ACTRA TORONTO

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performers

THE MAGAZINE FROM ACTRA TORONTO

MOSES ZNAIMER
ON THE FUTURE FOR 45+ PERFORMERS

AGING AND AGEISM

TORONTO'S OWN
SAVING HOPE

JUST WHAT DOES
RESPECT THE ARTIST
MEAN?

HEATHER ALLIN
FROM ACTIVIST TO PRESIDENT

ACTRA TORONTO EXCLUSIVE!

A Word or Two with Christopher Plummer

+
FAQs ABOUT CHILD PERFORMERS
CO-OP @ CANNES
ACT YOUR AGE

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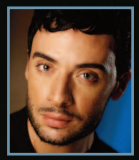
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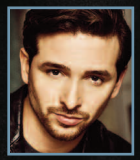
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Message from Your President

Heather Allin

From Activist to President

Overlooking a beautiful lake in the heat of mid-July, I'm thinking about what we, at ACTRA Toronto, have achieved in the three-and-a-half years I have been your President.

In 2001, I was a peripheral member, grateful for ACTRA, but not really knowing what it was or did. I wanted to act. I wanted to help other performers understand what is and isn't in our control. Serendipitously, then-President, Richard Hardacre called. He sought my help in making our general meetings more relevant. The first Members Conference was born and members were electrified and flocked to see this new union attitude. I was hooked.

Fast forward 11 years. This September 22nd, we're holding our 29th conference. I celebrate an awakened membership feeling pride and relevance in their union; a vital, engaged board of governors who are high-functioning performers and volunteers; effective committees building inclusion with focused strategies on diversity, ability, gender and age, practicing outreach and organizing. I celebrate three successful IPA and two NCA renegotiations. Bargaining – the most important thing we do – dealt with tough issues in a globalizing employer marketplace. We secured fair wage increases, better enforcement clauses, clearer respect and safety provisions, improved intellectual property rights and the move to digital distribution. I celebrate the coalition-building we have done with FilmOntario and the twice improved tax credits in this province. We said, "Lowering wages is a race to the bottom. Let's work together, building Toronto into a centre of film & TV excellence," and it worked: $1.265 billion spent in our industry in 2011, the best year ever and looking good for the foreseeable future. I celebrate three years of Creative Arts Savings and Credit Union where performers' banking begins, not ends, when you say, "I am an artist." I celebrate 10 years of spotlighting our stars with the ACTRA Awards in Toronto. I celebrate your engagement in our campaigns for Canadian Drama and Status of the Artist legislation.

Women now comprise 50 per cent of your council. Our leadership sparks conversations about real inclusion. I hunger for the stories and performances of women and the physically and culturally diverse to be commonplace, enriching lives and captivating hearts. I insist we need **all** voices to be seen, heard and celebrated in our storytelling. Whatever our age, we have skills and wisdom to share. Just look at the actor on this cover; Mr. Plummer had a pretty good year last year.

Heather demonstrates for more Canada on TV outside the Canadian Association of Broadcasters convention, 2007.
Photo: Christine Webber

When I answered Richard's call and said, "Yes, I'll help ACTRA Toronto," I had no idea I'd become your President. I had a vision of joyful inclusion, a global contract for performers, a vital Canadian industry, artists being treasured and our talents sought. I am so proud to have brought us this far, proud when I talk with you to see how happy you are to be associated with a union that's the vanguard for culture and cultural policy. I'm proud of the work opportunities we've fostered, the creative excellence we've generated in our patch and that we are a powerful advocate for Canadian stories.

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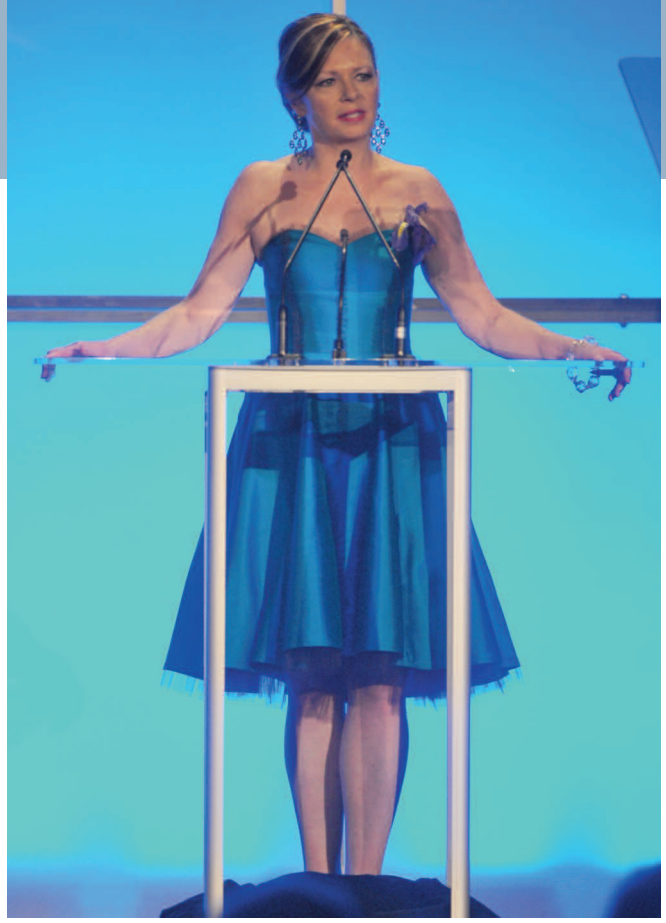
From Activist to President



Heather delivers the President's address, ACTRA Awards in Toronto, 2011. Photo: Jag Gundu

Proud that we have helped place Canadian TV and film on the world stage, proud that ACTRA Toronto members are working and fêted as world-class.

As ACTRA Toronto has grown, so have I. Our union is a better organization because of the work of the ACTRA Toronto councils I've had the privilege to chair and lead. Personally, I've benefited enormously: I'm a better, wiser, more generous, even a more alive person. If you get involved in your union, the same will happen to you.

Six months remain in my term of office. Our bylaws allow a sitting President two consecutive terms. In these last months of my Presidency, and with your help, I am looking forward to working with our council to do great things:

- successfully negotiate the 2013-2015 IPA
- improve work opportunities by continuing to mainstream conversations of inclusion
- continue to meet the seemingly never-ending need to demand that we be able to see ourselves on our screens
- protect artists' rights
- defend the need for unions
- advocate for improved Status of the Artist legislation
- champion that Canadian stories be told – with our voices

As employers globalize, we must protect our hard-won rights, wages and working conditions. The best way to do this is to build solidarity with all sister performer unions globally, working together to ensure we're all respected, paid, and kept safe. Potentially, our biggest challenge will be to freshly articulate the value of unions. Distressingly, the world seems to be moving toward anti-union sentiment – aggressive, disdainful attacks in the press, and pitched by many of our political leaders. Union contracts protect safety, rights, wages and working conditions, and set standards for all workers. If union rates go down, so too will non-union rates – everyone will sink together. When we fight in solidarity for what is just and fair, everyone wins. We must continue to mainstream the conversation that artists are key contributors to society, culture and the economy and must be honoured, included and rewarded. I see ACTRA Toronto playing its leading role in this work. Solidarity truly is power.

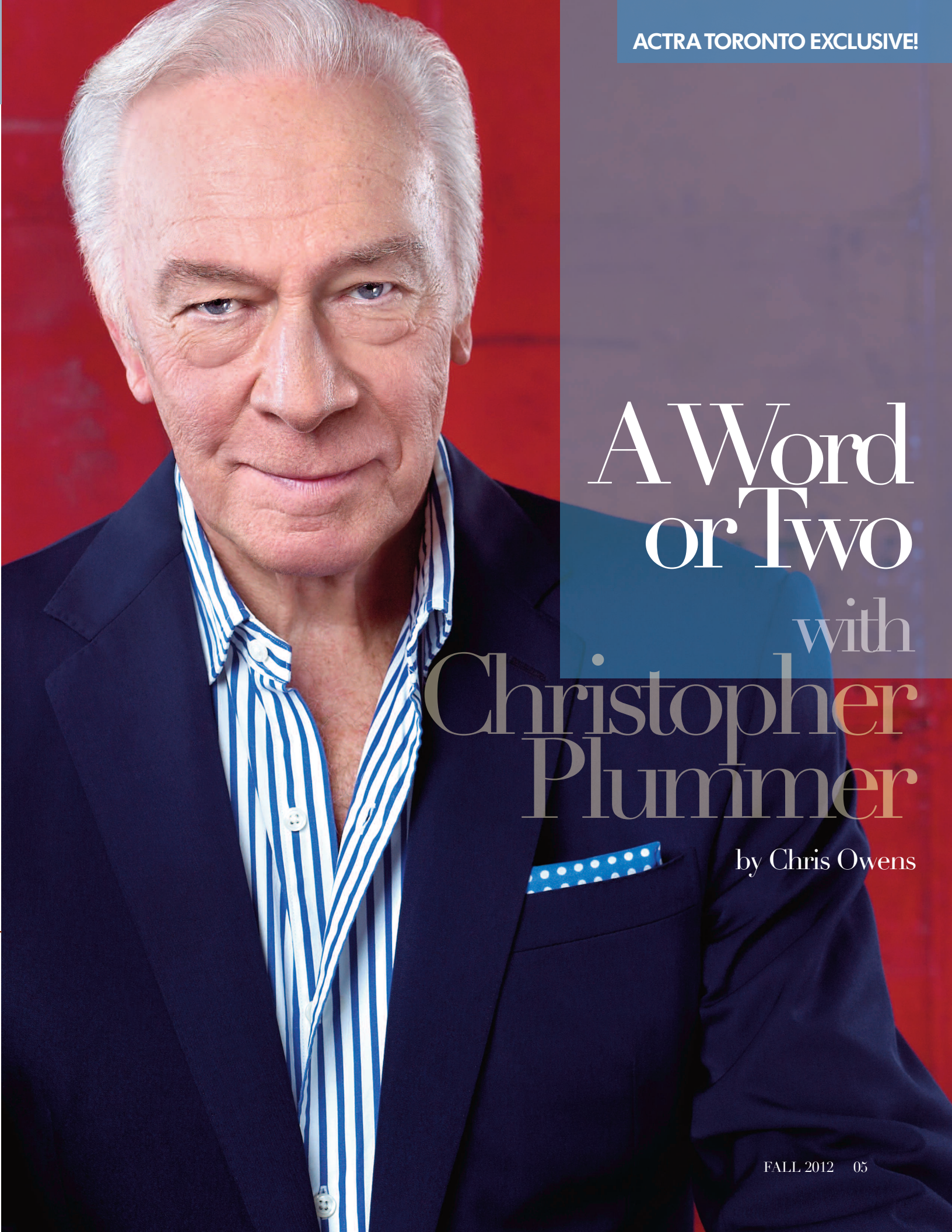
I have loved being your President, and have been honoured to serve you, lending my skills, energy and wisdom to making artists' lives a little better. Once a President, always a President. As I transition from President to past-President, I call on you to help make your fellow performers' lives better. Consider volunteering at ACTRA. Add your voice to the chorus. Watch Canadian TV and film. Talk about it, Twitter, Facebook, and write your governments asking for fair treatment for artists. Support union contracts, organize your friends' films to **Work ACTRA**. Carry forward the work we have done together, advance the agenda and give voice to all that is meant by **Respect the Artist**. Answer the call with, "I am ready to help." ●

Forever yours,

Heather Allin
President, ACTRA Toronto

"An old man told me: women carry the greatest gift in creation – new life. She has the mechanism to handle that enormous responsibility of which we, with this consciousness, cannot comprehend… The Cree word for fire – *iskotew* is made of two words: *islwew* – woman and *miteh* – heart."
Tantoo Cardinal

"I celebrate the fire we have ignited together."
Heather Allin



A Word or Two with Christopher Plummer

by Chris Owens

A Word or Two with Christopher Plummer

When **Christopher Plummer** was given the Best Supporting Actor Oscar at the Academy Awards ceremony this year for his performance in *Beginners* he held the trophy aloft and said: "You're only two years older than me, darling, where have you been all my life?" Indeed, at the age of 82, Plummer became the oldest actor to receive the award. Two days later he disputed his Oscar record saying, "Charlie Chaplin won an Oscar and he was 83-years-old, I think. I know it was an honorary Oscar, but an Oscar is an Oscar...so I think he has the edge on me." The fact is, Plummer is not yet ready to bask in his past glory and rest on his laurels. "I want to be a little bit younger - 'the oldest' sounds pathetic," he said with a laugh in a recent interview with **Jian Ghomeshi** on CBC's *Q*.

Despite his numerous accolades including an ACTRA Toronto Award, a BAFTA Award, two Emmys, a Genie, a Golden Globe, a SAG award, two Tony Awards and the Order of Canada, Plummer shows no signs of slowing down. Born in Toronto and raised in Senneville, Quebec, he has retained his Canadian citizenship and continues to move freely from stage to screen and back again, as he has for over six decades.

Continued on page 08...

Christopher Plummer was photographed by Monica McKenna at Factory163 in Stratford, ON with the assistance of Irene Miller photography.

A Word or Two with Christopher Plummer

All photos from *Barrymore* by Cylla von Tiedemann.

We caught up to him briefly in Stratford where he is rehearsing his latest one-man show, *A Word or Two*.

Chris Owens: *In 1997, you won the Tony Award for your performance in* Barrymore. *In 2012, you won the ACTRA Toronto Award for Outstanding Performance for your work in the film. Can you talk to us about the difference between the stage and screen versions?*

Christopher Plummer: From the stage it's a very funny piece, lots of laughs and there's heart in it which we worked hard to find. But on the screen, it's totally different. It's far more emotional. In the close-up shots you can see what's going on behind the lines, behind the mind. I was quite surprised at the depth it had.

CO: *You began your career in the theatre. Today, young actors begin primarily in TV, film, the Internet - in media other than the stage. Do you think they're missing out by not having roots in the theatre?*

CP: Yes, it's absolutely true. More actors that have come from the theatre have really triumphed on screen. It helps them enormously and it stretches them, it does everything – that's our medium. The screen is not really our medium. It's the directors, the committee that's behind it all – all those people are trying to run the show. On stage, you are alone with the audience and you have to project that whisper to the back row and you have to use your body, everything that you own has to work and that is an actor's training. The theatre is the writer's and the actor's medium.

CO: *I think a lot of young actors who don't have stage experience are shocked when they discover how difficult it can be.*

CP: Yes, they wait too long and then they come back to the theatre and you can't hear them past the eighth row. I would encourage every young actor who is ambitious to always go back at one point to the stage, freshen your craft, give it the resurgence that it needs.

CO: *You said in your memoir,* In Spite of Myself, *that when you're doing a play you like to go on the stage an hour before curtain up and go through your 'silent paces alone.'*

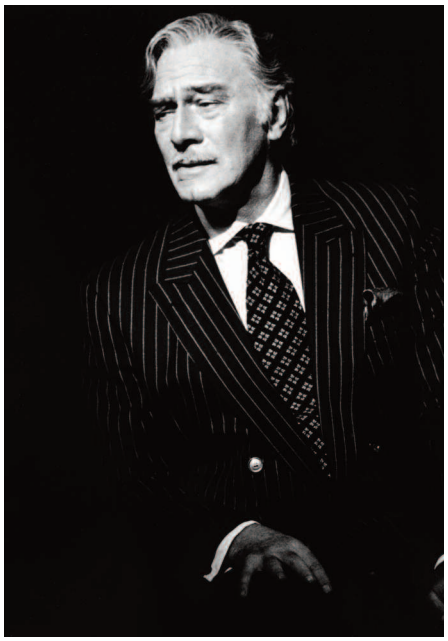
CP: Yes, I think it helps. I like to do that. It also helps you remember the bloody thing. (laughs) But it also gives you another look, a fresh attack.

CO: *Have you adapted that routine to the pace and rhythm of screen acting?*

CP: No, it's different altogether. Screen acting is better when it looks like improvisation. I try not to rehearse, actually. I don't like rehearsing a lot on screen – I like to be fresh. Particularly when you are a stage actor. We get things very quickly and so then it becomes technical – if you repeat and repeat and repeat you get more skillful and you rely on your technique. So I have to work against that. In other words, I have to work against my knowledge of technique in order to be immediate, free and fresh.

CO: *As a boy, you entertained the idea of becoming a concert pianist. Has your fondness for music fed your work as an actor?*

CP: Oh yes. I think it's very important to have some sort of knowledge of music or at least a love for music. And when I say music, I'm talking about classical and jazz. I've always thought of music as Beethoven, Brahms, Bach. I grew up loving the classics. Good



Academy Award® winner **Christopher Plummer** in *Beginners*. Courtesy of Focus Features Photo Credit: Andrew Tepper

writing has the same feeling of music. It has the climax, the coda, everything that a symphony has and I think you can apply it if you have a good ear. It's very, very useful for actors to have a good ear for music because then they can keep the colour of their voice always changing so it's not monotonous.

CO: *Over the years your work has evolved. Can you share any tips for getting better at the craft?*

CP: Keep on going. I enjoy it and I think that is what's helped me. I love it. Even when I've landed a role that I'm not particularly thrilled about I still love the profession and I love doing it. In fact, when you don't like the role it becomes a challenge and if you keep at it suddenly you're winning. So I just think one must never be disillusioned, you can't be, you've just got to carry on.

CO: *You've always been very gracious and generous in your praise of other actors and their work. Have you always felt that this was your tribe, that these were the people that you belonged with?*

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Satisfied ACTRA members talk about James Zaza, proud 34-year member of ACTRA and president of The Zaza Financial Group, Canada's largest financial advisors group specializing in the acting community.

"Thanks for helping us pay LESS taxes and keep more of our money. At the rate you're managing our money I feel confident I'll be able to retire sooner" — **Steve Anthony**

"Thanks to you Jim and your team at Zaza Financial...keep up the good work" — **David Ferry**

"Thank you Jim for teaching me about my finances" — **Maria del Mar**

" Your management has lifted a huge weight off my shoulders" — **Shawn Lawrence**

" More ACTRA members should be managed by you. Thanks Brother" — **Maurice Dean Wint**

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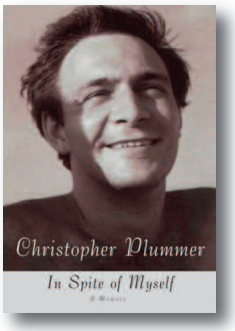
CP: Oh yes, absolutely. You know, you try to be as arrogant as you possibly can be and you need to be. You need to be in order to stand out from the crowd. Everybody who is really ambitious as an actor has to feel that - has to have his own sort of killer instinct. And of course, in the last analysis, we are a bunch of gypsies and we're fighting the World. We're up against it and we are all together. But, when we're on, we've got to think of each other as the best. If you don't think of yourself once or twice as the best they're going to get you - the audience is going to swallow you up, you know what I mean? The fact is, I love what I'm doing. It isn't a chore.

CO: *You're presently rehearsing a one-man show for Stratford's 60th anniversary. How did* A Word or Two *come about?*

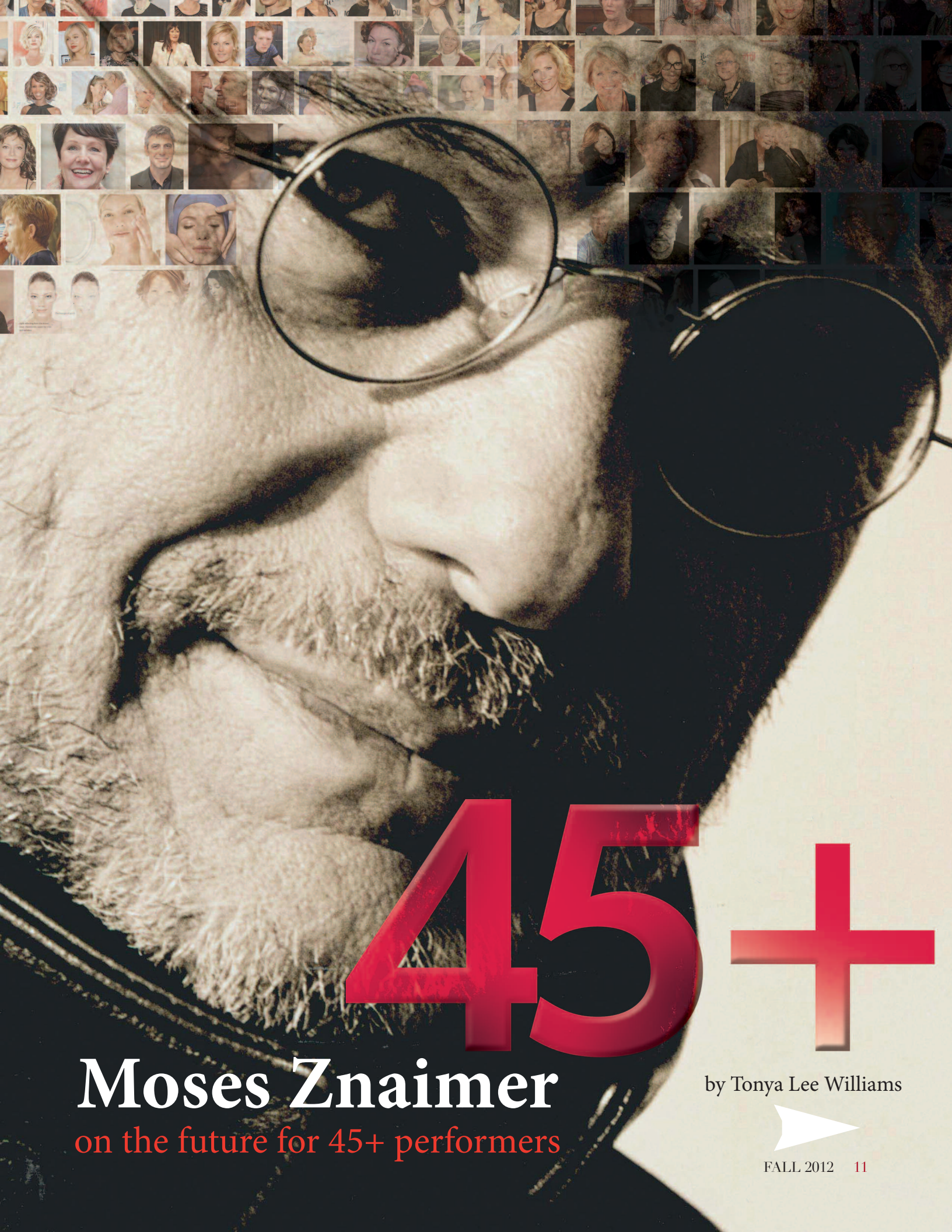
CP: I remember years ago someone asked me if I would like to give a lecture to help raise money to build an addition on a local library. I thought, oh God, there's nothing worse than a lecture so I put together something from all the literature I've always loved since I was a kid and that has taken me right through my life. I got a chance to play each sort of poem or character in a drama and I did all sorts of different creatures. It was only about half an hour long then but I kept re-writing it and making it longer and it seemed to work. So, I've done it a lot for charities but I've never earned any money. (laughs) Then I thought, why not try it out as a one-man show. We'd need a bit more of a production surrounding it so the perfect place is to go up to Stratford and open it. I read it in the living room for **Des McAnuff** and he liked it enough to say he'd come on board. So he's going to help give it a production with lighting and music behind some of the verse. I've made it a lot more personal than it was before and I think the more personal it is the more audiences respond. It's funny and I make it as entertaining as I can so people go home afterwards hopefully wanting more. ●

"The eyes of a truly fine actor are constantly negotiating - save me and I'll save you, they seem to say. That is the bargain we've made and that trust is all we can hang on to as we steady ourselves on the tightrope."

— In Spite of Myself



Chris Owens is the editor of *Performers* magazine. He recently attended the Osheaga Music Festival in Montreal (which he highly recommends). He plays hockey with Sgt. Rock.



45+

Moses Znaimer

on the future for 45+ performers

by Tonya Lee Williams

Moses Znaimer has been an ACTRA member since 1967.

In the late '70s I became aware of the name **Moses Znaimer**. He was running Citytv and spoke to a generation of youth who were mostly forgotten on television. Well he's done it again, only its now for the over 45. He's coined a new name: *Zoomer*. He's revolutionized what it is to be over 45, and once again has made a forgotten generation relevant in the eyes of the media. I had an opportunity to sit with Moses at his expansive new Zoomer buildings and get his unique perspective on the Zoomer generation, the media value they bring to broadcasting and how they redefine the audience.

Tonya: *When did you first realize the value in creating a media empire wrapped around the concept of Zoomers?*
Moses: (laughs) There are four or five whales in this business in Canada and we're the next-up minnow. Actually, I first had this thought the night I put MuchMusic on the air. I remember thinking, what happens when we're all 60? So I pursued that thought. In the late 1990s I filed an application with the CRTC while I was still at City, Much and Bravo, etc for a Channel to be called Zoomer Television; and was denied.

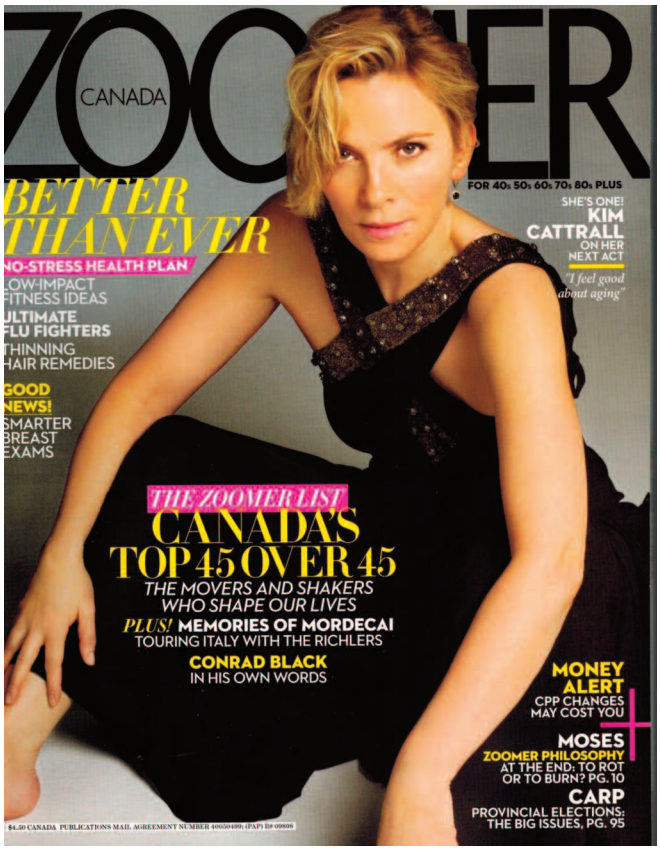
Tonya: *So they didn't have the foresight to see what you knew was coming?*
Moses: The culture and the ad agencies decided that what was important about the boomers was that they were young. But that wasn't it at all. What was important about the boomers was that they were the largest generation ever created. What seemed obvious to me was that if they were significant because they were large, they were going to continue to be large and therefore continue to be significant. But of course that's not quite how the system saw it.

There was an article recently in the *Lancet*, widely considered the world's most important medical journal, which said that 50 per cent of the babies born today have a shot at living to 100. But the advertisers' idea is still that because I'm over 55 I am at home, in my rocking chair, chewing my gums, waiting for the pension cheque so I can go out and buy the dog food. I mean how f #@!ed is that? So that's it. That was the origin of ZoomerMedia.

Tonya: I*'ve spent a lot of time in Europe and they seem to have a more positive view of their actors who have matured. Why is there such a difference between their philosophy on aging and our North American one?*
Moses: I've thought about that, and the closest I can come to an answer is Advertising. The European broadcast system did not go commercial until relatively recently. It was state-dominated and the major channels were commercial-free. So you didn't have that same pressure and influence. Here, we still have this pursuit of youth which seems particularly weird today when there's abundant evidence that young people don't have any money, that they are much smaller in numbers, and they're not the community that the boomers were.

I've asked for evidence as to why advertisers focus on the young so much, since marketers are supposed to be research-based, but I've never been able to get much of an answer. These are just old habits, prejudices, if you will. Obviously, that's in the process of changing, but from where I stand within the business and trying to keep it all afloat, it sometimes seems the change is painfully slow.

Tonya: *I feel that, in the past, TV centered more on the younger audience and film catered to a more mature audience. But in recent years it feels like it has flipped. TV is now focusing on a more mature audience and film has been picking up the younger demographic. Why do you think this change has happened?*
Moses: The movie-going experience is not always pleasant for mature people. The theatres and multiplexes are quite garish and loud. People in the movie business are making movies for the people going to the movies. Who wants to get out of the house? Who wants to get away from the parents? Who wants to go to a dark place and get his hand over her shoulder and see if he can grab a feel? It's kids. So as they made fewer and fewer films for mature people, fewer and fewer mature people went. Also the industry seems to need to swing for a home run every time, as opposed to making solid, interesting, reasonably priced movies that more mature people would like and that might make a decent, but not a crazy, return. What we must not forget is that a very critical part of contemporary filmmaking is merchandising. So it's not just the movie, it's that you can sell a lot of toys and other spin-offs from *Spiderman*. I don't know how many toys you can sell off of Meryl Streep.



North American television has finally rediscovered the more mature form of a serial. We now are able to tell stories over time and we see the phenomenon of the cable channels that are offering up more interesting, more complex, more character-driven stories that happen over a period of time. We still don't have a protagonist that is clearly 50, 60, 70 plus. But the day will come when somebody will do a hard-hitting series where the protagonist is a woman, clearly of a certain age, who will be powerful and effective and multi-dimensional and rich.

Tonya: *I happen to feel that the more natural Zoomer is a more attractive one. The Ellen Burstyns, the Gordon Pinsents, the Tantoo Cardinals, the Fiona Reids, the Graham Greenes. Maybe they've had work done but it's not apparent to me. Do you feel there is pressure for the Zoomer actor to have work done to look younger these days? Not only for women, but for men too?*
Moses: There is pressure. The countervailing pressure is that there are many disasters, of course and people can see them. So the trick is to get the work done and not to be seen to be having the work done. Of course, if you are in the profession, then it's not just vanity, it's your livelihood. So some people feel they have to do it. My personal attitude is: authenticity works. People who are comfortable in their skin, I think, are the best actors, the best professionals, the best people.

Tonya: *Do you feel there is a difference between the audience responding to Zoomer actors vs. actresses? Are the challenges different? Do men have it easier?*
Moses: Sure. Clearly there is more material written for older men than for older women. But we are beginning to see little positive signs. You mentioned earlier how Mirren and Dench have movies out; as these succeed, I think they will convince the decision-makers that there is a business there and they will continue to feed that business. But there's no question it's tougher on the girls.

Tonya: *As an actress, I've noticed the audience most critical of women, are women. Women aren't as critical looking at men and men aren't critical looking at themselves.*
Moses: This is a self-induced problem. I saw research recently that showed nine out of 10 women in North America are dissatisfied with some aspect of their physiognomy. Guys just don't think about that as much, except maybe hair and weight. The great signatures of aging are hair loss and weight gain for men. Do guys discuss this? I can't remember having a discussion about that with any pals of mine.

At the ideacity Conference a couple of weeks ago, I had these researchers come to speak who had tracked and analyzed what millions of people are looking at privately online re: sex. And the big news is that guys prefer chubbier girls. So here are women knocking themselves out to be rail thin but men prefer girls with a little bit of "cushion for the pushin", as someone at the conference put it.

So the big point is that women do it to themselves. It is embedded in a culture that creates dissatisfactions, which you then try and satisfy by commercial behaviour.

Tonya: *What does ZoomerMedia do to keep Zoomer audiences happy? What kind of programming are you creating?*
Moses: If you look at Vision it has a fair chunk of nostalgia programming drawn largely from the U.K. and because it's from

the U.K. there are many pieces that feature middle-aged protagonists and all that great delicious character acting that you see in British productions that you barely see in North American ones. We also offer movies that are typically from the U.S.; so British series, American movies, and Canadian documentaries are important strands at Vision.When we look for movies, we look for older protagonists, spiritual themes, anything with a speculative or biblical setting because the channel also has this mandate to serve the interests of people who become more interested in such matters as they age.

The Zoomer population that represents close to 40 per cent of the population of Canada commands about 80 per cent of the national wealth; yet advertisers are still only allocating maybe five to seven per cent of their budgets toward it. Whenever I go to talk to the business, I say, "You have your fixed ideas and I'm not saying drop all of that and move all the money over. If you just double the spend from five to 10 per cent it would acknowledge the new reality, and, incidentally, revolutionize our business." That would then empower us to create better programming and so on. Not a minute goes by without some aspect of the new Zoomer phenomenon coming to the fore. The papers are full of such stories; and I think we have done a good job of placing that topic on the public agenda, getting people to think about it, and, hopefully, getting advertisers to ask themselves why (in their world) everybody dies at 49. Zoomer is a word with which people can identify. It's got a certain dynamism and an optimism to it. So I think we are having an impact and we'll see whether it helps us get into a position to create programming that can bring this even more vividly to life. ●

I believe there has never been a better time for actresses over the age of 45 to work. The past 50 years have given us a plethora of dynamic Zoomer women and their stories need to be told. Meryl Streep said she's worked more since turning 60 than ever before, and the roles she's getting are more layered and richer then when she was younger. With trailblazers like Moses, we are at the brink of a shift in TV and films for mature actors. We are indeed living in a 'Golden Age' – and, as a Zoomer actor myself, I couldn't be more pleased! — **Tonya**

Tonya Lee Williams is best known for her role as Olivia Winters on *The Young and the Restless*. She has been nominated for two Emmy Awards, won two NAACP Image Awards, an ACTRA Award of Excellence, a Harry Jerome Award, an African Canadian Achievement Award, a Planet African Award, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Award and the International Women Achievers Award, among others. She's appeared on numerous television shows including *She's the Mayor* on VisionTV and recently wrapped on the films *Cybergeddon* shot in Hamilton and *Imperfect Justice* shot in Winnipeg. She is the founder and Executive Director of ReelWorld Film Festival and the President of Wilbo Entertainment, a production company. For more information about Tonya Lee Williams go to **www.tonyaleewilliams.com**.

Aging and Ageism

By Rosemary Dunsmore

Everyone wants to live a long time, but no one wants to get old.

The fantasy solution to this dilemma is well realized on our entertainment screens. In psychology texts, fantasy is defined as a series of pleasing mental images, usually serving to fulfill a need not gratified in reality. If an alien were to draw statistical conclusions about the makeup of our North American population from the people represented on our entertainment screens, they would conclude that there are many highly accomplished, young, attractive people holding positions of power in all arenas of the workplace and, also, that people must die around age 60 because this landscape features so few older people. The baby boomer population bulge, which defines our culture in North America, fears growing old and dreads the prospect of diminishment of prowess and deterioration of youthful appearance.

Shakespeare suggested there are seven stages of life. **Dr. Bill Thomas**, an advocate for 'elderhood', says that currently we only recognize three stages: childhood, adolescence and adulthood. When we speak of older people we measure them by their ability to still engage in 'adult' activities: 84 and still working, 92 and still traveling, 75 and still running at six every morning, 68 and still so attractive. We cultivate no real understanding, endorsement or acceptance of aging. Inherent in this foreshortened apprehension of our life's journey is a discomfiting sense of personal failure, when we no longer show up as young or young-ish. There is no job description for being older, no specific honourable criteria by which to measure ourselves as seniors. It seems to be an unmentionable stage in our lives. Professionals seeking to target the older market discuss in online forums how people 'of a certain age' should best be labeled: elders, seniors, elderly, old people, older people. The inquiry strives to find the least offensive nomenclature, the implication being that getting old is bad and embarrassing. The whole situation makes us uncomfortable. Talk about denial. **Jane Fonda** celebrates the joys of being 75 on her TED talk about The Third Act of Life. Her message to embrace elderhood is wonderful, but its integrity is compromised by the obvious money and effort she has invested in appearing to still look 45. **Carl Jung** said: "We cannot change anything, unless we accept it. Condemnation does not liberate. It oppresses."

As actors we participate in an industry which caters largely to the fantasy life of the public—entertainment as distraction. Producers apparently assume the public wishes to see itself reflected as better, more attractive, younger, than it actually is. Presumably we are cheered by this youthful vision of ourselves. It will be interesting to see if the boomers continue to be reas-

sured by this idealized version of themselves. Or will they long for a truer reflection of their experience of life? In the meantime, how do those of us of a certain age deal with this ageism, this dismissal, this sudden disappearance of job opportunities?

Victim mentality is an ever-present risk in the actors' life. Generally speaking, we don't make our own work, we wait for someone to offer us a job. It is very easy to feel victimized if we don't work and vital to a healthy, happy existence as an actor to develop strategies to ward off the victim chip on the shoulder. Are we to be victimized by the ageism in our culture which inevitably manifests in casting choices that eliminate the older actor from the running? In the workplace perhaps we will be marginalized, but we must combat absorbing into our own thought that societal fear of ageing. If we endorse that thinking in our own person, we are perpetrating the very self-contempt that is eliminating our jobs. We will be nurturing a mass neurosis that has spawned an insane multi-billion dollar anti-aging industry. Anti-aging! Think about it. What are the chances of ultimate success here? The phrase 'throwing good money after bad' comes to mind.

I was coaching an actress for an audition. Instead of focusing on achieving the character's objectives, she was driven by her actress intention to be good, to get the job, to do what THEY wanted. Aligned to this intention, she ceded control to THEM—they were in charge of her success. Unconsciously, she knew she was attempting to achieve something over which she had no control. As a result she felt disempowered, nervous and insecure. When she shifted back to the simple achievable task of taking care of the character's circumstances, she felt full, empowered and excited by the work. We must be wary of attaching ourselves to the unachievable. We want to live forever, but we don't want to get old. The truth is every day we are older. There are upsides and downsides to that process. Aging isn't for sissies and it isn't boring, unless all our energy is going into resistance and denial.

My acting teacher taught: "Thought precedes emotion. Think the right thought and the correct emotions will follow." As actors, we understand this and practice it in our work to build characters. I have been paying attention to my own thoughts and have discovered an incursion of Inner Ageism. I have been attending to negative thoughts about my laugh lines, the sagging, my wrinkles - yes, I will use the 'W' word. I think we, as boomers, are infected with Inner Ageism. As we grow older, we are horrified to become the person we used to hold in contempt. In defense, we exempt ourselves from the debilitated crowd of old folks, defining ourselves as special, 'fabulous looking old broads,' still young in spirit, which we are, no doubt about it. But have we actually addressed our attitudes or are we secretly, or worse, unconsciously, run by fear and contempt for getting old? I realize I speak often to myself unkindly. I deride myself with mockery and scorn. I berate myself for getting old, but if I catch myself doing it, I am able to shift the conversation, revise the thought.While I may be a bust posing as a 40-year-old, I am pretty darn fabulous for a woman approaching 60. When we chafe against ageism in the workplace, let us make sure we are not cultivating it at home. We do have power over how we think of ourselves and group change begins with the individual.

The young actor must learn that all she needs to do is show up and do what the character does—she doesn't need to improve upon the miracle of herself with extra Acting. Decoration born of insecurity obscures the work and our ability to see the real person. This principle remains true as we get older. Won't trying to be 'younger' manifest in the same self-sabotage generated by trying to be what THEY want and leaving your real self in the waiting room? In that second-guessing exercise, we diminish our uniqueness. The quest to accept and celebrate who we are right now continues. It may not necessarily bring work, but it is a surer path to personal contentment.

I was intrigued to learn that a certainty about aging is we become more unique as we get older. Our discrete genetic makeup, time, place, access to nutrition, education, health care, lifestyle, all contrive to develop our singularity. A group of five-year-olds are far more similar than a group of 80-year-olds but our culture would have us believe otherwise. The etymology of the word age is Aetas—meaning lifetime—a glorious word. The secret to a long lifetime is aging. It is a mysterious and often bewildering process that sneaks up on us. Dispel any illusion that it is not going to happen to you. The alternative is less desirable. Practice foresight: attend to your health and your wealth. Does age matter? Yes, but at the same time, no. It is a blessing and a curse—are we big enough to synthesize the intrinsic contradiction? Acting is the art of self-revelation. "Know thyself" is a worthy pre-occupation not only for the actor, but also for the person. "This above all: to thine own self be true." ●

Rosemary Dunsmore won the ACTRA Award in 2010 for *The Baby Formula*. She has been enjoying an acting career on screen and stage for over 35 years. She played Katherine Brooke and Aunt Abigail in *Avonlea*, *Mom P.I.*, and even worked twice with Arnold Schwarzenegger. Most recently she has been featured in two award-winning web series *Guidestones* and *Ruby Skye P.I.* She is Actor in Residence at the Canadian Film Centre.

(L-R) **Huse Madhavji**, **Michael Shanks**, **Erica Durance**, **Daniel Gillies**, **Julia Taylor Ross** and **Kristopher Turner** from CTV's SAVING HOPE

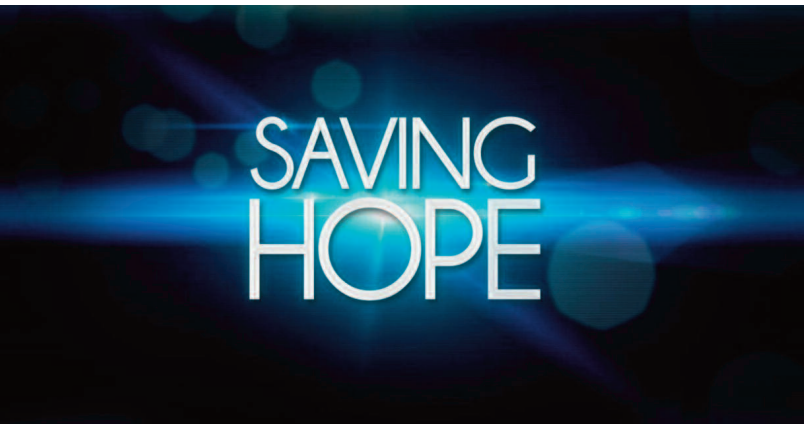
Photo/Illustration created by KCV Création • www.facebook.com/KCV80

by Salvatore Antonio

It is 4:15 a.m. in the morning when my hand slams down on the alarm. I very quickly remind myself to be grateful to have a reason to get up so painfully early. An hour later, I'm rolling onto the lot at Orbitor Studios just as the sun begins to spread across the sky. I down my second coffee of the day and seek the aide of the only real miracle-workers on-set: the make-up and hair team. As I step into the beauty trailer I am greeted by the reliable smile and kind eyes of **Erica Durance**. "Morning, sunshine. Guess what?" she asks brightly. "It's day 70." You would never know from Durance's energy that over the past 70 days she has almost always been the first person in that make-up chair, and the last actor to go home. We have another two episodes to shoot before we complete the 13 hour-long broadcasts that make up the first season of the new CTV/NBC series, *Saving Hope* – an hour-long, original drama that stars an entirely Canadian principal cast including: Durance (*Smallville*), **Michael Shanks** (*Stargate Atlantis*), **Daniel Gillies** (*The Vampire Diaries*), **Wendy Crewson** (*Away From Her*), **Huse Madhavji** (*Call Me Fitz*), **Julia Taylor Ross** (*Rookie Blue*), **Kristopher Turner** (*The Listener*) and myself in a recurring role as Victor Reis, an O.R. scrub nurse. The series is from acclaimed Gemini Award-winning producers **Ilana Frank** and **David Wellington** (*The Eleventh Hour*, *Would Be Kings*, *Rookie Blue*). The series was created by **Malcolm MacRury** (*Crash and Burn*, *Republic of Doyle*) and **Morwyn Brebner** (*Rookie Blue*) who is also the showrunner along with **Aaron Martin** (*Being Erica*).

Saving Hope centres around the doctors and patients of Toronto's fictional Hope Zion Hospital. When charismatic Chief of Surgery, Charlie Harris (Shanks) ends up in a coma, he leaves the hospital and his fiancée and fellow surgeon, Alex Reid (Durance), reeling. Struggling through her own shock and fear, Reid, along with newly arrived star surgeon, Joel Goran (Gillies), race to save Harris' life. While the daily grind of lives saved and lost continues, the comatose Harris explores the hospital halls in 'spirit' form, viewing the living and interacting with the recently deceased, not quite sure if he's hallucinating or a ghost himself. The team of doctors at Hope Zion, anchored by Reid, press on to save his life and those of their other patients as they continue navigating through the highs and lows that occur in a hospital, where everyone is struggling to find, or hold on to, hope.

It might sound like an intense set to work on, given the extremely high stakes of both the situations and the characters' individual plights — but let me assure you, not only do we routinely resort to ridiculous means to keep from ruining takes because of our own laughter, but there are wonderful pockets of humour and levity expertly built into the writing. It is truly one of the most enjoyable and supportive sets that I have ever worked on, and that is due to the genuine air of camaraderie between everyone involved, from the craft services personnel to the directors. There is a commonly-accepted theory in our industry, that the #1 actor on the call-sheet usually sets the tone for the set — well, if that is the case, you couldn't ask for a better #1 than Ms. Durance. Erica displays what seems to be the



Wendy Crewson stars as 'Dr. Dana Kinney' on CTV's SAVING HOPE

Erica Durance stars as 'Dr. Alex Reid' on CTV's SAVING HOPE

"You need to find your original voice; then listen to it, trust it and champion it."
— Wendy Crewson

perfect combination of focus, accessibility and heart, as she anchors the major storyline in the show.

Born in Calgary, Alberta, Durance is known to most viewers for her seven seasons playing 'Lois Lane' on the long-running American series *Smallville*. Hamilton-born Wendy Crewson, who plays the tough-as-nails, yet sympathetic Dr. Dana Kinney, is no stranger to working in the U.S. (*Air Force One*, *24*) either. *Saving Hope* is one of the latest of a recent wave of Canadian exports to U.S. airwaves. Along with *Rookie Blue*, *The Listener*, and *Flashpoint*, it is part of a new trend of Canadian-created, produced, and cast shows, licensed not only to a Canadian broadcaster, but also simulcast on an American network.

I ask Wendy whether she sees the growing number of Canadian/American productions as a positive progression, or as more of a necessity born out of limits in our Canadian industry. She answers with unapologetic passion, "There are two sides to it; first of all, any way we can get some work produced is a good way, I think — if it takes an American partner to get these shows off the ground, to allow our membership to work — then absolutely, I'm for it. We've had some terrific shows come out of these partnerships, and we've employed some great Canadian actors and they've had wonderful opportunities, along with writers, directors, and crews." She sighs deeply and then offers: "I think the fact that we have to do it is a sad sign of what has happened to English Canadian television. If anyone needs reminding, in 1999 we had the disastrous CRTC policy, which lifted regulations on private broadcasters, allowing them to broadcast Canadian content at any time during the day with the explicit promise that they would do more, and higher quality, drama. What actually ended up happening was that we were whittled down from 12 hour-long dramatic series, to zero — and what that effectively did was open up the floodgates that allowed all that protected Canadian content to flow away. Every year our private broadcasters go down (to the U.S.) and spend 12 times as much on American content as they do on Canadian content — that's money that is not going to our artists, to our creators, technicians and crews. The Canadian private broadcasters feed us American product on our own airwaves, seasoned with Canadian ads — and for the most part, that's still the current system. That being said, what we're creating here with *Saving Hope* is truly a homegrown show. I have worked on American shows in Canada, and I know the differ-

Michael Shanks stars as 'Dr. Charlie Harris' on CTV's SAVING HOPE

ence; there, you can always feel the network presence over your shoulder, checking out how you look, how you say what you say — all those eyes and ears trained on your every choice, keeping everything 'in line'. I never feel that here; we have tremendous artistic freedom on this set, and it feels like more of a collaborative discussion."

I ask Durance and Crewson to share any insight or advice from their own experience for anyone in the membership who might be trying to find their place as a working actor in the current market. They consider this carefully, before Wendy offers, "This is something I wish I had figured out earlier, or perhaps it's just a rite-of-passage. I suffered for so long from a lack of confidence. I didn't trust my instincts, I was always sort of looking around me — becoming the colour of the room I was in, forever morphing and trying to find myself in others. You need to find your original voice; then listen to it, trust it and champion it." To this Erica adds, "Find satisfaction in all the small accomplishments, because every audition and every job is an opportunity to learn and get better — so that by the time you get the big one, you'll be ready for it."

Some hope worth saving from two wonderfully vibrant, genuine and successful actors. ●

SAVING HOPE airs Thursdays at 9 p.m. ET/PT on CTV.
For more information, visit CTV.ca/SavingHope.

Salvatore Antonio stars as 'Victor Reis' on CTV's SAVING HOPE. He has recently been featured on *The L.A. Complex*, *Lost Girl*, *Being Erica*, *InSecurity*, *Nikita*, *Flashpoint*, *Warehouse 13*, and *The Listener* and has a supporting role in *Antiviral*. A published and produced playwright, Salvatore's first play, *In Gabriel's Kitchen*, was named a finalist for the 2007 Governor General's Award. A graduate of the National Theatre School, he is the Artistic Director and resident coach at Armstrong Acting Studios.

Daniel Gillies stars as 'Dr. Joel Goran' on CTV's SAVING HOPE

R-E-S-P-

Find Out What It Means To Me (The Artist)

"TO SEND LIGHT INTO THE DARKNESS OF MEN'S HEARTS - SUCH IS THE DUTY OF THE ARTIST."

~Schumann

The rallying cry has been sounded, the banners and T-shirts printed and the videos shot. We are mobilizing a major campaign at ACTRA Toronto with the determined yet enigmatic slogan: **Respect the Artist**. But just what does **Respect the Artist** mean? Let's break it down.

The Encyclopædia Britannica Online defines 'art' as "the use of skill and imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments, or experiences that can be shared with others." That absolutely describes what we do. Performing artists, recording artists, dancers, musicians, writers, directors, editors, composers, animators and countless more in our industry credibly fall under this definition. My dictionary app defines the verb 'respect' as: "to admire someone deeply, as a result of their abilities, qualities, or achievements and have due regard for their feelings, wishes, rights, or traditions." ACTRA Toronto members have exceptional abilities, unique and diverse qualities, and internationally acknowledged award-winning achievements. We vehemently fight for our rights and traditions and proudly protect our feelings and wishes.

As artists we deserve respect, but are we getting it? Does the public and its guardians value the contributions artists make to society?

Since the earliest storytellers and cave painters, artists have taken it upon themselves to reflect society back to itself. In the words of **Karl Pruner**, ACTRA Toronto past President and current Director of Communications: "Artists provide the virtual space in which to model and measure societies values, hopes and fears." Award-winning Canadian writer **Brad Fraser** takes a more blunt view: "What artists do is not some rarefied 'special' luxury that serves no practical purpose, but is actually what defines us as a culture and a species. Without art we're animals." In other words, if you want to know how a society is doing, don't check out its dog parks, check out its art, in all its countless forms: film, theatre, music, literature, dance, the Internet, art galleries and television.

Ah, television. **Glenn Close** said, "All great art comes from a sense of outrage." Well listen up. The Canadian Media Fund (CMF) collects money from the government and the cable companies (Bell, Rogers, Shaw, etc.) and grants or invests it with qualifying producers and networks to create Canadian product for television and the Internet. Without CMF funding, most TV dramatic series in Canada, from *The Listener* to *Call Me Fitz,* would not be produced. However these programs aren't required to end up on Canada's most-watched main networks. Broadcasters often relegate them to their less-viewed cable networks or Pay TV channels. Those aired in the summer months on the main networks, get high numbers. SURPRISE! When given the choice, Canadians will watch their stories, written by their writers, performed by their actors. At the time of writing, *Saving Hope* and *Rookie Blue* were both in the top 20 most-watched shows in Canada. *Saving Hope* was number 4!

Canadian broadcasters spent $58.3 million on Canuck drama in 2011. Seem like a lot? These same networks spent $480 million acquiring foreign drama which they simulcast with the U.S. Networks, in prime time during the fall, winter and spring, reaping high commercial revenues. We get little or no Cana-

E-C-T

RESPECT the ARTIST

by David Gale

dian television drama during the cooler months, yet these are **Canadian** Broadcasters.

Despite the fact that Canada's Broadcasting Act: "*...encourage(s) the development of Canadian expression by providing a wide range of programming that reflects Canadian attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity....from a Canadian point of view*," the CRTC, Canada's broadcast content watchdog and network licenser, allows entertainment magazine shows, such as *etalk* and *Entertainment Tonight*, to qualify as Canadian Content. As I write, *etalk* had as its lead stories: Possible Tom Cruise Girlfriends and The Calgary Stampede. *Entertainment Tonight*'s TV Guide blurb describes the show as "the celebrity dish of the day from Canada and beyond." But you'll have to look very hard for the CanCon in "All of the red carpet action... from the Emmys to the Oscars." Where are the Canadian stories? **The CRTC makes absolutely no requirement for Canadian Content to be scripted drama in prime time.** We get no respect!

Real estate agents know the value of artists. Pruner again: "(Artists) are the 'urban alchemists' that transform slums into trendy areas and reinvigorate neighbourhoods, communities and cities." So why doesn't the industry which employs us? Despite a very good year last year, some of our most talented artists are forced to travel south simply to earn a living. Those who stay are stuck in a 'scale' town, working for minimum. Why do Canadian artists have to leave Canada to make a reasonable living or become famous?

It's no surprise that Hollywood stars are treated like royalty. Not only does their industry respect and revere them, but it sees the value in promoting and marketing them. I have heard the argument time and again that we're not like Americans. Apparently, we're enough alike to have their TV shows played

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99% of us aren't rich.
99% aren't famous.
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training
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skill.

We do love our work.
But, it's:

short-term
unregulated
risky.

Respect the Artist

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on our networks in prime time. Americans arguably have the most successful film and television industry in the world. It's time we took a hard look at their success and started respecting our artists and creating our own stars. The venerable **Shirley Douglas** had a star-building suggestion: "If a performer is in the top three or four names on the call sheet, their names *must go* on all publicity and in *large print!*"

Despite our lack of a star system, some people believe that all actors are rich (99% of us are not rich) and that all actors are famous (99% of us are not famous). The fact is that artists earn 38% less than the average Canadian. Our chosen profession is a precarious and unstable one, offering a fluctuating, and often inadequate, income. Yet statistically, artists are better educated than the general population. We are highly motivated yet we are underpaid, and unfairly taxed.

The cultural sector is an important economic driver, not a fringe industry. In Canada it is a bigger contributor to our GDP than forestry and mining combined. According to the Ontario Media Development Corp, film and television budgets alone accounted for nearly $1.3 billion dollars spent in Ontario in 2011. (That's not including television commercials, corporate videos, music videos, or broadcaster in-house productions.) Screen-based production contributes $12.2 billion annually to Ontario's GDP and accounted for almost 30,000 full-time direct and spin-off jobs. Yet recent studies show that artists earn, on average, just $24,500 a year, and usually from multiple jobs.

Nevertheless, people still believe that artists live off subsidies. **The truth is: artists subsidize our industry with below average wages.** If we're lucky enough to have a good year we are subsequently taxed at our good year rate. This shows a deep misunderstanding of how an artist lives. The UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of the Artist was adopted in 1980, yet 32 years later, some of its most important recommendations for improving the quality of life for artists remain unachieved in Ontario. Shame! We need to be treated as well as everyone else, with the same benefits, security and income protections. Respect! In 2009, NDP MPP **Peter Tabuns** introduced a Private Member's Bill to the Ontario Legislature that would allow artists to average their income across multiple years for income tax purposes and also provide income tax exemptions for specific arts grants and royalties. Unfortunately, despite similar legislation working well in Quebec, Ontario is a long way from enacting that kind of legislation.

So what can you and your friends do to **Respect the Artist**? Watch Canadian! Talk it up when you like a Canuck show. 'Like' it or tweet it. If you can't find Canadian artists on your televisions or screens, ask, "Why not?" You should be able to watch Canadian programming, starring Canadian artists, in prime time in Canada. Our shows are sold and watched all over the world. Why not here? Write the CRTC and ask them why Canadian broadcasters are allowed to disrespect Canadian artists.

For nearly 70 years ACTRA has been a union of artists fighting for respect - from the moment we formed the Radio Artists of Toronto Society in order to stop working for "a dollar a holler" at the CBC, to our historic and triumphant first strike, to lobbying successfully for competitive Ontario tax credits. We must continue to insist on respect from the public, from our sisters and brothers in the other industry unions, from all levels of government, from the broadcasters, advertisers and from producers. Only then will we have earned our own respect. ●

"To be an artist is to be an activist!"

~Wendy Crewson

David Gale is an actor, writer, director and teacher. He won both Gemini and Galaxi awards for hosting the cooking with grandmas series: *Loving Spoonfuls*. He is an OSLO, ACTRA Toronto's Vice-President, Communications and Publisher of *Performers* Magazine.

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"A house is not a home,
unless it contains fuel and fire
for the mind as well as the body."

~ Benjamin Franklin

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Ask Tabby and Tova

Frequently Asked Questions about Child Performers

Theresa Tova with a child performer and **Tabby Johnson,** fielding questions from parents and children at an ACTRA Toronto information session.

Q: What is the biggest mistake parents make in this industry?

Tova: Even though resources are easily available, the biggest mistake parents make is to rush into this business without properly researching and knowing what they are getting into. We have seen too many parents sign contracts, choose the wrong agent or pay thousands of dollars for unnecessary conferences, registration fees, in-house acting classes, headshots or portfolios. Too many parents lose all common sense when blinded by the allure of stardom coupled with promises that seem too good to be true.

Tabby: In short, knowledge is power. Attend the free ACTRA conferences, read the ACTRA newsletters and magazines. Sign up for workshops held at our ACTRA offices. And if your spidey senses are tingling, pay attention.

Q: How do we know if our child has what it takes to do well?

Tova: You don't. Leave that judgement to the professionals. Even then, they may be wrong.

Tabby: Just like life, there are no guarantees.

Q: How can I promote my child on the Internet and keep them safe?

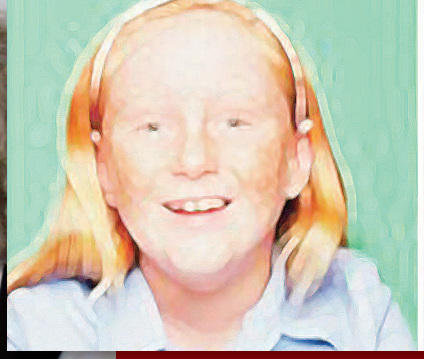
Tova: In today's world of free access to information it is very dangerous for young children to have profiles on the Internet. Do not be fooled into thinking they are safe. Even without listing any personal information, if you are hosting the page on your home computer any predator can find your home address and phone number in less than 10 minutes.

There is no need to have a presence on the Internet until you are an adult. Legitimate industry partners DO NOT surf the Internet looking for child actors. When you secure agent representation from an industry-respected TAMAC or EIC agent, you will be asked to sign on to a casting service. This is where your child's photo, information, breakdowns and 'sides' or scenes can be distributed in a password-protected environment. In Canada, all legitimate casting directors use a service such as CASTING WORKBOOK.

Tabby: Fan pages et al are not necessary because the network or production company on a series or film will do the leg work. Also, often your agent will have their own web presence and will have their clients well represented. Like the classic black dress, less is more. Don't let predators have your permission to gain access to your child. ●

Theresa Tova is an award winning actor, writer and singer. Tova's Holocaust musical *Still the Night* was honoured with 4 Dora awards and a Governor General Award nomination. This fall she takes her new musical about Bella Chagall to Warsaw Poland. Tova's Yiddish concerts have toured to Argentina, Israel, Poland, Austria, Holland, Germany, and throughout North America. In her spare time she is VP Internal at ACTRA Toronto and ACTRA National Treasurer.

Tabby Johnson is a Councillor and the Children's Advocate for ACTRA Toronto. A beloved singer, actor and voice artist, Tabby is fondly remembered by young people and parents alike for her role as Auntie Macassar on *Big Comfy Couch*, and from *Noddy* and *Polka Dot Door*.



For more information on Child Performers please go to our website, click on Members and then Child Performers: www.actratoronto.com/members/childperformers

ACT YOUR AGE

by Theresa Tova

Act Your Age mask workshop

I remember the afternoon in 2006 that **Diane Gordon** bravely stood up at an ACTRA Toronto conference to first applaud the work we were initiating engaging minor members and their parents, as well as the young 20-something actors who are our future. Diane boldly asked, "What about us older actors who also need to be thought about, engaged, and inspired? Are we forgotten? What, if anything is ACTRA doing for us?"

It has now been six years that I have had the honour to work, play and dream alongside the wisest and richest segment of our membership. When the late **Charmion King** addressed one of the first gatherings of Act Your Age (AYA) she inspired our ongoing mission with, "We are actors and all actors need is to act!"

As we age, we well-seasoned performers face the reality that auditions are not as frequent as they used to be. Members of AYA meet regularly in a friendly environment that allows us to exercise those actor muscles and dust the creative rust off our hearts and our minds.

AYA is an actors' gym. In addition to facilitating acting workshops, scene study, cold play readings, on-camera audition technique, improv, mask work, directing workshops, movie nights, development of new scripts by our own writers and a yearly pre-Christmas cabaret night, AYA has become a warm supportive community that shares in the highs of seeing one of our own star in a national commercial, nab a booking in a critically acclaimed film or star in a fringe theatre production.

Thanks to all the coaches and directors who have graciously offered to share their talents with us: **Jack Duffy**, **Anne Anglin**, **Mark Schoenberg**, **Kurt Reis**, **Jim Warren**, **Cindy Block**, **David Smukler**, **Michael Cohen**, **Kate Ashby**…. and more.

With over 90 members, we range in age from mid-30s to well into our 90s. We have become a family of sorts and want to acknowledge the dear friends we have lost. AYA will continue to celebrate and mourn the talents of **Murray Kash**, **Cayle Chernin**, **George Hevenor** and **Joan Barrett**.

I would be remiss in talking about AYA were I not to thank **Patty Gail Peaker** and Supporting Cast at PAL The green room has become a second home to AYA and we welcome anyone at PAL to join our work sessions. ●

We meet at the Performing Arts Lodge on the Esplanade or at the ACTRA offices on Church Street. If you are interested in joining us please e-mail me at ttova@actra.ca

Julian Richings stars in *The Tape*, directed by **Matt Austin.**

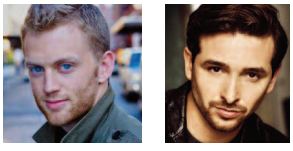
Co-op @ Cannes

"ACTRA Toronto has provided emerging independent Canadian cinema an oasis," explains **Evert Houston**, Creative Director of the Blue Flame Collective. "They have recognized a surge of interest in the highly motivated, cinema/linguistic/tech-savvy youth of today, and empowered them with the freedom to create. In doing this, they have unified a very inspired portion of the ACTRA membership to be working on their own projects - cultivating the future of the Canadian industry and strengthening the union as a whole. As my father would always say, "It's when talent and hard work meet opportunity."

Mr. Houston is speaking of the ACTRA Co-op Program. In recent years, the union has discovered an overwhelming desire for young cinema artists to create their own films and promote and share their work online. This notion provides major potential benefits for an emerging artist looking to refine their craft and build an audience in the current social media-centric landscape.

"ACTRA's professional development initiative is directly responsible for the incredible productivity flow we experienced with the Blue Flame Collective. We shot 14 short films in less than four months," adds **Oliver Ward**, Creative Producer of the Blue Flame Collective. "Thankfully, we were able to practice that model with a ReelWorld submission through ACTRA Toronto's Young Emerging Actors Assembly (YEAA) in the spring." Mr. Houston is referring to the clever resolve of **Bobby Del Rio**, ReelWorld Canadian programmer, and **Bryn McAuley**, Co-Chair of YEAA, to find and facilitate content from YEAA for inclusion in the 2012 ReelWorld Film Festival. Born out of an omnibus film concept, à la *Paris, je t'aime*, executive producers Evert Houston and **Andy McQueen**, together with YEAA, were able to create six short films in less than two months. The films were packaged under the name The Untitled Toronto Project and screened at ReelWorld. "It's a very smart move. ACTRA has given actors the reins and YEAA was responsible for creating this opportunity with ReelWorld. Emerging filmmakers are getting their hands on equipment and passionately creating work with no apologies. It's a fantastic time to be making film in this city," says Andy McQueen, Creative Director at WILDonez.

The YEAA independent Co-op at ReelWorld has already produced successful results. One of the six shorts included in The Untitled Toronto Project, **Matt Austin**'s film *The Tape*, starring **Julian Richings**, was accepted into Cannes as part of Telefilm's Perspective Canada - Not Short on Talent program. "ACTRA made it really easy," says Austin, "It was a race we got to run without obstacle," referring to the ability to make his film in such a short period of time, under the Co-op Program. "It was the first time Telefilm sold out the Perspective Canada program at Cannes. And it was really great to see a packed house with an international community so excited about Canadian film. I felt an incredible sense of importance to be included in this program, knowing my film had come out of this initiative with the union. If this opportunity didn't exist, neither would my film." ●



Oliver Ward & Evert Houston

— ACTRA Actors and Co-Founders of the Blue Flame Collective; a Toronto film production community driven to create original cinematic content by its members.

New ACTRA TORONTO Members

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ABRAHAM ASTO
AMERA ATIYEH
MICHAEL AYRES
CHRISTIAN BAKO
VICTORIA BALDESARRA
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JOSHUA WONG
EVE WYLDEN
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CHRIS R YOUNG
DEVON YOUNGS
JIMMY YU
DAIVA ZALNIERIUNAS

Lives Lived

John Anderson
Bill Haslett
Ben Gans
Ari Magder
Patricia Moffatt
Ray Staples

Linda Kash and Paul O'Sullivan Photo: Helen Tansey

Paul O'Sullivan

He was truly one of a kind. I will admit my first crush on him was when I saw him on stage at Second City. You know, one of those dangerous crushes you get on someone because of their immense talent? But also his shirt was off in the scene and I liked the pattern of his chest and stomach hair. And he made me laugh. Like I've never laughed. Because his characters were uncomfortable, you know? No one I've ever seen before or since could play a boastful loser better than my Paul. He was sexy, twitchy, macho, ridiculous. His physical comedy was stunning. He was also a wordsmith. With the exception of our daughter Matilda, no one could string a phrase of swear words like him. Holy Mother of Pearl, he was good.

He never reached the degree of success that he deserved. There were lots of reasons. He hated auditioning. He would talk himself out of the part in the waiting room. He admired his competition to a fault. But Paul was a genius. His family, his friends, his students and his peers all knew it. But I was his biggest fan. And he knew that too. His lack of belief in himself was very frustrating. But it fed his characters, you know? Gave them an edge. Gave him a sense of humour that no one else could get away with. Brash and inappropriate, uncomfortable yet somehow utterly lovable.

He was one of the kindest, gentlest people you'd ever wanna meet. Never elitist, never pretentious. He was kind to everyone but to himself. Self-deprecation was part of his shtick. He was wholly devoted to family. To his sisters and brothers, to his late Mum and most of all, to his children. And to me. He told us he loved us every day, many times a day. It took me awhile to get used to it as I was not accustomed to saying it so freely. I am now.

How do you thank an entire community? Who come to share in your sorrow. Who offer financial assistance, flowers, food, labour, love. Friends and strangers alike. Giving, calling, emailing, Facebooking and dropping by. All wanting to help in their own way. I lost my love. My children lost their dad and stepdad. Suddenly and horribly in a car accident. In an instant he was gone. We will never forget this terrible time. But we will also never forget how we were carried by our community. Every condolence, every gesture of food, flowers, toilet paper. Every dog sit, every furniture lug, every hug and prayer. Never, ever forgotten. We are carried by all of you. Because you loved him, we loved him, we love him. ●

Linda Kash and Family

Connect With US

ACTRA Toronto Council
Who's Who

PRESIDENT Heather Allin hallin@actratoronto.com
PAST PRESIDENT Karl Pruner kpruner@actratoronto.com
ACTRA NATIONAL PRESIDENT Ferne Downey fdowney@actra.ca
VICE-PRESIDENT, FINANCE David Macniven dmacniven@council.actratoronto.com
VICE-PRESIDENT, INTERNAL AFFAIRS Theresa Tova ttova@actratoronto.com
VICE-PRESIDENT, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS Art Hindle ahindle@council.actratoronto.com
VICE-PRESIDENT, COMMUNICATIONS David Gale dgale@council.actratoronto.com
VICE-PRESIDENT, MEMBER SERVICES David Sparrow dsparrow@council.actratoronto.com
EXECUTIVE MEMBER-AT-LARGE Wendy Crewson wcrewson@council.actratoronto.com

Shereen Airth sairth@council.actratoronto.com
Kirsten Bishopric kbishopric@council.actratoronto.com
K.C. Collins kcollins@council.actratoronto.com
Richard Hardacre rhardacre@actra.ca
Karen Ivany kivany@council.actratoronto.com
Taborah Johnson tjohnson@council.actratoronto.com
Don Lamoreux dlamoreux@council.actratoronto.com
Jani Lauzon jlauzon@actratoronto.com
Colin Mochrie cmochrie@council.actratoronto.com
John Nelles jnelles@council.actratoronto.com
Jack Newman jnewman@council.actratoronto.com
Eric Peterson epeterson@council.actratoronto.com
Leah Pinsent lpinsent@council.actratoronto.com
Chris Potter cpotter@council.actratoronto.com
Nicole St. Martin nstmartin@council.actratoronto.com
Spirit Synott ssynott@council.actratoronto.com

Caucus chairs, member advocates and Ombudsman:
Shereen Airth, Apprentice Advocate sairth@actratoronto.com, ext. 6621
John de Klein, Additional Background Performer Chair jdeklein@actratoronto.com
Taborah Johnson, Children's Advocate tjohnson@actratoronto.com
Jani Lauzon, Diversity Chair and Advocate jlauzon@actratoronto.com, ext. 6618
Shelley Cook, Stunt Committee Chair scook@actratoronto.com
Shawn Lawrence, Ombudsman slawrence@actratoronto.com, ext. 6604

ACTRA Toronto Staff
Is Here For You

ACTRA Toronto
General contact information
Tel: 416-928-2278 or toll free 1-877-913-2278
info@actratoronto.com
www.actratoronto.com
625 Church Street, 2nd Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2G1

Brian Topp, Executive Director

Commercial Agreement Interpretations
Judy Barefoot, Director, Tel: 416-642-6705
Kelly Davis, Steward, Tel: 416-642-6707
Cathy Wendt, Steward, Tel: 416-642-6714

Commercial Audition Callback Inquires
Claudette Allen Tel: 416-642-6713

Commercial Cheque Inquiries
Terri Black, Examiner, Tel: 416-642-6744
Lyn Franklin, Examiner, Tel: 416-642-6730
Brenda Smith, Examiner, Tel: 416-642-6729

Commercial Payment Inquiries
Tammy Boyer, Coordinator, Tel: 416-642-6739
Tereza Olivero, Coordinator, Tel: 416-642-6731
Laura McKelvey, Coordinator, Tel: 416-642-6728

Communications and Organizing
Karl Pruner, Director, Tel: 416-642-6726
Karen Woolridge, Public Relations Officer, Tel: 416-642-6710
Janesse Leung, Public Relations Officer - Web, Tel: 416-642-6747

Finance and Administration
Karen Ritson, Director, Tel: 416-642-6722

Independent Production Agreement (IPA), CBC TV & Radio, CTV, City-TV, Global, TVO, VisionTV Agreements
Sue Milling, Director, Tel: 416-642-6719
Indra Escobar, Senior Advisor, Tel: 416-642-6702
Erin Phillips, Steward: IPA, CityTV, CTV, VISION, TIP, Documentaries, Industrials, Reality TV, Tel: 416-642-6738 (Maternity Leave)
Gail Haupert, Steward: Audio Code, CBC, CFC, Documentaries, Industrials, Student Films Tel: 416-642-6709
Barbara Larose, Steward: IPA, CFC, Co-op, Student Films, UAP. Staff Liaison: Minors, Background Performers, Tel: 416-642-6712
Noreen Murphy, Steward: IPA, Animation, Dubbing, New Media, Pilots, Series, Video Games. Staff Liaison: Digital, Voice Performers, Tel: 416-642-6708
Richard Todd, Steward: IPA, Features, Series, NFB, TVO, Global. Staff Liaison: Health and Safety, Stunts, Tel: 416-642-6716
Clare Johnston, Steward: IPA, Features, Series. Staff Liaison: YEAA, Puppeteers, Tel: 416-642-6746
Cindy Ramjattan, Steward: IPA, Animation, CityTV, CTV, TIP, Reality, VisionTV, Tel: 416-642-6738

Toronto Indie Production
Tasso Lakas, TIP Coordinator, Tel: 416-642-6733

Member Training Intensive & Gordon Pinsent Studio Bookings
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Performers

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PUBLISHER
David Gale
dgale@council.actratoronto.com

EDITOR
Chris Owens
editor@actratoronto.com

STAFF EDITOR
Karen Woolridge
kwoolridge@actratoronto.com

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE
Heather Allin, David Gale, Art Hindle, Chris Owens, Karen Woolridge, Karl Pruner, Brian Topp

DESIGN and LAYOUT
Erick Querci
CreativeProcessDesign

ADVERTISING SALES
Karen Cowitz
kcowitz@rocketmail.com 416-461-4627

CONTRIBUTORS
Heather Allin
Salvatore Antonio
Rosemary Dunsmore
David Gale
Evert Houston
Tabby Johnson
Chris Owens
Theresa Tova
Oliver Ward
Tonya Lee Williams

ADDRESS EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
Performers magazine
c/o ACTRA Toronto
625 Church Street, Suite 200
Toronto, ON M4Y 2G1
Fax: (416) 928-2852
editor@actratoronto.com

JOIN THE TEAM
If you're an ACTRA Toronto Member and want to write an article or contribute original artwork or photos, we'd love to hear from you. Send an email to editor@actratoronto.com.

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(Hair and make-up, Stacey Martin)

Michael Riley

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For our young members: Kids can participate in an exciting full day, two-part workshop which includes self-tape coaching, callbacks and cold reads with top Casting Directors from *Life With Boys* and *iCarly* in Toronto, Vancouver and L.A. as well as two new series for YTV and Family Channel. Here's a phenomenal chance for our young members to hone their craft, shine and be considered for upcoming roles, while their parents get up to speed on all the latest Stage Parenting matters.

And for our young at heart members: Casting Director, **Millie Tom**, shares the secrets of nailing a one-line audition. Plus: Webseries creation and production, Green Screen acting techniques, and award-winning actor, **Michael Riley**, in an intimate Q & A on the essentials of Acting for the Camera. **And much more!**

ACTRA TORONTO

ACTRA Toronto Performers
625 Church Street, 2nd floor
Toronto, ON
M4Y 2G1

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