

**ACTRA TORONTO
COUNCIL MEETING – VIA ZOOM
MONDAY, MAY 1, 2023**

PRESENT

David Gale, President, in the Chair
Theresa Tova, Past President
Gugun Deep Singh, Treasurer
Lisa Michelle Cornelius, Vice-President
Debra McGrath, Vice-President
Joy Tanner, Vice-President
Louisa Zhu, Vice-President
Jocelyne Zucco, Vice-President
Dalmar Abuzeid
Fuad Ahmed, afternoon only
George Alevizos
Heather Allin
Martha Chaves
Nicola Correia-Damude
Wendy Crewson, morning only
Thalia Gonzalez Kane
Tony Nappo, afternoon only
Samy Osman, alternate for Thom Allison
Tonjha Richardson, alternate for Sandra Beckles
Oshi Wanigasekera, alternate for Anand Rajaram
Kara Wooten, alternate for Alicia Turner

REGRETS

Linda Kash
Janet-Rose Nguyen
Samora Smallwood

COMMITTEE & MEMBER CAUCUS CHAIRS, OMBUDSPERSON

Victoria Brooks, Chair, Apprentice Caucus
John McGrath, Ombudsperson

OBSERVER

Tavia Pereira
Dina Pino
Larry Robertson, Vice-Chair, Apprentice Caucus

ALSO PRESENT

Alistair Hepburn, Executive Director, ACTRA Toronto.
Judy Barefoot, Director, Commercial Production, ACTRA Toronto
Gail Hauptert, Director, Film, Television and Digital Media, ACTRA Toronto
August Lew, Director, Finance and Administration, ACTRA Toronto
Karl Pruner, Director, Communications, ACTRA Toronto
Nicole Valentin, Director, Member Services, ACTRA Toronto
Luisa Alvarez Restrepo, Manager, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging, ACTRA Toronto
Marie Kelly, National Executive Director, ACTRA National
Maxine Bower, Special Advisor, ACTRA Toronto
Tania Cardwell, Stunt Liaison, ACTRA Toronto
Cass Enright, Media Relations, ACTRA Toronto
Jennifer McGibbon, Public Relations Officer, ACTRA Toronto
Freda Merritt-Gambrill, Recording Secretary, ACTRA Toronto

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. with President, David Gale, in the Chair.

The reading of the Land Acknowledgement by Tonjha Richardson and Theresa Tova was followed by the reading of the Equality Statement Louisa Zhu, Samy Osman, Martha Chaves, George Alevizos, Oshi Wanigasekera, Dalmar Abuzeid and Wendy Crewson.

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION #1

Moved by Dalmar Abuzeid, seconded by Louisa Zhu:

“That the Agenda for the ACTRA Toronto Council Meeting of May 1, 2023, be accepted.”

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 6, 2023

MOTION #2

The following amendment were made to the Minutes:

Page 1: Dalmar Abuzeid was not present.

Page 2: WORD FROM SET, second bullet point, first sentence should read: “Louisa Zhu asked re AI, how will this apply to productions?” **brought up the use of AI in some voice work.”**

Page 5: Insert a heading **Member Education** after the *Diversity and Inclusion* report and move the second and third last paragraphs under it, as follows:

Member Education

Louisa Zhu reported that the Unconscious Bias Course is now online. It is an excellent course.

Lisa Michelle Cornelius invited all committee chairs to offer the Respect on Set course to their members. They can reach out to Nicole Valentin should they wish to register for this course.

Moved by Gugun Deep Singh, seconded by Samy Osman:

“That the Minutes of the ACTRA Toronto Council Meeting of April 6, 2023, as amended, be accepted.”

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

TABLING OF OTHER BUSINESS TO BE INCLUDED PER #12

There were no items to include under Other Business.

NCA & OLRB UPDATE

Marie Kelly, National Executive Director, reported on the NCA negotiations. ACTRA will be going into negotiations this week. A lot of work has been done to get us to this point.

Ms Kelly was in attendance for the opening statements at the OLRB but she is excluded at the hearings as she is a witness.

On the NCA bargaining front, ACTRA has signed a Letter of Continuance with Cossette. ACTRA is also back in negotiations with the ACA. It has taken us a monumental amount of effort to get us to this place. ACTRA will deliver the proposals to the ACA today. Ms Kelly said that she is proud of the staff and the bargaining team who have pulled this together.

Alistair Hepburn reported that the Egg Farmers commercial is being done under the NCA. We had to bend but we learned that some folks are unhappy about it. There are rumours that we have done it again with Walmart. Mr. Hepburn clarified that we have not and that Walmart is still with Publicis.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

David Gale reported on the following:

- Council elections are upcoming. Mr. Gale suggested that Councillors inform Mr. Hepburn if they plan on not running for re-election.
- Attended the *Leaving No One Behind: Building a Stronger Ontario* on April 13th at the Empire Club of Canada – a discussion with Monte McNaughton, Ontario Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. Minister McNaughton is very interested in our business.
- Bill C-11 – the Online Streaming Act – was passed by the House of Commons and received Royal Assent on April 27th.
- AABP Member, Vincent (Vinnie) Lisson, passed away on set of natural causes, on April 24th.
- Attended a great Stunt Committee meeting. The Committee has agreed to have Rotating Chairs every four months. The first Co-Chairs are Kara Wooten and Dan Iaboni. The entire process has been so positive and has been handled respectfully and honourably.
- April 19th, attended the National Canadian Film Day 's screening of *John and the Missus*, celebrating Gordon Pinsent.
- Interactive Ontario Gaming Conference of up-and-coming gamers – a very dynamic group of people. Had a great conversation with one of the creators an ACTRA performer had suggested that they look into hiring ACTRA performers and they are so pleased that they did.
- Participated in the info picket outside H&R Block. He believes that the picket lines are working.

WORD FROM SET

- Louisa Zhu said that she talked to a performer who had joined ACTRA with credits. They were told by their (EIC) agent that they should drop their ACTRA membership. Now that agent has dropped them. Can this person be reinstated? Mr. Hepburn responded that, typically, this is dealt with on a case-by-case basis. It does require back up. We do ensure that every member, before they decide to resign, is walked through the benefits of membership and the pros and cons of going on withdrawal and/or resigning. Ultimately, it is recommended that they talk to Nicole Valentin.

- Joy Tanner said a lot of members are concerned about the writers strike and how difficult it is right now. Non-union performers cannot wait to get into ACTRA – there is a bit of concern and a lot of enthusiasm.
- Victoria Brook suggested that Members should be educated re working out of zone and that working as a local when not a local is not permitted.
- Nicola Correia Damude enquired whether anything was done about a member’s post online that violated ACTRA. Mr. Hepburn responded that discussions with members cannot be disclosed.
- Deb McGrath wanted to know how the WGA strike would affect the work of performers in Canada. Mr. Hepburn responded that they are still in negotiations and we were monitoring the situation.

ACTRA AWARDS IN TORONTO WRAP UP

- Ms McGrath said that the ACTRA Awards in Toronto was excellent. “David knocked it out of the park!” She understood the reason for a smaller event but suggested in future that the venue be larger and continue with a daytime theme. It was confusing on the red carpet. Let’s not always end with the male performer – alternate it. Mr. Hepburn said that it was done this way because both the female/non-conforming recipients weren’t in attendance.
- Joy Tanner said that Karen Thorne-Stone (Ontario Creates) loved Mr. Gale’s speech and wanted to know who writes his speeches. Loved the venue, interviews and photo ops. She was glad for the opportunity to be seated with Ms Thorne-Stone and David Hope (Actors’ Fund of Canada). She would’ve glad to have known ahead of time that she was to be seated with them.
- Ms Tanner said kudos to Jennifer McGibbon for successfully organizing her first ACTRA Awards in Toronto show.
- Victoria Brooks thanked the decision-makers for inviting her – she was glad to be included. She said that members did not understand the reason why they were excluded.
- It was noted that the Casting Directors said that holding the event during the day disrupted their business day.
- Jocelyne Zucco said kudos to David Gale. His speech was funny and brave. Respect! She thanked and congratulated Ms McGibbon, Mr. Hepburn and August Lew for a fantastic event.
- Ms Zucco that the nominees do not know that there is a specific jury that selected them. Is there a way to make it known that the winners are selected by a jury. She would like that the Jurors, Co-Chairs and Committee are thanked for their work. Mr. Gale had thanked them from the stage.
- Theresa Tova said that Mr. Gale his speech brought her to tears. She did not know that he was “coming out”. Ms Tova said that she loved the venue and the intimacy and voted to stay at the Palais Royale. The event was structured beautifully but she would have loved it to go on longer. The noted that the sponsors loved it. Congrats to all!
- Louisa Zhu said that it was her very first ACTRA Awards in Toronto and it totally exceeded all her expectations. She too agreed that the red carpet was confusing.
- George Alevizos said that he enjoyed his first ever Awards but would have loved a bigger party. Overall it was great. The venue was accessible from the front.
- Gugun Deep Singh said out that the SAG Awards are also limited and exclusive. He pointed out that no member money was spent on our Awards and all the money came from sponsors. Sponsorship monies were smaller. Ms Lew did an incredible job to put this together. What we witnessed was a wonderful, viable model going forward. He was glad how it was managed. He agreed with Ms McGrath’s comments.
- Mr. Hepburn said that costs had increased by 30% and that it was 50% cheaper holding the event during the day. We would’ve like to make it available to all.
- Wendy Crewson also loved the day time event. We took the best of both worlds and refined it into an elegant event. She said it would have been good to not have to be rushed at the end.

- Joy Tanner suggested that in future a lottery system be considered to invite the membership. She also suggested swag for the nominees.
- Mr. Gale said that as a performer he had an amazing team. Cass Enright always makes us look and sound great. All the work he did was top notch!

ACTRA TORONTO LIFE MEMBER VOTE

Council voted on which members should be granted Life Membership. They were in favour of recommending three recipients. Louisa Zhu abstained.

Mr. Gale advised those present not to make the selection public until ACTRA National approves of the recommendation from Toronto Council.

EXECUTIVE & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Association of Acting Coaches & Educators (AACE)

Theresa Tova reported that work continues on this file.

Financials

Gugun Deep Singh reported that we have a very vigorous audit going on. Preparation has been a little more labour intensive. This has been compounded because there have been scheduling issues. No hard numbers to offer yet.

Liaison: No Liaison appointed

AABP Caucus (ACTRA Additional Background Performers) – Advocate, Shereen Airth

Victoria Brooks pointed out that Background Members feel that they are not getting support and do not have a direct connection to Council to have their concerns heard.

Tony Nappo said that Anett Rumanoczky would be more than happy to sit on their behalf. Heather Allin suggested that the Background community be involved in selecting an Advocate. Mr. Hepburn said that the Executive have made a suggestion that the Background Advocate mentor a new person to step into that role. He explained that the appointment of the Advocate is essentially a job interview. Ms Allin said that we should involve the community in putting a name forward.

Ms Allin said that we must be inclusive in every way. There needs to be some kind of conversation on how to do this in an inclusive way.

Liaison: Treasurer, Gugun Deep Singh

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

The Apprentice Caucus met April 12th for 90 min on Zoom.

Lots of education opportunities around member “working as a ***** local”. Advised that working as a local in an area that you do not live is a breach of the IPA, and members could be disciplined if they worked out of the zone as a local. Lots of concerns about the lack of knowledge in this area. Also offered empathy that as Apprentice members, it is very enticing to work the job, simply to get that ‘last credit’.

- Concerns about a model/talent agent that are operating with some concerning practices. Advised that ACTRA has no jurisdiction with agents, but shared links with Ontario Consumer Protection, and Ontario’s Model and Talent Agency rights page.
- Confusion over signing “agree” on a BG voucher prior to the end of the day, and putting personal information on the voucher, to give to wardrobe for the day. Advised that you are encouraged to wait until the end of the day, and the terms are clear before signing ‘agree’, and to never put important details on a voucher before it is necessary.
- Members working in BG are feeling that AABP wants to have more of a voice and place to be heard and share information. Shared that AABP caucus is still not running.

The Apprentice Caucus will meet next on Wednesday, May 10th at 11am on Zoom, and continue on Zoom until they can secure a regular monthly slot to meet at the ACTRA offices.

Liaisons: Vice-Presidents, Jocelyne Zucco and Debra McGrath

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

Co-Chairs Heather Dick and Anne Wootten have begun work on the following three projects:

- Promotional Strategy for roll-out of “This is What _____ Sounds Like”. With input from John McGrath, former AYA Chair, and member Tracey Hoyt, creator of the project, they will be creating a press release to inform the membership, spread the word to Casting Directors and (with guidance from business reps) send to signatory advertising agencies. The spots are available for listening on the AYA page, and members are now able to download them for distribution on their social media platforms.
- Plans are underway for a movement workshop with member Jeffrey Prentice on Thursday, May 25, 2023, from noon to 2:00 pm. This is a hybrid in-person and online opportunity for members to refine fitness goals, help with stamina, and members’ ability to stand on set!
- They will be holding a brainstorming session in June. The date is TBA, and we are planning a Zoom get together session for AYA members to tell us what workshops and opportunities they want the Committee to develop.

Liaisons: Not assigned

Child Advocate – Angelica Alejandro

New Member Calls to Parents and Guardians of Minors. Continuing to respond to member emails and making follow-up calls. No new issues to report.

Liaisons: Lisa Michelle Cornelius, Gugun Deep Singh and Louisa Zhu

Diversity and Inclusion – Co-Chairs, Chattrisse Dolabaille and Janet-Rose Nguyen

- Their inaugural Picture Day is officially wrapped, all follow-up between participants and photographers has been completed.
- Set our fourth committee meeting of the year for May 3rd.
- Announced the call for readers for *Working the Scene in Colour 17* .
- The Accent Discrimination Sub-Committee had their second meeting on April 21st.
- Highlighted that our Sandi Ross Award winner Amanda Parris won big at the CSAs with her web series *Revenge of the Black Best Friend*.

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

Editorial – Chair, Joy Tanner

- The most significant thing to report at this time is to highlight the links to the photos from the ACTRA AWARDS, which dropped on April 28th, 2023.
www.performersmagazine.com/red-carpet-21st-actra-awards-in-toronto/
- Next article to look out for will be the showcase of AoE, Angelica Lisk-Hann.
- Next Spotlight will focus on Deb McGrath’s short film, *Junior’s Giant*.
- Would like to point out how easy the site is to use!
- Next Editorial meeting, TBA

Liaison: Vice-President, Debra McGrath

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

General

- Committee meeting held on April 12, 2023.
- Next meeting May 10, 2-3:30pm.
- ACTRA Toronto President David Gale gave a brief NCA update.
- Fulsome discussion had about award categories, and how they can best represent the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

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 nearly complete. One more installment.
- New outACTRAto members have been actively posting.
- Reach on Instagram continues to be larger than ever.

Social Reading Group

- Met on April 18, 2023, in the evening.
- Read first half of *Angels in America*.

WTSR Subcommittee

- Event date set: May 19th, 2023, 7:00 PM–8:30 PM.
- Writer submissions open, jury call deadline was April 26th.
- Planning in full swing, working to engage ASL interpreters for the event, something that was lacking in previous editions.

Inside Out: Queer Your Stories Short Film Competition

- *Plant Daddy* is in post-production, nearing completion.
- Invitation extended to attend next outACTRAto meeting to share experiences.

Pride Celebrations Subcommittee

- outACTRAto members as ACTRA pride “marshals” brought to executive with enthusiastic support.

Liaisons: Past President, Theresa Tova and Vice-President, Louisa Zhu

Stunt Committee – Rotating Chairs: Kara Wooten and Dan Iaboni

Submitted by Alicia Turner

- They are excited to be back!
- In process of Developing Mandate through Shared Document.
- In process of creating shared document to bring up and move forward topics. Details and Doc sharing in progress.
- Sending out poll in favor of creating WhatsApp chat for Stunt Committee.

Stunt Women's Committee – Submitted by Alicia Turner

Women's committee has not had a meeting in a while. However, they are overjoyed at Angelica Lisk-Hann's Award of Excellence. She represented stunts ladies, stunt people and ACTRA so impeccably at our awards ceremony. Go Ang!

Liaisons: Vice-Presidents, Louisa Zhu and Jocelyne Zucco

Voice Committee: Co-Chairs, Krystal Meadows, Scott Farley and Kate Ziegler

- An AI subcommittee has been formed and we have received quite the response already.
- Outreach has begun for the ACTRA Toronto/Artist2Artist Voice Showcase which will take place in the summer.
- The Voice Committee would like to support the calls from members for a Town Hall to discuss the Letter of Continuance that was signed by Cossette on April 7th. Members have been receiving audition notices and are eager to understand what the new terms are.

Liaisons: President, David Gale and Vice-President, Joy Tanner

YEAA

Co-Chair, Tavia Pereira

- YEAA had its first meeting on April 18th, over zoom
- The turnout was small, but the members were engaged
- YEAA really enjoyed the Demo Screening and would like more showcase initiatives with a variety of casting directors
- Discussed potential new initiatives:
 - Instagram/Tiktok education reels -> fun skits to dispel misconceptions about ACTRA
 - Working the Scene Gen Z - > looking to have it be an acting workshop.
 - YEAA Networking Socials - >looking to showcase YEAA members and have a social afterwards. Potentially looking to have the events sponsored.
 - Acting Workshops - > would like them to focus more on group work than audition work
- There was a real sense that YEAA is longing for community and group initiatives
- Next meeting is TBD in May. The next meeting will be in person.

Submitted by Joy Tanner

- YEAA met on April 17, 2023
- First online meeting of Committee
- Attendance included six members, plus President David Gale, Special Advisor Maxine Bower and Executive Vice-President Joy Tanner
- Minutes were taken by James Gerus
- Blue Sky Breakout explored the following:
 - Initiative Examples with Lynn Cormack on Nailing the Small Role
 - Additional Casting Director Collaborations
 - More opportunities for a Young Filmmaker Network and collaboration with peers
 - Working The Scene Gen Z
 - Staged Readings and Scene Work
 - TIK TOK Sketches about ACTRA that address common concerns use as an educational tool and showcase social media skills

- Understanding the Co-op process
 - Discussion about questions and concerns about ACTRA
 - Hope to talk to Gail Hauptert for better understanding of questions, potential workshop?
 - Intimidating to go to ACTRA website
 - Discussed emails - turn on your email notifications
 - Get one's ACTRA Profile up and running
 - BOYCOTT
- "Remove transparency by showing up," Tavia Pereira

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Mr. Hepburn reported on the following:

- Netflix has officially opened an office in Toronto. They have entered a deal with Cinespace.
- Location shoots are a nightmare due to road closures. A lot have moved away from downtown Toronto.
- Hudson & Rex will be doing a spin-off.
- WGA are still in bargaining under a complete media blackout. They will be meeting with their members on Wednesday. One production has currently paused.
- Compass – had a good conversation with RBC. It is a slow process.
- Members of the CSA should fill out their survey for next year's awards. Please let them know that while we are pleased with the Non-Gender Awards category we are saddened because of the cuts.

Jocelyne Zucco suggested that ACTRA do a push on social media. Tova said that there is huge drop in women's awards.

Tony Nappo suggested a Non-Binary Award. Deb McGrath responded that they will not be comfortable if there is a separate Non-Binary Awards. However, every suggestion is appreciated.

- Ontario continues to be stable in our tax credits, however, New York State is putting forward a large tax credit, increasing it over 70% over two years. New York State is very similar to Ontario so it is going to be a struggle for us. It is worth us looking at.
- Re the *Enough is Enough* campaign – they are also looking towards June Day of Action.
- ACTRA National has brought on board a great Organizer, Fran Borsellino.
- Taisa Dekker is away for a little while. Any questions for her should be directed to Mr. Hepburn.

Industry Initiatives & Outreach

Taisa Dekker, Manager – Industry Initiatives & Outreach

- Presented at the Canadian National Freelancing Summit with Heather Allin about ACTRA's agreements and organizing. This event was hosted by the [Canadian Freelancer Union](#).
- Met with a producer about contracting ACTRA members for a microbudget feature film.
- Along with Senior Advisor Clare Johnston, spoke with the production team for a web series in development about working with ACTRA performers via the Web Indie Production Guideline.
- Spoke with a producer about engaging ACTRA performers on a demo production for a web series in development.
- Met with a producer about engaging union performers on a short film.
- Attended the SAGIndie webinar about SAG-AFTRA's low budget film agreements.
- Presented to George Brown College's Production Entrepreneurship program with Associate Business Representative Tricia Clarke.
- Presented to Seneca College performance students with Thalia Gonzalez Kane.

- Presented to Toronto Metropolitan University's graduating performance students with Theresa Tova.
- Attended the winter member conference.
- Work continues on a variety of projects in support of the operating plan.

Green Committee

Avaah Blackwell and Elle A, Co- Chairs

In April, the Green Committee organized a community clean-up event in Toronto and Hamilton. Our Toronto event got cancelled due to rainy weather, the Hamilton event went ahead. A clean up date will be discussed for the summer season during our next meeting to make-up to reschedule our Earth Day clean-up event. We have the support of committee members to make these clean-up events regular seasonal events.

The Green committee is working on a member sustainability one-sheet and a production sustainability one-sheet for best practices that we hope to present to council at a later date.

The committee has decided to move to a once-every-two-months meeting schedule; we will be able to update you on committee activities every other month.

Artistically and environmentally yours,
Elle and Avaah

Special Advisor

Maxine Bower, Special Advisor

- Membership Support
 - o Assisting the YEAA committee and outACTRA with administrative as staff liaison.
 - o Supporting members with peer-to-peer conflicts.
 - o Supporting business representatives with various major incidents occurring on set.
 - o Supporting member with mental health challenges and significant issues on set.
 - o Volunteer support for the ACTRA awards.
- Membership Education
 - o Assisted with the facilitation of biweekly Respect on Set course.
 - o Roll out of the Unconscious Bias course.
- HAVEN Helpline
 - o Continuing close reviews of the helpline intake process for quality assurance.
 - o Reviewing the LifeWorks App – exploring how to get more member involvement with the using the app.
- Planning for Future Initiatives and collaboration with other organizations/committees
 - o Preparing final stages for the (power and consent workshop) at the AACE conference in May.
 - o Presented proposal for a Cognitive Behavioral Therapy informed workshop to support members with addressing the fear of reporting.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Mr. Gale requested Council's approval of the recommendation from AYA regarding the appointment of Anne Wooten as Co-Chair of AYA. Council was unanimous in their approval.
- Thalia Gonzalez Kane requested that the Councillors be introduced to the membership. Joy Tanner responded that the Council is listed on the ACTRA Toronto website. Mr. Hepburn said that it is on the list of the Comms team "to do" items to include contact information, i.e. email addresses for Councillors.
- Oshi Wanigasekera said the Zoom etiquette is not what she expects from Council and makes her uncomfortable. She said that ACTRA does not feel like a safe space.

ADJOURNMENT

Jocelyne Zucco moved to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.