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“Promoting and marketing Canadian film and television”

Thank you for your kind words Alain.

Good afternoon everyone. I am delighted to be here, and to have been asked to make closing remarks to this annual meeting of broadcasters and industry players.

What has struck me the most about the last couple of days are the discussions that have taken place about a subject that has become Telefilm’s most important priority. In fact, an urgent priority for us all who care deeply about the future of the Canadian broadcasting system – the promotion and marketing of Canadian films and television programs.

I would like to talk to you about three things in this regard: First, why promotion? Second, what promotion strategies is Telefilm adopting and third, and most importantly, how can we work together as an industry to do justice in promoting this country's extraordinary talent.

Why promotion is important: A transformational time for the Canadian broadcasting system

So let me begin with the why... promotion. You know better than anyone on the importance of marketing – especially in today's reality.

As you well know, telecommunications and broadcasting are rapidly converging into a single world of communications offering innovative services to consumers, delivering these services in new ways and disrupting current business models. Consumers expect to access the services and content they want at anytime, anywhere, using whichever device they choose.

So, in addition to providing audiences with access and creating a critical mass of content... it's about getting the word out in the context of massive consumer choice.

An ambitious goal to promote Canadian content everywhere

For Telefilm, the message is clear: we are no longer waiting for the main event. We are in it.

This takes me to the second point I want to share with you today – what strategies Telefilm is adopting concerning promotion.

As most of you know, Telefilm has a mandate to foster and promote the development of the audiovisual industry. We have played a key role for 45 years. You have been and continue to be valued partners.

Last year, Telefilm took a bold step forward by recognizing that, while we had done a good job at developing the Canadian audiovisual industry, we had neglected the promotion aspect of our mandate. We decided to take a fresh look at what we promote and how we promote.

When we consider the Canadian movie business, we note that it suffers in comparison with other cultural sectors. The Canadian music industry, for example, captures 21% of market share, compared to the portion for Canadian original book titles, estimated to be about 28%.

By these standards, the less than 5% market share captured by Canadian films is disappointing. I raise these figures because I believe that the status quo is no longer good enough.

The challenge we have before us is the following: How do we get our productions in front of larger audiences, more audiences and new audiences?

We have adopted an ambitious goal to promote Canadian content with all the resources that we can muster. I know that Valerie Creighton has met with many of you to explain our strategic orientations.

We also introduced our new Success Index, which allows us to better measure, understand and promote Canadian cinema based on the current realities and dynamics of today's market. *We want to go beyond the box office.*

It paints a more accurate and global picture by incorporating three weighted attributes: the commercial (box office as well as domestic and international sales), the cultural (selections and prizes at festivals and competitive events), and the industrial (the ratio of private and public financing).

And we are also using our communications channels to promote Canadian talent.

At TIFF, our popular Talent to Watch series were designed to spotlight the creative talents of our country's emerging and established filmmakers. Last year's speakers included hosts Atom Egoyan and Deepa Mehta, as well as filmmakers Philippe Falardeau, Anne Émond and Nathan Morlando.

During Sundance we held a media Q&A to announce Philippe's Oscar nomination for *Monsieur Lazhar* – more than 50 journalists took part which resulted in media coverage across the country!

And for the first time ever at the Cannes Film Festival, Telefilm is hosting a tribute to Canadian on-screen talent in partnership with Birks Jewellery Stores. This is the first of what we plan to make an annual event to promote Canadian stars.

Speaking of Canadian stars...

Consider Denis Villeneuve who, in the wake of *Incendies'* international success, has wrangled in Jake Gyllenhaal for *An Enemy*, a psychological drama based on José Saramago's novel *The Double*. Rhombus Media will produce and Alliance Films will distribute in Canada.

Or the recent announcement by Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks Studios, who were so enthralled by the smash hit *Starbuck*, that they acquired the remake rights to this film. Even more impressive, Caramel Films' André Rouleau will produce while original filmmaker Ken Scott will write and direct the comedy.

Add to this the more than 127 awards won last year by our films – indeed, it is an excellent picture... and I could go on.

Canadian screen-based content is too good and too important not to succeed.

Canadian production capability is now well developed as demonstrated by the sales of Canadian films around the world and the millions of audiences that tune in globally to watch Canadian television shows. We have a strong international reputation.

Between 2006 and 2010, Canadian films generated \$127 million in foreign sales, an increase of more than 200% over the five previous years.

And of course, the success of *Barney's Version* and *Incendies*, which have earned a total of \$35 million at the box office around the world. These two features do honour to our movie industry.

The question now is how do we translate this international success to success at home?

Recent broadcasts of Canadian feature films on the CBC show solid audience numbers: the film *Breakaway*, for example, attracted almost half a million viewers and *Barney's Version* had a reported average audience of almost one-quarter of a million viewers.

Could this be the beginning of a new trend?

Canadian feature film has become the domain of specialty television proving to be a strong contender among these catalogues.

Finally, according to our research, Netflix currently houses in its catalogue over 10% of Telefilm-supported films produced since 2007.

It goes without saying that these successes would not be possible without the passion of Canadian creative pioneers who have driven forward this success story.

How we can work together: Towards a strategy to position Canadian content as a brand in the world market

Promotion of Canadian content can no longer be left on the sidelines of all our priorities – we need a national and international strategy in this country. **You** have the pipelines – the networks – as well as the deep understanding of the audience that are key to making the market bigger for Canadian content.

Every time a Canadian film or television program is shown at the box office, broadcast on the many television platforms available, or sold on iTunes, we have incredible opportunities to promote Canadian talent to the world.

Telefilm commissioned an omnibus survey of the attitudes of Canadians toward our feature films. We found that 52% believe that more of these films would be seen if they were better promoted.

60% of Canadians believe that our films should be available on television, and even more interesting to us is that 75% of Canadians surveyed learned about the films when they saw them being promoted on television.

This tells us that, perhaps, national advertising campaigns for Canadian films should be adopted. It tells us that we need to draw on both traditional and new networks in order to propel Canadian films forward.

In this new communications environment, part of the power of film, for example, lies in the way it has extended its reach from the conventional cinema screen to a myriad of different platforms. Yet, whatever the technology, the end product remains the same – stories told using sound and light that move across a screen.

We want to ensure that our broadcast and distribution models capitalize on the significant content investments made by Telefilm and the Canada Media Fund, and that they optimize audience reach on both traditional and new digital distribution platforms.

Telefilm is prepared to invite you all to a symposium this Fall exclusively focused on promotion – a forum for new ideas, connections and, yes, some inspiration too on how best to promote feature films on the Canadian broadcasting system.

This will be an opportunity for all of us – broadcasters, funders, regulators and others – to tackle a number of questions: How much are we spending collectively on promotion? How much should we be spending? What should our target be and how should we measure our success?

I would like to hear your concrete strategies on promotion. I would like us to walk away from such a gathering with a clear plan as an industry focused on goals, strategies, targets, and identified resources.

Canada's wine and cheese industries had the same challenge and came out strong when, as an industry, they focused on promotion. (Many of you have also mentioned the music industry.)

We need more innovative partnerships such as the recent announcement that the CBC, Rogers Media and Shaw Media will launch the Canadian Premium Audience Exchange (CPAX), a real-time bidding exchange that provides digital inventory from each of the three media companies.

This is a unique moment of change for the industry as we enter a new phase of the digital revolution, one in which I believe we must be bolder.

Let's aim for 10 successes of the nature of David Cronenberg's *A Dangerous Method*, which was shown at festivals around the world and brought in \$26 million in world box office.

But Telefilm Canada can't do it alone. I'm confident that with your help, we can find the right solutions and keep Canadian films and television programs at the forefront of the new digital economy that has emerged.

Consider for a moment that Telefilm's annual budget of \$115 million is equivalent to the marketing budget of one blockbuster American film. There is no doubt we need to find creative ways to promote our successes to the world. It isn't easy with the resources we have.

But with that in mind, Telefilm took another confident step forward by creating a new private donation fund, which has been certified by the CRTC. Endorsed by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, this fund will leverage public money to attract private-sector investment from corporations and individuals in support of our industry.

At the last MIPTV, Josh Sapan, President and CEO of AMC Networks, spoke of "iconic content experiences" – content to which viewers are personally connected. He said that the connection forged between shows and their audiences "is the killer app of TV's digital age."

When TV creates shows that are iconic, and these shows are properly deployed, through technology that allows them to be watched

whenever and wherever viewers want, TV gains from the enormous power of the Web.

Canadians want to watch their own stories, are proud of them when they succeed, and appreciate and want to celebrate our Canadian talent.

In closing

In closing, I want to say that we have an unprecedented opportunity to maximize the investment we all make in Canadian content. Telefilm Canada is prepared to be innovative and share the risks with you to promote the best of our industry.

And if we get it right, our Canadian broadcasting system will emerge stronger and more successful than ever.

I thank you for inviting me.

Merci.