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Inside ACTRA Toronto

ACTRA Toronto is the largest organization within ACTRA. ACTRA began more than 60 years ago when performers in Toronto came together to fight for better fees and working conditions and formed the Radio Artists of Toronto Society in 1943. Today, ACTRA continues to be a strong voice and advocate for Canadian culture and Canadian professional performers.

Who are ACTRA Toronto's members? Our members are performers who:

- perform in the hundreds of different film and television productions that are shot in Toronto's billion-dollar-a-year film and television industry.
- work in Canada's biggest commercial production scene, where radio, television and internet commercials are made for markets in Canada and around the world.
- perform on-air for public- and private-sector broadcasters such as CBC Radio and TV, TVOntario, Citytv, CTV, Global and other Ontario-based networks and specialty channels.
- appear in thousands of smaller productions every year – including industrial and internet videos, Toronto Indie Productions (TIP), Digital New Media and other recorded media.

What ACTRA Toronto does

ACTRA Toronto represents the interests of the 15,000 professional performers who live and work in Canada's largest production centre. When ACTRA members work, they are protected by agreements that set out minimum rates of pay and working conditions. These agreements are administered and enforced by dedicated staff in ACTRA offices across the country, the largest of which is ACTRA Toronto.

As performers are independent contractors and may work for thousands of different engagers over the course of their career, ACTRA provides many of the services to our members that would be provided by traditional employers.

- ACTRA negotiates and administers agreements with major studios, independent producers, television, radio and cable broadcasters on members' behalf.
- ACTRA ensures members are paid for both their work and the future use of their image.
- ACTRA ensures members have a safe work environment.
- ACTRA administers an insurance and retirement plan for members.
- ACTRA provides professional development opportunities for members, including training for Apprentice members.
- ACTRA ensures that members act in a manner befitting professional performers.

ACTRA agreements

The two main agreements setting out minimum wages and working conditions for professional performers are the **Independent Production Agreement (IPA)**, covering film and television projects by independent producers; and The **National Commercial Agreement (NCA)**, covering work in television, radio and internet commercials. ACTRA Toronto initiated a low-budget initiative, the **TIP Guidelines**, to help emerging filmmakers hire professional performers, and provide more work opportunities for members.

ACTRA campaigns

Through media campaigns, lobbying and participation in local and international coalitions, ACTRA Toronto advocates for better cultural policies, a stronger film and television industry and more work opportunities for our members. ACTRA is a member of the International Federation of Actors (FIA), is affiliated to the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and has an alliance with the United Steelworkers.

Professional development

ACTRA Toronto's Members' Conferences offer members free workshops, master classes and networking opportunities with fellow actors. The Gordon Pinsent Studio, another free service for members, is an on-site recording studio where members can record auditions or rehearse on camera. Another professional development initiative is ACTRA Toronto's Member Training Intensive. This two-and-a-half day course covers the business aspect of being an actor, audition protocols, the basics of ACTRA's collective agreements and how ACTRA works.

ACTRA Toronto works hard to provide our members with on-set protection, industry advocacy and related services that support our members' professional lives. Together with ACTRA National, and our other ACTRA branches, ACTRA Toronto strives to improve working conditions for performers across the country and around the world.

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ACTRA Toronto has more than 15,000 members and is the largest organization within ACTRA (Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists). As an advocate for Canadian culture since 1943, ACTRA continues to secure the rights and respect for the work of professional performers.

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