

**ACTRA TORONTO  
COUNCIL MEETING – VIA ZOOM  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2023**

**PRESENT**

David Gale, President, in the Chair  
Theresa Tova, Past President  
Lisa Michelle Cornelius, Vice-President  
Joy Tanner, Vice-President  
Louisa Zhu, Vice-President  
Jocelyne Zucco, Vice-President  
Dalmar Abuzeid  
George Alevizos  
Heather Allin  
Thom Allison  
Sandra Beckles  
Martha Chaves  
Wendy Crewson  
Thalia Gonzalez Kane  
Linda Kash (half day)  
Matt Lemche, alternate for Debra McGrath, Vice-President  
Tony Nappo  
Janet-Rose Nguyen  
Samy Osman, alternate for Fuad Ahmed  
Anand Rajaram  
Tonjha Richardson, alternate for Nicola Correia-Damude  
Samora Smallwood  
Alicia Turner

**REGRETS**

Gugun Deep Singh, Treasurer

**COMMITTEE & MEMBER CAUCUS CHAIRS, OMBUDSPERSON**

Larry Robertson, Vice-Chair, Apprentice Caucus

**OBSERVER**

Tim Beresford	Victoria Brooks, Chair, Apprentice Caucus
Nicola Correia-Damude, Councillor	Elana Dunkleman
Jameson Kraemer	Dina Pino
Shack Shackleton	

**ALSO PRESENT**

Alistair Hepburn, Executive Director, ACTRA Toronto.  
Gail Hauptert, Director, Film, Television and Digital Media, ACTRA Toronto  
August Lew, Director, Finance & Administration, ACTRA Toronto  
Karl Pruner, Director, Communications, ACTRA Toronto  
Luisa Alvarez Restrepo, Manager, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging, ACTRA Toronto  
Nicole Valentin, Director, Member Services, ACTRA Toronto  
Cass Enright, Media Relations, ACTRA Toronto  
Jennifer McGibbon, Public Relations Officer, ACTRA Toronto  
Jenn Paul, Director, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging, ACTRA National  
Freda Merritt-Gambrill, Recording Secretary, ACTRA Toronto

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. with President, David Gale, in the Chair.

The reading of the Land Acknowledgement Matt Lemche, Tonjha Richardson and Dalmar Abuzeid was followed by the reading of the Equality Statement by Samy Osman, Thalia Gonzalez Kane, Martha Chaves and Tony Nappo.

Mr. Gale welcomed and introduced the Councillors, alternates and staff.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

##### **MOTION #1**

**Moved by George Alevizos, seconded by Thalia Gonzalez Kane:**

**“That the Agenda for the ACTRA Toronto Council Meeting of August 9, 2023, be accepted.”**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 6, 2023**

There being no corrections to the Minutes, the following was passed:

##### **MOTION #2**

**Moved by Tonjha Richardson, seconded by Sandra Beckles:**

**“That the Minutes of the ACTRA Toronto Council Meeting of June 6, 2023, be accepted.”**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **TABLING OF OTHER BUSINESS TO BE INCLUDED PER #12**

- Bystander Training – Heather Allin.

Alicia Turner raised the following questions from the Stunt Committee: When the strike is over, will the productions that shut down still be required to honour previously booked days?

- How will UBCP’s new contract affect the rest of us, both now and during our future IPA Negotiations?
- It seems some productions are somewhat notorious for “postponing for weather” to the point of making it seem like they’re abusing this hole in the contract, at least for stunts. What can we do to stop this until we can hopefully have it removed from the IPA next round?

#### **ALL THINGS US FILM UNIONS UPDATE & DISCUSSION**

David Gale and Alistair Hepburn reported on the WGA and SAG strike.

Mr. Gale said that he was interviewed by CBC re the WGA and SAG strike. The media outlets all focus on the writers and performers strike in the US and ignore the lockout of Canadian commercial performers. Mr. Gale ensures that he discusses that our performers have been locked out for 16 months in every interview. The last WGA strike was 100 days and the current strike is going to bypass this as they are into day 100 today. The WGA and AMPTP (Alliance

of Motion Picture and Television Producers) returned to the table last week. The AMPTP had insisted on a media blackout but the WGA was disappointed that they broke this agreement. There is absolute optimism, however, that they will return to the bargaining table.

SAG is also working hard to get back to the bargaining table.

ACTRA and SAG are working together to organize a dual Day of Action.

There was concern raised that *Barbie* and *Oppenheimer* sales were high without the performers selling the movies.

Mr. Gale mentioned that Fan Expo Canada is on August 24-27<sup>th</sup> and it is expected that a lot of SAG-AFTRA performers will be in attendance.

It was noted that SAG has over 100 interim agreements that their members can work under and their goal s to get folks back to the table.

Ms Tova said that she was hesitant about supporting these films, i.e. *Barbie* and *Oppenheimer*, because of the strike. Mr. Hepburn said that both WGA and SAG have not asked that these movies should be boycotted. This is about supporting the arts and the artists – including those who work at the cinemas.

Mr. Gale said that the residual model is different in the States. They make their money from the first viewing.

Alicia Turner said that she too was confused about promoting and supporting productions. Mr. Hepburn said that SAG have said that its members should not do any promotions for films that have been struck. Our contract is still in effect. In terms of our members breaking any laws or by-laws, they are not. Our agreement is different. SAG has been clear that if you work for a struck producer, you will not be able to join.

Wendy Crewson said that with Canadian productions you are contractually obliged to promote those films. Mr. Hepburn said that there would be a rider to do PR work and, if so, the performer is obligated to do so. As a Canadian resident and someone who has signed an ACTRA contract, the performer would be in breach if they did not.

Mr. Hepburn said that we go into IPA negotiations in the fall of 2024. If agents can negotiate the SAG contract into a rider that would cover it. If performers are working under another union, SAG cannot tell them what they can or cannot do.

Lisa Michelle Cornelius said that they are allowing their members to work but just not on AMTPT productions. She said that she does not feel guilty working for Canadian productions.

Mr. Hepburn pointed out that if any US studio or streamer is signatory to the IPA and hires all Canadians, SAG cannot stop that.

Ms Cornelius said that she was interviewed and that the commercial lockout did not even come up. The Canadian media is so infatuated with what is going on in the States and they do not care about what is happening here.

Thalia Gonzalez Kane suggested that there should be three bullet points on our website re the commercial lockout, i.e.

- Wages – pay ACTRA performers for the work that they put in
- Attempting to slash wages.
- Attempting to use performers with no addition payment.

Mr. Hepburn talked about Drew Barrymore working under a SAG contract in Canada with non-union performers. He said that she was working under the Temporary Foreign Workers permit that was not designed for this purpose and

that the program does not seek input from ACTRA. A Non Objection Letter is not required if the work being done is two weeks or less on a commercial shoot. We are trying to fix this loophole. This permit was originally meant for farm workers.

## **AI UPDATE & DISCUSSION**

Mr. Hepburn said that as many have read, there have been some concerns brought forward about Zoom and their license agreement regarding the potential use of AI.

Zoom has clarified some of their position, but some of the questions remain unanswered for sure. Sadly, there remains no rules or legislation in place to stem any over reach. Teams also has AI usage, as does Google Meet, Cisco's WebEx, etc. If you use a smartphone, a digital meeting platform or any audio or video app, you are providing data that can and likely will be used in some form of machine learning. Even Audacity, the audio recording software used by many performers, also has built in AI tools. Ultimately, you will need to decide for yourself if you wish to continue using virtual meeting software. At present, you need to opt in to using Zoom's "Zoom IQ Meeting Summary" or "Zoom IQ Team Chat Compose" to grant Zoom a license for AI training. ACTRA has not implemented either of those tools.

We have already flagged this type of over-reach and others to the Ministry of Innovation, Science & Industry (ISI) and have additional meetings scheduled with that team there shortly.

In the meantime, do you use Gmail? Google has a program called Security Sandbox that uses AI to scan every attachment you send or receive.

Hotmail or Outlook? Microsoft has been crowing about their AI innovations since 2018.

Love your Apple products? Apple launched Siri in 2011...They tend not to use the term AI though. They say machine learning, or as used 13 times in their recent launch of the Apple Vision Pro- "magic".

Mr. Hepburn explained how auto captioning works on Zoom. It is the same in any virtual meeting platform. We need to fight for copyright protection. We have been living in an AI society since the 1950s. Our cellphones are listening to us at all times. Everything we do is being captured in some shape or form. We need:

- Consent
- Compensation
- Control

ACTRA National is working with FIA on this file.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. Gale reported.

- On his interviews on the John Oakley Show, Toronto Star and Toronto Life. Although he mentioned the NCA lockout it was not mentioned in the articles.
- Regarding the NCA negotiations – we remain cautiously optimistic that with the help of a mediator that there is a path forward.

## **WORD FROM SET**

- Tony Nappo made suggestions regarding the ACTRA Awards gender performance categories .
- Permit issued to a non-union stunt performer was raised. Mr. Hepburn said that there is nothing in the ACTRA Constitution or By-Laws to not approve this. There are no qualifications for Stunt Coordinators in place either.

Previous Stunt Committees have resisted to put rules on low budget productions. Alicia Turner said that the Committee is working on this. UBCP has put in place a mentorship program. Mr. Hepburn said that ACTRA Toronto put this forward to the past committee but it was turned down. We have a seasoned Stunt Coordinator who is mentoring this performer. The committee was not pleased with what went down. Our process does work but the community needs to come together.

- Janet-Rose Nguyen asked how information be disseminated more clearly. Mr. Hepburn said that ACTRA is “you” (Council). Council leads this organization. According to LoA, only two Councillors have engaged with the Locked out Actors Instagram account. Mr. Hepburn said that there are lot of members who do not understand the process. We are a very small union and are trying to do a lot. Our goal is to get performers back to work.
- Ms Tova said that we do what we can to educate our members. She said that Northern Ontario members are being asked to work as locals in Ottawa. Mr. Hepburn noted that contracts do not always come to us in time for this to be caught in advance. We always contact the performer if they are asked to breach the IPA. Should this happen, members should contact Gail Hauptert with specifics.
- Thalia Gonzalez Kane asked that a list of Councillors be put on our Instagram page of who members can contact should they have a question for Councillors. Mr. Hepburn said that this is doable and will talk to the Communications Department to make this happen.
- Joy Tanner raised a query from a member from the Deaf community. Is it up to the member to arrange for an ASL interpreter or production when meeting with production? She asked whether ACTRA Toronto provides this service or if we get a discount from ASL interpreters. Mr. Hepburn responded that ASL interpreters do not come cheap but if there is a funding model, we can look into it. Members will have to make it known to production that they require this in advance but we would not like our performers to be shut out. Luisa Alvarez Restrepo said that performers can reach out to this group: [hello@dso-orphe.ca](mailto:hello@dso-orphe.ca).
- Samy Osman said that there are some positive comments in favour of ACTRA on Locked Out Actors. He said that being a regular alternate on Council, his perspective about ACTRA has changed. He is aware of the amazing work that is done. It is very valuable to have members attend as observers.
- Tova pointed out that anyone asked to make a statement on behalf of ACTRA must go through the President and Executive Director.

#### **NCA UPDATE (IN CAMERA – COUNCILLORS AND ALTERNATES ONLY)**

Mr. Hepburn gave Council an in-camera update on the NCA negotiations.

#### **LET’S TALK ELECTIONS!**

Mr. Hepburn said that an Election Committee will have to be struck. Members on the committee cannot run for elections and they cannot publicly support any particular candidate. The October Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup> and the election guidelines will be sent to Council prior to that meeting.

#### **EXECUTIVE & COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### ***Theresa Tova – Past President***

##### *Entertainment Industry Coalition (EIC)*

Good conversation with Karl Pruner, Director of Communications. In the process of a soft launch on the move to our own ACTRA built EIC website. Both sites will be up for a few months, but the most current agent information will be on the new site. Will launch more officially with EIC agents community meeting in the fall.

##### *Association of Acting Coaches and Educators (AACE)*

- Processing applications for membership up to 100 and growing.
- Speaking to workshop leaders and planning AACE fall sessions.

- Lining up educational institutions and studios for further conversations.

***Liaison: Treasurer, Gugun Deep Singh***

*Apprentice Caucus – Chair, Victoria Brooks Vice-Chair, Larry Robertson*

The Apprentice Caucus met June 7<sup>th</sup> for 90 minutes on Zoom.

- Lots of discussion on the NCA and next steps. Continued education provided on the structure of the ICA/ACA as it relates to ACTRA and the NCA.
- Questions on producing your own work, and how to get funding.
- The caucus is excited to get back to doing in-person meetings starting in August.

The Apprentice Caucus will meet next Thursday, August 17<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm at the ACTRA offices, followed by a happy hour meet-up at The Bishop and Belcher - all are welcome!!

***Liaisons: Vice-Presidents, Jocelyne Zucco and Debra McGrath***

*Act Your Age (AYA) – Co-Chairs, Heather Dick and Anne Wootten*

- Update on the AYA Brainstorming Session on Zoom on Thursday, June 22, 2023.

This was a get-together session for AYA members to provide input on their priorities and what workshops and opportunities they would like AYA to develop for them.

Heather gave everyone an Audio Project update - the spots are available on the AYA page for listening, downloading, and posting on their social media platforms.

They discussed the AYA name. A request had been put forward by a committee member prior to the meeting that the name be changed. Jennifer Higgin explained the origin of the name as she and Theresa Tova were the original committee co-chairs. Several of the members present objected to the name 'Act Your Age' because it sounds against to them and/or demeaning. They decided this could be an ongoing discussion for now.

A member suggested AYA could create a sub-committee of members who would be willing to act as volunteer readers for self-taping auditions. AYA has begun a list of volunteers.

They compiled a list of the workshops and events that were suggested, and are looking at the most in demand, as well as how they can be most efficiently and effectively produced.

- Suggested Workshops

Most members who attended our session were in favour of a hybrid format of In-Person and On-Line Workshops.

Topics suggested were:

- table reads
- movement, voice & voice over
- memory work
- scene work
- improv
- spinal care – increased amount of computer work & phones change our posture & we all need to work on it for better health, stamina and stability on set
- writing workshops so we can learn to write scenes, short films for ourselves
- possible meeting with ACTRA writers (young as well as experienced) to ask if they would be willing to write scenes with/for AYA members

- series of workshops (self-taping & other) at cost but with discounts for members
- Other: They discussed the idea of reaching out to the Fall Membership Conference Committee with respect to having a ‘virtual’ table for meeting new members.

***Liaison: No Liaison appointed***

*Background Advocate – Shereen Airth*

- Staff interaction regarding member questions or issues.
- Continue to direct members and performers to staff primarily Business Reps and Membership, to the web site, to FAQ, to Background Page, to Forms, to Zone map, to AFBS, CRA, to Child Advocate, to Ombudsperson and other support platforms.
- Responded to online inquiries, emails, texts, and phone calls.
- BG is very concerned regarding AI.
- A lot of online discussion regarding SAG strike and ramifications, received a number of calls and online discussions regarding current impact of strike on Canadian productions and industry at large.
- Shared the recent passing of a number of BG performers.
- Email fatigue.
- Wellness calls.

***Liaisons: Not assigned***

*Child Advocate – Angelica Alejandro*

- New Member calls to parents have not been as successful during the month of July due to school holidays and some are on vacation. Will continue the list into the fall.
- Productions with Minors have called in with questions about working with minors, mainly educating the newer Minors Coordinators.
- Continue to answer questions from parents and guardians of members and non-members contacting the Child Advocate about the Union, the role of the Child Advocate and responding to any questions or concerns they have which currently are in regards to the strike which has impacted work and auditions.

***Liaisons: Vice-Presidents Lisa Michelle Cornelius, Gugun Deep Singh and Louisa Zhu***

*Diversity and Inclusion*

Lisa Michelle Cornelius said that there was nothing to report as the Diversity and Inclusion Committee is still looking for Co-Chairs.

***Liaisons: Vice-President, Joy Tanner and Treasurer, Gugun Deep Singh***

*Editorial – Chair, Joy Tanner*

In the first three months since the launch, the new website achieved over 5,600 pageviews and almost 2,300 unique impressions (comparatively, the old website received 2,970 pageviews and 1,800 unique impressions over the same three-month period in 2022).

*Articles in June/July:*

- Spotlight on Outstanding Performance winners (Raven Dauda, Billy MacLellan and bahia watson; Eric Peterson will be recording a podcast in August with his *Junior’s Giant* cast members and director)
- Red carpet interviews (hosted by Paul Constable)
- ACTRA Spotlight was launched via member eblast on June 22. Articles to date:

- Applause (spring 2023); submission deadline for summer 2023 is August 15
- Commercial Spotlight: June and July articles
- Permit Access Fund article by Lisa Michelle Cornelius
- Upcoming: accent discrimination article by Yvette McKoy
- Upcoming: Interview with Award of Excellence recipient, Angelica Lisk-Hann
- Upcoming: Performance Awards by Dayo Ade
- The Stunt Committee has approved the revitalization of Angelica Lisk-Hann's Stunt Stars series.
- Up to four articles in 2023

Confirmed articles: Interview by Stunt Committee member Dillon Jagersky with 2023 Stunt Ensemble winners Tig Fong and JF Lachapelle (August); Interview by Stunt Committee member John Stead with 2023 Stunt Award recipient Paul Rutledge (August); and Women in Stunts by Stunt Committee Member Alicia Turner (October). The Stunt Committee to choose topic/individual for fourth article.

Q3 Editorial Committee confirmed to be confirmed.

The Q2/Q3 editorial lineup has been approved and outreach has begun to confirm writers.

***Liaison: Vice-President, Debra McGrath***

*outACTRAto – Co-Chairs, Thalia Gonzalez Kane and Matt Lemche*

General

- Committee meeting held on June 07, 2023.
- Next meeting August 14, 2023, 12:30 PM–2:00 PM
- Sent a general survey to membership in attempt to grow meeting attendance, get feedback about concerns, and alert members to co-chair term ending at the end of the year.

Social Media Subcommittee

- Social Media campaign for Guidelines for Working with Queer Performers, tips for industry professionals to respectfully and thoughtfully engage with 2SLGBTQIA+ performers, is complete.
- Reach on Instagram continues to be larger than ever.
- Excellent responses from WTSR 3 posts as well as Inside Out Film Fest ticket giveaway.
- Discussing outACTRAto leaving Twitter as it doesn't currently feel like a safe space for our community.

WTSR Subcommittee

- Event held virtually on June 19th, 2023, 7:00 PM–8:30 PM.
- 57 attendees, including casting directors, WGC members, and E20 participants.
- Received constructive and very positive feedback from survey sent to panelists and attendees.

Pride Celebrations Subcommittee

- ACTRA Toronto, led by outACTRAto members along with their friends and allies, marched in the 2023 Toronto Pride Parade.
- Becky Ablack was the Red Carpet Correspondent for the event and conducted several great interviews with members about issues facing 2SLGBTQIA+ performers.

***Liaisons: President, David Gale and Vice-President, Louisa Zhu***

*Stunt Committee – Rotating Co-Chairs, Dan Iaboni and Kara Wooten (until July 2023)*

The Stunt Committee held an emergency meeting via Zoom from 2:00pm to 3:30pm on Thursday, June 29, 2023.





Submitted by Executive Liaison Joy Tanner

- Nicole Valentin took over Maxine Bower's position as Staff Liaison at the end of July.
- On July 26<sup>th</sup>, Gail Hauptert, Director of Film, TV & Digital Media at ACTRA Toronto hosted a webinar to learn about Low Budget Films, Co-Ops, and Digital Self-Promotion. There is a fact sheet available upon request.
- First in person meeting scheduled for August 23<sup>rd</sup> from 2 to 4 pm. Conversation to include Fall Planning and Next Initiative.
- Information for the Labour Day Parade has gone out.
- Working on the outstanding Mike Wong production proposal for creating economically feasible reels for the members.
- Working on updating a current email list.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Mr. Hepburn reported on the following:

- CRTC – ACTRA National takes the lead on this. They pushed back on Bell Media's submission to the CRTC. They are looking to spend less on telling Canadian stories.
- EOne sale – they were bought by Hasbro for \$4 billion. Hasbro then sold most of it to Lionsgate, except for *Peppa Pig* and *PJ Max* for \$500 million.

### *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion & Belonging*

Luisa Alvarez Restrepo, Manager, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging

- Provided support for and attended Appendix 33 Meeting which focused on Disability Justice.
- Attended Banff World Media Festival where we announced the launch of the Permit Access Fund. The Festival also has an Indigenous Screen Summit where I connected with Ontario projects that were pitched. The creators were excited to know ACTRA is open to working with Indigenous creatives and want to continue conversations with us about becoming ACTRA signatory. I also connected with advocacy organizations to talk about how we can work together, BIPOC producers to talk about how ACTRA can support them, and with ACTRA Toronto members who were not aware of our efforts in DEIB. Overall, the feedback I received was that industry members were really glad to not only see an ACTRA presence but the focus on DEIB.
- We launched the Permit Access Fund! The fund, supported by Warner Bros. Discover Access Canada, is a \$25,000 that will cover 50% of Principal Performer/Actor permits on low budget productions. To learn more about the program and criteria, [check out the Toronto page here](#). Please share with your contacts!
- Had a conversation with outACTRAto and EP Canada to advise on terminology for their new platform. This included connecting them to the Disability Screen Office.
- Our community partnership with TIFF continues this year. We received 5 complimentary passes that were shared with performers from underrepresented communities as well as a discount code for their Industry and Conference pass. If you'd like to get the code, please fill out [this form](#).
- We supported the Female Eye Film Festival through a cash sponsorship.
- Accent Discrimination: the sub-committee met on June 26. I supported the meeting and continue conversations with members about raising awareness about this issue.
- Attended ACTRA National Hair & Makeup Equity Townhall.
- Connected with a performer who had left the union due to frustrations about diversity and inclusion in the industry. The performer was excited to know about the work that we're doing both internally and externally.
- Met with the Black Screen Office to talk about best practices to cast authentically.
- Attended the CFC Actors Showcase.
- Attended NCA Negotiations.

- In conversations with Reel Asian to renew our partnership. We will be supporting the Pitch Competition once again.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

- Bystander Training – Heather Allin reported that she took the Artistic Mental Health Coordinator Course. There are free courses available and she strongly recommended that Councillors visit these sites: <https://www.aftermetoo.com/training/> and Bystander Intervention: [www.RightToBe.org](http://www.RightToBe.org) – <https://righttobe.org/our-training/>
  - When the strike is over, will the productions that shut down still be required to honour previously booked days? Any days previously booked will need to be honoured or paid out.
  - How will UBCP's new contract affect the rest of us, both now and during our future IPA Negotiations? This will allow the IPA to set the bar in the go-forward for negotiations.
  - It seems some productions are somewhat notorious for “postponing for weather” to the point of making it seem like they're abusing this hole in the contract, at least for stunts. What can we do to stop this until we can hopefully have it removed from the IPA next round? If there are concerns, members should contact the Business Rep. There actually needs to be a weather event to invoke this article.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**The meeting adjourned 2:00 p.m.**