



**TELEFILM CANADA ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING**  
**SPEECH DELIVERED BY MICHEL ROY, CHAIR OF THE BOARD**  
NOVEMBER 15, 2012

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to Telefilm Canada's fourth Annual Public Assembly.

Greetings to all of Telefilm's clients and partners who are here today.

Two years ago, we launched a corporate plan, titled *Fostering Cultural Success*, which aimed to stimulate demand for Canadian content both at home and around the world. We wanted Canadian content to be seen everywhere and on all platforms—and that it be recognized for what it is: content that is among the best in the world.

We especially wanted Canadians to be proud of Canadian content and to embrace even more fervently these works inspired by their reality, their imagination and their experiences.

Without modifying Telefilm's core mandate, we have broadened our vision to take into account the way the industry is evolving and its environment.

The Canadian industry has definitely come of age. It has reached a level of development marked not only by the quality of its products but by their quantity and variety—and all regions of the country contribute to this development, from British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador.

We've changed over the last few years. We've "dared to change," as we've stated in a variety of forums.

We've granted outstanding companies more autonomy.

We've reoriented our programs and processes in order to better encourage and reward success.

We've created new financial tools, several of which are aimed directly at emerging talent, and we now support a broader range of productions.

We've rethought the way we measure success in order to better recognize the work done by Canadian creators and entrepreneurs.

We've finally put an emphasis on national and international promotion... and we're just starting.

And so fiscal 2011-2012 has been productive in terms of moving our corporate plan forward and, along with it, Telefilm's roles as investor, promoter, thought leader and administrator. We act with rigour... and we fulfill these four roles with a lot of pride!

We've begun a major redesign of all our funding programs in order to better align them with our corporate vision. Our funding criteria are now aimed at encouraging the best-performing companies, the most promising creative talent, and those promotional events that truly highlight the value of our audiovisual heritage.

We've also made sure that all communities have access to our resources, including official-language minority communities, Aboriginal communities and multicultural communities.

As chair of Telefilm's Board, I'm also very pleased that more funding is now available for low-budget films. I'd also like to point out that emerging filmmakers can now take advantage of a new program targeting emerging talent leveraging digital platforms to produce, distribute and promote features.

Launched this year, our Program Redesign initiative was a major challenge, requested by the industry, following extensive consultation. And we teamed up with clients throughout the year in order to maximize our capacity to invest in production despite the difficult financial environment we operate in.

Our corporate plan also yielded other innovative initiatives in 2011-2012 that are worth highlighting.

As I announced during our last annual public assembly, in November 2011, we put in place a new success index for feature films that we fund. What I like about this index is that it is really inclusive and it allows us to measure the results of our collective efforts. In addition to box-office results, the Index factors in domestic and international sales across all platforms; selections and prizes at national and international festivals and events; as well as the ability of production companies to obtain funding from private-sector and foreign sources.

With an annual budget of around \$110 million, it's only normal that, more than ever, Telefilm is looking to regional, national and international partnerships in order to leverage every single dollar of investment.

In 2011-2012, members of Telefilm's Board supported the creation of our *Talent Fund*. This is a private donation fund that targets production and promotion, and which the CRTC has recognized as a Certified Independent Production Fund. The initiative was enthusiastically supported by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

Five senior executives, from all regions of the country, agreed to serve on an honorary committee that aims to encourage businesses to invest in Canadian content. I'd like to thank them for their outstanding commitment.

On that note, I'd like to take the opportunity to acknowledge a member of this committee, the Ontario representative, Dr. Anil Gupta, Medical Director of Clinical Cardiology at the Trillium Health Centre, who is with us today. Welcome Dr. Gupta.

The *Talent Fund's* goal is to put \$5 million per year at the service of seasoned as well as emerging Canadian filmmakers and to ensure that there is an audience for their films.

Along the same lines, I would like to recognize the private and public companies that supported our recent red carpet events in Ottawa and across the country. It is a long list, but they are the ones that make it possible: Mongrel Media, Entertainment One, Alliance, Astral, Rogers, Zip.ca, Caramel Films, First Take, micro\_scope, Enbridge, the Canada Media Fund, CBC/Radio-Canada, the National Arts Centre, the Ontario Media Development Corporation, the film agencies from Alberta and Newfoundland and Labrador, the cities of Calgary and St. John's.

And thank you also to the Rogers Group of Funds and the National Film Board of Canada, who joined us to renew the Theatrical Documentary Program.

While making great strides in implementing our corporate plan in 2011-2012, Telefilm's Board and senior management still targeted a balanced approach to funding. Our administrative costs held steady at 6% of our budget. We acted in a spirit of prudence and rigour against the backdrop of a demanding economic context and an ever-changing environment.

I have been greatly helped in my work as chair of Telefilm, thanks to the support of a dedicated and experienced Board. Please allow me to introduce the Board members who are with us today:

- Elise Orenstein, from Toronto, Vice-Chair of the Board, a specialist in intellectual property law for a broad range of industries including knowledge management;
- Marlie Oden, a communications and marketing specialist who works in Vancouver and who chairs the Strategic Planning and Communications Committee;
- Grant Machum, a Halifax lawyer, who chairs the Governance Committee; and
- Ram Raju, an education and digital media specialist from Ottawa.

Two members of the Board were unable to join us for the meeting:

- Yvon Bélanger, from Quebec City, an accountant and the Chair of our Audit and Finance Committee;
- Tom Perlmutter, Government Film Commissioner and Chair of the National Film Board of Canada.

During the year ahead, we will continue working on our program redesign. We want to become an even more efficient partner and to simplify the way we work together.

But the biggest challenge—and Carolle will talk more about this in a few minutes—will be to attract audiences. We want Canadian content to be what Canadians prefer above all else.

It was in this spirit that we organized last month a first symposium on the promotion of Canadian content, in collaboration with the Canada Media Fund and the CRTC. The Symposium brought together some 300 participants, and we saw that there was a very real desire to grow Canadian audiences for Canadian content by better promoting our films, TV shows and digital products.

We'll also have to remain vigilant and ensure we properly balance our strengths as well as our production and promotion resources. To attract and retain audiences, we need to maintain a critical mass of films—in other words, the number and diversity of films—that Canadians can access each year.

I'd like to end these remarks on a more personal note. I recently had two wonderful experiences as a movie-lover thanks to two films from Ontario. The first was Sarah Polley's documentary *Stories We Tell*, which I first saw at the Venice Film Festival.

Like many Canadians who are now seeing the movie in theatres, I was moved by this film. It's an intimate and daring work. Exploring her own family's history and secrets, Sarah Polley's film is a highly accomplished piece of filmmaking, and one that tells a very human story.

The other film is *Breakaway*, which came out last year and that was a hit with audiences across the country, not only in theatres but also—and this is worth pointing out—in our schools!

According to Jack Blum, who heads *Reel Canada*, which organizes festivals of Canadian films in high schools—incidentally an organization supported by Telefilm since its inception—*Breakaway* is on track to becoming one of the most popular films that *Reel Canada* has ever presented. Teens everywhere have been giving the movie a standing ovation. Co-writer and star Vinay Virmani often participates in the screenings, and a lot of students are inspired by this direct contact with a talented young Canadian.

In closing, I'd like to salute all our creative talent, several of whom are in the audience today. You make a huge contribution to Canada's audiovisual legacy and to our quality of life. You create stories that bring us together, and that leave a unique cultural heritage for future generations.

Thank you for your attention.