

***Talent First***  
***Annual Report 2012-2013***

**Address by Carolle Brabant, Executive Director, delivered at Telefilm’s Annual Public Meeting, held at the PHI Centre in Montreal on Wednesday, December 11, 2013, 10 a.m.**

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*“Creativity, expertise, partnerships  
and promotion are key to our film industry’s future.”*  
Carolle Brabant

Thank you, Mr. Roy.

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, dear clients and colleagues.

It’s my turn also to thank Phoebe Greenberg for her warm welcome. I appreciate Phoebe’s work very much. She isn’t afraid of challenges, or of change. She’s a true creative spirit. Thank you Phoebe.

Three years ago, together with our clients and partners, we decided to foster Canadian cultural success. How? By highlighting the value of Canadian talent, everywhere across the country.

I’m now in my fourth year as Telefilm’s Executive Director, and I can tell you that I’m as enthusiastic and convinced as ever that this approach is the right one. Let me tell you why in six key words: stories, expertise, platforms, audiences, partnerships and promotion.

**Good stories**

Let’s start with “good stories.” And let me tell you, there’s no shortage of creative talent in our country who can tell a good story.

Our cinema is fascinating and appealing. Our creators explore subjects that are very much of our time—love, old age, immigration, family strife, solitude, the will to succeed, intolerance or social inequality. Our filmmakers tell stories that are serious, that are often very moving—but that can also make us laugh and smile.

There are characters and images that stay with us for a long time. I’m thinking of Michael McGowan’s *Still Mine*, starring Geneviève Bujold, Xavier Dolan’s *Tom at the Farm*, or Sébastien Pilote’s lovely film, *Le Démantèlement*.

Certain movies bring larger-than-life characters back to life, like Daniel Roby's *Louis Cyr*. Others take us to foreign lands, telling stories that are fascinating, or disturbing, but always intriguing: to India, in Richie Mehta's *Siddarth*; to refugee camps, in Anaïs Barbeau-Lavalette's *Inch'Allah*; to Congo, in Kim Nguyen's *War Witch*; and to Syria, in Ruba Nadda's *Inescapable*.

These stories are portrayed by gifted actors who bring a unique personal touch to their films. I'm thinking of Jay Baruchel, Antoine Bertrand, Gabriel Arcand, Sarah Gadon, Emily Hampshire, Alexandre Landry and the young Sophie Nélisse, among many others.

This past February, the Berlin International Film Festival also paid tribute to our Aboriginal films during the NATIVE—A Journey Into Indigenous Cinema event. The event opened with Zacharias Kunuk's *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* and prominently featured Aboriginal women filmmakers, among them Alanis Obomsawin.

Guy Maddin, who put Manitoba on the world's movie map, and Denis Côté, who won the Silver Bear award for innovation at Berlin 2013, each, in their own way, brought new perspectives to creativity.

All of these achievements shine a spotlight on award-winning filmmakers, on people who are energetic and inspiring, and who have stories to tell and to share.

#### Expertise

Every good story, in order to work onscreen, needs the expertise of reliable, skilled film crews—on the set as well as in the postproduction studio. Expertise puts the magic into film.

In 2012, 232 foreign productions were shot in Canada. They weren't shot here only because of our superb landscapes! As you know, Canada is renowned for its highly talented film crews.

#### Greater number of platforms

Now let's talk about platforms. Indeed, Canadian talent is bursting forth everywhere, and on a variety of platforms, such as the Web and other digital media.

One of the Canadian works in the spotlight at Power to the Pixel, held in London in October, was *Avatar Secrets*, an interactive iPad documentary supported by the Canada Media Fund. Our creative talent innovate and explore new narrative techniques. And they offer their audiences original, interactive experiences.

At Telefilm, we're eagerly awaiting the launch of eight films funded under our Micro-Budget Production Program. All eight will be screened and promoted via digital media.

And 10 award-winning Quebec films are now available on iTunes France, among them Rafaël Ouellet's *Camion* and Bernard Émond's *Tout ce que tu possèdes*. The initiative is supported by Telefilm, SODEC and Under the Milky Way, with support from the IPEDA Mundus project.

### Attracting audiences

My fourth point touches on a key subject... the public. We now have an almost unlimited number of ways to reach audiences. Let's make the most of it!

In the past, films disappeared once their theatrical and TV careers were over. Today, they continue to live on. I'm delighted that new technologies make it possible to access our screen classics, such as Denys Arcand's *The Decline of the American Empire*, first released in 1986.

But it's also important that we make young viewers aware of the movies that we produce here at home. Age is a determining factor when it comes to consumer habits. As a group, young people are the single-largest consumers of films in Canada, and they watch movies on several different platforms.

### Partnerships

The issue of audiences is tied to the necessity of fostering partnerships with a great many stakeholders.

All kinds of partnerships are possible. For example, some 30 Canadian short films will be screened across Canada on December 21 during The Shortest Day Short Film Celebration event. Some 60 participants, movie theatres as well as libraries, cultural centres and associations, accepted the invitation extended by SODEC, the National Film Board of Canada and Telefilm to get involved in the event.

We have partners in every sector of activity: Corus Entertainment for family movies; the Rogers Group of Funds for documentaries. Several partners wanted, like us, to celebrate Canadian talent at international events: the CMF, the Canadian Tourism Commission, Entertainment One, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, the CBC, Rogers Broadcasting, the Directors Guild of Canada, the Canadian Media Production Association, as well as several provincial funding agencies, who are becoming more and more active in supporting homegrown talent at major events.

We also need to foster financial partnerships.

Talking about partnerships, I'm thrilled that seven distinguished entrepreneurs have agreed to sit on the advisory board of Telefilm's Talent Fund, a new private-donation fund. They saw this initiative as another opportunity to change things, to make a difference, to build audiences. They felt that things were moving in the film world, and they wanted to come on board with us. I'd like to say this to them: welcome to the club, and thank you for having chosen to get involved.

### Promotion

I've come to the sixth and last keyword: promotion.

Right now, a wave is rising in favour of Canadian cinema, a wonderful wave that we want to ride.

We're lucky to have a festival right here at home like the Toronto International Film Festival, whose spinoffs compare favourably with those of the Cannes Film Festival. We are also fortunate to have leading festivals *everywhere* across the country.

Telefilm's Movie Nights in Ottawa, organized in partnership with producers, distributors and several other provincial partners, were recognized by *Maclean's* magazine as one of the "five events that matter most to Ottawa's power brokers."

Former minister of Canadian Heritage James Moore and current minister Shelly Glover hosted these events, thereby clearly indicating their support of our creators.

This fall, Telefilm, the Canada Media Fund and Entertainment One presented Don McKellar's *The Grand Seduction* at film festivals in Calgary, Halifax and Saint John's, Newfoundland, where the movie was shot. Some 2000 people attended the screening in Calgary, and people had to be turned away in Saint John's. What a fantastic response!

I dream of a day when every major city in Canada will honour its filmmakers, its screenwriters, its actors—in short, its talent.

The gamble we're taken is simple and has already proved itself: the more that Canadian audiences hear about Canadian movies, the more the news media and social media will talk about them, and the more these movies will be screened in movie theatres, on TV, on tablets and on other mobile devices.

To entice viewers here at home, we need to highlight the prizes, awards and other honours that our films have won abroad.

Private entrepreneurs are becoming more and more involved in international events. Maison Birks, notably, has participated in major events at Cannes, Toronto and Shanghai.

Every producer, every distributor also has an important role to play in deriving full value from their products on an ongoing basis.

Promotional activities produce results. In one year alone, the number of Canadians who were able to name a Canadian film rose from 37% to 58%. Of course, this is just the beginning. We still have a lot of work to do to attract Canadian audiences.

We also have to take account of audiences. In this regard, I'm delighted that the CRTC is consulting Canadians about the future of the television system in Canada.

### Conclusion

I think that creativity, expertise, partnerships and promotion are key to our film industry's future.

We have the talent and the expertise. Canada was the Country of Honour at MIPCOM 2012, the largest annual global market for entertainment content across all platforms.

And while we're talking about international glory for our industry, I'd like to congratulate Fabienne Larouche and the entire team behind *30 vies*, the first Quebec TV series to be nominated for an International Emmy Award.

Last month, an impressive delegation of Canadian producers went to Australia to strengthen its ties with what is now our fourth most important coproduction partner. We've also breathed new life into our business ties with Mexico, Brazil and Argentina. Stay tuned for further developments.

For their part, Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo, Pusan and Mumbai are fans of our film industry. Things are also moving ahead in the United States, where more and more festivals are prominently featuring our movies; the Palm Springs "fest" will once again this year provide a major showcase of Canadian films, including those in the running for an Oscar.

Success can take a variety of forms, and we're in the midst of discovering what they are. There are many different ways that companies can contribute to Canadian success: by reaching out to audiences in movie theatres and on digital platforms; by winning awards; by increasing their sales; and by building partnerships at home and abroad—through coproduction, among other ways.

In closing, I'm convinced, Ladies and Gentlemen, that we all want the same thing:

- Canadian talent on as many screens as possible, in Canada and everywhere around the world; and
- Audiences, and even more audiences, in Canada and everywhere around the world.

That's the challenge we face—a collective challenge—over the next few years.

Thank you for your attention.