

**ACTRA TORONTO  
COUNCIL MEETING  
Tuesday, February 6, 2024**

**PRESENT**

Theresa Tova, Past President (in the Chair)  
George Alevizos  
Heather Allin  
Tim Beresford  
Jason Bryden  
John Cleland  
Paul Constable  
Nicola Correira-Damude  
Elana Dunkleman  
Emily Hurson  
Jameson Kraemer  
Premika Leo, alternate for Mercedes Morris  
Amy Matysio  
Janet-Rose Nguyen  
Rick Parker, alternate for David Gale, President  
Tavia Pereira  
Dina Pino  
Gord Rand  
Gugun Deep Singh  
Samora Smallwood  
David Wallen  
Katlyn Ziegler  
Jocelyne Zucco, alternate for Joy Tanner

**REGRETS**

Alana Bridgewater

**COMMITTEE & MEMBER CAUCUS CHAIRS, OMBUDSPERSON**

Victoria Brooks, Chair Apprentice Caucus

**OBSERVER**

Fiona Highet  
Roy Urbanozo, Co-Chair, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

**ALSO PRESENT**

Alistair Hepburn, Executive Director, ACTRA Toronto  
Gail Hauptert, Director of Contracts, ACTRA Toronto  
Karl Pruner, Director, Communications, ACTRA Toronto  
Nicole Valentin, Director, Membership Services, ACTRA Toronto  
Tina Wang, Director, Finance & Administration, ACTRA Toronto  
Luisa Alvarez Restrepo, Manager, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, ACTRA Toronto  
Taisa Dekker, Manager, Industry Initiatives and Outreach, ACTRA Toronto  
Luca De Franco, Public Relations Officer, ACTRA Toronto  
Jennifer McGibbon, Public Relations Officer, ACTRA Toronto  
Marie Kelly, Executive Director, ACTRA National  
Freda Merritt-Gambrill, Recording Secretary, ACTRA Toronto

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. with Past President, Theresa Tova, in the Chair.

The reading of the Land Acknowledgement by Tim Beresford was followed by the reading of the Equality Statement by David Wallen, Amy Matysio, Paul Constable, Emily Hurson, Premika Leo, Jason Bryden and Samora Smallwood.

Councillors, alternates, observers and staff introduced themselves.

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

### **MOTION #1**

**Moved by Gugun Deep Singh and Jocelyne Zucco:**

**“That the Agenda for the ACTRA Toronto Council Meeting of February 6, 2024, be accepted.”**

**CARRIED**

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 8, 2024**

The following are corrections to the Minutes:

**Page 10:** Second paragraph. ~~Delete: Council was in agreement with the above suggestion.~~ **Add: “Council was in agreement with putting a down-payment on the venue.”**

Last bullet point, first sentence, replace ACCE with **“AACE”**.

### **MOTION #2**

**Moved by Gugun Deep Singh, seconded by Amy Matysio:**

**“That the Minutes of the ACTRA Toronto Council Meeting of January 8, 2024, as amended, be accepted.”**

**CARRIED**

## **TABLING OF OTHER BUSINESS TO BE INCLUDED PER #9**

- Release of Council meeting Agendas.
- Reviving the AAPB Caucus. Alistair Hepburn reported that Call for Nominations has gone out to 2,000 Members. Seven have been shortlisted.
- Letter to AFBS from the Disability Alliance Committee.

## **PRESIDENT’S REPORT/CHAIR’S UPDATE**

Theresa Tova reported on ACTRA’s presence at Prime Time in Ottawa. She was proud of the Members and staff who represented ACTRA Toronto, especially the Hair and Makeup Panel that was led by ACTRA and Toronto Member Lisa Michelle Cornelius. NABET has committed to follow this up with educating its members by holding workshops.

A Councillor, who was in attendance, said that it was important to hear about the state of the industry. The AI panel left them “breathless and gutless” how these images are being used. They talked about replacing creative labour.

Another Councillor said that there is a shift in the industry, and we need to pivot in order to stay ahead of it.

Marie Kelly said that she has never seen a federal government so open-minded on the AI issue.

Ms Tova said that she kept hearing that the producers are pressured to do quality work for less.

A Councillor requested a fulsome written report from the members who attended Prime Time.

#### **SPECIAL GUEST – LAURA WALTON, PRESIDENT OF OFL**

Special guest, Laura Walton, OFL President, addressed Council. She talked about organizing strategies.

#### **APPROVAL OF BUDGET**

#### **MOTION #3**

**Moved by Paul Constable, seconded by George Alevizos:**

**“That the ACTRA Toronto Budget for the fiscal year ending, February 28, 2025, be accepted, as presented.”**

#### *Discussion*

A fulsome discussion ensued.

#### **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **WORD FROM SET**

*IPA Survey:* A Councillor said that they have been hearing from members regarding the IPA survey and there appears to be some confusion. They suggested that the survey deadline be extended in order to give them time to speak to the members. Members do not understand what they are filling out.

Following suggestions were made:

- Do another survey that is member-driven and member created.
- Extend the deadline to February 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Hold a Town Hall.
- Do an Instagram push.
- Hold meetings – 1 day, 1 night and 1 Zoom. The following Councillors will be available for these meetings – Kate Ziegler, Tim Beresford, Amy Matysio, Gugun Deep Singh, Gord Rand, Jameson Kraemer, John Cleland and Theresa Tova.

#### *Awards:*

Concerns were raised about the format of the ACTRA Awards in Toronto which will be held on April 26<sup>th</sup> at Palais Royale.

- The issue is that the membership is saying that right now this is not what they need. They would like it to be more of “a party element” with the awards still being presented – something scaled back and completely rethinking what it is for, i.e. a cocktail-sized reception.
- It was felt that Bourinot’s Rules were not followed, i.e. there needed to be a democratic process which would then be communicated to the membership.
- It was pointed out that although over 250 members RSVP’d to the networking session held last fall, only 76 members attended.
- It was felt that these decisions were already made and felt that there were no other options available. Council was informed that these decisions were made with the outgoing Council.
- It was mentioned that people feel excluded by the options presented.
- Some Councillors said that they were in favour of going ahead with the Awards as planned as “it is meant to establish our place in the industry” instead of an open-member party. It is a party to honour those members who have established themselves.
- Council was asked to be cautious about holding a cocktail reception because it might not be accessible for everybody.
- It was suggested that a separate community event be held.
- Council was told that members were not aware there was an ACTRA Award ceremony. They said that they felt unwanted and unheard at all the industry events, and they did not have a reason to care about it.
- In terms of Councillors responding to Facebook posts, a Councillor asked if they should remain silent. Mr. Hepburn said that the correct response would be to acknowledge the concern and say that they will take it to Council.
- Council was informed that the Awards was created to celebrate our talent and create a star system. It took years for media to attend the event. There were members waiting at the elevators to get people’s autographs. We need to know who our stars are. Sponsorships are important. We won’t get sponsors with just a party. The sponsors get recognized and are mentioned at the Award ceremony.
- A Councillor said that what was done in the past has not contributed to the star system. They did not mean to devalue our work but said that it was only about morale. They suggested having a fancy dress party with a fee but not a \$100 fee. Focus on morale and not a star system. We will get the morale up and that will get us more work.
- A Councillor appreciated the effort and creativity that has gone into it so far but said that Council needs to create a strategy that can create work for members.
- A suggestion was made to investigate inviting a larger group of members to attend. Having media coverage is important.
- A discussion was held about the cost of the tickets for members. Different options were suggested. Council decided to establish a focus group to discuss options. Following Councillors will attend the focus group meeting on Zoom – Samora Smallwood, Gugun Deep Singh, Amy Matysio, Dina Pino, Janet-Rose Nguyen, Kate Ziegler, Emily Hurson and David Wallen.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

- The letter to AFBS from the Disability Alliance was reviewed. It was suggested that vocal health and coverage for steroid injections be added to the letter. Council approved of the letter being sent to AFBS.
- It was suggested that the Council Agenda be distributed earlier and be open to amendments.

## **OPERATING PLAN CONTINUED**

A blue-sky session re the 2024 Operating Plan was held.

The Recording Secretary left the meeting at 2:46pm during the session.

## COMMITTEE AND CAUCUS HIGHLIGHTS

The following reports were emailed to Council prior to the Council meeting:

### ***Liaisons: Treasurer, Paul Constable & Vice-President, Amy Matysio***

*Apprentice Caucus* – Chair, Victoria Brooks

The Apprentice Caucus met January 24<sup>th</sup> for 90 minutes at ACTRA Toronto offices.

- Observed some ADs not following IPA protocol regarding voucher details, and things that relate to money potentially being paid out. (Cutting corners)
- Signing out for BG and principal performer members being expressed to the front of the line, (ahead of non-members) for productions to save money. Also, the “walk by, sign-by” attempt when performers aren’t even out of wardrobe, to cut costs.
- Principal or BG; we need to have more information, further in advance when it comes to location and call time. There is no excuse for late calls with no info.
- Request to have the Lead AD very specifically marked and obvious to all BG.
- Suggested members ask the AD before leaving the set: “M.I.S.O”: May I step off?

The Apprentice Caucus will meet and elect a new executive on February 28, 11:00 on Zoom, followed by an informal social at The Bishop and Belcher (@4pm). All are welcome!

### ***Liaisons: Vice-Presidents, John Cleland, Amy Matysio & Kate Ziegler***

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

- On December 13<sup>th</sup>, the committee set up a virtual meet-up to chat and catch up as the year draws to a close. Despite the busy holiday season, 11 members joined and shared their news, offered suggestions for 2024 workshops and wished each other merry holidays. Another 7 members sent regrets. Thank you to ACTRA for the Zoom link and to Karl Pruner and Luca De Franco for their assistance on the day.
- At the holiday meet-up, they had a chance to thank Jocelyne Zucco, the out-going Toronto Council liaison, for her support and assistance over the past couple of years. She has always championed their cause and was a great help as Anne Wootten and Heather Dick took over as Co-Chairs last January. They are sad to lose her as their liaison but wish her well going forward.
- Upcoming Events
  - CAN (Canadian Artists Network) has offered to host a joint virtual workshop in February on how to use the Casting Workbook app for recording, editing and submitting self-tapes. CAN itself has quite a number of actor members who have been asking for this workshop, so AYA is happy to promote and participate in it as this is one of the biggest frustrations for our members. CAN has the funding to pay for the workshop which is grand. The committee will promote it to AYA members as soon as they have the details.
  - The committee is also trying to find an instructor who knows how to use the free Clipchamp app for editing videos and self-tapes. Many actors don’t feel confident using the Casting Workbook app or the others that are available for Actors Access, etc. and would prefer to be able to edit on a larger computer screen. If they can find an instructor, they will reach out to CAN and offer to share the workshop with their members. It might be very helpful for any artist wishing to create a video recording of their art (painting, sculpture, weaving, etc.) for grant submissions or simply posterity and documentation.
  - Out of their brainstorming sessions have come requests for acting scene study workshops and audition workshops so the committee will look into organizing one later in the spring.

### ***Liaisons – Vice-President, John Cleland***

*Child Advocate* – Angelica Alejandro, Child Advocate

- Executive Liaisons for this file going into 2024 - new appointment, John Cleland, and continuing liaison, David Gale.
- Staff Liaison Clare Johnston and Angelica Alejandro met with Mr. Cleland in order to bring him up to speed on what the Advocacy Office is responsible for as well as their roles within that Office. They both made suggestions based on their experience and outreach, for some new initiatives to introduce going forward to assist our Minors and those working with them.
- Congratulations to the new Council and Executive. They welcome and continue to encourage that if anyone has questions, to kindly direct those to the Child Advocate and Staff Liaison using the appropriate email addresses.

### ***Liaisons: Vice-Presidents, George Alevizos, John Cleland & Kate Ziegler***

*Conference Committee* – Chair, Jocelyne Zucco – Vice-Chairs, Victoria Brooks and Pierre Simpson

A new year.... a new look at the conference and what it will look like moving forward and what format will it take?

First change is that the Plenary will stand on its own. It will be happening in February (date TBD). This event is fully organized by ACTRA Toronto staff.

As for the conference.... it's on hold. The Committee is "on standby" while the Council and Executive, along with staff and the conference coordinators re-imagine what the conference will look like in the future. Will it continue to be a conference, a one-to-two-day event? Will it be workshops throughout the year? Live or in person? Only in Toronto? Do they go back to having a full committee or continue with the three coordinators?

Council will have been, or will be, sent a questionnaire with questions relating to the conference. **Please do take the time to fill it out. This is the first step, one in which Council can play a key role, in looking at how the conference moves forward.**

### ***Liaisons: Treasurer, Paul Constable & Vice-President, Kate Ziegler***

*Editorial Committee* – Chair, Joy Tanner

- Articles in January
  - IPA 101: Performer Residency <https://performersmagazine.com/ipa-101-performer-residency/>
- Upcoming in Q1:
  - Applause
  - Ask an Expert: Taxes
  - NCA 101
  - IPA 101: Hair and Makeup (part 2)
  - AI series (Part 1)
  - Introduction to Political Advocacy/Labour Allies
  - ACTRA Awards:
    - AofE Q&A (March)
    - Outstanding Performance nominee spotlight
    - Stunt Award Q&A
- Next Editorial Committee meeting will take place February 22 from 2:30pm to 4:00pm



***Liaisons: Past President, Theresa Tova and Vice-Presidents, Amy Matysio & Janet-Rose Nguyen***

*Voice Committee: Co-Chairs, Krystal Meadows and Kwaku Adu-Poku*

- Scott Farley stepped down from his position as a Co-Chair on the Voice Committee after roughly five years. He will still be an active member of the committee going forward. There will be a vote at their meeting in March to welcome a 3<sup>rd</sup> Co-Chair.
- IPA survey was sent out to membership with a number of questions focusing on AI. Roughly 46 out of 200 members responded to the IPA survey. (Gail Hauptert shared this and a higher percentage than what they usually get as a response)
- IPA focus group happening February 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Focus group for dubbing should happen in the next week or two. Gail Hauptert is taking the lead arranging this.
- The Co-Chairs met with the Voice Committee's new Executive Liaisons in January, and they are working on some ideas to engage new members and support current members growing their skills in VO. Some "Lunch and Learn" and "Member to Member" training ideas are in the works. More to come on this in the future.
- AI Subcommittee has their focus group on February 13<sup>th</sup>.

***Liaisons: Vice-Presidents, George Alevizos & John Cleland***

*YEAA: Chair, Tavia Pereira*

- Welcomed new Executive Liaisons George Alevizos, John Cleland and Staff Liaison Grace Hawkins.
- Socials Subcommittee met on January 18<sup>th</sup>. YEAA is currently working on two social-networking events:
  - Collaboration with D&I for an offsite event in February.
  - New Graduates event to welcome recent graduates to the union. Event proposed for April and off site.
- Social Media Subcommittee met on January 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss an outline for the Instagram page. Have defined three pillars:
  - Inform -> videos to educate and empower members.
  - Engage -> photos to highlight events.
  - Celebrate -> videos and photos to highlight YEAA members' successes.
- Working with Grace Hawkins to figure out the category and paperwork for video creation.
- Other continuing projects:
  - Video game audition workshop proposed for March.
  - Self-Advocacy Panel proposed for Winter Conference.
- January general meeting postponed. Date TBD.

**OTHER REPORTS**

*Awards Jury Report – Jury Coordinators: Pierre Simpson and Jocelyne Zucco*

Jury season has begun.

Juror packages have been sent out. There are a total of 126 submissions for the Female/GNC category and 98 for the Male/GNC category. The juries have their work cut out for them.

The first deliberation day is scheduled for February 21<sup>st</sup> for the Male/GNC category and February 23 for the Female/GNC category. The jurors will pick their top 10.

The second day will take place on March 4<sup>th</sup> (Male/GNC in the morning and Female/GNC in the afternoon). The jurors will pick the five nominees and the winner.

The Jury Coordinators will then contact the nominees and winners. All will be kept secret until the press release from the Comms Department of ACTRA Toronto.

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

- D&I Committee: Supported the new co-chairs through an on-boarding sessions, administrative tasks like getting them set up on the email, and facilitating introductions to sub-committees, executive liaisons, and other committees.
- Disability Alliance: met with leads and supported the crafting of a survey to get members' thoughts on coverage such as what can be improved and what they would like to see added.
- DEIB Puppetry workshop: applications far exceeded the number of spots. Participants had great feedback and the instructor, Kanja Chen (an ACTRA Toronto member), was grateful for all the support from ACTRA Toronto to make the workshop a reality.
- TIFF: Attended the TIFF Canada's Top Ten Industry Forum. Programming included a panel on disability representation and access in the screen industry. Luisa Alvarez Restrepo is currently in talks with the TIFF Industry team about how our members can participate in their year-round programming and any other benefits TIFF may be able to offer our members.
- Toronto Black Film Festival: ACTRA Toronto is supporting the 2024 edition of the Toronto Black Film Festival. ACTRA Toronto will co-present the Tribute to Charles Officer, which will be a screening of the ACTRA Production AKILLA's ESCAPE. ACTRA Toronto has also received four pairs of invitations to the opening night of the festival on February 14 at the Isabel Bader Theatre. Councillors should let Ms Alvarez Restrepo know by February 8, if they would like to attend.
- Productions: Several productions reached out as they are telling BIPOC stories and wanted to know how ACTRA Toronto could support them. Meetings have been arranged with FTDM, and it looks like the productions will be moving forward as signatory.
- Asian Performer Showcase: met with Comms to discuss strategy, including a website revamp and amplifying the call for submissions. DEIB aims to launch this in the next week or two.
- outACTRAto: attended their first meeting of the year.

*Industry Initiative & Outreach* – Taisa Dekker, Manager

- Thanks to outreach efforts in 2023, a web series, two short films, a new media demo, a video game, and a feature film became signatory to ACTRA, bringing work to 81 performers.
- Met with the organizer of an outreach event co-hosted by Queen's University and the Kingston Canadian Film Festival. ACTRA Toronto will be taking part in Industry Day to connect with potential engagers and re-members on Friday, March 1, 2024.
- Met with Hollywood North Film Awards about their event on Sunday, April 28, 2024, celebrating Canadian indie film.
- Met with Toronto Film School about their student film festival taking place on May 16, 2024, and the potential for ACTRA Toronto to present the performance awards.
- Met with Future of Film Showcase about ACTRA Toronto's continued support of the festival. FOFS takes place June 20 – 23, 2024.
- Coordinated post-secondary presentations for 5 performance programs and 4 production programs for the winter semester.

- Presented to 92 students in Sheridan College's BFTV program, 3<sup>rd</sup> year core 2 production class on January 23 with Business Representative Anisha Gliddon.
- Attended CMPA Prime Time in Ottawa.

*Ontario Green Screen – Taisa Dekker, Manager – Industry Initiatives & Outreach*

- Members who were unable to attend the Ontario Green Screen Fall Community Meeting can watch a recording of it [here](#).
- Ontario Green Screen is in the process of redesigning the Climate & Sustainable Production training module and the Carbon Calculator training module. Registration for the new modules should be available in the spring. To be notified when the registration for the courses opens up in the spring, please add your name to the list [here](#).
- To become an Ontario Green Screen Ambassador, apply [here](#).
- A new grant that has just been launched from the city of Toronto as part of their Circular Economy Transformation initiative. The new Circular Food Innovators Fund will support local small businesses (both for-profit and not-for-profit) to implement reuse systems that replace single-use and takeaway items with reusable foodservice ware that is collected and redistributed for further use. Eligible companies can receive up to \$35,000 in support to help advance circular economy principles into food systems. For more information, please check out the link below. For questions regarding the Circular Food Innovators Fund, please contact [circulareconomy@toronto.ca](mailto:circulareconomy@toronto.ca). Deadline for submissions: February 27, 11:59pm. For more information, please visit: <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/grants-incentives-rebates/circular-food-innovators-fund/>

*Past President's Report – Theresa Tova*

EIC – The EIC has had two new applications from agencies this month. The board is taking extra steps to ensure proof of proper payment of earnings. More Compass clients are being encouraged to come forward to the police. A reminder went out to EIC agents asking for volunteers to discuss the work on government regulations.

AACE – Momentum is growing. They had a total of 15 new members in the last six weeks. Social Media presence is also building awareness.

They had 2 students reach out to them with complaints about different non-member coaches. Bullying, harassment and unsafe fight club environments are still part of some spaces. AACE take the complaints seriously by assuring the students of their rights but are limited in what they can do. The complaints go into a flagged folder and will inform the vetting committee should these coaches ever apply for membership.

Industry partner meetings are in the works. Stay tuned.

Theresa Tova participated in a webinar of global coaches, facilitators, acting teachers performing arts, psychologists, and counsellors to share their experiences and wisdom around various aspects and challenges of Actor well-being. The webinar was sponsored by Performing Arts Medicine.

CANCOM (The Foundation for Canadian Comedy) – Ms Tova continues to represent a ACTRA on the CANCOM board. The annual general meeting took place on January 28, where the board positions were reaffirmed, they had a first look at next year's symposium plans, budgets for same, diversity initiatives.

STUNTS and INTIMACY coordination – After an illuminating discussion at the National Stunt committee Ian Chai and Ms Tova have reached out to a vocal group of stunt performers, including Toronto members, to plan an educational initiative dispelling misconceptions and figuring out how best to work together and support each other's specialization on our sets. Stay tuned.