

Telefilm Canada Annual Public Assembly 2014-2015

Q&A

Given the troubling results of the Women in View on Screen report, what is Telefilm Canada doing to address the gender inequality that is apparent in its funding decisions? Any plans to adopt a mandate similar to BravoFact, where at least 50% of their funding goes towards projects helmed by female producers or directors? What is Telefilm doing to support an inclusive and diverse Canadian film industry?

Producer, Ontario

Carolle Brabant: This situation has been a concern for us as well. We are part of the dialogue—which is why Telefilm funded the *Women in View on Screen* report with other industry partners.

But there are encouraging signs that we are seeing through our programs, such as the Talent Fund/Micro-Budget Production Program where we encourage filmmakers to direct debut features (Amy Jo Johnson, Sonia Bonspille Boileau, Julie Lambert, Stephanie Clattenburg). We also continue to promote women filmmakers through, for example, our partnerships with the St. John's International Women's Film Festival and, for the last three years, at TIFF, with Birks to pay tribute to the women directors and actresses of the year.

Right now, we are in consultations with women filmmakers, and hopefully, by next fiscal we'll have some recommendations. We want to see how the next generation wants to tackle this issue.

Is there a way to see the financing plans of the productions that partner with Telefilm? Even in a general sense? It is the most mysterious and creative part of the filmmaking process?

David Ray, Second Chance Productions, British Columbia

Yes, financing plans are one of the complex aspects of filmmaking.

But in a general sense, for productions that we finance, on average:

- Federal and provincial governments: 68%
- Foreign financing: 11%
- Private financiers: 10%
- Distributors: 9%
- Broadcasters: 2%

Over the past few weeks Canadian coproductions have been gaining a lot of attention and being honoured with several nominations. Why do you think this is happening now?

Carolle Brabant: Canada basically invented the coproduction model through its international treaties!

As you can see, coproduction is really a team effort. We work with the provinces to foster partnerships. The provinces are doing a tremendous job in going around the world in promoting Canada as a partner of choice. One example is Claudia Llosa's *Aloft*, which was filmed in Manitoba and coproduced by local company Buffalo Gal Pictures due to the work of Manitoba Film and Music.

Minister Joly just announced the signing of the new Canada-Ireland audiovisual coproduction treaty. I thank the CMPA for its recent trade mission to Ireland, which included industry players from across the board.

And finally, success brings success. Coproductions like *Room*, *Vikings*, *Brooklyn* and *Versailles*—you couldn't ask for a better calling card for our country to attract partners.

What is Telefilm Canada doing to support emerging talent?

Michel Roy: This question raises a crucial issue. We're talking about the future here. Emerging talent need opportunities to get their foot in the door into the industry.

In this light, I'm most proud of our Micro-Budget Production Program, which aims to stimulate the use of new digital distribution platforms by emerging filmmakers.

And of course, thank you to the some 40 educational institutions and film cooperatives from across the country who recommend projects to us.

Looking at the annual report, the amount of support for Canadian features coming from English Canadian broadcasters in particular is virtually non-existent. With new money coming for the CBC, is there any plan to partner with them to create a new support initiative?

Paul Gratton, Whistler Film Festival

Carolle Brabant: As M. Roy said earlier, over 80% of films viewed by Canadians are watched at home. So your question is indeed timely.

I can assure you that we are in conversations with broadcasters, including the CBC, to see who we can work more closely together.

On that note, I'm pleased by Minister Joly's message to the heads of the cultural agencies—to see how we can all collaborate more in order to better leverage our activities.

The Nova Scotia industry has been decimated by funding cuts. Telefilm Canada effectively shut down, more or less, its Halifax office a few years ago. Is there any possible way to show its support for local filmmakers by reopening its office with permanent staff?

William MacGillivray

Carolle Brabant: In my opinion our Halifax office is alive and well. There are four full-time employees working closely with feature film and TV clients. They work very hard with the community to support Atlantic filmmakers.

I'm really impressed by the quality of first features from Atlantic Canada filmmakers. One great example is the success story from Newfoundland's Christian Sparkes. *Cast No Shadow* was the big winner at the last Atlantic Film Festival Awards, taking home six awards, including best Atlantic feature.

And speaking of the AFF, our Halifax office is still very active in its support of Atlantic festivals.

From our client consultations, we heard the message that clients wanted our feature film execs to travel more often to the region. I'm happy to say Michel Pradier, Stephanie Azam and Anne Frank are doing just that.

You talk about new ideas, about being a thought leader and about thinking of audiences in new ways, is Telefilm Canada open to re-examining its 40-year policy of ignoring IMAX productions, which reach a lot of audiences?

Kirwan Cox, Quebec English-Language Production Council (QEPC)

Carolle Brabant: Thank you for your question and for your suggestion on what to do with our increased funding when we get it. We will be reviewing our priorities when that time comes.

Speaking of coproduction success, Canada is the partner of choice for many foreign documentary/factual producers. Is Telefilm Canada still committed to supporting this genre?

Anne Pick, DOC

Carolle Brabant: Telefilm Canada has a long history of supporting documentary features, most notably through our over 10-year partnership with the Rogers Group of Funds. And we continually looking to add new funding partners.

We're also proud to be long-time supporters of events like Hot Docs.

Is there any timetable for the Eurimages announcement?

Jeremy Torrie, Winnipeg

Carolle Brabant: This is a very important international initiative. I can't give you a specific date today but we're all hopeful that it will be sooner rather later.

With new money coming is there an opportunity for additional funding for Western producers, to compensate for the decrease in license fees?

Jeremy Torrie, Winnipeg

Carolle Brabant: We understand your concern for funding. We all know it's a highly competitive environment.

One of our goals was to increase funding for the industry and to engage the business community. Launched in 2013, the Talent Fund accepts private donations to help support emerging talent, as well as to finance the production and marketing of Canadian feature films. The Chair of the Talent Fund's Advisory Committee, Hartley T. Richardson, actually hails from Winnipeg.

As I mentioned earlier, the Talent Fund is now financing 75% of the Micro-Budget Production Program—many of the projects are from Western Canada.

In the end, our priority is to balance our portfolio, from first features to larger budget coproductions, and of course regional productions.