



ACTRA

celebrating 60 Years

a magazine for ACTRA

Montreal members

Grapevine

Fall 2003



**Get
your tickets
now!**



Jaclyn Linetsky 1986-2003

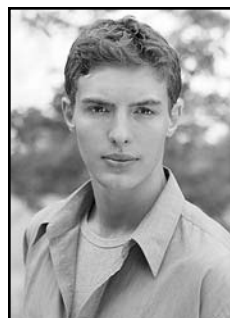
It is with great sorrow that ACTRA Montreal mourns the sudden passing of member Jaclyn Linetsky.

The talented performer, perhaps best known as the voice of **Caillou** was killed Monday, September 8th in a tragic automobile accident while on route to the set of the television series **15/Love**. Her co-star, **Vadim Schneider** lost his life in the crash as well. At the young age of 17, Jaclyn was already an experienced professional in the industry, having worked with many of our members in the voice community for nearly a decade.

"Jaclyn was one of our younger members in that particular group that was loved by all the performers in this community," said ACTRA National President Thor Bishopric, who had worked alongside Jaclyn on numerous occasions. "She had a positive, infectious energy and when she came to studio, it lightened everyone's day."

Originally from France, Vadim had lived in Montreal since the age of 7. He followed in his father's footsteps, choosing a career in the arts at an early age. Vadim was 17 years old.

ACTRA Montreal and the entire membership would like to extend our condolences to both Jaclyn and Vadim's family and friends.

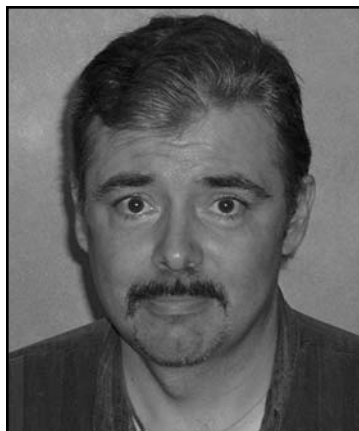


Vadim Schneider

Gary Jewell 1955-2003

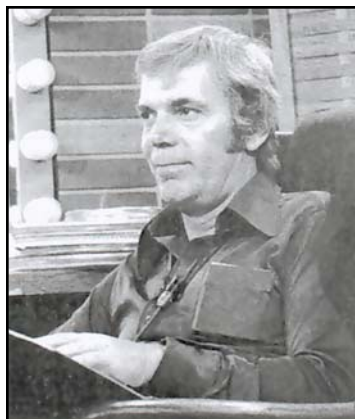
Gary Jewell, an accomplished radio writer, producer and voice performer passed away in August. A Montreal member for over 20 years, Gary was nominated in 1981 for two ACTRA Awards; **Best Writer/Producer, Radio Variety** and **Best Actor, Radio Variety**. His resume included thousands of voice performances in commercials and animated projects, most recently as the voice of Officer Halcroft on the television series **Mona the Vampire**.

Gary will be missed by those who knew him well in the voice community and all of us at ACTRA.



Jack Curran 1932-2003

We are saddened by the passing of legendary Montreal broadcaster and member, **Jack Curran**. Born in Grand Falls, N.B., John Bernard Curran joined the CJAD team in Montreal in 1953. In addition to his work as a broadcaster, Jack performed on stage with the Montreal Repertory Theatre, **Trinity Players** and **Shoestring Theatre**. Appearing on **CFCF** and **CBC** through the 1960s, Jack may be best remembered for hosting **CFCF's Movie Matinee** in the 1970s.



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Got an opinion?

Send your comments to

The Grapevine

by email: rduniz@actra.ca

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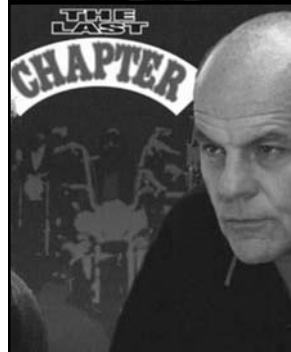
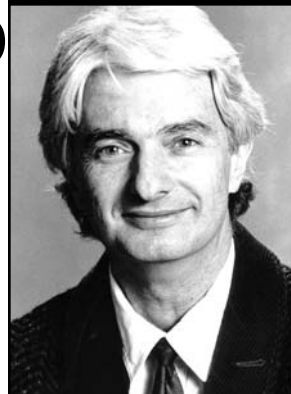
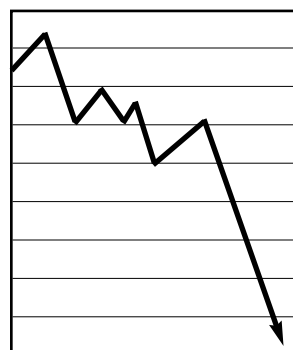
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Celebrating
60 Years
1943-2003



a message from the president...

Dear Members,

As many of you know, our usual autumn, back-to-school enthusiasms have been significantly dampened by the heart-breaking loss of two young actors. It seems trivial, but somehow necessary, to address the topics usually found here: events, professional developments, work opportunities and the general state of our métier, in light of the unhappiness we feel at their untimely passing. So, I'll try to be succinct and forward-looking in these matters, before turning to more doleful thoughts.

The Fall belongs to ACTRA Montreal, beginning with an early, concise, pared-down Annual General Meeting on October 20th. The production roster is healthier this year and there are some signs of improvement in our indigenous film industry, what with the strong crop of new Canadian features and shorts at the recent Montreal, Toronto, Atlantic (and up-coming Vancouver) Film Fests. Also, Quebec films continue to show the rest of the country how it's done, with the international critical successes of such titles as *La Grande Séduction*, *Les Invasions Barbares* and *Mambo Italiano*, movies which have done solid box-office business here at home.

Next is ACTRA National's 60th Anniversary Celebration at The Canadian Consulate in Los Angeles on October 23rd, followed by ACTRA Montreal's own gala 60th Anniversary event at Le Windsor on November 22nd, where, in an all-day affair, we will both promote and celebrate our performers' creative efforts and achievements, capping the day with an awards ceremony dinner, where we will honour the lifetime achievement of actor, producer, director, writer, and native-son William Shatner. Check for details in this newsletter, and pencil it in your agendas. Above all, we want to celebrate you, the performer, who has given life and vitality to this organization for six decades, so we hope to see you there...

The recent, tragic death of Jaclyn Linetsky, a young, vibrant and talented performer and ACTRA Montreal member, and of her equally-young co-star in *15/Love*, Vadim Schneider, has cast a pall over our close-knit acting community and diminished the relevance of material things in our daily lives. The suddenness and the randomness give us pause and remind us of our own vulnerability, while the sorrow we feel connects us to our emotions in a profound and unhesitant way. As performers, we constantly strive for that connection in our work, but as human beings, we naturally empathize with others in their pain.

There are no words to aptly describe the feeling, and gestures seem woefully inadequate in the face of such a tremendous loss - an undesirable situation for anyone to be in, let alone a performer. But we make the attempt; we have to, to get a signal or message - no matter how small or humble - across; to move forward, to work through, to improve...to give grief its due, but to eventually emerge from its grasp and heal.

Our condolences are not all we have to offer the Linetsky and Schneider families: the example and the spirit of the children they lost supersede their physical presence, to provide inspiration and energy to the many who admired and were touched by them. This, in turn, is a reflection of the fine, loving way in which these young people were raised. And so, the bereaved have our gratitude as well; for the gift, however fleeting, of Jaclyn and Vadim. They are missed.

In solidarity,

Matt Holland
ACTRA Montreal Branch President

AMIC

Apprentice Member Initiation Course

Have you taken it yet?
Sign up now for a Fall/Winter date!

Monday, November 17, 2003
Tuesday, December 16, 2003
Thursday, January 22, 2003

**Earn a
Credit!**

Come to the ACTRA office to register in person or download the form from www.actramontreal.ca and mail it back with your cheque!

Congratulations!

Congratulations to **ACTRA Montreal Branch President Matt Holland** and his bride, **Margaret McBrearty**. The adorable couple tied the knot on May 31, 2003 at the Havelock Town Hall. Everyone at ACTRA would like to wish the Prez and his wife all the best.



Margaret McBrearty and
Matt Holland



Congratulations to **Melvin the rabbit**.

A long time friend of the branch and performing partner of **ACTRA Montreal member Nemo Turner**, Melvin has become the first (and only) rabbit to be honoured with a membership in the **International Magicians Society** - a prestigious organization with nearly 37,000 members world-wide.

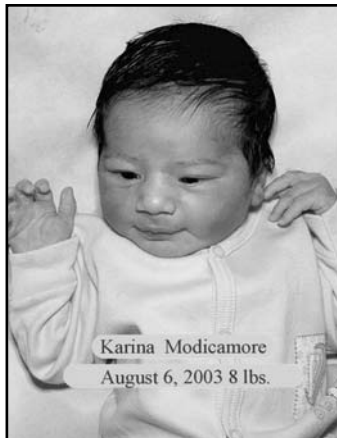
Melvin and Nemo have been great supporters of ACTRA Montreal for a number of years, performing together at our AGMs and at the ACTRA booth at the **Location Expo Trade Show** in Los Angeles.

To read more about this unbelievable story, visit Melvin's website at www.StarRabbit.com

Thanks to Nemo Turner for his contribution to the story.



Nemo Turner



Karina Modicamore

Congratulations to **ACTRA Montreal Branch Clerk Carmy Renda** and her husband **Joe Modicamore** on the birth of **Karina Modicamore**.

The couple's first child, Karina was born August 6th and weighed in at an even 8 pounds.

We wish Carmy and her family all the best.
We miss you around the office already!

Congratulations to **ACTRA Montreal member Adrian Knight** and wife **Lisa** on the birth of their second child, **Jacob Knight**. Jacob was born July 23rd, a healthy 7 pounds 11 ounces.

Welcome to the family!



Jacob Knight

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

FOR

ELEVEN (11) BRANCH COUNCILLORS

It's that time again; time to elect our Local Branch Council.

Once elected, the new Branch Council will elect - from amongst its members - a President, Vice President and Treasurer.

As well, the new Branch Council will elect - from amongst its members - two (2) National Councillors, who will represent the Montreal Branch on ACTRA's National Council.

The first step in this process is to identify those members who wish to stand for election.

Attached is a nomination form.

Only Full Members may nominate a member. Only Full Members may stand for election.

Full Members in good standing who wish to stand for office must sign the form - indicating their willingness to serve if elected. As well, the names, membership numbers and signatures of the members (also in good standing) nominating and seconding them must be included.

The completed nomination form must be returned to the ACTRA office no later than October 31, 2003.

The ballots, as well as information on the candidates, will be sent out shortly after the nomination deadline.

NOMINATION FORM: ACTRA MONTREAL BRANCH COUNCIL

NOMINEE: _____ MEMB #: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

PROPOSED BY: _____ MEMB #: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

SECONDED BY: _____ MEMB #: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

(If you wish to nominate additional candidates, please contact the Montreal office for additional forms)

a word (or two) from the branch...

Face to Face form...Back in May, members received an ACTRA form to fill out regarding skills, disciplines and personal details. After some lengthy data entry, the move from our old system to Face to Face Online will be happening within weeks. What does this mean? Casting directors will be using Face to Face exclusively to find members that fit certain criteria - for both auditions for speaking roles and as a means of finding Background Performers. If you have not filled out that form and returned it to ACTRA or have not logged on to Face to Face yourself to update your profile, you will not appear on any of the queries generated by casting directors.

Face to Face is an important tool in the creation and protection of work opportunities for our members. So use it!

• • •

On a related note...members without agents are encouraged to sign a release form allowing ACTRA to publish your home phone number on Face to Face so that you may be contacted by producers and casting directors. Similarly, background performers should ensure that they have signed the release form so that you may be contacted directly for extra work.

If you haven't already signed the form, please come to our office to do so. Don't worry - Face to Face is a secure web-site and limited to authorized users who require passwords to view your profile. All of the information on the site is protected.

Why

are my

work days

down?

Production numbers in 2003 are up. That means the number of roles is up. By all accounts, 2003 may not be our greatest year, but it is a good year - and certainly a better year than 2002.

So what has so many of our members scratching their heads, asking...



by Eastern Regional Director
Raymond Guardia

"There's no work for us when American projects come to town."

"I heard that ACTRA is letting American producers bring in whomever they want."

"The ACTRA Office is even letting Americans in to play one-day roles."

Chances are that you've been part of a conversation - either on set or, after a hard day's work, at La Cabane - where a fellow member has said something like this.

Now, if you've attended an ACTRA Montreal membership meeting in the past four years, you'll know that ensuring that members get their fair share of work when American productions come to town is a big deal for us. That's why we spearheaded **"The Opportunity Project"** in 1999; an initiative aimed at increasing work for members on American production. At each AGM, we provide a report for the year that just passed.

Have we abandoned "The Opportunity Project" this year?

Well, at the risk of letting the facts get in the way of a good story, let's take a look at the numbers;

Fourteen American productions came to Montreal this year. Nine have wrapped. Let's see how we did on these nine;

...continued on page 6

Why are my work days down? continued...

- 322 roles were created. 256 - or 80% - went to Canadians. This percentage is in line with results from the previous four years.
- 1,580 workdays were generated. 720 went to Canadians and 860 went to Non-Canadians, for a ratio of 1:1.2. Now that's a little off the 1:1 ratio that we strive for, but, it isn't catastrophic.
- An average per production of 7.3 permits for Non-Canadians have been approved - 66 in all. That average is also in line with results from the previous four years.

So, while the numbers are not great, they're not bad either.

All in all, our members are working this year. So why doesn't it feel that way? Well, part of the reason may just be that while MORE of our members are working, many of you are actually getting FEWER workdays on those productions.

Why?

An American production comes to town. Before casting begins here, there are a number of roles that are already filled south of the border by what may be referred to as 'above the line stars'. There are - let's say - forty roles available and maybe the first 6 are filled with recognizable foreign performers who are very often the reason the film was greenlit in the first place.

Montreal performers then compete for roles 7 to 40. Generally, 7 and 8 are still sizable roles with a good number of workdays. As we move closer to role 40, the number of workdays gradually

decline. Let's look at **Gothika** as an example. Role 7 has 18 days. Role 8 has 12. There are three more roles with 6 workdays and five roles with 4 days. This gradual decline is what allows a member who earns role 7, 8 or even 13 to bank on a decent cheque that will help pay the rent until the next role comes around. The problem is, more and more often, that gradual decline is no longer happening.

It may be said that many of the projects that shot here in the past year resemble a play on film more than they do an actual movie; the same five actors exchanging dialogue in front of a camera in every scene. Take **The Reagans** or **Taking Lives** for example. Let's look more closely at **Secret Window**, with Johnny Depp.

“...while MORE of our members are working, many of you are actually getting FEWER workdays on those productions.”

Thirty roles. Five go to American performers. But unlike **Gothika**, the largest Canadian role has only 7 days. The second largest has only 4. After that, it's 1 and 2 day parts. In the end, 25 Canadian performers amass a grand total of 40 workdays while the five Americans account for more than 100. The gradual decline is replaced by a steep drop.

This is not the first time we've encountered such projects (see **No Good Deed** last year). Not all films present us with such a problem - and the fact that the work days ratio is still close to the 1:1

mark demonstrates that there are projects in which our members are the big winners and we get most of the work. Our concern is, those types of productions seem fewer and farther between.

Is there anything we can do?

Truthfully...no. This industry is constantly evolving. And that requires as much adaptation as it does acceptance. Five years ago, **Movies-of-the-Week** were the bread and butter for our members in Montreal, earning them enormous amounts of work. If the powers that be decide not to make MOWs anymore, there isn't a lot that anyone can do.

Just last year - in the midst of terrible production levels - movies like **Their Last Chance**, **Redeemer**, **After Amy**, **Christmas with J.D.** and **Federal Protection** were great projects for our members where many of them saw substantive workday numbers. This year - with a greater number of productions in town - we have fewer that offer that same opportunity.

Members are getting the same percentage of roles. ACTRA is policing work permit applications with the same fervour. But some productions will just not satisfy the needs of our membership. In the end, all we can do is have patience. The industry will change again. For now, let's just work as hard as we can at making films like **Secret Window** an enjoyable experience and maybe next time Columbia Pictures comes to town, it'll be the members that win.

ACTRA PDC presents **The Business of Acting: Getting Started**

Robyne Ropell-Baruchel teaches how to launch and maintain a successful acting career. Tools of the Trade, Finding an agent, Set Smarts and more.

Mondays!!! 6pm - 9pm
Oct 20, Nov 10, Dec 8, 2003

Registration fee: \$15 (\$20 at the door)

To register, please send your cheque by mail or pay at the ACTRA Montreal office.
1450 City Councillors #530
Mtl, Qc H3A 2E6

the art pitch of the

Having a great idea is one thing. Selling it is another.

The art of pitching is a fine one and in most circumstances, it is crucial if your one of a kind, million dollar idea is to ever become a reality...or reality show, if that's what you're pitching!

In conjunction with the **60th Anniversary celebrations**, we're pleased to announce the **Pitch the Panel Breakfast!**

This morning event will give select members an opportunity to unveil their own ideas for a television show, feature film, documentary or other project to a panel of industry guests - including producers, directors and writers.

We won't be giving away a half million dollars in development money and we won't be able to sign you to a three-picture deal with Dreamworks, but if you've got a great idea, this is your opportunity to be heard! Interested? Check out the details on the next page...



Hosted by
David Acer

David Acer's eclectic talents as a magician, writer, actor and comedian have been featured on **A&E's Comedy on the Road**, **CBC's Just For Laughs**, **SHOWTIME's The Hunger**, **CTV's Comedy Now**, and **ABC's America's Funniest People**, where he placed second behind a vomiting squirrel. He has appeared 10 times at the **Just For Laughs Festival**, he wrote for two seasons on the award-winning **Popular Mechanics for Kids**, and he's one of the writers and stars of **Discovery's** new hit series, **Mystery Hunters!**

Join us at the Pitch the Panel Breakfast!

Anyone and everyone is invited to join us at the Windsor Ballroom for the Breakfast on Saturday morning, November 22nd to hear your fellow members pitch their hearts out. Hosted by renown comedian **David Acer**, this event will be your opportunity to enjoy a delicious breakfast, learn a thing or two about the art of pitching and have yourself a lot of fun.

**Tickets are now on sale for the
Pitch the Panel Breakfast.**

The event will take place the morning of
November 22, 2003.

Cost is **\$30.00** or **FREE** with the purchase
of a ticket to the **60th Anniversary Gala**.

To purchase your tickets, visit Randy at
the ACTRA Montreal office.

Being a Pitcher

All Full Members, Apprentice Members and ACTRA Extras are encouraged to apply to be one of the **6** chosen to pitch at the breakfast!

Applications must contain ALL of the following materials:

1. Contact information.

Name, ACTRA number, phone number and email address.

2. Project Title.

3. Type of Project.

There are a million different types of projects out there. Dramatic television series or comedic television series, documentary feature or documentary series, feature film or movie-of the week, just to name a few. If you are pitching an animated feature to be distributed on the internet, tell us. Be as specific as you can.

4. Logline.

One sentence used to describe your project. Think: Fictional romantic tale of a rich girl and poor boy who meet on the ill-fated voyage of the 'unsinkable' ship (**Titanic**, 1997). Or a comedic documentary exploration of the roots of America's predilection for gun violence (**Bowling for Columbine**, 2002).

5. Log-paragraph.

A 50-75 word expansion on your logline - sort of like the summary on the back of the DVD/VHS case.

6. One Pager.

500 (or so) words outlining the details of your project. This page will be very different depending on what type of project you are proposing. A one pager on a feature film may just be an outline of the plot while 500 words about your documentary series might include an overview of the concept mixed with ideas for the first three episodes. Do whatever feels right for you to help get your idea across to us, your audience...just keep it to a page!

Note:

You may include any other supplementary materials you wish, but none are necessary.

The application deadline for the Pitch the Panel Breakfast is October 31, 2003.

Applications should be mailed/emailed/dropped off at the office to the attention of:

Randy Duniz
ACTRA Montreal
1450 City Councillors #530
Montreal, Quebec H3A 2E6

rduniz@actra.ca

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Randy at 514.844.3318 or by email.

Get your ticket

Celebrating 60 years

**The ACTRA Montreal
Branch Council cordially invites
you to attend a series of events
celebrating ACTRA's 60th Anniversary
and the creativity of ACTRA performers.**

Join us on **Saturday, November 22nd, 2003** at **Le Windsor** 1170 Peel Street, Montreal for

Pitch the Panel Breakfast 10 a.m.

Hosted by comedian & magician David Acer, this Spotlight Series event invites you to enjoy a sumptuous breakfast and marvel as our members pitch their project ideas to a panel of industry delegates.

ACTRA Shorts Film Festival 1³⁰ p.m.

Hosted by renowned Montreal comedian Joey Elias, the first-annual ACTRA Shorts Film Festival will celebrate the creativity of Montreal members both in front of and behind the camera.

60th Anniversary Gala 6³⁰ p.m.

This evening affair will include a cocktail hour, five course dinner, live performances, award presentations and dancing into the morning. Join us as we present guest-of-honour, William Shatner, with the ACTRA Montreal Award of Excellence.

Cost:

Pitch the Panel Breakfast:

\$30 or complimentary with the purchase
of a Gala ticket

ACTRA Shorts Film Festival:

Free admission

60th Anniversary Gala (includes ticket to Breakfast):

\$100 for ACTRA full and
apprentice members
\$150 for guests

Attire for the 60th Gala is formal.
Tickets for each event may be purchased
at ACTRA Montreal, tel. 514.844.3318
Seating is limited.

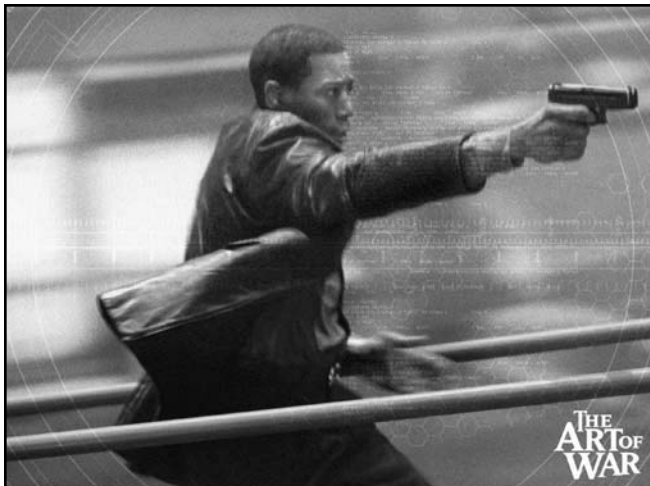
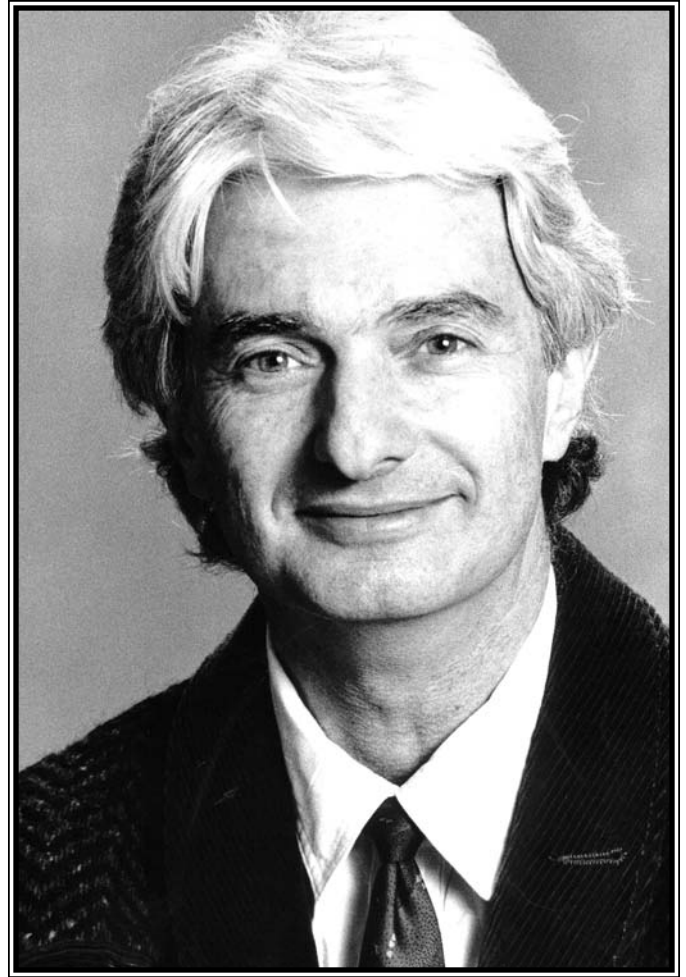


ACTRA

celebrating 60 Years

*Nicolas Clermont to be
honoured posthumously
at ACTRA's 60th for his
contribution to the local
film & television
production community*

Born in Neuilly, France, Nicolas Clermont began his career on his native soil in the early '60s, before relocating to Montreal to expand his career in the latter years of the decade. After a short time working in the production and direction of educational documentaries and television, Clermont moved to Los Angeles to continue his career as a producer. But in the early 1980's his love of Montreal brought him back to the city where he co-founded **Filmline International Inc.**



Wesley Snipes in *The Art of War* (2000)

In a relatively short time, Filmline International became one of the leaders in production and co-production in Canada, producing an impressive slate of features, M.O.W.'s and mini-series, such as **Highlander - The Series**, **This Is My Father**, **The Secret Adventure of Jules Verne**, **Bethune - The Making of a Hero**, starring Donald Sutherland, **Eye of the Beholder**, starring Ewan McGregor and Ashley Judd, **The Caveman's Valentine**, starring Samuel L. Jackson and **The Art of War**, starring Wesley Snipes.

On the eve of producing **A Sound of Thunder**, Clermont died of cancer on April 11, 2001, in his Montreal home. He was 59.

60th Q & A

We know a lot of you have questions about the 60th Anniversary events, so let's take some time to answer a few of them. If there is anything else you would like to know or if you are ready to purchase your ticket, please do not hesitate to visit Randy at the ACTRA office.

When is the 60th?

All of the 60th celebration events will take place on Saturday, November 22nd, so free up that day on your calendars.

Where will it all happen?

Everything is happening at Le Windsor, a historic and beautiful hall located in the heart of downtown Montreal, on Peel street.

How many events are there?

Three. The day will start with the Pitch the Panel Breakfast. Everyone is welcome to join us for the ACTRA Shorts Film Festival in the afternoon. And the 60th Gala will be held in the evening.

Do I have to come to all three events?

Of course not. You can come to any or all of the three.

Well, how much do they cost?

It depends. The ACTRA Shorts Festival is free to everyone. The dinner Gala ticket is \$100 for a member and \$150 for a guest. The Breakfast tickets cost \$30 - but if you buy a dinner Gala ticket, you get into the breakfast for free!

My husband isn't an ACTRA member. Can he come?

Sure! Members may purchase one ticket for a guest, but remember - guest tickets cost \$150.

Why is it so expensive?

ACTRA Montreal's contribution and sponsor donations have made it possible for us to subsidize the cost of the tickets for both the Gala and the Breakfast, but holding three events of this magnitude at Le Windsor is still quite costly.

Can I buy my ticket at the door?

I would say no. There are 2600 invitations going out to the

membership and industry guests - many of whom may choose to purchase a second ticket. There are only 375 seats available for the Gala. So I would say, get your ticket as soon as possible.

What is planned for the Gala?

The Gala will begin with a cocktail hour and will be followed by a sumptuous five course meal (don't worry - a vegetarian alternative will be available). During the evening you will be entertained by a performance from Rane Lee and a screening of the three finalists for BEST ACTRA Short. An award will be presented to the winning short. ACTRA Montreal will also be presenting Nicolas Clermont with a posthumous award for his contribution to the film and television community in Montreal. And of course, guest-of-honour, William Shatner, will be on hand to accept the ACTRA Montreal Award of Excellence. Following dinner, everyone is invited to dance the night away in the elegant Windsor Ballroom.

Can I sit with who I want at the Gala?

Unfortunately, we will not be reserving seats at tables. What you can do, however, is get together with 9 of your closest friends (members and non-members) who wish to attend and purchase a table under our sponsorship program. At \$2000 (for 10 tickets), you will be paying a bit more, but you will also be contributing to the event and acknowledged for doing so! If this sounds interesting, ask Randy at ACTRA about being a sponsor.

Will William Shatner actually be there!?

You betcha.

What is the attire for the evening?

Formal. So break out the suits and gowns.

Will I have a great time?

Undoubtedly.

ACTRA gets a pat on the *Playback*

by Peter Vamos

Barely a year into ACTRA's campaign on behalf of Canadian culture, the industry is taking notice of our hard work. Reprinted here is an editorial which appeared in *Playback* magazine June 21, 2003.

In June 2002, ACTRA launched what it called its "campaign for Canadian programming," a broad-based effort to take a leadership role in reviving Canadian drama.

But it was also a coming-out party of sorts for the union; a declaration that ACTRA was undergoing a paradigm shift, moving beyond its role as bargaining agent for performers' rights.

For much of the previous decade, the union, which had traditionally been active on such concerns as the North American Free Trade Agreement and copyright law, had retreated from public policy issues as it focused on rebuilding internally.

That all changed in June of last year following the union's first-ever policy conference. Having watched domestic dramatic production volumes plummet and with it the prospects for actors working in Canada, ACTRA decided it was time to chime in on some of the key issues concerning performers in Canada.

The union did not tiptoe out of the gate. Since last year, ACTRA has taken a lead role in just about every major cultural issue concerning performing arts in Canada.

Most recently, ACTRA Toronto Performers mobilized on the issue of declines in production in Ontario with the launch of the Ontario Film and Television Consortium, gathering together an unprecedented coalition of talent unions, Ontario producers along with the Ontario Media Development Corporation with the goal of promoting production in the province.

ACTRA has long asserted that the CRTC's 1999 Television Policy was the central villain in the decline of drama production. This spring, a sweeping review of the broadcast landscape by the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage came out

in favor of ACTRA's stance and echoed that the Television Policy needs to be reopened as soon as possible. The union was first out of the gate with a strongly worded reaction to federal cuts to the CTF. The union was also first in reacting to a report on English-language drama by retired broadcast executive Trina McQueen and a study of Canadian content regulations by former Telefilm Canada executive director and chairman Francois Macerola.

The union, now celebrating its 60th anniversary, has picketed federal Finance Minister John Manley on the CTF cuts, and has lobbied Ottawa, sending its members, including actors Paul Gross and Gordon Pinsent, to meet federal ministers. Gross has become ACTRA's face and voice on the drama issue.

Some credit national president Thor Bishopric for articulating a need to be more proactive on the big issues facing Canadian culture. Others point to national executive director Stephen Waddell, or Brian Topp, executive director ACTRA Toronto Performers.

Whoever may ultimately be the catalyst, what is remarkable is the willingness the union has shown in working with organizations that are traditionally considered its adversaries, whether producers or broadcasters, for the common good of bettering prospects for the Canadian production community.

There's an old adage that in times of crisis true leaders emerge - think Winston Churchill and Rudy Giuliani. Under the pressures of the current declines in Canadian production, ACTRA and its leadership have stepped out from behind the Independent Production Agreement and are leading the charge.

*Originally published in Playback,
June 21, 2003 - written by Peter Vamos*

New ACTRA Montreal Members

Baribeau, Judith
Bessa, Freddy
Castillon, Eduardo
Cavezzali, Nathalie
Chan, Jimmy
Egre, Anne Marie
Falcone, Johnny
Gervais, Caroline
Karls, Lezlie
Kulish, Taras
Kwan, Sandrine
Lapommeray, Dave
Magisano, Maria-
Teresa
Monastesse,
Daniel
Monty, Michel
Paquette, Francois
Rath, Meagan
Schaenfiel, Brett
Sprio, Jerry
St. James, Jordan
Tam, Alvin
Walker, Max
Wilkie, Rylan

Apologies...

The Treasurer's Financial Report which appeared in the Spring 2003 issue contained a number of punctuation and grammar mistakes that were beyond our control. We regret this and hope that this did not deter from your enjoyment of the article.

What is the PDC up to this fall?

Check it out...

On-camera Audition Workshop: One for adults, one for kids 8-12. Simulated auditions and camera technique to help you land that role!

Animated Voice / Dubbing Workshop: Two consecutive Saturdays, the second in-studio; for youth, ages 10-15.

Business of Acting Seminar: How to get started and maintain a successful career in the acting profession; an ongoing monthly workshop.

The Actor's Studio: A regularly scheduled drop-in "lab" where members can work on scenes, sides, or works in progress with a camera and input from peers. In the new studio space at the ACTRA office.

Looking ahead to spring...

Spotlight on the Casting Director: The latest in our Spotlight Series, this would be your chance to ask professional questions, and gain an insight into how it looks from the other side of the casting process.

Tax Seminar: Always appreciated, C.A. Frank Laposta brings clarity to this confusing business, and provides coaching on how become financially responsible.

Check out www.actramontreal.ca and keep your eyes peeled for our postcard announcing dates and details for these upcoming workshops and seminars! We're offering the basics here, as affordable as possible. If you have any new ideas or suggestions for professional development projects, we would love to hear from you - we'll be handing out a survey at the upcoming AGM October 20th.

Thanks for your
interest and support!

ACTRA Montreal Professional Development Committee

Susie Almgren, Chair
Maria Bircher
Dawn Ford

The Actor's Fund of Canada

The Actor's Fund of Canada is launching a special awareness campaign the week of October 20-26. They are encouraging groups and individuals to plan and deliver events to help raise money for the Fund. Almost any kind of fundraising event, large or small, is welcome.

Events can be industry-only or open to the public. Bake sales, craft sales, prop & costume sales, silent auctions, fun runs or walks, skills competitions, carnival events, and special benefit performances and cabarets are just a few of the many kinds of projects volunteers will organize to take place during the campaign week.

As we're well aware, times are tough - and the Actor's Fund is seeing an unprecedented demand for its emergency financial assistance. The most recent figures - from March 2003, show an increase of \$140,000 over the \$236,000 in the previous year.

Members are encouraged to pitch in by making a donation or organizing a local fundraiser.

Visit www.actorsfund.ca - The Fund's website has a full menu of ideas and tips on how to organize a fundraiser.

Brochures are available in the ACTRA Montreal office.

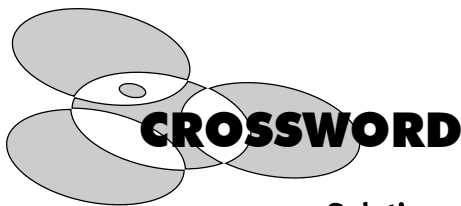
IPA referendum

We are pleased to report the final results of the referendum of the ACTRA membership with respect to ratification of the terms of settlement of the **Independent Production Agreement**.

95.94% of the members across the country voted in favour and **4.06%** opposed the ratification of the new agreement. Having been approved, the new IPA will be implemented effective January 1, 2004. ACTRA Montreal's number broke down as follows: **97.73%** in favour and **2.27%** opposed.

Thank you once again for your support of this organization.

- the ACTRA Montreal Branch Council



Solution: p 17

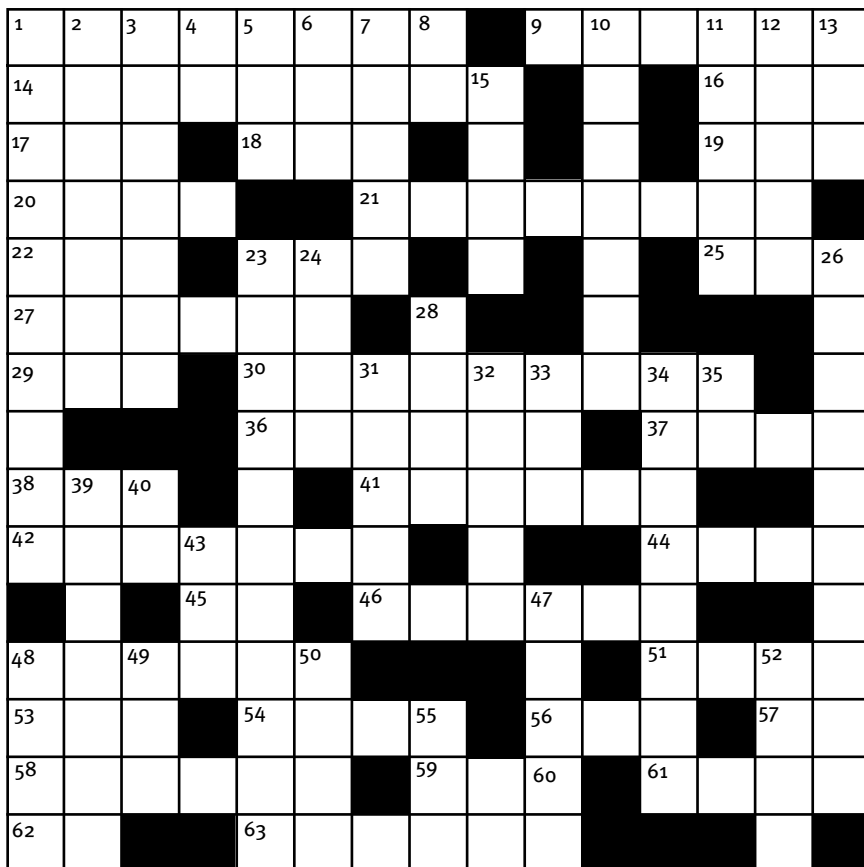
Across

- 1 payment for a commercial's 13 week cycle
 9 that week in February when the best shows air
 14 what our industry is meant to do
 16 midday rest
 17 what you do before the feathering
 18 Cowboy talk, "_____ darn tootin'!"
 19 a period of history
 20 a Muslim spiritual leader
 21 what a 14 hour day gets you
 22 Academy Award Best Director, _____ Howard
 23 "Guests of the show stay at the Holiday _____"
 25 it starts Psalm 23
 27 *Best in Show* (2000) Canadian star, _____ Levy
 29 religion class in high school acronym
 30 Fox cartoon series with a talking dog & evil baby (2 words)
 36 she knows all in the Matrix trilogy
 37 a Quebecer's dad
 38 a horse
 41 it's the bit of show that precedes the opening credits
 42 high flying circus attraction
 44 a single thing
 45 Michael Crichton created TV show
 46 squares, circles and octogons
 48 what Prof. Plum used to kill Mr. Body in the study
 51 he was reputed to be pretty Terrible
 53 Stimp's friend
 54 electrically charged particles
 56 common German word
 57 Hartford's state (abbr.)
 58 Greenberg's Montreal Media giant
 59 *Knight Rider* car
 61 1997 Nicholson film, *As Good as it _____*
 62 Barnum's initials
 63 Billy Bob Thornton flick, shot in Montreal

Down

- 1 AFBS concern
 2 inspire to love
 3 Ralph Fiennes 1995 movie, _____ Days
 4 that is (abbr.)
 5 it follows wash
 6 German born singer, _____ Lemper
 7 TV magnate, _____ Spelling
 8 action star, Jet _____
 10 what he was doing in his trailer
 11 2001 Jude Law film, _____ at the Gates
 12 Montreal...um...gentlemen's club, Chez _____
 13 mud bath locale
 15 not a want, but a _____
 23 Ron Popeil ad
 24 close

- 26 the IPA and NCA
 28 the type of guy that finishes last
 31 gets together, in the Biblical sense
 32 animal known to spit to defend itself
 33 positive response
 34 what peasants like to partake in
 35 Montreal bar, _____ Olde Orchard
 39 the drink holder is attached to it at the theatre
 40 Atlanta state (abbr.)
 43 it's mightier than the sword
 47 the state of religious devotion
 48 the party after a film packs up
 49 a tree creature in *Lord of the Rings*
 50 what I've occasionally dug myself into
 52 play divisions
 55 Whistler attraction
 60 Stephen King novel about a killer clown



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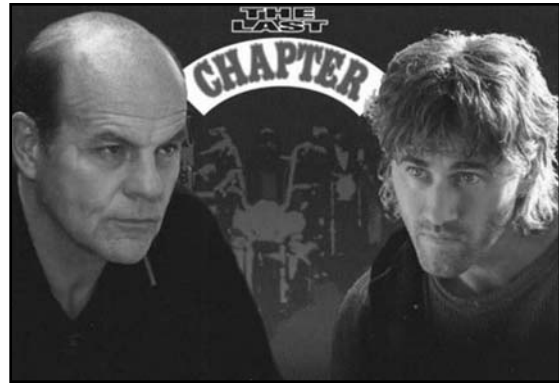
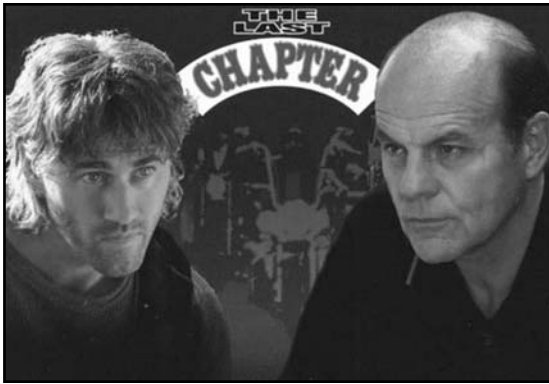
Sunday Seminar: Nadia Rona & Vera Miller
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DOUBLEDOUBLE



SHOOTTROUBLE

ACTRA Montreal recently faced the most serious challenge to our jurisdiction in recent memory. And we won.

For over thirty years, double-shoot productions have been filmed under both the **Union des Artistes (UDA)** and **ACTRA** jurisdictions. Typically, these productions use the same performers in both the French and English language versions. Scenes are set up once, and the performers film each scene twice; once in each language. The producer then has two separate productions, two separate venues for distribution and ultimately, two separate sources of profit for their product. Until recently, everyone was happy. Performers received two contracts; a UDA contract for the French language performance and an ACTRA contract for the English performance. The producer benefited from filming the two versions simultaneously, saving a great deal of money in doing so.

The double-shoot production model has worked well for everyone involved, as we have seen in **Last Chapter**, **Last Chapter 2** and **Ciao Bella** - a few of the double-shoots produced in Montreal in recent years.

“For over thirty years, double-shoot productions have been filmed under both the Union des Artistes (UDA) and ACTRA jurisdictions.”

And Then Someone Got Greedy.

Three double-shoots were in pre-production at the beginning of the summer: the television series **11 Somerset** and two feature films, **Nouvelle France** and **Daniel and the Superdogs**. As these projects were preparing to shoot, the Quebec producers' association, the **APFTQ**, instructed the three productions to issue performers only UDA contracts for both the French and English language performance. They followed this egregious act by filing a legal challenge to ACTRA's jurisdiction at the **Commission de reconnaissance des associations d'artistes et des associations de producteurs**; the governing body overseeing Quebec's Status of the Artist legislation.

“...an even greater danger... would have been the reality of a production being filmed in English in our city without ACTRA contracts and with the Commission's approval - an enormous blow to the security of our jurisdiction.”

That would be quite the deal for producers: A huge saving on producing both languages at the same time, plus a half-off sale on performer rates, residuals, and insurance and retirement benefits. Perhaps an even greater danger, however, would have been the reality of a production being filmed in English in our city without ACTRA contracts and with the Commission's approval - an enormous blow to the security of our jurisdiction.

continued p 16

One wonders what they expected to happen as a result of this reckless, arrogant and cheap offensive. Did they actually believe that ACTRA would simply accept this attack without a response? Did they think that UDA would jump on their bandwagon in an attempt to take over ACTRA's jurisdiction on English language performance? Did they think that both unions would panic and settle on terms and conditions that undercut the collective agreements?

Instead, producers met a unified and impenetrable wall of solidarity and resistance; Actors, ACTRA, UDA and Talent Agents all chorused one collective and resounding "NO!"

Building Solidarity

As soon as the APFTQ launched their ill-advised war, ACTRA leaped into action.

The first thing we did was to meet with the UDA, who were very supportive throughout the entire campaign. ACTRA and UDA drafted a joint statement denouncing the APFTQ action and imploring all members of both unions not to sign their proposed contracts. ACTRA Montreal Members received the statement by e-mail or regular post.

“The response from agents was overwhelming. In the interest of their clients more than likely, because they realized ACTRA was right, every agent in Montreal supported our decision...”

Our next action was to contact Talent Agents. We sent them the joint statement and asked that they not sign contracts that violate our jurisdiction. The response from agents was overwhelming. In the interest of their clients and more than likely, because they realized ACTRA was right, every agent in Montreal supported our decision - instructing their clients not to sign any contracts with these productions. Every one of them understood the importance of demonstrating a solid common-front in the face of the producers' tactics.

At that point, the three productions were in a panic. **11 Somerset** and **Nouvelle France** were gearing up to start principal photography as the dispute was at its climax. Their problem: they could not cast their projects. Some agents even refused to provide the script to their clients until the matter was settled.

In an effort to undermine the iron will of the Talent Agents, the producers contacted some of the performers directly - and behind the backs of their agents. Producers thought that performers would not show the courage displayed by their agents. Their hope was that actors would crumble under the pressure and sign contracts to avoid the risk of losing the part to someone who would agree to sign.

“With the reality of starting principal photography with no performer contracts signed staring them in the face, the producers had only one choice left: surrender.”

Once again, the producers were wrong. Not one Member agree to sign a contract before the issue was resolved. Most simply referred the producer back to their Talent Agent, and claimed that they couldn't sign a contract that their union would not approve.

Terms of Surrender

With the reality of starting principal photography with no performer contracts signed staring them in the face, the producers had only one choice left: surrender. The APFTQ and the three producers met on Wednesday, July 30th. ACTRA received a call inviting us to a meeting the next day.

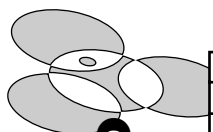
On Thursday, July 31st, we negotiated the following terms:

1. That the APFTQ immediately withdraw their legal challenge to our jurisdiction.
2. That the APFTQ confirm - in writing - that the issue of double shoots will be resolved by negotiation, recognizing both unions' jurisdiction.
3. That ACTRA and the UDA will negotiate separate double-shoot arrangements with the three productions, as we have with all other double-shoots.
4. That the three parties - ACTRA, UDA and APFTQ - will sit down in September/October to review the recent double shoot experiences and develop more permanent 'models'.

The terms were accepted. A written document was finalized on Monday, August 4th. We have already reached agreements with **11 Somerset** and **Nouvelle France**, and performers will receive both ACTRA and UDA contracts. An agreement with **Daniel and the Superdogs** is sure to follow.

This victory was made possible because ACTRA and UDA Members and their Talent Agents showed great resolve in the face of irresponsible and futile pressure tactics from producers trying to undermine our collective agreements. For that, we would like to applaud you.

**- Gary Saxe,
National Organizer**



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Please join us
for the

2003

ACTRA Montreal

Annual General Meeting

Monday, October 20th
6 30 pm

2003 has been a year of change
for ACTRA Montreal - a year of
new challenges and new
opportunities.

How have we changed?
How should we change?

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