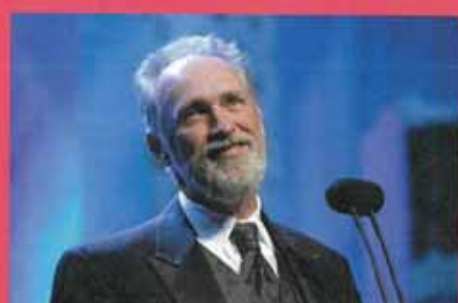
**Cara Pitko** - *This Is Wonderland*, Winner For Best Performance By An Actress In A Continuing Leading Dramatic Role



**Michael Riley** - *This Is Wonderland*, Winner For Best Performance By An Actor In A Continuing Leading Dramatic Role



**Kristen Thomson** - *I, Claudia*, Winner For Best Performance By An Actress In A Leading Role In A Dramatic Program Or Mini-Series and Presenters Maxim Roy & Peter Outerbridge



Earl Grey Award recipient Steve Smith

FYI — MEMBERS' NEWS

## Canadian Comedy Awards — Funny and Fantastic!

It was a double-barrelled win for **Kristen Thomson** at the sixth annual Canadian Comedy Awards festival — she took home two Pretty Funny awards for best writing and best female performance in a film for her one-woman hit, *I, Claudia*.

**Mike Wilmut** won two awards: He topped the men's stand-up, and was also lauded as best male film performer for his turn as the sleazy manager of a deaf DJ in *It's All Gone Pete Tong*.

**Nikki Payne** became the first two-time victor in the female stand-up category.

CTV sitcom *Corner Gas* took two Pretty Funny awards.

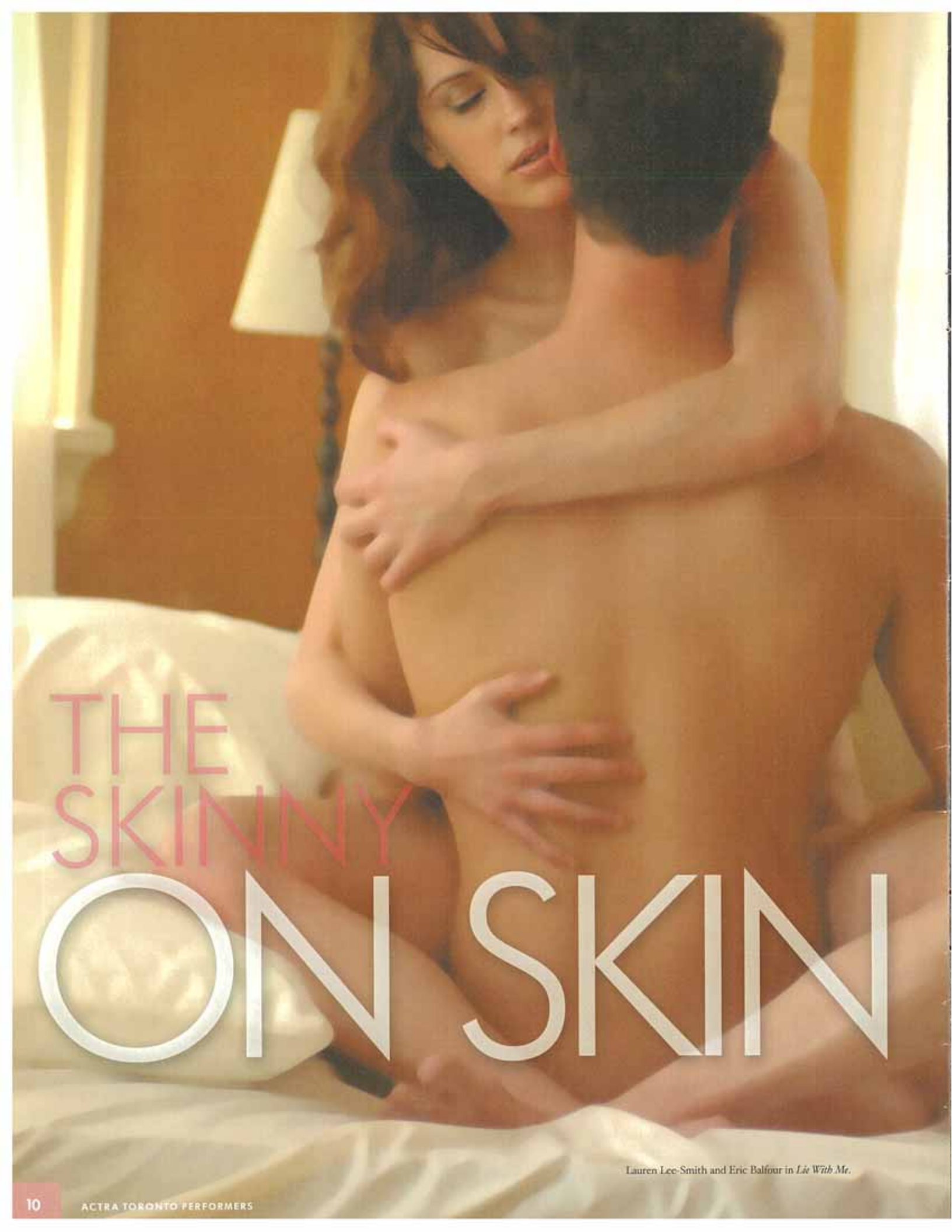
For the second year running **Brent Butt** won for best male performer on a TV series.

Toronto-born **Samantha Bee** of *The Daily Show* won the Pretty Funny award for best female on a TV series.

Check out the website for more info:  
[www.canadiancomedyawards.ca](http://www.canadiancomedyawards.ca)



**Brent Butt** won a Pretty Funny award for best male performer on a TV series.



THE  
SKINNY

# ON SKIN

Lauren Lee-Smith and Eric Balfour in *Lie With Me*.

## There is a lot of sex on our airwaves these days.

How do actors deal with performing in scenes where they have to show their naughty bits. How do they prepare for those scenes? How difficult are they to shoot? What is the physical and practical reality of shooting a sex scene? And what happens if the actor just isn't feeling up to it?

Last year my wife **Christina Collins** had to do a sex scene with **Shamar Moore**, (a soap star from the *The Young and the Restless*) in a **Tom Selleck** mini-series for NBC called *Reversible Errors*. I thought it would be good for this article if she could share her experience... in all its wonderful detail.

**DH:** Okay Christina, how difficult are sex scenes to shoot?

**CC:** It depends on the person. I had a hottie, so it wasn't difficult at all.

**DH:** Uhm... right... So, how is preparing for a sex scene different from a normal scene?

**CC:** You do the same stuff you do for any part. There are some physical problems that arise; having to cover things up and stuff. It depends on the network. Ours was NBC, so they couldn't see nipple. I had quite a lot of dialogue with the director in preparation for how we were going to shoot it. It's very technical. They want to see a certain amount of your face in the window of the car; they want you to arch your back in a certain way. You have to hit marks. You have to make sure you're not blocking someone's light. And then you've got to develop some trust between you and the person you're having the scene with.

**DH:** So describe your scene with Shamar. Like... what happened?

**CC:** We had to be in a car at the airport, having sex in the back seat. They wanted to do one shot with a bra on, and one shot with the bra off. We were in the car for several hours.

**DH:** And how hard was that?

**CC:** It was pretty hard... That boy was happy. You have to realize that the reality of the situation is not your reality. It's the character's reality. And you have to stay with that because while you're doing a sex scene, inevitably your body responds. The scene with Shamar in the backseat was not difficult to shoot. It was the scene where I had to be found naked, dead, that was the more difficult one. My skirt was lifted up, and my underwear was pulled down, and it looks like I've been anally raped. I had to have my rear end exposed and that I found very difficult because, well, you feel very vulnerable with your ass in the air for everybody to see.

**DH:** How did you prepare for that scene?

**CC:** I worked out like crazy. I made sure it was a closed set and I made sure that the dresser was right there. As soon as they said "cut", the dresser would cover me up.

**DH:** So how is having sex with a hottie in the back seat of a car, different from having sex with me?

**CC:** It's fantastic. Oops. I mean, I really can't remember. I was so in character.



Brigitte Bako in *G-Spot*

The next person I thought I'd interview was **Brigitte Bako**, the star and creator of the TV series, *G-Spot* currently playing on TMN. In September 2006, the first season will also air on Showcase.

**DH:** Now, you've had to do nudity in many projects...

**BB:** Every project.

**DH:** You're using the nudity in your show as a form of comedy.

**BB:** Absolutely. It's not for titillation in any way. One of the characters used to sniff coke off her ex-porn star boyfriend's ass. I find that hilarious. And most of the nudity in the show is male, which is a very conscious decision. It's also to make a statement on the way nudity is approached in Hollywood.

**DH:** So, when you have to show your breasts in your show, how is that different from when you did it in other projects?

**BB:** It's completely different; it's my choice. If I want to show the ta ta's, which I'm quite fond of, then I will show them. Being told that you have to do it on somebody else's project, (that probably isn't very good), and nine producers are standing around, (who only showed up on the day that you need to be nude), is a totally different experience. It's very empowering to do it for yourself. I never had a problem with the ta ta's. I come from European parents. I go topless on the beach. But, I've never showed my derriere in a show. In fact, I had a fabulous body double named Tara who was my butt for a few movies. That felt more exploitive than tits.

**DH:** How do you prepare for sex scenes?

**BB:** Well, we put a cock sock on the guy and we lube him up. This season we have **Jefferson Brown** who plays one of my love interests. When he was cast he called me and said, "Oh Brigitte, I'm playing Duff, and we work tomorrow, and our first scene is in bed. Would you like to meet for a coffee or something?" And I thought, what makes you different from anybody else? Get naked and get in my bed. This is *G-Spot*. No, I don't want to have coffee with you. I'm very comfortable in these scenes, probably because in my youth I've done so many. I did a love scene with **Patrick Dempsey** and they built us neoprene diapers out of scuba material. So here we are, two adults in diapers so our private parts didn't bang into each other. It was ridiculous. He came into the make-up trailer and in front of all the hair and make-up people and said, "Here you go," and he exposed the jewels. "It's so silly. I'm not going to wear the diaper. Big shock. Let's go do the scene."

A million people will tell you those scenes are not sexy; they're choreographed. Mind you, I had a really good time with a bobsledder last year so I don't know about that theory. That was a fun day. It helps if you have no friendship or chemistry with the person you're doing it with.

When I do nudity, I wear little smiley face band-aids on my titties, and the actor has a laugh. In *G-Spot*, there are 75 people standing around, including my boyfriend; it's a big family and we try and have a good time. And men get naked and crawl into my bed first thing in the morning. That makes the day start off quite well.

Leslie Hope and Peter Outerbridge in *Paris, France*.



To get the male perspective of what an actor goes through during a sex scene, I called up **Peter Outerbridge**, star of the hit series, *ReGenesis*, and asked him how he prepares for doing nudity. Peter has had to do a lot of sex scenes in the show, as well as in the film, *Paris, France*.

**DH:** Peter, how do you prepare yourself for a scene where you have to have sex with another person?

**PO:** I usually take them out for a drink first. First of all, any smart production company will usually do sex scenes either the first or second day of the shoot; so you don't have to think about it too much and because you run the risk of having them hate each other. If you're doing it on the last day and your leads don't like each other, you're going to have all sorts of problems: actors not wanting to come out of their trailer... people pulling power trips... anything to keep from getting in the sack with that other person.

Generally, you just try to get to know the other person as quickly as possible in a short amount of time, because you know you're going to have to make it look like you've known each other forever, or you're madly in love with each other.

It's not so bad on *ReGenesis*. Luckily, my love interest on the show is a really good friend of mine so we laugh our heads off. If we have a guest star on the show, I generally go to their trailer as soon as I can, try to put them at ease as quickly as possible, thank them profusely and joke around; try and get them to laugh and relax. I try and put them at ease by getting naked as soon as possible. I let them know that I'm not shy about it, it's okay, and it's fun. Nudity is fun. The other issue you have to remember is that naked men are funny. Naked women are not. Naked women create a tension and seriousness on set. As it should be: because it's a completely different thing.

**DH:** Do you find that using humor to break the ice puts the other person at ease, and makes them feel better about themselves and the situation?

**PO:** For sure about the situation, but there's not much you can do about feeling better about themselves. The bottom line is, it is different for a woman to be naked on set than it is for a guy. I mean guys can be insecure, embarrassed, and shy about it, but it's not the same thing. Right off the top I say, "Look, you're running the show. I may be on top during the scene, but you're on top in general. If there's something you don't want to do, I'm on your side. If you don't want to take your clothes off, I'll back you up." You let them know it's entirely their game.

**DH:** Have you ever been in a situation where you yourself have felt uncomfortable?

**PO:** Not really. Even *Paris, France*, which was probably the most extreme nudity or sex that I have ever done, was all highly choreographed. **Chick Reid** and I rehearsed all the sex scenes in that film over and over and over again in our underwear. It was absolutely by the numbers.

On *ReGenesis* I usually take the actor aside and say, "What do you feel comfortable with?" I also try and make it about the characters. I ask would your character do this? Would your character be on top?



Lauren Lee-Smith and Eric Balfour in *Lie With Me*.

Would your character be on the bottom? Let's make this love scene represent these two characters. When you do that, you stay in character.

**DH:** Have you ever done a love scene where things didn't work right? Or things worked too well?

**PO:** (Pause) An erection?

**DH:** ...Yes.

**PO:** No, I've never ever done a love scene where I've been aroused. A friend was joking with me the other day saying I was an exhibitionist because I'm naked on *ReGenesis* all the time. Well, I might be an exhibitionist, but I have no interest in being a porn star. There's just no way I can imagine getting aroused when there's a whole crew of guys chewing gum, standing around, staring at me. I mean, all you can think of is, "God I hope we can get this scene finished and move on."

My last interview was with the actress **Lauren Lee Smith**, star of the new Clement Virgo film, *Lie with Me*. In the film, Lauren plays Leila, a woman who has a voracious sexual appetite and beds numerous men. She falls in love with one of her conquests and it causes her to question her behavior and values. Lauren had many sex scenes with her co-star, **Eric Balfour** in the film.

continued on page 26

## NUDITY & ACTORS

Here are some of the ways the Independent Production Agreement (IPA) protects you when nudity is involved in auditions and on set. For a more complete explanation of your rights when doing nude scenes, consult section A24 of the IPA or call the ACTRA Toronto steward in charge of the production.

- You must be told in advance of an audition that the script requires nudity.
- You cannot be asked to disrobe at the first audition. You must be auditioned first as a performer.
- The second audition is solely for viewing the body. No performance shall be required while the performer is disrobed.
- The audition is closed and production may only have those persons present who "...have direct professional or artistic relationship to the Production and to the particular Audition." A representative of ACTRA may be present in addition to the five production people.
- No photos, films, tapes etc. may be shot without your prior written consent.
- No sex acts can be required at any audition.
- There are no callbacks for nude or semi-nude auditions.
- A nudity rider must be signed between the producer and the performer. A rider details the performance and how the scenes shall be shot.
- Performers can refuse to do anything not in the rider and cannot be penalized by the production for exercising this right.
- No full or partial nudity is required in rehearsals prior to the final rehearsal.
- You have a right to a closed set for scenes involving nudity according to Section A2403 (b) of the IPA. This means that the only people who can be on set are those who have "...a direct and proven professional need to be present." The production cannot allow observation by means of a monitor.

## Be aware of sexual harassment

While on set, especially while working in scenes that involve nudity or sexual content, you should be aware that sexual harassment can exist. In most cases, sexual harassment is related to the exercise of power. For example, the director's right to make demands of you as a performer does not imply the right to carry that power into the personal realm.

### Under the IPA collective agreement, clause A503, sexual harassment includes:

- (i) unwanted sexual attention of a persistent or abusive nature made by a person who knows or ought reasonably to know that such attention is unwanted;
- (ii) implied or expressed promise of reward for complying with a sexually oriented request;
- (iii) implied or expressed threat of reprisal, in the form of either actual reprisal or denial of opportunity, for refusal to comply with a sexually oriented request; and
- (iv) sexually oriented remarks and behaviour that may reasonably be perceived to create a negative psychological and/or emotional environment for work.

If any on-set problems or questions arise, or if an obvious violation of the rules occurs, call the ACTRA Toronto steward responsible for the production immediately at (416) 928-2278 or toll free at 1-877-913-2278. ACTRA works to protect and safeguard your rights to a harassment-free environment.

*\*Two sexual harassment incidents were recently reported to ACTRA – your IPA department grieved both cases and won on behalf of the performers.*

# In Conversation with

By Chris Owens

# MARIA DEL MAR

IN CONVERSATION WITH...



**C:** About your role as Katie Sampson in *Terminal City*, *Globe and Mail* columnist **John Doyle** wrote: "A great deal depends on **Maria del Mar** in the tough lead role and she handles it with aplomb. She's in so many scenes and required to morph from emotional wreck to flippant, funny TV mom. One can only admire her handling of it." That's pretty high praise; and deservedly so.

**M:** *Oh, thank you very much.*

**C:** What makes *Terminal City* special?

**M:** *It didn't set out to please anyone in particular. It sort of took on its own life and there's nothing trite or earnest about it. It's unapologetic. And it's out of the mainstream. It's bold.*

**C:** As is Katie.

**M:** *Yes, I think that's what makes her so fascinating, for me anyway; the fact that she's very flawed, very weak. But, that's who she is and you're going to either embrace her or not. I think many of the characters on good television are such - **Helen Mirren** in *Prime Suspect*, **Dennis***

*Frans* from *NYPD Blue*, *The Sopranos* - they all play flawed characters. Only when we try to personify someone as being so wonderfully perfect do they become one-dimensional.

**C:** She's a fighter. Do you feel close to her?

**M:** *Very. I'm very defensive of her. (laughs)*

**C:** Did the element of 'reality TV' in *Terminal City* lend itself to a lot of improvisation?

**M:** *There was some improv. You know how you can be in an airplane and tell your whole life story to a complete stranger and never see them again? Things that you might not tell your spouse, your neighbour, girlfriend, or buddy? That's how I think Katie feels. With her reality TV show it's a form for her to get it all out; to purge.*

**C:** After I watched *TC* I kept going back to that extraordinary moment when you tell your husband [**Gil Bellows**] that you have cancer. All the things that were going on; the disappointment, the fear, the anger, the apology.

**M:** *It's a hard scene. You want to pay your respects to those who've had to utter those horrible words for real. And, the "sorry, I'm sorry"... that just sort of came out. Suddenly, at that moment, you realize 'oh my god, this is going to change your life too and I'm sorry that you're going to have to go through this.' Suddenly you feel not only great sadness for yourself but empathy for the one you love and those around you.*

**C:** The apology just came out of you? It wasn't scripted?

**M:** *It just happened.*

**C:** It seems to me that when an actor is really in touch with the story, completely involved, that's when those great moments happen; things like that can just pop out.

**M:** *Yes. They're very sweet; they're like cherished gems, aren't they?*

**C:** And yet you can't push for them, they've got to come out of whatever you've been working on.



## Maria's bio

Maria del Mar plays the tenacious Katie Sampson in *Terminal City*. She is also known for her role as Inspector Victoria Castillo on the crime series *Blue Murder* and her recurring role as Laura Crosby on the long running CBC series *Street Legal*.

del Mar's other television credits include *Robocop: Prime Detectives*, *Bull* (pilot), *Outer Limits*, *Frasier*, *The Practice*, *Unlikely Angel*, *Relativity*, *Tek Wars* and most recently *Monk*, *JAG* and the MOW's *Pentagon Papers* (starring opposite James Spader), and *The Christmas Shoes* (starring opposite Rob Lowe).

In feature films, del Mar has starred opposite Jimmy Smits in *Price of Glory*, and in *Eclipse* - a complex story following the lives of 10 people. She most recently completed the independent film *Jekyll & Hyde*.

**M:** Exactly. If it is to happen spontaneously or naturally, you've got to let it out and see. Those little moments, those little gems are the difference between you and anybody else playing that part.

**C:** As a mom, how are you able to juggle your kids' hockey games and still find time to work the way you work?

**M:** Well (laughs) number one, it's misleading because, you know, in Canada nobody works that much. And someone once said to me that I couldn't do it all, that I couldn't have it all, and I think that just made me so much more determined to do it all. (laughs)

**C:** You are a fighter.

**M:** Absolutely. Oh, there you go - I am Katie! Heavens! Where's my big beautiful home?

**C:** Maybe it awaits you in the United States.

**M:** That's right - the second I sign a SAG contract.

**C:** You've done a lot of work south of the border on popular US shows - *24*, *Monk*, *The Practice* - is there a big difference?

**M:** We're not even in the same ballpark [in terms of earnings] as American performers. Had I done an American series, I'd still be cashing residual cheques and living in the \$2 million home I'd have already paid off.

**C:** You've been a series regular on three Canadian shows [*Blue Murder*, *Street Legal*, *ENG*] but you still have to go to the States to make real money?

**M:** Oh, absolutely. Or, to at least make your mortgage payments!

**C:** If you're an actor in this country and you own a house - that's no small miracle.

**M:** And that's for the actors in the top 1%. It's crazy. You can't compare the top 50% of American actors to the top 1% of Canadian actors. It's an entirely different kettle 'o fish. And it's sad and it's tragic because it's not like we don't have the talent here. We have an abundance of talent in this country; I'm talking about writing, directing, acting... all across the board.

**C:** And yet, in 1999 we had 12 series going on and now we have three.

**M:** Yep, yep, yep. And, how did that happen? You make a living off of that? It's crazy.

**C:** How did that happen?

**M:** Well, the CRTC mandate changed in '99. The broader interpretation of what passes for 'Canadian content' is sinking us. We no longer compete. We no longer really attempt to produce enough nighttime dramas... the broadcasters themselves have decided that they can regulate what they do.

**C:** It certainly seems that way. I'm hoping that our new Heritage Minister will help reverse that crippling trend.

**M:** Well... let's hope! I remember a time when there was a ton of shows to choose from across Canada and they had viewers. What

continued on page 26.

# ACTRA TORONTO'S MEMBERS' CONFERENCE

Friday, February 24 | 06

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

## WORKSHOPS

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

## MASTER CLASS SESSION FORMAT

MASTER CLASSES give selected ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS the chance to work with an industry professional. AUDITORS can watch from the audience. A selected number of participants, as per the class' specs, will be chosen from applications submitted.

Participants apply at [www.actratontoronto.com](http://www.actratontoronto.com) with your photo and résumé and any other requirements for that particular MASTER CLASS.

We encourage performers with disabilities to apply.

\* Master Class participants must apply by February 14, 2006!

## FACE TO FACE ONLINE

A Face to Face workstation will be set up throughout the day for demos and assistance. Bring your photos and résumé for addition to your Face to Face portfolio. Forgot your password? Don't have one? Staff will be available to help you out.



## HOW TO REGISTER

\* the fastest way to register is online:

[www.actratontoronto.com](http://www.actratontoronto.com)

\* by fax (416) 928-0699

\* or drop off your workshop choices to ACTRA Toronto, 625 Church St., 2nd floor

PLEASE REGISTER BY FEBRUARY 21, 2006!

\* Master Class deadline February 14, 2006

All workshops and master classes are subject to change. Check for conference updates at [www.actratontoronto.com](http://www.actratontoronto.com). Conference free to ACTRA Toronto members who register.

## Morning Workshops (pick one) 10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

### 1 MASTER CLASS

#### Audition Technique with Bernadette Jones

Audition technique specialist **Bernadette Jones** will lead the class through a series of mock auditions and show you how you can tweak your performance to score the part! Bernadette will select lucky audience members to quickly peruse some short scripts and to audition for the camera. Then, she will lead each person through a quick but intensive coaching of their performance. Take the challenge and come to the class. Who knows, you might get picked!

Moderated by: **Janet Land**

PARTICIPANTS will be chosen from the audience.

Due to popularity, space is limited - REGISTER EARLY!

### 2 MASTER CLASS

#### Working with a Teleprompter

Everyone has a first time. It can be a surprise and a tad embarrassing or you can be prepared with a little experience from some experts... I'm talking teleprompters here, people. Join seasoned actor **Eric Murphy** and operator **Jerome Swanick** as they talk about different techniques and delivery styles, and then give 10 interested participants hands on experience with this challenging piece of equipment. Be ready on the set of your next industrial as you learn to read without showing it.

10 PARTICIPANTS will be chosen from the audience.

### 3 MASTER CLASS

#### Making Choices with Casting Director Gail Carr

They sent you the sides at 6:00 PM. Your audition is at 10:00 AM. Take away sleep, travel and Jimmy's dance recital, and you've got 90 minutes to prepare. Join Casting Director **Gail Carr** (*Corner Gas, Nothing Sacred*) as she coaches five teams of two through the choices they've made with the goal of better auditions.

Moderated by: **Chris Owens**

LIMIT of 10 PARTICIPANTS.

See MASTER CLASS details on this page for how to be chosen as a participant. You will be required to come with your sides prepared and ready to play.

11:45 noon to 1:15 p.m. LUNCH Courtesy of ACTRA Toronto Performers

## 1:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. ACTRA Toronto Plenary Meet Your New Council

\* Keynote Speaker: **MAYOR DAVID MILLER**

\* Don't Miss the Plenary Prizes!



## Afternoon Workshops (pick one) 3:15 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### 8 WORKSHOP

#### Nailing the Part with Deirdre Bowen

Join Casting Director **Deirdre Bowen** and actors **Nicky Guadagni** and **Aiden Devine** for an in-depth discussion on the casting process as it relates to film and television. Hear about her casting process for lead & support lead characters, series regulars, recurring, guest star and day player roles. Learn what is expected of you at the audition and again at those nerve-wracking recalls. Find out what you can do to show up best prepared and land that part.

Moderated by: **Maria Ricossa**

### 9 JOURNEYMAN CLASS Audition 201

So, big audition huh? What if you could call over a few experienced actors to help you prepare? **Mariam Carvell**, **Neil Crone**, **Kirsten Bishopric**, and **David Sparrow** are ready to put all their talk from Audition 101 into action. From how you enter the room to the choices you make, they'll be ready with their two cents when you put your audition on it's feet.

Moderated by: **David Gale**

LIMIT of 5 PARTICIPANTS.

See MASTER CLASS details on this page for how to be chosen as a participant. You will be required to come with your sides prepared and ready to play.

### 10 MASTER CLASS

#### Youth 18-25: Acting from the Director's POV with Phil Earnshaw

Hey guys 18-25!! Come see **Phil Earnshaw** (*Degrassi, The Eleventh Hour, Dark Oracle*) work with hot young actors **Lauren Collins** (*Take The Lead, Degrassi*), **Mpho Koaho** (*Get Rich or Die Tryin, Four Brothers*) **Andrea Lewis** (*Mocassin Flats, Degrassi*). Even better, you have a chance to join in! Part scene work (3 guests will team up with the panelists) and part Q & A, this is your chance to interact with a director and ask questions of other young actors roughing it out in this crazy biz we all love so much!

Moderated by: **Tara Pearson**

LIMIT of 3 PARTICIPANTS.

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

## Free to ACTRA Toronto members who register.

Registration and Breakfast 9:00 a.m. at Victoria College, U of T (building foyer behind Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St. W.)

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

### 4 WORKSHOP

#### Career Tools Of the Trade

So you want a demo reel, but you're not quite sure what to leave in and what to leave out... how 'bout a new blow-them-away picture... and an eye-catching resume... and a voice tape... and a... Wait! Who should you call? THE PROFESSIONALS! Come meet renowned photographer, **Tim Leyes**, demo expert, **David Lees** and the queen of voice **Kim Hurdon** for the answers to those tough technical questions. Then get *after* casting associate, **Janelle Hutchison's** take on the whole package.

Moderated by: **Rick Wharton**

### 5 WORKSHOP

#### Staying on top of your Voice with Terry O'Reilly

Being a voice-over actor is one thing, remaining a busy one is another. Join **Terry O'Reilly**, of Pirate Radio & Television, as he discusses the behind-the-scenes realities of voice-over work for established actors. Topics will include: how audition tapes are really judged by agencies; why your reel is so important; the problem with most reels; the two things directors like to hear; how to age wonderfully as a voice-over actor; how to promote your "hidden talents"; and the things that annoy directors and agencies about experienced VO actors.

Moderated by: **Tracey Hoyt**

### 6 WORKSHOP

#### Creating/Producing Your Own Show

Got a killer idea for the next big show. Great... but where do you go from here? Who do you send it to? Who do you talk to? Come listen to some folks who've already climbed that mountain. **John Pattison** (*Puppets Who Kill*) **Deb McGrath** (*Getting Along Famously*) and **Teresa Pavlinek** (*The Jane Show*) actually got a Network to listen and foot the bill. And they're willing to tell you how they did it. PLUS you'll get all the details about our **Pitch the Networks Contest** coming to the June 28th conference. That'll be your chance to pitch live to the folks that hold the keys. So, don't stand there waiting, start creating!

Moderated by: **Jennifer Podemski**

### 7 WORKSHOP

#### The Seasoned Actor - Seniors Working in A Time-Obsessed and Image-Oriented Industry

Are you concerned with how the community views its senior members? Share in a discussion with fellow actors **Ann Anglin**, **Jack Duffy**, and **Hamish Robertson** about what works and what doesn't for 60+ artists in today's business. Get a few tips on how to keep those actor muscles vibrant with **Gabriella Herr** from the Artists Health Centre and **Elizabeth Hanna**, actor/speech language pathologist.

Moderated by: **Diane Gordon**

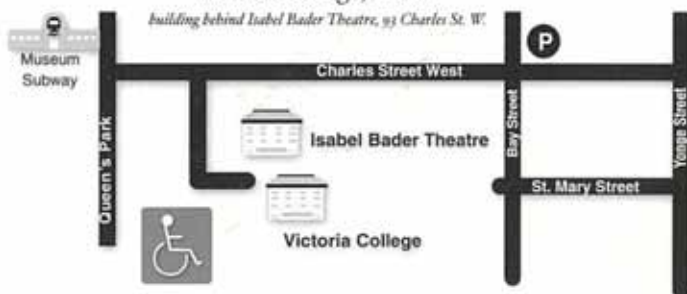
## Plenary DoorPrizes!

Include a luxury night at the Fairmont Royal York!

to qualify for the draw you must attend the afternoon plenary session and be present at the draw

### Getting there

Victoria College, U of T



### 11 WORKSHOP

#### Transitioning your Career - Changing Categories

You've played "Young Mom" or "The Business Boy Wonder" for years and you're auditioning better than ever, so why aren't you booking? These performers know because they've been there! Actors **Rosemary Dunsmore**, **Tony Nappo** and **Sandi Ross** will describe how they have managed their category transitions and have successfully moved to the next level. Also ask agent **Alicia Jeffery**, and casting associate **Janelle Hutchison** what you can do to update yourself and step into your 'new' shoes!

Moderated by: **Deb Grover**

### 12 WORKSHOP

#### The ABC's and 1,2,3's of TIP

"ACTRA makes it too tough for someone making a low-budget film to get great talent." NONSENSE!

"And you wouldn't believe the mountain of paperwork." BALDERDASH!

"Well no one can wade through all those rules." WRONG AGAIN!!

Join TIP Coordinator **Tasso Lakas** as he demystifies TIP (Toronto Indie Production Agreement) right before your eyes. It's the ABC's and 1,2,3's of TIP. If you want to be a film maker, ACTRA Toronto is there to help. Get all the facts and prepare to see myths shattered.

Moderated by: **Siu Ta**

### 13 WORKSHOP

#### Acting and Taxes - What You Can Deduct... legally.

It's TAX SEASON! Only 6 days left for an RRSP contribution! Can I claim the shoes I wore to see *The Lion King*? My hair cut? Should I declare per diem or is it just like... found money? RELAX. **Brian Borts**, CA who specializes in doing taxes for folks in entertainment is going to answer all your questions. And if you're thinking of buying a house and want to use your RRSP for the Home Buyer's Plan - did you know we have a Home Buyer's Plan? Well Actra Fraternal's **Bob Underwood** will be on hand to answer questions about, RRSPs, investing and yes, buying a home. So, come to the workshop that's tailored to help you keep more of YOUR money... legally.

Moderated by: **Austin Schatz**

Then come join us at the **ACTRA Awards in Toronto!**

7:30 p.m.  
- 1:00 a.m.  
at The Carlu!



FREE TO ACTRA TORONTO MEMBERS WHO REGISTER!

YOU &  
YOUR  
UNION


## Casting from the Producer's POV

### Gail Harvey

Gail's producer credits include *The Shower* and *Manic Organic* and she was the executive and creative producer of the CTV movie *Terry*. Gail's director credits include *Striking Poses*, *Some Things that Stay* and numerous tv shows including *This Is Wonderland*.

If you have been asked to audition for a part, the casting director thinks you are good. Relax, go in, and do your best.

If you are asked to do the scene a different way, that is usually a good thing. The director wants to take some time to see if you are easy to direct. It doesn't mean you've taken



Casting from the Producers' POV panelists: Tecca Crosby, Don Carmody, Jennifer Jones, Gail Harvey, host Marcello Cabezas and Peter Lauterman.

the wrong tact with the part (though sometimes it could mean that) and they want to give you another shot at it. Don't give up. It takes a long time to break through.

## Jennifer Jonas

Jennifer is executive producer of the feature films *Cake* and *Sugar*. Her producer credits include *Childstar* starring Mark Rendall and *The Perfect Son* starring Colm Feore. She co-produced *Perfect Pie* and *The Life Before This*.

Filmmaking and particularly casting, is nominally a consensual, collaborative process. When people don't agree, each must defend their position. The strongest defense wins.

If we give direction, it doesn't mean we didn't like your first choice, it means we're looking for versatility, listening, and responsiveness.

I don't mind some business – or a jacket if you're reading for a lawyer and wearing the jacket helps you – but please no nurse uniforms or abundance of props. A cigarette or apple, maybe.

I don't care about being off-book as long as I can see some prep/thinking about the part has been done.

Be on time. Be part of the process. Respond to the vibe.

## Peter Lauterman

Peter is a writer, producer and creative consultant. Executive story editor and executive producer of *North of 60*, his various producer credits include *G-Spot*, *Tom Stone* and *Rules of Engagement*.

Never stop studying and exploring your craft. However you choose to do it, become the best actor you can possibly be. If you have talent, a superior work ethic and a willingness to grow, sooner or later you will succeed.

Over the long run, the most employable actors are usually character actors. Be the fat guy, the ugly guy, the bad guy, the fall guy. The audience will recognize you, remember you. Beauty fades. Character ages like fine wine.

Don't be intimidated or overwhelmed by the audition process. It's impossible for you to know all the things on the producers mind. Just make a choice and go for it.

Whether you get a particular gig or not, every good audition is a building block for your career.

## Scene Study for FILM & TV with Award-Winning Actor Walter Alza

Recent credits: co-starring role Feature Film "GET RICH OR DIE TRYIN", in Ken Finkleman new Series Hotel, and in his Lead role as Andreas in Metropia



*On-Going Scene Study for Film & TV*  
 Wed 6 – 10 pm  
 Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June  
 5 classes, a new Wednesday class starts every 5 weeks  
 Actra \$190 Non-Actra \$225  
 Location: Castaway Studios  
 (Location could change from time to time)  
 Register: 416 890-0999  
 walteralza@fidohiptop.ca or  
 walter@44films.com  
 more info www.walteralza.com

### Details:

*This is a workshop for performers who are making or have made the transition to pursue acting in Film & TV. Focusing primarily on scene study, character development, creating your own dynamics, text analysis, cold reads, and working on sides. Mr. Alza shares his knowledge gained in over a decade of working in Film & TV. Mr. Alza is an award-winning actor/filmmaker with more than 13 years of experience and over 40 credits to his belt.*

-Walter gives a Powerful Performance in Get Rich or Die Trying!- Acting is a craft, he has perfected!  
 -Bina Pandya host of One on On at Rogers Television

"Act with a winner" Liz Brawn of The Toronto Sun

-I love the level and I love the challenges- I felt fantastic!" Michelle, Recurring actor of Kevin Hill and Actor of This is Wonderland-

-Walter Alza represent an emerging trend in Canadian program - The Mississauga News

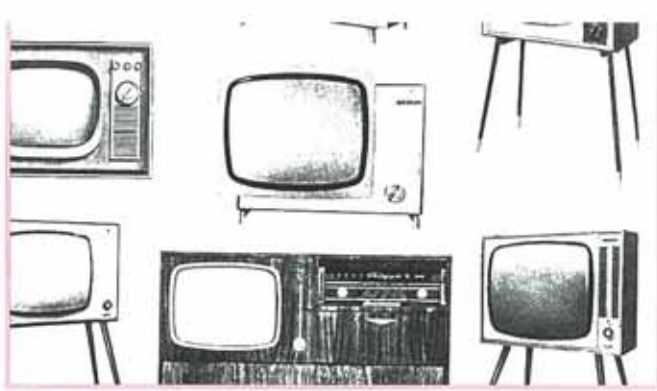
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Call today at 416-640-7770 ext. 61 to discuss your investment planning & tax preparation needs, or visit our website at [www.brianbowes.com](http://www.brianbowes.com)

A SENSIBLE APPROACH TO FINANCIAL AFFAIRS  
 SERVING THE ARTS COMMUNITY FOR OVER 15 YEARS



## Your Episodic TV Gig

### Tips on how to hit the floor running on a TV series set...

Episodic production is like carrying a refrigerator down three flights of stairs by yourself – it's not about control... it's about limiting damage!

The most difficult challenge for the episodic actor is letting go of doubts and disappointment in the previous take in order to focus on the next take.

What the audience perceives as a different "quality" of acting is often a function of the "quantity" of material that must be shot in a given time. When a scene works, it is the result of a lot of very experienced people working very hard against difficult odds to snatch excellence from the jaws of mediocrity.

Broadcasters sell audiences to advertisers. The purpose of the scripted entertainment is to attract a specific demographic group so that they can be exposed to the ads. A sobering thought for the performer who finds that artistic concerns are not decisive.

### PREPARING THE EPISODIC ROLE:

**Know your character** – The series regulars and the central concept are the context for everything and everyone else that appears

in the series. Ask yourself the usual ten thousand questions: Where am I from? What are the character's objectives? Then ask what the character's dramatic function is. What is the character for? Who is the character in relation to the leads – a role model, a nemesis, a peer, a fantasy?

**Understand the story** – Since we shoot out of sequence, you need to know where you are in the story, where and when the audience last saw your character and what story elements the current scene is presenting or setting up. You should learn your lines but don't over prepare. You are properly prepared when you can paraphrase all the other actors lines in a scene and remember accurately all of your own. Stay loose and leave room for the other actors to affect you.

**Big ones and little ones** – The main difference between large and small roles is the degree of detail available – for preparation and for performance. Think back to what you did at the audition, (the performance that won you the role) and build on that. Where the part is underwritten, it may be necessary to prepare a number of different possible approaches so that you have some options to show the director. Many performers on their first TV gig are surprised to find themselves almost ignored. More often than not, the director is also a guest on an episodic shoot and is very busy and often preoccupied with technical problems or with the leads. Set your own goals and be ready to work in a vacuum... and be glad if you don't have to! Justify your presence on the set with clear confident acting choices and accept direction (no matter how it is offered) with grace.

Your Episodic TV Gig participants: Kristopher Turner, Walter Alza, Julie Stewart, Michael Riley, Peter Outerbridge and Alberta Watson.



# JUST FOR PARENTS

(Of Child Actors)

At the October conference we offered a JUST FOR PARENTS workshop complete with handouts, knowledgeable instructors and ACTRA staff on hand to answer questions. The session was a huge success and we are determined to offer the course again in the near future. Meanwhile, below are some questions that the parents of young actors should know the answers to...

1. Give yourself a reality check: What do you expect for your child in this industry, and is it reasonable?
2. Talent agents, children & parents: Do you know who is responsible for what?
3. The money: Do you understand cheque stubs & Talent Payment Calculation Sheets and use fees?
4. Tax issues: Do you understand filing for kids, allowable expenses, trust funds.
5. ACTRA: Do you know what ACTRA does & doesn't do? Do you know who to call for questions?
6. IPA & National Commercial Agreement: Have you read the minor's section in each?
7. The Gordon Pinsent Studio: Do you know that ACTRA Toronto has a studio set up for your use to rehearse and to put auditions on tape?
8. Auditions: Are you prepared? Are your kids pressured? Do you know how to read a script? Are you aware of the scene requirements? Particularly regarding harsh language or possible compromising or dangerous situations?
9. ACTRA apprentices: Do you understand all about work permits?
10. Face to Face: Are you registered in ACTRA's talent bank?
11. Your rights: Do you know your rights, as a parent, on set?

If you or your agent doesn't know the answer to these questions, contact **Theresa Tova** (professional actor and the ACTRA Toronto child advocate) at [ttova@actratoronto.com](mailto:ttova@actratoronto.com). Or, if it's a question related to a specific production, call the steward (at ACTRA Toronto) of that production. Or better yet, come to our next conference and get all your questions answered.

ACTRA works for performers and will never do anything on your behalf without your consent and knowledge.

If you have a question, call us.

# YOU & YOUR UNION



LAST CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS



# THE ONE AND ONLY SARAH POLLEY



Photo credit: Chris Woods

# SARAH POLLEY TO RECEIVE ACTRA TORONTO'S 2006 AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

The ACTRA Awards in Toronto: February 24, 2006

ACTRA Toronto Performers is pleased to announce that Sarah Polley will receive ACTRA Toronto's 2006 Award of Excellence.

"Sarah Polley is one of Canada's treasures. She is a commanding actor who has taken on varied and challenging roles while becoming one of our most recognizable Canadian stars," said ACTRA Toronto President Karl Pruner. "But Sarah is so much more than an actor. We admire her fierce commitment to Canadian culture and her strength in speaking her mind. We are thrilled that she is to receive ACTRA Toronto's 2006 Award of Excellence."

Sarah Polley began her career as a child actor and shot to fame as the star of *Road to Avonlea*. At age nine she garnered a Gemini Award for her performance in the CBC/Disney movie, *Lantern Hill* and later another for her performance in the CBC series *Straight Up*. An actor of extraordinary subtlety and range, Ms. Polley made a transition from child to adult star with her critically acclaimed performance in Atom Egoyan's *The Sweet Hereafter*, winner of the 1997 Grand Prix at Cannes.

Ms. Polley's numerous acting credits include *Exotica*, *Sugar*, *The Event*, *eXistenZ*, *Last Night*, *Luck*, *Dawn of the Dead*, *The Hanging Garden*, *Love Come Down*, *The Law of Enclosures* and *The Planet of Junior Brown*. She won a Best Actress Genie Award and an ACTRA Award nomination for her performance in *My Life Without Me*. She won another Genie Award as director of the short film she wrote, *I Shout Love*, which also earned an ACTRA Award for its star, Kristen Thomson.

Ms. Polley spoke out on the crisis of the Canadian film industry during the Heritage Committee's 2005 review of feature film, appearing on behalf of ACTRA Toronto. She is an ongoing advocate for child performers and spearheaded a series of ACTRA Toronto workshops designed for young actors.



# Interview with Mpho Koaho

By Tara Pearson

IN CONVERSATION WITH...

## Have you had any formal training?

"I messed with **Dave Eisner** for a bit but that was just after school. I was messin' with the big brothers and the head of that agency knew that I was tryin' to get down with this. And before I knew it, I was at the arts school with Dave. And then I just don't remember being at the class anymore. That's how I got my agent **Larry (Goldhar)**. That's a father I shoulda had from the start."

## How does your family deal with all this stuff?

"[They're] real two-faced; I'll be honest. I remember I'd go to [my fathers] work, you know he'd punk me a lot, wouldn't even really show me no time or nothing. Nobody knew who I was. And then BOOM, *Down in the Delta* came out and all of a sudden this man's willing to tell everybody my name, 'This my son... this my boy', all this junk. So it's one of those things... nobody can ever show me that face and win. I'm prepared for it."

## Who keeps you grounded?

"I keep myself grounded. Larry keeps me grounded. I caught myself a few times not caring about shit. But then I gotta catch myself and it's like because I'm in the position that I'm in... I have to care. Those are the things I'm adjusting to."

## Do you ever get recognized?

"On [*It's a Boy/Girl Thing*], Movie Television came to set and I thought 'Liz West... Yo, I put it on Liz West', but then she didn't get at nobody. There's probably four Canadian actors... principal cast. To me, that's where my focus would be. There's no star system here. We gotta start letting people know about these people they don't know about. Because if they're not pushing our stuff, they're not gonna give Canada the respect it really deserves. I look at actors like **Colm Feore** and I got respect for cats like that. **Callum Keith Rennie**, wicked actors that are Canadian. I love that. He's not getting featured as much in terms of interviews but when I watch the films, I see him, I know he's there."

## What kind of reaction do you have seeing your own work? Does it bother you?

"It definitely doesn't bother me because I expect to be here. I expect to work with **Orlando (Bloom)** and **50 (Cent)** and cats like that. What's weird is when I don't do things the way I want to. That bothers me..."

## Have any of these experiences shaped or changed your attitudes towards acting?

"Definitely. For me to work with **Maya Angelou** right off the bat... you can't duplicate something like that. It wasn't until a few years after, that I actually processed who I had just worked with. Like **Esther Rolle**, that's a real serious lady. Just seeing what they done and knowing what they bin through in the industry has me wanting to learn and just listen to them."

## Where did that kind of passion come from?

"I've always had it but I guess you could say I got it from my mother. She was doin' a whole bunch of stuff in Africa before she came here. So I guess it's definitely her side of things."

## You landed your fist job at 14. If you had the choice would you have started older...?

"I definitely would've started younger."

## Do you have any advice for kids starting out?

"You gotta want it. You gotta get up every day and still want it because emotionally, this shit can fuck with you. You gotta be strong within yourself. You can't get mad at everything people don't do. Everybody thinks it's so fucking glamorous and so fucking great. It's great... I love it, but there's a lot of bullshit."

## What's been the toughest role for you?

"If anything, this TV movie: *Doomstown*. I had to get the accent right. But again, that's shit I do every day. I still don't think I've been challenged. I still feel like I've got to prove myself. I feel I bring my A-game every single time and like I could make every film that I've ever seen, that I could have been in, better. That's just the bottom line."

## Have you ever wanted to quit?

"I won't say quit, but I definitely questioned what I was doing. I quit a lot of stuff... I mean a lot of stuff. That's why I actually kinda shock myself to still be around. But this is what I know I can do... I wouldn't stick with something this long if I didn't think there was a chance for it to get good."



# Bio

Mpho Koaho (pronounced "Um-poh Kwa-ho") was recently featured on **Playback's annual 10 to watch list**. His list of credits includes *Goosebumps*, *Soul Food*, *Four Brothers*, *Get Rich or Die Tryin'* with rap artist **50 Cent** and most recently the Canada/U.K. co-pro *It's a Boy/Girl Thing*.

# Bio

## The Skinny on Skin: the naked truth on sex scenes.

continued from page 13



Lauren Lee-Smith and Eric Balfour in *Lie With Me*.

**DH:** So when you have to do a sexual scene with nudity, how do you prepare for it?

**LL:** Really the only thing that I did was build trust with Clement and Eric. And then rehearsing it over and over and over, getting the blocking down and making sure that we were comfortable within our boundaries. So that, when it comes to the day and the moment, you just sort of let it go and conquer your fears. Let all your insecurities and anxieties go away. I think that can only happen if you trust the person you're working with.

**DH:** Do you find yourself thinking of technical things and the choreography, when you're in the midst of it?

**LL:** Not so much. We spent about a week really going through the blocking so it was ingrained in our heads. When it came down to it, it was like, "Okay, well we know that. It's the emotional part of it now."

**DH:** Was this your first experience doing nudity on film?

**LL:** Yes, absolutely it was.

**DH:** So describe your feeling about that.

**LL:** Most of my anxieties were about a month before the film started. I thought that I would never do nudity. And then I finally let it go. About a month before film-

ing I thought, "I've committed to do this, I really want to do this. It scares the shit out of me." As an actor, you kind of have to get naked, not necessarily physically, but mentally and emotionally. Once I came to peace with that it was fine. And it was actually, the very first day, sort of freeing.

**DH:** Describe some of the sex scenes in the film that you had to do.

**LL:** In the film there's not a whole lot of dialogue. The sex scenes had to convince the audience of what Leila and David were going through, in their heads and emotionally. So each sex scene was treated like it was a dialogue driven scene without the dialogue. It was very intense. It's very easy to go through the motions of having sex, but it's a lot harder to portray making love emotionally to someone on screen.

**DH:** What would be your advice to a young actress who has to do a sex scene in a film? What would you tell her?

**LL:** Don't do it – unless you absolutely know that you can, that you want to, and that you completely trust the people that you're working with. And then just let it go. Don't think about your guts or your stomach, or whatever you don't like about your body, just get over all the aesthetic insecurities.



## In Conversation with Maria del Mar

continued from page 15

*happened? I see a lot of actors out there walking around in a daze wondering why they have to go back to waiting on tables. It's shocking, isn't it? It's such a horrible thing because I don't think anybody in their right mind goes into this because*

*they want to be a star. You'd have to be so naive. I don't think a lot of us have a choice. It's like a bad addiction; acting. You can't just stop it.*

**C:** Does it bother you to have to turn to the States?

**M:** *Yeah. It bothers me. Not because I feel I'm owed anything. I just feel that I should have a chance to have a chance here. There should be something for me to go and audition for. That's all. I don't feel an entitlement, I don't feel somebody owes me, I don't feel I've reached a certain status where people should provide me with jobs. I just want to have a stab at it. I'd like to not worry about my mortgage. And then the problem is that, chances are, whatever job I get next will be American anyway.*

**C:** Do you still have to audition at this stage?

**M:** *Yeah (laughs). Welcome to Canada. I actually just did a movie where I didn't have to audition. I'm still a bit dizzied by the whole experience (laughs). It was shocking! It was the result of this director, **Matt Hastings**, having watched some of my work on *Terminal City*.*

*You know, I remember arriving in Vancouver to do that movie thinking: I'm still not sure I'm really working. How do you know that I can do this job? It was very strange.*

**C:** But you did do the job.

**M:** *That I did. They didn't shoo me off set.*

**C:** Actors. Why do we always feel like we're going to be exposed as frauds?

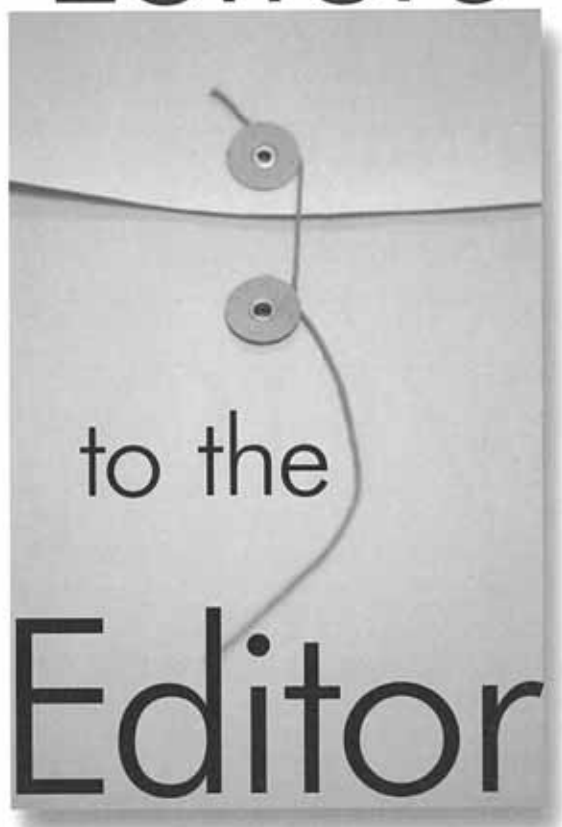
**M:** *Oh, you know what? It's not just us (laughs). It's directors, and DPs and writers. I think it's because of our world of make believe. You think: Someone's going to find out I've been bluffing the whole time. Someone's going to find out that I really don't know what I'm doing! That's a horrible fear. Horrible.*

**C:** It gives you 'edge.'

**M:** *Yes. Yes it does. It keeps you running. It doesn't allow you to get too lazy, that's for sure.*

*Terminal City* airs on *The Movie Network* (Eastern Canada) and *Movie Central* (Western Canada).

# Letters



## Babies and a career?

Well, I did it. I was making great money as a professional actor, and then I got pregnant (on purpose). Then... I couldn't do both. I had to put talent and ambition on the back burner. But I'm not dead! I TOOK TIME OFF! There are others like me, right? What happens to the bunch of us who left the business to have children and now are in the process of coming back? Are you out there? I feel, deep down, that we deserve to have it all, even though that means redefining our definition of success. Awards? They would be great. Wealth? Even better. Fame? Who needs it.

*Dawna Wightman*

## What have YOU done for YOU lately?

December 1st, 2005 marked 15 years since I became a professional, full-time actor. It's a business that never stops demanding passion, hard work and tenacity, and I love it.

In 1992 I became a member of ACTRA. I knew nothing about the organization save for the fact it was a union (Ewww!) and for the next 11 years I had nothing to do with it, perfectly blissful in my ignorance.

Then in 2003 I was asked to attend a focus group for the commercial negotiations and I got... focused.

Turns out, our union is actually made up of acting-stiffs like you and me. Working actors who voluntarily band together to act on our behalf to create more work opportunities, to set minimum rates, to ensure safe working conditions and to lobby government for changes that will make being an actor even more rewarding.

Since that focus group, I have jumped in with both feet and my career has continued to thrive. In fact, I am more connected to the industry, to other actors and the bureaucrats who legislate my business than ever before.

I now find it hard to understand how anyone in the business of acting cannot be interested in how the professional body (to which they pay their dues) represents their interests and negotiates on their behalf.

Call me pushy, but I'm calling on all members to make your union a priority. Sit on a committee, offer to volunteer at a conference, attend a plenary, observe a council meeting or attend a rally. Make 2006 the year you choose to do something for yourself and GET INVOLVED. We'll save you a chair.

*Dave Sparrow*

[dsparrow@council.actratoronto.com](mailto:dsparrow@council.actratoronto.com)

## Errata

In the last issue of *Performers Magazine*, Dan MacDonald was incorrectly identified as the former ACTRA Toronto President, he was national president.

We apologise for this error.

*What happens to the bunch of us who left the business to have children and now are in the process of coming back? Are you out there?*

# ACTRA Toronto's New Elected Council

ACTRA Toronto Performers is run by a council of 24 performers elected every two years. These councillors are full members (as are any members who vote or hold office). Of these, four councillors are elected by the membership as direct representatives on the ACTRA National Council. These four councillors are joined on the ACTRA National Council by an additional eight Toronto representatives who are elected from within the Toronto Performers Council.

All of your councillors are professional actors who selflessly volunteer their time and intellect to represent your best interests and to make all our lives as professional artists better. They are always available to listen to any concerns you may have.

**We congratulate our new council and we give them our support.**

**We also offer a heartfelt and very warm thank you to the outgoing council for the wonderful work that they have done.**

ACTRA Toronto Performers is the largest organization within ACTRA, the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists. ACTRA Toronto has a membership of 13,000 members out of a national membership of 21,000 across the country. ACTRA represents performers in all recorded media in the English language. If it's an English-language performance recorded in Canada, it's in our jurisdiction!

# ACTRA Toronto Council WHO'S WHO

**The following individuals were elected to Toronto Council and National Council:**

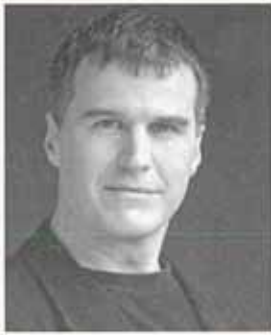
**President: Karl Pruner** E: kpruner@council.actratoronto.com  
**Aidan Devine** E: adevine@council.actratoronto.com  
**Ferne Downey** E: fdowney@council.actratoronto.com  
**Dom Fiore** E: dfiore@council.actratoronto.com

**The following individuals were elected to Toronto Council:**

**Heather Allin** E: hallin@council.actratoronto.com  
**Joanna Bennett** E: jbennett@council.actratoronto.com  
**Brad Borbridge** E: bborbridge@council.actratoronto.com  
**Bob Collins** E: rcollins@council.actratoronto.com  
**Toni Ellwand** E: tellwand@council.actratoronto.com  
**Lyn Mason Green** E: lgreen@council.actratoronto.com  
**Richard Hardacre** E: rhardacre@council.actratoronto.com  
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**John Nelles** E: jnelles@council.actratoronto.com  
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**Ron White** E: rwhite@council.actratoronto.com

**Visit the ACTRA Toronto website  
at [www.actratoronto.com](http://www.actratoronto.com)**

## Toronto Council and National Council:



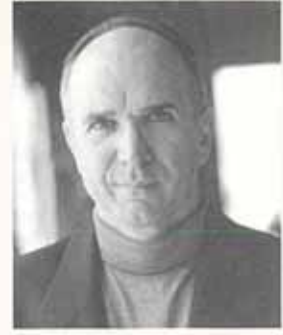
President Karl Pruner



Aidan Devine



Ferne Downey



Dom Fiore

## Toronto Council:



Heather Allin



Joanna Bennett



Brad Borbridge



Bob Collins



Toni Ellwand



Lyn Mason Green



Richard Hardacre



David Macniven



Eric Murphy



John Nelles



Tara Pearson



Priya Rao



Maria Ricossa



Wayne Robson



Austin Schatz



Anne Marie Scheffler



Stephen Graham Simpson



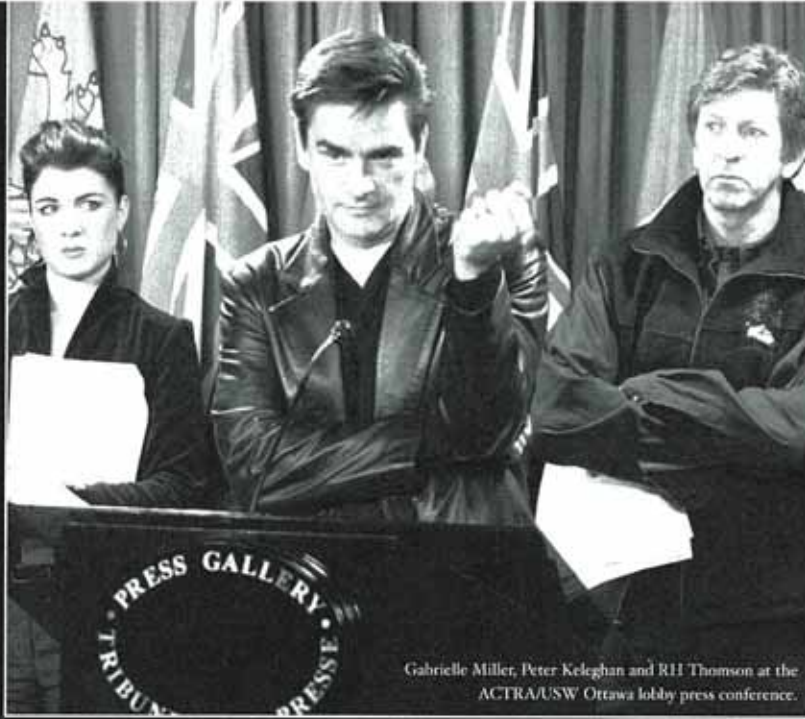
David Sparrow



Theresa Tova



Ron White



Gabrielle Miller, Peter Keleghan and RH Thomson at the ACTRA/USW Ottawa lobby press conference.

# ACTRA CRASHES THE PARTIES ON PARLIAMENT HILL

## ACTRA and Steel Lobbyists meet with 80 MPs!

In November of 2005, members of ACTRA and our alliance partners the United Steelworkers teamed up and swarmed Parliament Hill for a weeklong lobbying effort to fight for a strong cultural and national identity.

Throughout the week, we met with more than 80 ministers and MPs to present a list of demands that would benefit all Canadians. We argued for MPs to: fix the CRTC and make them live up to their legislated responsibility to get more Canadian stories on the airwaves; we presented our ideas for a fairer way to tax artists; we encouraged them to invest in culture, health care and post-secondary education; and to make key legislative reforms to protect workers and maintain limits to foreign ownership of telecommunications companies.

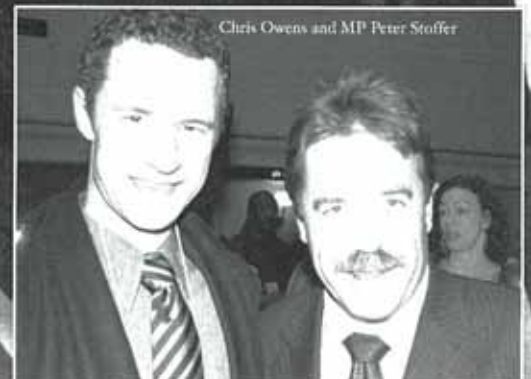
An extra special thanks to those of you who volunteered to go to Parliament Hill to lobby MPs: Heather Allin, Tyrone Benskin, Thor Bishopric, Barry Blake, Ferne Downey, Thelma Farmer, Dawn Ford, Richard Hardacre, Matt Holland, Peter Keleghan, Dan Lett, Gabrielle Miller, Chris Owens, Leah Pinsent, Karl Pruner, Priya Rao, Austin Schatz, David Sparrow, Julie Stewart and RH Thomson.

Thank you for so generously sharing your passionate voices and your time!

For more information on ACTRA Toronto public policy positions and political outreach please go to our website [www.actratoronto.com](http://www.actratoronto.com)



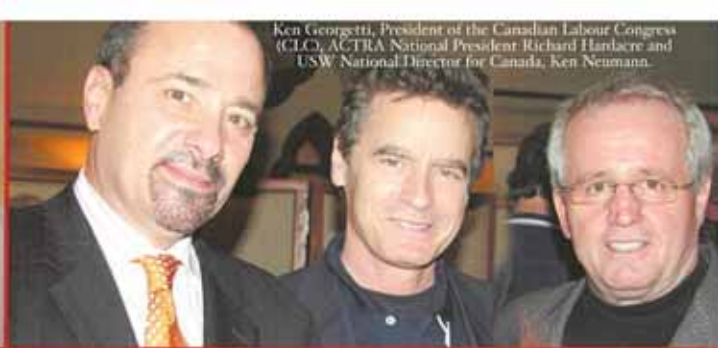
Julie Stewart waiting her turn to speak at the press conference.



Chris Owens and MIP Peter Stoffer



ACTRA Toronto President Karl Pruner and Julie Stewart.



Ken Georgetti, President of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), ACTRA National President Richard Hardacre and USW National Director for Canada, Ken Neumann.



Gabrielle Miller speaking at the press conference.



MP David Christopherson and Leah Pinsent.



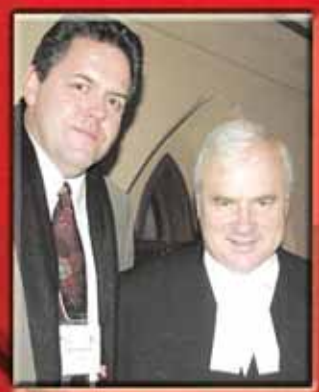
Tyrone Benskin and MP Peter Julian.



Jack Layton with Julie Stewart and Dan Lett.

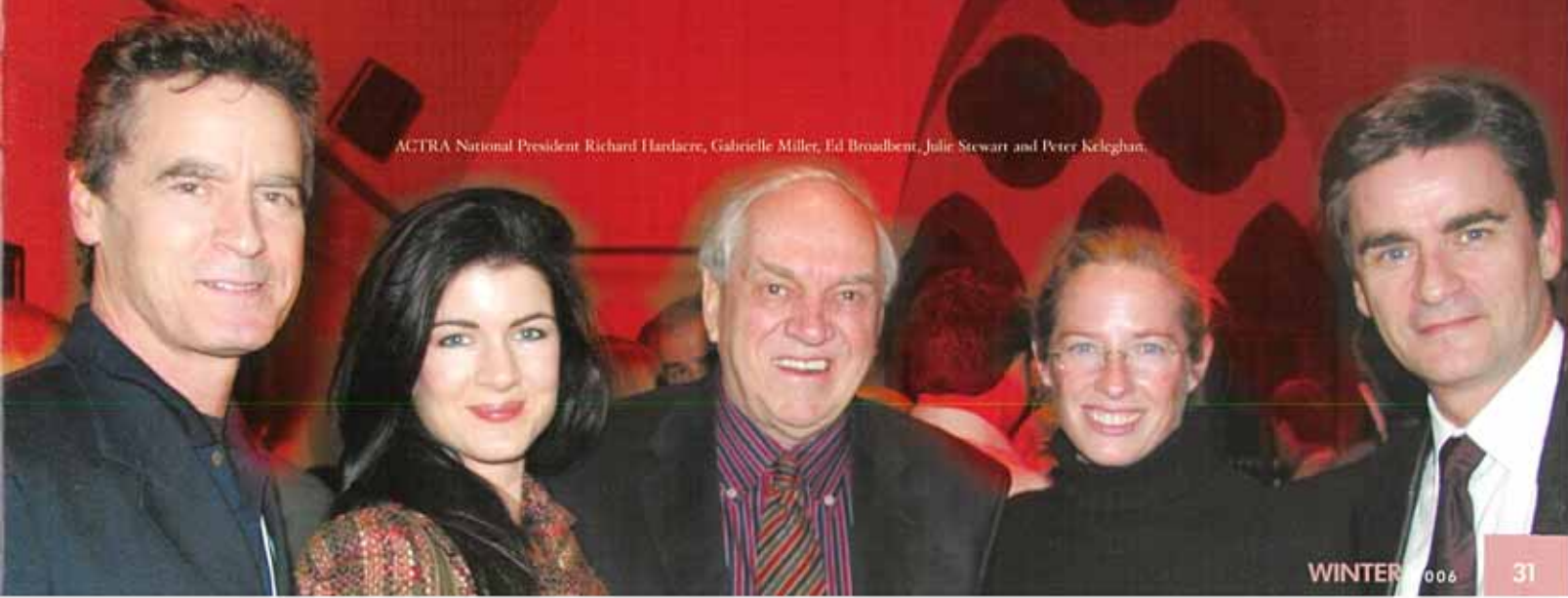


Julie Stewart speaks out at the ACTRA/USW Ottawa press conference with Gabrielle Miller and USW National Director for Canada, Ken Neumann.



David Sparrow with House Speaker Peter Milliken MP.

# TAKING THE HILL



ACTRA National President Richard Hardacre, Gabrielle Miller, Ed Broadbent, Julie Stewart and Peter Keleghan.

You're invited to the **ACTRA AWARDS** in Toronto 2006.

**Friday, February 24**

7:30 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.

This elegant evening at The Carlu is an invite only event and an exclusive gala for Toronto actors to celebrate our best.

Rub shoulders with the best actors in Canada!

Register early, space is limited!  
Free for ACTRA members  
(no door crashers... YOU MUST REGISTER)

**GET  
DRESSED  
UP!**

... from head to toe.



**The Carlu, College Park, 7th floor**

• Awards Presentation • Party into the night!

Feb. 24 also marks your next Members' Conference: meet your new council; listen to Mayor Miller; win a luxury night at the Fairmount Royal York!! - see page 16 for details.



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