

**ADDRESS BY CAROLLE BRABANT**  
**Executive Director**

**ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE APFTQ**  
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**(Check Against Delivery)**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you, Mr. Provencher, for your kind introduction.

I would like to thank the APFTQ for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today. This is my first public appearance since I was appointed Executive Director of Telefilm Canada in March. I couldn't have asked for a better audience.

I should point out, however, that I'm more accustomed to sitting with you in the audience than standing before you onstage. I thought I'd impress you, therefore, by asking Steve Jobs for his secrets on giving a good presentation.

In addition to rehearsing my speech, which I did religiously, I kept two bits of advice in mind:

First, speak slowly. My team should send me a signal if I get too carried away.

Second, inspire dreams. That's when I thought things might not be as easy as all that.

A chartered accountant who tries to inspire film and TV producers to dream? ...

But I decided to dive in anyway.

As many of you already know, I've been with Telefilm for about 20 years. That's where I've spent a good part of my career. By getting to know you and talking to you, by doing the same with my colleagues at Telefilm, I've acquired a good understanding of your environment. I'm also very aware of your concerns and preoccupations. And one thing has remained constant with me over the years: my commitment to finding winning solutions through teamwork.

The appointment of someone from within the organization to the position of Executive Director of Telefilm Canada is certainly a sign of continuity and confidence. In our current context, however, continuity does not mean inactivity.

Even before I was appointed Executive Director, Telefilm had embarked on a process of reflective thinking about its strategy, about the progression of the Canadian industry, and about the best ways of supporting the industry's development.

I'd like to share some of this thinking, these ideas, with you. They fit in perfectly with the theme the APFTQ has chosen for its annual convention: The producer, a cultural entrepreneur.

I'd like you to come away with three thoughts from this, my first speech as Executive Director:

- I believe that Telefilm Canada, as an organization that assists the industry, must help the industry deal with the wave of change that is shaking up the audiovisual sector.
- Telefilm Canada must do more to serve its clients.
- It will be my mission to make Telefilm Canada a real instrument of success for the industry.

1. Telefilm's role: to support the industry in this time of change

Through my work experience, at Telefilm and elsewhere, I have come into contact with many different entrepreneurs working in a variety of sectors. All of these entrepreneurs have two things in common: a passion for what they do and an ability to tolerate risk. Passion is something that all creative people have. In your case, passion is what keeps you going when the going gets tough. It's what keeps you forging ahead, to exceed yourself, to survive. The ability to tolerate risk is what allows you to draw a line in the sand, to decide when it's time to stand back, to not go any further. I think we really have to think about this line. And we'll have to manage it differently in future.

History constantly repeats itself. New technologies change the order of things, and shake up our world. The cultural sector hasn't been spared these changes. Movies had an impact on the theatre and other performing arts. Radio threatened newspapers. Television terrified film, radio and the daily papers. iTunes has replaced Sam the Record Man. Today, digital media, like an Icelandic volcano, is wreaking havoc with our business. But despite predictions of doom, all these media continue to exist, and planes continue to fly.

However, these revolutions have created winners, losers and survivors, while others have simply disappeared.

In every case, the winners were those who knew how to seize the opportunity and ride the wave of the new and the innovative. The winners knew how to take risks. As true entrepreneurs, they embraced change with a passion. And those who tried to stop the wave simply drowned.

Since the creation of Telefilm Canada, Canada's independent audiovisual industry has truly evolved. Thanks to you, it has become what it is today: a major instrument of economic and cultural development. Through its policies and programs, Telefilm Canada has significantly contributed to this growth.

Overall, cultural industries contribute \$46 billion to the total value of Canada's gross domestic product and create more than 600 000 direct jobs—as much as the agricultural, fishery and forestry sectors combined.

Thanks to your entrepreneurship, we now have a critical mass of knowledge and know-how in all areas of activity, from production to directing, in all media. Your expertise is recognized and acknowledged.

From its small-scale beginnings, audiovisual production has evolved to become a multi-level industry that today contributes, like other industries, to Canada's economic development.

This contribution is important, although it often receives little attention or is frankly misunderstood.

The cultural sector, more than any other, is always being called on to justify its use of public funds. However, a 2007 study by Jean-Thomas Bernard and Gérard Bélanger, both economics professors at Laval University, revealed that every job that Rio Tinto Alcan created at its new aluminum smelter would cost Quebec taxpayers \$300,000. A job created in the cultural sector costs less than \$100,000.

This industry, like so many others, needs public funding support. Creating jobs, contributing to regional and national economies, providing Canadians with stories that they want to listen to—all of these are ways in which you have given the taxpayer a return on investment. We'll have to work together to find ways to better measure this contribution.

In this new environment, however, these truths alone are not enough.

We must all adapt in order to survive. Better still: we must innovate to drive our growth and continue to raise our culture's profile, at home and around the world.

## 2. Serving our clients

My second message today is that Telefilm must do more to serve its clients.

The quality of our customer service is a priority for me.

In these turbulent times, I rely on a few certainties to help guide my decisions. And it is by building on these certainties that Telefilm will fulfill its mission.

First, we will always want to listen to stories—or rather, have stories told to us. And by us, I mean everyone, including myself. I'm a fan of your products, and I have eclectic tastes—like all Quebecers, for that matter. I liked *C.A.*, *Aveux*, *1981*, *De Père en Flic*, and many other TV shows and movies...

New technologies may change the way we create and broadcast fictional stories and information, but we will always have an appetite for them.

Secondly, having to choose from among various projects is always going to be difficult. But that's something we will continue to do. The mark of a good entrepreneur is being able to make choices without having all the information at hand. I recently read an interview with Luc Besson, who was asked if he wasn't frustrated by being labelled a producer of blockbusters. He answered: "where I come from, we produce the same way that we love. You can't make movies without passion."

At Telefilm, we also bring passion to the choices we make. Using the means at our disposal, we want to provide Canadian audiences with a diversity of stories.

Thirdly, competition will be more global and more intense than it is today. And that's where I totally agree with the theme the APFTQ has chosen. As entrepreneurs, your ability to work in a climate of uncertainty, to take risks, to listen to your market, will always be crucial assets—assets that will allow you to succeed in an ever-changing world.

In order to continue fostering and promoting the industry's growth in this turbulent world, Telefilm Canada will also have to be more astute. We must be able to take different kinds of risk, be innovative and remain flexible. And we'll have to do all this by continuing to be efficient, transparent, predictable and soundly managed...

That's quite a challenge.

But I like challenges. Those who know me appreciate my openness, my ability to analyze problems and find solutions. I won't change.

I'm also a team player.

And I'm very proud of my team.

Telefilm Canada is made up of a team of 200 fans of your work, and who believe they can contribute to your success with their hearts and minds. I'm talking about the entire management team, the experts in each department, the lawyers... Even the accountants (give honour where honour is due!). All of them have seen to it that our organization is equipped with a high-performing infrastructure and operating processes. I'd like to take this opportunity to say hello to all of my Telefilm colleagues who are here this morning.

We're all going to have to take on these challenges together, as we've done in the past.

I've already asked my senior management team to come back to me with suggestions on how to improve efficiency in their respective areas of activity, the first goal being to reduce the amount of red tape within the organization.

But that's only a first step.

After that, I would like to sit down with you to talk about the ways we can refocus our activities so they are better aligned with the industry's needs.

We'll talk about our decision-making processes... And yes, about performance envelopes! ... But also about co-production, regional and international development.

Co-production remains one of our priorities. These kinds of partnerships serve to diversify funding sources and make it possible to take new projects into production. They also have an important economic impact.

To this end, we already devote a quarter of funds in the Canada Feature Film Fund to co-productions. We work very hard to advance Canadian audiovisual products in international markets. But we want to do better. In fact, the first workshop at this conference is titled "Co-production: we need solutions, and fast!"

In short, if you think the last 40 years have been action-packed, you—we—haven't seen anything yet...

There are still a few questions that need to be asked; a few potential solutions need to be explored. In an ever-changing environment, we must be prepared to experiment. We must also manage our priorities from amongst the issues we'll have to deal with over the next few months. Not everything is urgent.

We must take baby steps and adjust accordingly. Act to succeed.

3. Telefilm: same mission, to continue providing financial leverage but also to leverage success

My third message today is that Telefilm must serve to leverage success as much as it provides financial leverage. Telefilm Canada was created to foster and promote the development of Canada's audiovisual industry. That remains its mission.

But we have to consider that its strategies and activities need to be different from what they were in the past. We can't simply provide financial leverage. There's no doubt we must also serve as a catalyst for success for the industry.

And so we're working for you: to help spread the word about your successes and the contribution you make to Canada's cultural and economic landscape.

I will devote myself to this task.

To achieve this, we'll get closer to you, our clients, in order to serve you better. We'll make better use of our regional presence. We'll change gradually, step-by-step, by systematically measuring results. We'll enhance our transparency, by clearly communicating to you our intentions and the results of our initiatives.

Steve Jobs has another piece of advice that I've taken to heart: when you've said what you had to say, it's time to wrap it up.

Before closing, I'd like to sum up:

- First, our industry is embarking on a period of major change and Telefilm Canada intends to stand side-by-side with you during these turbulent times.
- Secondly, Telefilm Canada must better serve its clients.
- And thirdly, I will make it my mission to ensure that Telefilm Canada is a catalyst for success for the industry.

Our industry has the resources it needs to benefit from everything that change has to offer. It's up to the industry to take on this challenge. But as it does, it can count on Telefilm's support.

Thank you.