

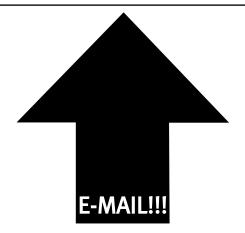
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Many of you have not updated your e-mail address with us and do not receive these announcements.

Please send us your current e-mail address. Just send an e-mail to **montreal@actra.ca** with "e-mail address" as the subject line.

Thank you.





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#### JOIN THE TEAM

If you're an ACTRA member, apprentice member or ACTRA Extra and would like to contribute news, an article or photos to the Grapevine, we'd love to hear from you! Send us an email at rduniz@actra.ca.

#### **ACTRA MONTREAL**

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### president's | message

### WHAT NOW?

ear Members,

Things are good. Of course,

"good" is relative. In the four years I've
been privileged to be President of ACTRA
Montreal, I have been a part of our organization's first ever strike, suffered the fallout of the beleaguered negotiations of
WGC and SAG, witnessed a turf war decimate our local production levels and
protested as our own Montreal-based producers began an exodus, chasing richer
tax credits elsewhere in the country.

So I may be forgiven for thinking that anytime the sky is not set to fall in on us, that things are good. But in fact, there has been some cause to actually celebrate as of late, in our industry.

Our lobbying on the tax credit front has given rise to a resurgence in Canadian production in the city. We have a new Independent Production Agreement – negotiated in a record 45 minutes. With a healthy production scene, the branch expects to be financially viable two years in a row – for the first time in over a decade.

And after a ten year long fight with the CRTC, we finally have some substantive changes – for the better – in the 1999 policy which has devastated the Canadian television industry over the past ten years. It wasn't a complete victory, but all of our efforts have achieved some significant improvements (read all about it in *Two Out of Three Ain't Bad*, National Vice-President Tyrone Benskin's article on page 6).

For the first time in quite awhile, we are entering a period with no discernable clouds on the horizon. No fires to put out. No major obstacles to overcome. There is peace in the valley. While that might be overstating things, the point is, we have a unique opportunity now that we have not had for some time.

It is an opportunity to recharge our collective batteries, look back on how far we've come in the past four years and begin to envision where we'd like to be as an organization – and more specifically, as a branch – in the coming years; maybe turning our attention to some of those goals that have regrettably taken a backseat to fixing other people's mistakes.

Professional Development is one such project; creating workshops aimed at fine tuning our skills and increasing our work opportunities. To that point, I am very pleased to announce that the Professional Development Committee has been reestablished with Holly Gauthier-Frankel and National Councillor Cary Lawrence serving as co-chairs.

The plan is to offer a series of beneficial and affordable workshops on a continuing basis to all members, as the PDC has done in the past. And in addition, the PDC has been charged with the task of developing a Members' Conference – complete with workshops – to be held in conjunction with this year's Annual General Meeting.

While a number of members will be invited to participate in the workshops, the rest of us will be given a chance to learn a thing or two, watching from the audience. Yes – it's an idea stolen from our colleagues in Toronto. But in our defense, it's been a success and great benefit to their members. And truth be told, they've stolen enough of our good ideas. So why not return the favour?

The Members' Conference will allow a considerable amount of members to gather some valuable tips and techniques in a fun format and social setting. It is the first project in our long-term goal to create a stronger sense of community here in Montreal; one which is both involved and proactive in the betterment of our branch. So stayed tuned for more details.

As we take a moment to enjoy the calm, let's remember to keep looking forward. Things are good. Now how do we make them better?

In solidarity,

Don Jordan, President. ACTRA Montreal

Son Jordan

member | news

Congratulations to all of the

ACTRA members who worked on

# Assassin's Creeding

winner of the Canadian Video Game Award for



### Congratulations

to stunt performers Nancy Bouchard and Stephane Lefebvre on the birth of their son, Logan, born March 5th, 2010.

No doubt he'll be an expert at high falls by his tenth birthday.





### Congratulations to

Marion Hinz Outerbridge and her husband Ted on receiving the BC Touring Council's 2010 Touring Artist of the Year Award.

For more information on the magical duo and their show, Outerbridge - Magical Moments in Time, feel free to visit their website at www.tedouter-bridge.com.



### Congratulations

to Lois Dellar and James Milvain, who were married in a quiet ceremony December 19th, 2009, after a 19 year courtship.

### Congratulations to new ACTRA Montreal members...

Raymond Bouchard, Raphael Cohen-Demers, Rockne Corrigan, Philippe Cyr, Michael Dean, Martin Doepner, René Forget, Charlene Francique, Chantele Francis, Alexandre Gorchkov, Trudi Hanley, Edward Joseph Langham, Mirielle Levesque, Andrew Mackay Bee, Mariateresa Magisano, Jason Moran, Maxime Morin, Alain Nadro, Valerie Ouimet Chiriaeff, Jessica Paré, Anie Pascale, William James Phan, Marcela Pizarro Minella, Katie Stanfield, Victor Andres Trelles Turgeon, Alex Weiner, Julie Williams, Janice Wu, Shyrelle Yates, Dermai Zan Young, Remy Karl Zucchet Jr.

# INVESTING IN THE FUTURE



by Cary Lawrence, ACTRA Montreal Treasurer & National Councillor

efore becoming Treasurer for Actra Montreal, I didn't really pay much attention to my family's finances. You know, I paid the bills, well actually my husband did and I trusted that my union was safeguarding my insurance and RRSPs for that time when work would be slow and my aging bones would call this business a day.

Since becoming Treasurer, I am less afraid of all the financial jargon that is associated with money. I take an active part in my personal finances now, looking at all the options with my husband and I continue to trust in my union for retirement and if I get sick. I have learned through my treasurership just how fantastic our union is in helping us squirrel away money for the future; however, this does not necessarily apply to my children and their future. This is why I am writing this article.

There is a huge difference between RRSP and RESP. The first acronym (Registered Retirement Savings Plan) applies to us, the actor and money is deducted from our pay cheques, the producer contributes, and all of this is put into an RRSP. I'm pretty sure most of you know this part.

The second anacronym (Registered Education Savings Plan) applies to children. Namely ours! Whether you are a parent, an aunt, an uncle or a grandparent, or even just a friend, you can set up an RESP for a child and this money will grow in size until that day when Post-Secondary School rears its angry head threatening to bankrupt us so-so paid actors. In case you weren't aware, there is money in the form of grants available from the Canadian Government for parents who set up an RESP for our children. YES....that is correct! The Government GIVES us cash to invest in our children's education! UNBELIEVABLE!

Here is a brief summary of some of the grants that may be available to you.

## Up to \$7,200 for Canada Education Savings Grant (CESG)

Through the Canada Education Savings Grant, the Government of Canada could add an extra 20% on the first \$2,500 that you contribute annually to each child's RESP. This may be enhanced by an extra 10% or 20% of the first \$500 you contribute each year, depending on your family income. The lifetime maximum available is \$7,200 per child.

#### Canada Learning Bond (CLB)

Families that qualify for the National Child Benefit Supplement are eligible for the Canada Learning Bond. The Government of Canada will give qualified children an initial \$500 RESP grant, followed by \$100 grants every year until your child turns 15, providing up to \$2,000 for post-secondary education.

## Up to \$3,600 in new grants for Quebec residents

The Quebec Education Savings Incentive (QESI) is a grant program that matches 10% to 20% of annual RESP contributions, depending on your family income. Available to children who are residents of Quebec, the QESI could add up to \$300 per year, with a lifetime maximum of \$3,600 per child.

Now, before your eyes glaze over, let me introduce you to someone who can help you set up an RESP and can explain all the ins and outs of these grants.

Montreal based ACTRA member Jennifer Marcil is also a licensed RESP respresentative. With an MBA concentration in finance and with a Quebec licence as an RESP representative, Jennifer is well qualified and will be able to help you get the maximum grants available. In addition, having been in the business over 20 years herself, she understands our industry and can give you good practical advice on how to set up your savings to fit our industry's particulars.

So, if you are interested in bringing peace of mind to you, your family, or a friend, give Jennifer a call and let her help you get on the yellow brick road to your child's future. Education savings can gain you potentially over \$10,000 in grants. It is one of the smartest things you can do for a child.

Here's how to get in touch with Jennifer:

Jennifer Marcil, M.B.A. Scholarship Plan Representative USC Educations Savings Plans Inc.

Direct: 514 973-9055 Email: Jennifer.Marcil@sr.usc.ca

Give Jennifer a call.



# TWO OUT OF THREE AIN'T BAD

### **CRTC TV Decision Offers Mixed Results**



by Paula Costain, Branch Councillor

In 1999, the CRTC changed its television policy. They seriously weakened the rules obliging broadcasters like CTV and Global to invest in and air Canadian drama. The result was a disastrous decline in Canadian television production and performer work opportunities. Instead of airing Canadian shows, broadcasters spent hundreds of millions of dollars to purchase US programming, which they aired in prime time.

ince then, ACTRA has been lobbying, demonstrating, demanding and arguing for change. Last November, the CRTC held public hearings on the subject and recently they made their decision.

The result was mixed. ACTRA asked for three main changes. We asked the CRTC to:

- 1. Require broadcasters to spend 30% of their revenues on Canadian programming.
- 2. Require that part of the spending be reserved for scripted programming.
- 3. Require broadcasters to air a minimum of two hours a week of Canadian drama in real prime time (8pm 11 pm, Sunday to Friday).

On the first point, we got what we wanted. Broadcasters will be required to spend 30% of revenues on Canadian programming. In addition, they will not be able to include money they receive through the Canadian Media Fund as part of the 30% calculation.

We also won on the second point. 5% of revenues will have to be spent on programs of "national interest", including scripted drama and comedy shows. The problem was in our third demand.

While broadcasters will be required to invest in Canadian drama, they will have no obligation to air it during prime time – or even to air it at all. They are also allowed to pass the programs over to their specialty channels.

Canadian shows have been very successful when they are aired at times people watch television and when they are given the proper promotion and time to develop an audience. Even the best of shows, when aired at 2:00 a.m. on the Mystery TV channel, has very little chance of success.

While ACTRA is pleased that some of our recommendations were adopted, particularly the re-establishment of spending requirements, we remain very concerned that the private broadcasters will still funnel us a full slate of US programming during prime time, while minimally fulfilling their spending requirements on shows aired when few Canadians are watching.

The battle continues. We will take our fight for prime time exhibition requirements to next year's CRTC broadcaster license renewal hearings.



# I WORK ACTRA

### by Gary Saxe, ACTRA National Organizor

nion production: Good! Non-union production: Bad!

It's really not much more complicated than that. Union films, television programs, video games, commercials, web series, etc., etc., etc., provide ACTRA Members with professional wages, regulated working conditions and job opportunities. Nonunion projects undercut those standards for you as a professional performer in our industry.

The idea behind a union is that Members have an important agreement with each other. You all agree that you will not work for less than those professional standards.

The more non-union production there is, the worse it is for you. It means that more people are trying to undercut and undermine the minimum terms and conditions of our contracts. It also means that there is

Ultimately, it means that we have a very difficult time negotiating increases and improvements to our contracts with producers who have discovered that our Members are willing to work for less.

Over the last few years there has been a slow but steady growth in non-union production, particularly in Vancouver, and to a lesser extent, in Toronto. In order to counter this dangerous trend, ACTRA Toronto recently hired an additional organizer, Laura McKelvey, who is now working hard to bring non-union production under ACTRA's jurisdiction.

Previously, Laura worked in the ACTRA Toronto commercial department, so she is very familiar with the industry and has been able to hit the ground running. Our branch in Vancouver, the UBCP, is now looking to hire an organizer.

ACTRA recently launched the "I Work **ACTRA**" Campaign to inform Members about the benefits and importance of only working on union contracts. Check out the web site at www.iworkactra.ca

Here in Montreal, we've had much success in organizing non-union production. We've converted many previously non-union commercials, web projects, video games, films, etc. Please remember that this work takes your cooperation. If you are ever approached for a non-union film, commercial, web, corporate, voice, or video game project, please let us know. We'll do what we can to convert it to a legitimate union project offering ACTRA contracts. And your information will always be kept confiden-

Send any non-union tips to gsaxe@actra.ca, or give me a call at 514-844-3318.



**ACTRA Montreal Branch Councillors:** (l to r, front) Cary Lawrence, Thor Bishopric, A.J. Henderson, (middle) Eleanor Noble, Holly Gauthier Frankel, Phyllis Gooden, Tyrone Benskin, Paula Costain, (top) Tyler Hall,

agreement with each other.

# SIX REASONS TO WORK ACTRA:

### Better pay...

Non-union production pays badly - if it pays at all.

### Retirement Benefits...

Good luck getting a non-union producer to contribute to your RRSP.

### Health Benefits...

And don't expect them to pay into your health plan either.

## Work Opportunities...

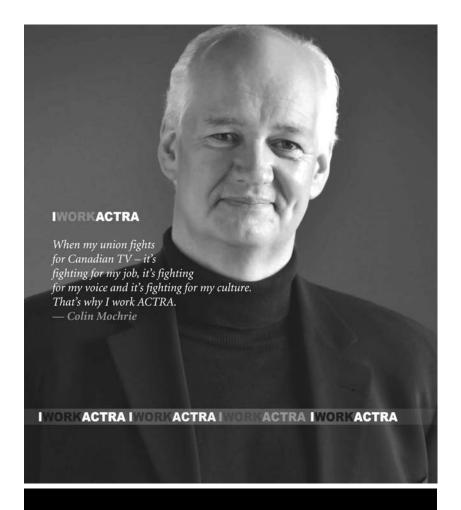
There's no preference of engagement to ACTRA Members on non-union shoots.

# Intervention when there's trouble...

Who're you going to call if there's a problem?

# Leading the fight for our culture...

ACTRA lobbies for, organizes and promotes Canadian culture. Non-union producers; not so much.



# THE VOICE OF TEMPTATION

"Tis one thing to be tempted, another thing to fall."

William Shakespeare,
 Measure for Measure

It can be tempting. We know it can. When times are tough and auditions few and far between, it can be easy to yield to the tempting offer. \$75 to record a few lines of telephone prompts ("Thank you for calling Joe's Garage. Press 1 for an appointment.") or a webisode, or a corporate voice over.

You might receive a tempting e-mail. They may have found you through the internet. Or, you might be in studio at a legitimate session and someone asks if you'll also record a quick promo for something.

The answer has to be "No. I only work on ACTRA contracts!" It's your obligation as a Member to refuse non-union work.

And please let us know what happened. Maybe we'll be able to get the project under an ACTRA contract.

# THE WILD HUNT



by Matt Holland

Mark Antony Krupa is a man in full. The co-writer, co-executive producer and co-star of the locally-made, recently-released feature, "The Wild Hunt," is proudly animated when he talks about his cinematic baby, which has picked up prizes and honorable-mentions at practically every festival it's entered since it premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival last year.

striking comedy-turned-thriller set mainly in the world of Live Action Role Play (L.A.R.P.), "The Wild Hunt" tells the story of two brothers: a pseudo-Viking-weekend-warrior type, Bjorn (played with obsessive verve by Krupa), and Eric (a compelling Ricky Mabe), who loses his girlfriend, Lyn (a captivatingly enigmatic Kaniehtiio Horn) to a full-on L.A.R.P. staging in a remote forest compound northeast of the city, where she becomes the focus of several conflicts between warring factions of Vikings and Celts, led by Pictish shamans, and whiny kings.

When Erik crashes the game to try to win Lyn back, circumstances swing from comedically absurd to dangerously out of control. It's this inspired concoction of fantasy versus reality, of shifting themes and tones, together with solid performances by the actors and keen and crafty direction by Alexandre Franchi, that give the film both its originality and its strong entertainment quotient.

Just as inspiring is the way the film came together. Though he's coy about it, Krupa's fascination with role-play began with a youthful enthusiasm for Dungeons and Dragons, one which he shares with Franchi, whom he has known for 20 years.

Roughly four years ago, the germ of the idea for "The Wild Hunt" came to Krupa in the form of a pilot for a TV series, and it was Franchi who encouraged him to shape it into a feature film script instead. Their collaboration on the screenplay then led to development, which led to alternate acceptance and subsequent rejection from the different funding bodies (Telefilm Canada and La SODEC), script consultants, countless rewrites, microscopic budget proposals, and other setbacks. Along the way, a constant refrain was voiced by many industry observers: "There's no way you can do this." That admonition only fueled the creative team's drive to get the film made.

as "Human Trafficking" and "Shake Hands with the Devil", as well as hosting a daily kids' series, "Zooville," on Radio-Canada; and a fishing show, "Hooked with Mark Krupa" on the Oasis network. To counter the frustrating realities of trying to get a first film off the ground in this country, Krupa also found worthwhile distraction in his pursuit of a Masters degree in Drama Therapy.

At long last, in the summer of 2008, despite only securing independent, low-budget financing from Telefilm Canada (\$200,000.00), as well as a few modest production offsets and deferrals, "The Wild Hunt" received as close to a "green light" as it was ever going to get.





Though the budget was prohibitively small given the ambition of the project (as Krupa puts it: "The film was made for less than your average beer commercial."), the producers were determined to stretch every last penny. At the time he was soliciting funding, Krupa would boastfully promise: "For every \$100, 000 of funding we get, we'll put \$1, 000,000 worth of production value onscreen." True to his word, the finished product belies its microscopic budget.

The creators had put together a talented crew and landed a terrific location: The Duché de Bicolline, a sprawling rural domain where actual L.A.R.P. events take place. The only problem was it is situated in St-Mathieu-du Parc in the Mauricie region, a good two-hour drive from Montreal. People would have to be lodged throughout the 17-day shoot, and the cast was a considerable one in terms of numbers.

The producers came to ACTRA Montreal with all these disparate elements - limited budget, outlying location, tight schedule – and, together with our branch's intrepid, resourceful, low-budget steward, Shannon Joutel, found a way to make it all work.

During the shoot, Krupa expanded his man-ofmany-hats role to add driver, caterer, and even, for a short time, boom operator (but, as he admittedly "sucked at it", the sound recordist quickly replaced him). What became paramount for Krupa, however, was banishing all of those chiefcook-and-bottlewasher concerns from his mind when it came time to act.

Krupa knew Bjorn was a very important character in "The Wild Hunt"; he embodies the escapist spirit, to the detriment of other responsibilities in his life. But when the camera rolled, Krupa somehow managed to temporarily let go of his other obligations and throw himself into the role.

As anyone who sees the film can attest, he succeeds admirably in infusing what could easily have been a cartoonish, throwaway character, with a complex blend of naivete,

Krupa would boastfully promise: "For every \$100, 000 of funding we get, we'll put \$1, 000,000 worth of production

value onscreen."



(l to r) Ricky Mabe and Claudia Jurt, ready to do battle.

continued on page 10.

### the wild hunt | continued

humour, guilt, cowardice and, ultimately, cold-bloodedness.
Without exception, the rest of the impressive cast (and the many actual L.A.R.P. Warriors who served as background performers) plays at a similar level of commitment.

The creative team struggled with the anticipated uncertainty all through post-production and in the run-up to the TIFF submission last summer. They liked what they had in the can: solid performances, stunning 35 MM cinematography, strong direction and an original

"It's still worth the risk."

premise, but worried about how well it would come together and affect audiences. This was essential to the film's success, as any kind of commercial marketing was well beyond their means.

Fortunately, once they were accepted into the Toronto Fest, they had passed a crucial first step. "The Wild Hunt" was embraced by audiences and critics alike, and positive word of mouth gathered as the film festival-hopped last Fall and Winter: Victoria, Whistler, Slamdance (where it won the audience prize), Santa Barbara, Gen Arts, etc.

And now with TVA (Canada) and Dark Light (International) on board as distributors, and a modest but strategic roll out of "The Wild Hunt" in theatres here and in the States this Spring, Franchi, Krupa et al. are poised to make their mark on a wider audience.

After three plus years of constant work, financial setbacks and struggles with self-doubt, Krupa has finally allowed himself to feel positively about the film's future. "It was 100% worth it," he says, "if this film can affect people – and we make our money back, I'm utterly thrilled."

But whether or not his "baby" catches on at the box office, he's still happy he went through the often arduous, sometimes rewarding process of getting it made. "It's still worth the risk," he admits with true Bjorn-like optimism.



Mark (centre) at the film's Montreal premiere with ACTRA stewards Carmela Algeri and

Shannon Joutel.

# NO MINOR PROBLEM

# by Daintry Dalton, Assistant Branch Rep, Commercials

he ACTRA collective agreements provide for special consideration and provisions whenever minors (i.e. children under the age of 18 years) are engaged. The provisions are not only intended to protect minors from abuse and improper working conditions, but to ensure that the best interests of the minor shall always prevail, particularly for the duration of the work day.

For minors under the age of 16 years, the work day consists of eight consecutive hours (excluding meal breaks). For minors under the age of 12 years, overtime is forbidden. Between the ages of 12 – 15 years, two additional hours of work are permitted. For both age groups, the parent or appointed chaperon is not permitted to provide consent for work beyond the allowable hours.

Prior to engaging a minor in a production, the ACTRA steward will review the minor's provisions with the producer and whenever possible, the steward will go on-set to ensure that these provisions are respected.

As well, the parent or chaperone is required to complete and sign a "Declaration of Parent in the Engagement of Minors" form,

which outlines their responsibilities for the ultimate health, education and welfare of the minor with respect to the engagement.

Notwithstanding that ACTRA has been exceedingly successful in collective bargaining to secure special considerations for Minors, there are those rare occasions when violations take place; for the most part, with respect to hours worked beyond an eight hour day.

Two such overtime violations recently occurred while Minors were engaged on the production of television commercials under the National Commercial Agreement (NCA).

The first violation; a fourteen year old was engaged under ACTRA's jurisdiction for the first time and worked two Additional Work Time hours and three Overtime hours. In this case, the producer incorrectly believed that once the parent had provided consent for the additional hours, they were allowable.

In the second violation, two minors under ten years of age had their eight hour work day extended by two hours due to "technical (camera) difficulties".



While the producer was cognizant that this was a clear violation of the NCA, the decision was made nevertheless to continue shooting (with the consent of the parents).

Once ACTRA became aware of these violations, grievances were filed immediately with the advertising agencies involved.

ACTRA and our industry partners to the NCA, the Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA) and the Institute of Communication Agencies (ICA) have agreed to act expeditiously whenever a violation to minor's section occurs, including steps or time periods normally established under the grievance procedure, which may be abridged.

ACTRA Montreal is pleased to report with the support from the ACA/ICA, the grievances with the advertising agencies were resolved in a timely fashion, with the award of liquated damages payable to the charitable organization, the Actors Fund of Canada, totalling \$9,000.00.

The settlements demonstrate a zero tolerance regarding the violation of minor's rights while providing an important and strong precedent. Remember, the NCA is working for you!



## Stop throwing your money away!

Did you know your first callback (second audition) for a role in a commerical will earn you \$50? That is, only if the Audition Sign-in Sheet clearly indicates that it was a callback.

Forget to mark that down and forget your \$50 callback fee!

# WORKING WITH THE WIDC



by Leisa Reid

first became curious about the Women In the Director's Chair (WIDC) back in 2008, but it wasn't until WIDC 2010 that I finally got an opportunity to participate in the program.

I was among six women and three men chosen to be the instruments in telling the stories of eight wonderful and talented female directors at WIDC 2010.

What I loved about the program was that it was truly representative of Canada: positively multicultural. Both of the directors I ended up working with the most were also women of color, like me – an opportunity I normally don't get in our entertainment industry. And I was given the chance to play with juicy, compelling characters, just what we actors crave most! Not to mention, networking and getting to know fellow artists from across the country.

The program itself ran two full weeks. During the first week, we were involved in casting exercises for the directors (a.k.a. "auditions" for us actors), working on two warm-up scenes (where the actors were pre-cast) and finally, two or three main

THE WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR WORKSHOP

scenes for each actor, where the actors were cast from the casting session exercises. The second week was spent on working on the main scenes even further. Of course, I'm speaking from the actor's point of view. The directors had actually started their part of the program well before and were working much harder than us!

Even though the workshop took place in beautiful Banff, Alberta - as it does every year - don't think for a moment that this was a leisure trip. We were working hard every day, trust me! We had group meetings, last-minute changes, several scripts to memorize, wardrobe fittings, hair & make-up sessions, 7:00am call times to set, the works! Everything you would expect on a real set, because everything was real; preparing and training the directors for all the aspects and situations that may arise in their professional careers.

The crew was made up of a mentor director, mentor directors of photography, a production designer, four awesome 1st A.D.'s, lighting, grips, set dressers, prop masters, etc. just to mention a few, who had worked on professional sets such as Brokeback Mountain, Cool Runnings, and Unforgiven. There were also crew apprentices that came from schools located in Calgary and Edmonton to get their practical experience and they worked just as hard as the seasoned professionals.

When we started working on the main scenes, there were two productions, per studio, per day, going at full throttle. Not an easy task! Steering this giant ship all along was the creator and producer of the WIDC, Carol Whiteman herself. She jokingly referred to herself as the "Den Mother" and she really was. Making sure everything ran as smoothly as possible,

all the while, having an open-door policy to everyone in the program. Truly I don't know how she does it!

I can't say enough good things about the WIDC! It took me at least two weeks to come down from the high of my experience at Banff. To tell you the truth, I haven't lost the amazing feeling I got by participating in the workshop. I highly recommend this workshop to any actor out there who would love to challenge themselves and have a great time doing it.

The actors chosen for the program depends largely on the material that is written by the chosen directors. Some actors may get in on their first application, while others may submit many times before being considered. It depends on many factors, just like any role we may audition for.



For my participation, I got some awesome material to add to my demo, a renewed love and appreciation for my craft and a lifetime of wonderful memories. Not to mention, two weeks room and board at The Banff Centre, meals and travel arrangements to and from Banff, plus a stipend - all covered by the WIDC.

One unfortunate bit of news is that as of right now, the only financial support provided to the WIDC Actor Scholarships by our union come from ACTRA Alberta, AFBS, and ACTRA National. Other branches which had donated to the program in the past, have gradually dropped out due to the economic hardship over the past few years.

It's very important that programs such as these remain available to all of the artists who need to and/or want to participate in them and learn from these non-judgemental, supportive settings.

We all need to continue to support these programs by contacting our Federal representatives, corporate sponsors such as Telefilm Canada as well as our ACTRA representatives, to ensure that artistic programs such as the WIDC Workshop don't disappear. We artists deserve just as much economic support and consideration, if not more, as any other industry in Canada.

For more information on The Women In the Director's Chair Workshop, please visit www.creativewomenworkshops.com.



# Fondly Remembered

## Rod Dewar 1926-2010



Long-time CJAD show-host and commentator Rod Dewar died at age 83 following a brief battle with cancer.

A member of ACTRA for 47 years, Rod joined CJAD in 1957, when the station was still in its infancy. Among his early claims to fame was the weekend classical music show "Starlight Concert", one of CJAD's longest-running and most successful programs. Starlight was on the air, with different hosts, for 48 years.

Our condolences go to Rod's family and friends.

# Lynne De Bel 1919-2010



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Lynne De Bel.

Lynne joined the ACTRA family at the age of 84 and spent a great deal of time working with various charitable organizations - even donating 10% of her earnings to various charities; that was after attending to every need of her five children and husband.

She embraced her time as an actress with enthusiasm; Lynne was never too old or too tired for the challenge of any role.

Our condolences go to Lynne's family and friends.

# HONOURING OUR OWN



by Sylvia Stewart

n February 1st, 2010, the Black History Month Roundtable had a gathering at City Hall to kick off its series of events. This gathering was attended by city officials and honoured the best and the brightest of the black community at large. For the past 15 years, the Roundtable produced a calendar highlighting 12 laureates who make significant contributions to Quebec's black community.

This year, ACTRA Montreal President Don Jordan, ACTRA National Vice President Tyrone Benskin and ACTRA member Fabienne Colas were all celebrated for their achievements. I had a chance to sit down with Don and Tyrone for a candid interview about being honoured.

**Sylvia:** Did you think that you would be honoured? Did they tell you well in advance?

**Don:** No, absolutely not. I had no idea whatsoever. I was in California and I was checking my emails and I got an email congratulating me for being a laureate nominee and I wondered if it was for real...

Then there were a few more emails leading up to the event, detailing the schedule so I thought, 'ok this is for real'.

**Sylvia:** Did they honour you for your choreography work? Acting? Lifetime achievement?

Don: It was for my achievements over the years in all aspects as well as for being the first black President of ACTRA. The calendar [produced by the Roundtable showcasing all of the honourees] was interesting. They tried to work it in a thematic way. Basically they had everyone show the palms of their hands in different poses and they would superimpose on the palms that person's hero and motto. I said that my hero was Arthur Mitchell – who had the first black classical ballet dance company.

Tyrone: I said my heroes were my parents and all those who came before me. According to Michael (Farcas), he couldn't figure out what to honour me for so I guess it was for being the Artistic Director of the Black Theatre Workshop. I'm going into my fifth year.

**Don:** Already? I used to be artistic director as well – nine thousand years ago.

**Sylvia:** When did you have that feeling that you wanted to be an artist?

Don: Well I was born into a performing family and I started when I was fifteen on TV. I guess that was the beginning of it, you know, basically the mentality was that you would have to be able to sing, dance, act. You couldn't just do one thing, so that's what I did. I was the lead dancer on a TV show for six years. It was a dance contest. At the end of the sixteen weeks, after all the eliminations, I won and they asked me to sit in and choose all the other dancers. I choreographed the show for a couple of years and danced prior to that — mostly African dance.

**Tyrone:** Like Young. It was a Canadian version of American Bandstand.

**Don:** I was the first black [person] on a Quebec TV show. There were a lot of firsts, you know, I was the first black male





model in this town. And something that I realized last week – I came across an old magazine cover and I realized that I was the first black model in Canada to be on a magazine cover (in 1974).

Tyrone: I knew I wanted to be an actor at seven. I knew it wasn't going to go over well with my parents, but my parents were always supportive, you know - it was never sort of like, "You are going to be a doctor or lawyer." My mom is a nurse; my dad a machinist, semi-retired.

I always had a penchant for the arts but I also wanted to do it right so when I filled out the forms for CEGEP, we had the choice of three CEGEPS and three choices per CEGEP and I put John Abbott, John Abbott, John Abbott and theatre, theatre, theatre. Eventually, I auditioned and got in and after John Abbott I went to Concordia. I got my start at BTW! The Gingerbread Lady by Neil Simon, Pinter - and we weren't locked in to doing specifically black theatre - we just did shows that people wanted to do with all-black casts or mixed casts.

Sylvia: Did you think for a moment that they made a mistake when you heard that you were singled out for an honour?

Tyrone and Don: [Laughing]No.

Tyrone: I think for both of us, we have been doing this stuff forever.

Don: We may not always be readily identifiable, but it's nice to think that our work hasn't been forgotten.

The Black History Month Roundtable consists of a group of individuals who are responsible for organizing events associated with Black History Month.





# FRIENDS PLAN

### The Actors' Fund of Canada Voluntary Payroll Donation Program for Film and Television Workers

For more than fifty years the Actors' Fund of Canada has provided short-term emergency financial aid to help entertainment industry workers maintain their health, housing and ability to work after an injury, illness or economic setback.

#### The Actors' Fund isn't just for actors.

People working in every aspect of the entertainment industry can benefit from it and the Fund depends on contributions from industry members in all sectors for its long-term survival.

Demand on the Fund has tripled in the last ten years, mainly due to financial difficulties faced by workers in the Canadian film & television production industry. Therefore, if the Fund is to ensure its long term survival it needs the help of everyone in the industry who is in a position to give.

### Consider joining the Actors' Fund Reel Friends Plan today.

There's no better time to give than when you're working. By enrolling in the Reel Friends Plan - be it for a month, a year or as long as you like - you can automatically make donations to the Fund that start when you're working and stop when you're not.

Payroll donations are an extremely effective way of supporting a cause you believe in.

A 1% or 2% weekly payroll donation will likely not be noticeable to you but will make a huge difference to the Actors'

Signing up for payroll donations is an easy way to support the charity that has provided emergency financial assistance to so many of your film & television colleagues.

Make The Actors' Fund of Canada your charity of choice for everyone working in the entertainment industry.

Become a Reel Friend today and make a difference for tomorrow.

#### Joining the Plan is Easy

- 1. Enroll online at www.actorsfund.ca/reelfriends and choose the start and stop dates for your participation. You can change or cancel your participation at any time.
- 2. During the time you're enrolled in the Plan, a tax deductible donation of an amount you choose will be deducted from paycheques issued to you by our participating payroll companies and will be remitted to the Actors' Fund on your behalf.
- 3. At the end of the year, you will receive a tax receipt for the total amount of your payroll donations

Thank you for your support.

For more information contact the Actors Fund.

Phone: 416-975-0304 or toll-free at 1-877-399-8392

Email: contact@actorsfund.ca



### A GLOSSARY OF STUNT TERMINOLOGY



by Michael Scherer

am going to take a break from my normally cynical prose to enlighten the masses. I am sure many of you have been on set and overheard stunt performers regaling each other with tales of incredible skill and bravery and have often wondered what language it is they are actually speaking. So I will now give a brief breakdown of some stunt terms you may have overheard on set. It should also go without saying "kids, don't try this at home..."

#### Fire

The Full Body Burn. This is where the performer does his impression of a bonfire. This requires multiple layers of protection and can go up to 30 seconds without an external air source. It can go much longer with a remote air supply and also usually includes 2 or 3 safety people.

A Partial Burn can be an arm or lower body or even just the head. Gluing Up is where the safety people apply a slow and even burning substance to the performer. Last but not least we have Fire Gel or Stunt Gel. This is a secret and very expensive concoction that stunt performers' use as a heat barrier and protective layer to prolong exposure to flame and is applied both to under layers and exposed skin. BBQ Sauce is not an accepted term and is frowned upon by the community as a whole.

#### Cars

Here we have the basic 90, 180 and 360 degree maneuvers and sometimes all points in between. These refer to degrees of rotation of the vehicle. A 90 can either come to a stop or be thrown on the fly around a corner. A Reverse 180 is thrown on the fly going backwards and usually continues on.

E Brake is a term used in conjunction here because most of these moves require a fully functional parking brake and is the first thing stunt drivers' check.

A Pipe Roll refers to the action of a car taking to the air as it barrel rolls around its

long axis. It gets its name from the equipment used which is a pipe ramp. A regular Rollover stays close to the ground and may use a simple wedge to get it over. A Cannon Roll is a vicious thing that uses explosives in a contained space to fire a projectile out from the bottom of the car. Physics takes over and sends the car into what can sometimes be an unpredictable series of barrel rolls.

The Car Ski is when a very good driver puts a car up on 2 wheels using a ramp and remains in control for extended distances. There is quite some prep involved and any old car won't cut it.

A Car Hit may sound like two cars hitting each other but it actually refers to a stunt person getting hit by a car. It requires intense focus, quick reflexes and athleticism. The term "almost" does not apply here. Finally 5 Points refers to the racing harnesses we use in place of regular seat belts.





### Specialty Equipment

The Air Ram, Air ramp or Kicker Plate, is a device used to launch stunt performers through the air using very high pressure. These are very dangerous machines even when sitting idle and should not be approached by those not involved. I have built several of these and let me say initial testing is a puckering experience.

In the same family is the Ratchet. This is another high pressure device that pulls a person through the air using piston and cable action and with the performer sporting a custom made Jerk Vest or Jerk Harness.

A Descender is a device that drops a person at a predictably constant rate and then slows the person near the end using conventional braking and air resistance. Along the same lines is the Decelerator. This involves higher drop velocities akin to free fall with a quicker stop near the end sometimes using pneumatics. Both of these use cables.

A newer addition to the stunt inventory is the Speed Winch. These are high tech, computerized and very powerful machines that can basically perform the same actions as all the aforementioned equipment. They are a big investment and not that common but are great to work with because of their controllability and consistency. Using programmable software they enable us to perform the same actions over and over. I call it Motion Control stunt work.

Finally in this category we have the all important and versatile Mats. They come in all sizes and densities and their primary purpose involves what stunt people and some crew do when they are on standby and have nothing to do and craft service has lost its appeal. But I digress...

There is much more but this basic lexicon should help the non stunt performer navigate his or her way through a conversation with stunt performers hanging out on set. It should at the very least allow you to nod knowingly at the appropriate times. Just remember that sometimes distances, speeds and heights may be multiplied by a factor of 2 or 3. I hope it helps and I will return with my sarcastic wit intact next time.







on 40 years of excellence

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