

Keep it Rolling

The monthly publication of the Alberta Film & Television Industry

Alberta
Motion
Picture
Industries
Association
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Ava Karvonen, right, of Edmonton-based Reel Girls Media, was on hand in Tokyo to accept *The Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology* Japan Prize for "Anash Interactive." See full story on page 5

Passchendaele up for Best Picture Genie Alberta shot and co-produced epic up for 6 awards

The nominations for the 29th annual Genie Awards, celebrating the best in Canadian film, were announced on February 10 and to no one's surprise, "Passchendaele," the sprawling World War I saga is up for Best Picture as well as five other Genies, including two for producer and star **Paul Gross**.

The film, co-produced by Alberta's **Francis Damberger**, is very close to totalling \$5 million in boxoffice receipts in Canada.

Released on DVD at the beginning of this month, a copy of the film will eventually be sent to every high school in Canada to assist in educating students about Canada's important contribution to the First World War.

Shot in Alberta in 2007, "Passchendaele" is also expected to be in the running for the 2009 Rosies, when the Alberta Film & Television Awards are announced in the spring. Although Gross himself is not eligible because he no longer resides in Alberta, various Alberta crew members do qualify to be nominated.

Albertans nominated for Genie Awards for "Passchendaele" include Francis Damberger, for *Best Motion Picture* as producer, **Wendy Partridge** for *Achievement in Costume Design* and **Garrell Clark** for *Achievement in Overall Sound*. In all, many Albertans worked as cast and crew on the epic feature.

This year the Genie Awards will be televised live from Ottawa on Global Television on Saturday, April 4.

2009 Gerri Cook Memorial Prize winner announced

Connie Edwards of Edmonton-based Souleado Entertainment has been awarded this year's Gerri Cook Memorial Prize.

The \$2500 prize, awarded by AMPIA through a juried competition, assists the creation of an innovative and professional pitch package for a television project.

In recognition of the significant importance of an industry "pitch" proposal, every year AMPIA and CTV Calgary proudly honour the memory of long-time member Ms. Gerri Cook with a yearly Grant of up to \$2,500. Thanks to the generous legacy of the CFCN Production Fund, AMPIA is pleased to award this annual Grant to the Alberta-based AMPIA member who submits the most innovative television program or series concept with the greatest potential of it being produced.

Edwards, through her Souleado company, will be pitching a 13 part half hour documentary series "Discover Me!" The series follows a group of aspiring actors in Los Angeles as they try to live out their dreams of hitting the big time.

Inside this issue...

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Getting to know you... by Jane Bisbee, AMPIA's Interim Executive Director

Over the next couple of months, you'll be introduced to the people working at AMPIA on your behalf – in some cases people whose friendly voices you may have heard at the other end of the phone, but who you may never have seen face to face.

This month we'll start off with AMPIA's newest recruit, the Awards Coordinator **Marie Guerrette**.

Marie Guerrette is a member of a small, but prolific group – namely producers working in the French language in Alberta. In fact, she has just finished a documentary with the National Film Board of Canada as one of the 2008 winners of the Tremplin prize. The award supports the work of promising young Francophone filmmakers outside Quebec. Marie's film, "Le chœur d'une culture," followed a Franco-Albertan choir as they prepared, then participated in last summer's celebrations of the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City.

Marie is well known to many short filmmakers from her work with the Edmonton International Film Festival's In Our Own Backyard.

The event is a day-long showcase of more than 35 short films

made in Alberta. Marie was responsible for wrangling the filmmakers during the nine hours of screenings on the day itself, a task she feels is not too different from organizing the masses of details involved with the Alberta Film and Television Awards.

You also may have seen her on screen as part of Travel Alberta TV, hosting City Spice segments on line. She was also a 2008 CTV Western Canada Fellow at the Banff Television Festival.

Marie is very familiar with the Rosies, having been nominated several times, and carrying home the prize in 2007 for Best Educational Production.

During her contract position with AMPIA, Marie will be responsible for processing all the Awards entries information, organizing the juries and keeping track of the final results. So if you didn't fill out the entry form carefully and legibly, it will be Marie you will hear on the other end of the phone.

Mark your calendars – the 35th annual Alberta Film & Television Awards (aka The Rosies) will take place Saturday, May 2 at the Northlands Agricom in Edmonton

2009 Telefilm Television Business Unit information sessions

Telefilm Canada's Television Business Unit (TBU) Directors **Dave Forget & Francesca Accinelli** along with **Nathalie Clermont**, Director, Program Management, Canadian Television Fund (CTF) are inviting clients to attend an informal information session to review changes to the CTF's guidelines for 2009-10 and highlights of the TBU's achievements over the past year.

RSVP to the number or email address below and take note of the applicable date/region.

For the March 11 Calgary and Edmonton sessions RSVP **Monica Keen**, either at (604) 666-1566 (extension 2639) or email at <keenm@telefilm.gc.ca>.

Calgary, Alberta

Edmonton, Alberta

Wednesday, March 11, 2009
9:00am – 11:00am
Calgary Economic Development
Telus Convention Centre
731 – 1st Street SE
North Building

Wednesday, March 11, 2009
3:30pm – 5:30pm
Matrix Hotel
10640 – 100th Avenue
The Prism Room

Canadian publications mail sales product agreement No. 40036756; return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association 318, 8944 182nd Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5T 2E3; ☎ (780) 944-0707; e-mail: < info@ampia.org >.



Membership News

Fiddle & Drum now on DVD

Legendary artist **Joni Mitchell** and internationally acclaimed choreographer **Jean Grand-Maître** of the Alberta Ballet, combine music, dance and visual art in an unforgettable narrative ballet that explores the human spirit's potential to create and destroy, love and hate, as well as its capacity for war and peace. Recorded in High-definition and seen on BRAVO! CANADA television, "Joni Mitchell's The Fiddle and the Drum" is now available on DVD.

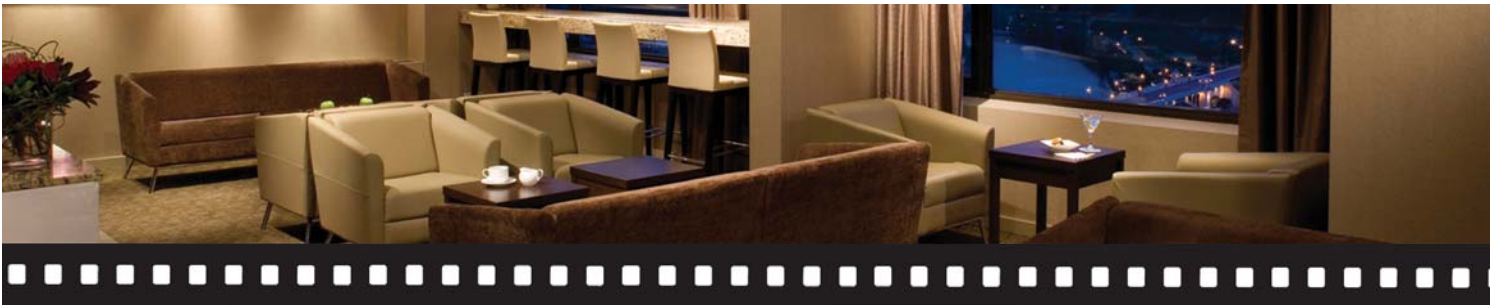
The collaboration between Mitchell and Grand-Maître has garnered rave reviews across Canada and the stage production of "Joni Mitchell's The Fiddle and the Drum" has been referred to by Mitchell as "the most exciting thing I've ever done."

"Joni Mitchell's The Fiddle and the Drum," performed by the Alberta Ballet, continues to tour across Canada and will begin its United States tour in early 2010.

Mitchell was intimately involved in all aspects of the film production including music selection, directing, editing and set design, featuring the first release of Mitchell's latest artwork "Green Flag Song," which is projected onto a large canvass screen as a backdrop to the ballet. The soundtrack includes re-mastered versions of ten eternal songs from Mitchell's catalogue, including three song's from Mitchell's most recent album, Shine – "If," "If I Had a Heart" and a remix of "Big Yellow Taxi."

The DVD "Joni Mitchell's The Fiddle and the Drum" includes exclusive, never-before-seen bonus features that go behind the scenes, including Joni Mitchell and Jean Grand-Maître sharing their personal story of the collaboration, interview segments with Director of Filming **Mario Rouleau** and Alberta Ballet dancers **Kelley McKinlay** and **Nicole Caron** and isolated presentations of Mitchell's artwork video installation. The DVD includes a photo-rich, 8-page booklet of liner notes by Mitchell. The DVD can now be purchased at major retail outlets across North America.

Joe Media Group produced "Joni Mitchell's The Fiddle and the Drum" in association with BRAVO! Canada and with the participation of The Canadian Television Fund, the Alberta Film Development Program of the Alberta Government, the Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit. The television producer is **Karen Pickles**, the co-producer is **Deborah Osborne** and the editor is Ken Filewych. The performance was recorded in High-Definition at the Jubilee Auditorium in Calgary.



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White Iron's many diverse projects

Amidst an intense workload in 2008, a number of White Iron projects reached milestones while numerous others were acknowledged for their accomplishments within the community. White Iron Pictures and co-producers, Purple Dog Media delivered Seasons 4 and 5 of the series "At the End of My Leash." The 65 x 30 min. HD series, hosted by **Brad Pattison**, was directed by **Kelly Peckham** and **Heather McCrae**. The show was shot in Calgary and Vancouver this past summer and The White Iron Digital team put on the finishing touches. Editors **Glenn Sakatch**, **Jamie Francey**, **Steve Katakami** and **Brent Waters** were joined by **Paul Mortimer** and **Duane Hicks** to complete the editorial duties. The series is executive produced by **Jean Merriman** along with supervising producer **Lisa Cichelly** and produced by **Matthew Kershaw** and Brad Pattison.

"Horse Racing Alberta" was honoured to receive the Sovereign Award for the third year in a row for the production of Northlands Filly Pace in Edmonton. South of the border, White Iron received several accolades for the production of Horse Racing Alberta including the Hervey Award from the U.S. Trotting Association for the 'Warren Grant' feature depicting Alberta's top trainer/driver. White Iron was also the recipient of an honourable mention from the Eclipse Awards, a North American award sponsored by the Daily Racing Form and Thoroughbred Racing Association. **Mike Little** directed all of the episodes and features for the season.

Shaw's High Speed Internet "Snailskis" campaign entered into its 11th commercial production with White Iron. The online marketing campaign brought Don and Sharon to life in "Winter Wonderland". Directed by **John Cameron**, an outdoor production crew teamed up with DOP **Al Leader** to shoot the snails in the snow. The VFX team, **Aaron Bilawchuk** and **Kevin Dryden** continue the animation and compositing of live footage and CG animation. Before 2008 wound down, snailskis.com received a Best In Show award from W3. A collaboration between White Iron and Suitcase Interactive involved 3D generated environments to transition between different rooms of the Snailskis' house. It is the third award for the site.

Star Alliance, the worldwide conglomerate of 21 airlines, turned to White Iron to create a showcase piece for their brand. A combination of live footage combined with CG effects and animation is currently in production and aims to profile the prestige and reach of the airlines.

Mike Little directed and produced a video to launch the new branding of WINSPORT (CODA). The video will also be used for a fund development tool for the new proposed Winter Sports Centre of Excellence at Canada Olympic Park. White Iron is proud to be a sponsor of helping to "Ignite the Passion" for Olympic athletes in Canada.

And White Iron crews have been working in some far flung places. One Production team spent a week in the Dominican Republic shooting a documentary about the 2009 Canadian Open Poker Championship for **Kelly Kellner** of HeadsUp Entertainment. Mike Little and his crew shot at the Ocean World Casino in Puerto Plata and post production begins in early February. In addition, Emmy Award winning editor Glenn Sakatch has just returned from Aspen Colorado, where he was working with ESPN on the 2009 Winter X Games in Aspen, Colorado.



White Iron also proudly produced a feature presentation for ESPN featuring then-Senator **Barack Obama**. Directed by **Michael Sciallis**, the piece was created as an opening element for an ESPN Major League Baseball game. Viewers expecting him to announce his candidacy for President of the United States were outwitted when in fact he announced his support for his hometown NFL team. Watch it at <www.whiteiron.tv/demo> and click on the SPORTS banner.

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Reel Girls wins Japan Prize for Anash Interactive

Reel Girls' founder and Executive Producer, **Ava Karvonen**, recently returned from Tokyo where she received a Japan Prize, the world's most prestigious educational media awards, for "Anash Interactive." The same cross-platform project is also nominated for Best Convergent New Media at the upcoming CFTPA Indie Awards in Ottawa this month.

"Anash Interactive" is a stand-alone website and companion to the children's animated television series, "Anash and the Legacy of the Sun Rock," produced by Panacea Entertainment. Visitors to the site can watch webisodes and podcasts, play games, create comics, look behind the scenes of the TV production, and learn about the indigenous Tlingit people at the project's heart.

Japan Prize jury members praised the cross-platform project for harnessing technology as a means of appreciating the traditional. "This is the first time that linear TV and interactive media have competed side by side for the Japan Prize, and the winning entry in the Primary category – "Anash Interactive" – applies tools of the 21st century, extends children's enjoyment of a popular animated television series, and immerses young people in the stories and culture of an aboriginal people."

Karvonen also had the pleasure of meeting the Crown Prince and Princess of Japan, who attended the awards ceremony and hosted a private reception for Japan Prize recipients and members of the jury.

The Japan Prize is the latest in many prizes and accolades "Anash Interactive" has received. To see this award-winning project, check out <www.anashinteractive.com>.

Earth to Sky gears up to expand

As of February 1, 2009, **Nancy Laing** is returning to the helm of Earth to Sky Pictures, the company she co-founded with **Christina Willings** in 2001. After 4 productive and informative years with Joe Media Group, first as Senior Producer on 39 episodes of "Fixing Dinner" and then as Senior Director of Development and Business Affairs, Laing is looking forward to returning to producing full time at Earth to Sky Pictures.

"Working with Joe Media has been a valuable experience. While there I built strong business affairs and production accounting departments. In addition, I had the opportunity to expand my expertise in documentary, performance and factual series," says Laing. "There is a great team of people at Joe Media with whom I have enjoyed working."

In 2004, prior to Laing joining Joe Media, Earth to Sky Pictures had primarily been a film production house. Four years later, with over 40 hours of television programming added to her resume, Laing is now ready to expand the company's portfolio into television and digital media.

Earth to Sky Pictures is now actively seeking concepts and co-production opportunities for family movies, and female-oriented factual TV and digital media projects. Contact Nancy Laing at <nancy@earthtoskypictures.com> or by cell at (403) 862.6114.

Pyramid rolling along

Pyramid Productions is back by popular demand on PBS. Following last year's highly-successful broadcast of "Rain: A Tribute to the Beatles," the company is putting the final touches on a second special featuring the group recreating the Beatles' concert experience. Both HD productions were recorded during tour stops at the Jubilee Auditorium in Calgary.

Pyramid returns to the Jube this month, to film the Rankin Family as the reunited band plays two shows in Calgary. The HD concert special will showcase some of the Juno-winning group's biggest hits and new material from their upcoming album, These Are the Moments.

There was a reunion on the set of Pyramid Productions' series "Flames This Week" recently. Former NHL superstar **Theoren Fleury** acted as guest host with one-time Calgary Flames teammate **Perry Berezan** as his guest on the popular talk show. Flames This Week can be seen on Rogers Sportsnet West and Theo will be seen around the Pyramid building more often as the company's digital media department has secured the contract to build his official website.

Also in January, Star Choice Communications and advertising agency WAX Partnership Inc. spent a week using one of Pyramid's two soundstages and 20 x 35 ft. green screen to film a series of spots for their new ad campaign. Pyramid also continues to produce "Simply Star Choice," a monthly entertainment magazine show, for the satellite provider.



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CTS launches new show

CTS (Crossroads Television System) Cable 51, launched a different type of public affairs program, on January 24. Entitled "New West Weekly," the show airs Saturdays at 10:00am and 8:00pm, hosted by Calgary personality **Natalie Faith**.

In the fast-paced first program, viewers will see Mayor **Dave Bronconnier** from a decidedly different point of view, and listen to children describe what God looks like. Hint: they have better answers than most adults do.

"I have worked in the Calgary community for 5 years, and am delighted to bring this new type of show to the airwaves," said Faith, known to Calgarians previously as a morning drive host on radio station Shine FM. "With this program, we want to reflect the as-yet untold stories of the lives of unsung community heroes and organizations making a difference right here."

"New West Weekly" will include segments on public affairs, culture, sports and the activities of local charities, inspiring individuals and communities of worship.

"We've listened closely to the community and it is telling us that it wants programming that entertains, uplifts and celebrates the selfless good deeds of everyday people," said Executive Director of CTS Alberta, **Richard M. Landau**. "This new program reflects that desire."

CTS is dedicated to bringing wholesome programming to the Calgary community, and has a number of new series and programs in development.

The local channel and its sister station in Edmonton have been on the air since October 2007. CTS also has broadcast operations in Ontario, which began in 1998 and grew out of the 100 Huntley Street broadcast ministry.

New West Weekly airs every Saturday at 8:00pm on channel 32, cable 51. A complete schedule for the station can be found at <www.ctstv.com>.

News from Earth Magic

Earth Magic Media Inc. of Edmonton, Alberta is currently in the editing phase of their national television series "From the Spirit – Season III" with BRAVO! and Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. The work of seven native artists in Canada and United States will be ready to air in September, 2009 in primetime. Producers **Raymond Yakeleya** and **Bill Stewart** travelled as far south to Santa Fe, New Mexico and as far north as Yellowknife. Travel also included Seattle, Comox, BC, Mississauga and Stephenville, Newfoundland.

"It was quite amazing to see the beauty of both countries and to meet the fascinating artists who are turning out stunning work. We are so glad to be able to present to the country, stories of our great artists and their achievements" says producer Yakeleya.

Earth Magic Media Inc. has currently received financing to develop a First Nations television series on the paranormal from a native perspective. This series is titled "The XIIIth Hour" and we hope to be in production in the fall of 2009. The City of Calgary awarded them commercial production promoting their upcoming blue cart recycling program.

NFB's 70th anniversary gift to Canadians : <www.nfb.ca> - the online Screening Room

A vital part of the national fabric since 1939, the National Film Board of Canada is marking its 70th anniversary in 2009 with a new online Screening Room providing free home viewing of over 700 productions, films, trailers and clips from the NFB's world-renowned collection.

Now online at <www.nfb.ca>, the Screening Room is the latest step forward in a sweeping digital transformation now underway at Canada's public film producer and distributor, which is committed to harnessing digital technologies to connect with all Canadians, as a key part of its new Strategic Plan.

Available 24/7 in Canada's both official languages, the NFB's online Screening Room provides Canadians with a unique screening experience: high quality, free viewing of over 700 productions from the NFB's vast collection – a national treasure of our stories. From historical films dating back to 1928 to current contemporary releases, including award-winning documentaries, animation and fiction, this initiative invites Canadians from all regions, to browse, discover and be entertained by the stories that bind us together.



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ZOOM rolls with Ford

ZOOM Communications is busy finishing the first of seven commercials for Alberta Ford Dealers, through Y&R. The spots feature country star, and Ford spokesperson, **Paul Brandt** interacting with 3D word elements. ZOOM director **Todd Langille** envisioned the creative approach and helmed the shoot. ZOOM's senior editor **Allan Thrush** and visual fx artist **Greg Marshall** handled the post production visuals, while **Brad Belcher** took care of post audio at GGRP. This marks the second time ZOOM has worked with Y&R and Ford in the past year, both on their own and through their association with Toronto-based Mad Films.

A major player in the web video market, ZOOM continues to expand the market for their proprietary Jetvision web-video content playback and management system. Jetvision is allowing companies and organizations to essentially create their own television channels online. One of the newest Jetvision users is Sunshine Village. They've launched a web-based TV channel that plays ZOOM-produced content, plus videos shot and edited by Sunshine staffers. Check it out at <www.jetvision.tv>.

Viewers of OLN's Gemini-nominated series "Half Mile of Hell" will remember the miraculous ride of chuckwagon driver **Mark Sutherland**, when he clung to the undercarriage of his wagon after being thrown from the box. Mark recently relived the near-death experience for ZOOM's cameras, so viewers around the world can watch this amazing ride in an upcoming episode of "Most Shocking." Part of Nash Entertainment's "Caught on Video" anthology, "Most Shocking" airs in Canada on MenTV.

ZOOM writer/producers **Trevor Alberts** and **Grant Nolin** have been selected to move on to the second phase of the National Screen Institutes' Totally Television Program. Over the next several months, Trevor and Grant will work with seasoned story editors and executive producers to further hone their half-hour comedy series about life in a Northern Alberta oil town.

Erin Berube back with Anaïd

Anaïd Productions is excited to announce the return of **Erin Berube** to their team. She joins the company this time in newly created position of Manager of Production/Digital Media.

Erin graduated from NAIT in 2001 and immediately started her career with the Anaïd team in Edmonton in a variety of roles, from Assistant to the Producer to Supervising Producer, on series including "Mentors," "Taking It Off" and "X-Weighted" before moving to Nova Scotia in 2006.

While in Halifax, she continued with Anaïd remotely as a casting director for "X-Weighted" and "The Family Restaurant." She also worked as production manager for "Cubers," a one-off documentary on rubik's cube obsession, which aired on CBC in the fall '08. Berube then joined CTV as the Coordinator of Independent Production for Eastern Canada and served as CTV's liaison to the Eastern independent production community.

Delighted to be back at Anaïd, Berube is responsible for managing production budgets and business affairs, as well as focusing on digital media opportunities for Anaïd's current programs. She is working from Anaïd's Vancouver office.

Development seminar in Edm Feb. 28

You have the best concept for a television series. You've been through all the production hoops before and this time you want to make sure you get things absolutely right. You want to take your Canadian series right into the belly of the American television market. What are the things you need to know to successfully pitch and produce your series for American broadcasters?

John Amodeo, producer of numerous television series in Los Angeles, New York and Canada, is willing to share the secrets to successfully pitch and produce your series for American broadcasters. Amodeo has produced shows such as "Samantha Who?" (ABC), "Arrested Development" (Fox) and "Titus" (Fox).

Attendees will learn about important things, including; getting in the door; what to do when the Network wants to change the idea you have pitched; traditional programming vs reality programming and thinking your way out of a hole when things go off the rails.

The day-long session will be held in Edmonton on Saturday, February 28 from 10:00am to 3:00pm at the Shaw Theatre, NAIT. Registration (Deadline: February 24) is \$40 for AMPIA members (includes lunch). If you want to register, please go to <www.ampia.org/pdfs/RegistrationForm.pdf> to download the registration form.



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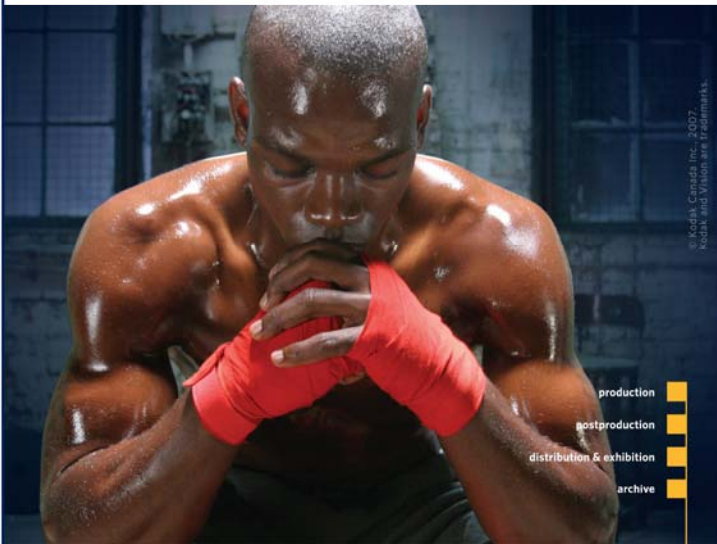
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Calendar of Events

- The Reel Fun Film Festival (Calgary)**
(403) 275-9373 February 12 – 23
- ACTRA Calgary information session**
1 866 913-3123 February 17
- ACTRA Edmonton information session**
1 866 913-3123 February 18
- BNMI Co-production Residency: Almost Perfect**
1 800 565-9989 June 4 - July 4, 2009
Application deadline: February 25, 2009
- The 81st Academy Awards**
(310) 247-3000 February 22
- AMPIA Professional Development seminar in Edmonton**
1800 814-7779 February 28
- Canwest Alberta Fund deadline**
(780) 468-9304 March 15
- The 29th Annual Genie Awards**
(416) 366-2227 April 4
- HOT DOCS Canadian International Documentary Festival**
(416) 203-2155 April 30 – May 10
- The 2009 Alberta Film & Television Awards (Edmonton)**
1 800 814-7779 May 2

ACTRA information sessions in Edmonton and Calgary

ACTRA and the Institute of Communication Agencies (ICA) and the Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA) concluded negotiations on the National Commercial Agreement in October 2008, new rates came into effect January 1, 2009. ACTRA Alberta would like to invite industry to attend information sessions outlining the details and changes to the new three year agreement. Daintry Dalton, of ACTRA Montreal, played a significant role in the negotiations will be conducting the sessions.

Please RSVP by Friday, Feb 13 to alberta@actra.ca.

Calgary – Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Kanhonoff Centre - 200, 1202 Centre Street S.E.

9:30am – 11:30am: Producers, Production Managers, Agencies 1:30pm – 3:30pm: Performers and agents

Edmonton – Wednesday, February 18, 2009
Trans Alta Arts Barns - 10330 – 84 Avenue

1:30pm – 3:30pm: All interested parties

Keep it Rolling - is AMPIA's monthly newsletter, published on the first Friday of each month. All news pertinent to the film and television industry in Alberta is considered for inclusion. All information can be sent by e-mail, either to AMPIA <info@ampia.org> or to the editor, Gordon Imlach / G FORCE PUBLICITY <news@gforcepublicity.com>. For advertising inquiries please contact AMPIA, (780) 944-0707 in Edmonton, or toll free at 1 800 814-7779

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