



# WIFTV Committee Reports – 2010 AGM

For the year April 2009 – March 2010

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Robyn Wiener**

This year was a very exciting one as WIFTV focused on advocacy, community outreach, awards, the long awaited Producer's Workbook 4, mixers and member benefits. This year, the women on the board worked hard to continue our mandate in supporting women in screen based media. I want to thank everyone on the board for their dedication, hard work and tenacity. Those completing their terms will be missed, but their hard work will remain indelible to this organization. We look forward to an even more exciting new year ahead with much news to report for next AGM.

## **ADVOCACY: Peggy Thompson & Mary Bissell**

The following reports were compiled by Peggy Thompson & Mary Bissell and their continued efforts in creating awareness within the industry through outreach and awareness. There was a lot of work done this year and so please take a moment to read the following reports.

### ***Please Adjust Your Set***

Please Adjust Your Set.com links to studies, research and articles world wide and locally regarding statistics about women in the film and television industries. The site is both useful and popular for journalists and researchers writing about this critical issue.

The website was developed by the BC Institute of Film Professionals Women's Labour Issues Committee several years ago and is now managed by an independent committee, chaired by past BCIFP Labour Committee member and past president of WIFTV, Sharon McGowan. Several current board members of WIFTV as well as members of the WIFTV Advocacy Committee, Eileen Hoeter, Peggy Thompson and Mary Bissell, also serve on the management committee.

This website is the most important tool that the WIFTV Advocacy Committee has in bringing attention to the issue of the under representation of women in key creative roles in the film and television industry. Thanks to Rave Film for hiring researcher/designer Siobhan Devlin and contributing significant funds to give the site a fresh new look, and to continue adding new stats and information.

### ***BC Tax Credit Issue***

On behalf of the members of WIFTV, the Advocacy Committee wrote a letter to the Premier's office and sent out a mailer to our constituency to bring attention to the concern regarding the local film and television industry and how it was being affected by the expansion of the Ontario Production Services Tax Credit. Since then, the BC Government announced an improved to the BC Tax Credit.

### ***2009/10 Advocacy Strategy***

An Advocacy Meeting was convened September 9, 2009 to determine strategy for committee on issue of under-representation of women in film industry. Three priorities were identified by attendees for future focus: 1. determine whether we have grounds for human rights case/determine legal strategy; 2. develop separate financial strategy for improving stats of women in key creative roles for industry; 3. develop outreach campaign.

1) Financial – improve allocation of funding to women in key creative positions in the industry. Convene separate meeting to determine whether this should be through tax credits, or some type of production incentive or adjustments to CAVCO.

2) Outreach – to become more public around this issue – to present to and lobby when appropriate to the CRTC. To set key meetings with local and hopefully national powerbrokers and our senior members – Once we've determined our financial and legal strategy, we will develop communications strategy.

Sharon McGowan, Roslyn Muir and Mary Bissell met with Shona Moore of Moore Edgar Olsen re review of circumstances of women in film and television industry vis a vis public funding and are awaiting her general review.

### ***Crazy8s***

In November Mary met with Diana Wilson regarding under-representation of women in Crazy 8s contest. The stats are similar to the rest of the industry – about 15 % of projects submitted in past have in women in director's chair. A further meeting took place with Liz Shorten, Louise Clark, Sue Biely (on speakerphone) and Katrin Bowen where Double Dog Dare strategy was developed.

Crazy8S was a success with the Triple Dog Dare initiative to encourage female filmmakers to get involved. Here is a quote from Diana Wilson: "Vis a vis the impact of the Triple Dog Dare, I think it's fairly easy to conclude that the initiative had an impact, not just in total numbers, but especially in the number of strong projects from women writers and directors. The total number of women who applied definitely increased, although not quite as much as I'd hoped - to about 30%. But of the 40 films selected for an in-person pitch, 40% had a female director (and another 10% had a male director working with a female writer or co-writer.) And the stats just kept getting better as the process went along. For the 12 semi-finalists, 50% were directed by women (with another 2 projects written or co-written by women), and 2/3 of the finalists films (4 of 6) are from female directors. Definitely a first in Crazy8s history!"

### ***Networking***

In July, Mary Bissell attended a roundtable with Maria Minna, the Official Opposition Critic for Labour and Chair of the Federal Liberal Women's Caucus and presented statistics re women in key creative roles in the industry. In October, Mary Bissell made a speech to the Canadian Federation of University Women about the same.

### ***Media Exposure in Wake of Bigelow's Win***

Journalist Marie-Claude Arnott wrote a story about female directors for Suite101 an on-line magazine Various members of the board submitted their views re status of female directors in Canada vis a vis those in the US. This come in the wake of Kathryn Bigelow's win as Best Director at the Academy Awards. Hurrah!

## **PRODUCER'S WORKBOOK 4: Clare Hodge**

The Producer's Workbook originated as binder accompanying a 1989 producer's workshop. The fourth edition of this essential guide for the producer is being published in partnership with Reel West for the second time. The Workbook has been extensively edited since the 3rd edition (published in 2000) including the dozens of documents and contracts which are a feature of the Workbook. New this edition will be a CD-Rom which includes the most popular and valuable contracts and forms.

Cindy Leaney was hired as the Editor and worked tirelessly with the following film and television professionals: Lisa Celotto, Shirley Anne Claydon, Katherine Dodds, Tracey Friesen, Catherine Lough Haggquist, Amanda Harris, Erin Haskett,



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Eileen Hoeter, Virginia Keast, Lael McCall, Sharon McGowan, Roslyn Muir, Deb Patz, Patti Poskitt, Karen Powell, Kim Steer, Peggy Thompson, & Elizabeth Yake. The Workbook Committee included Clare Hodge, Sharon McGowan, Tracey Friesen, Kim Steer, and Elizabeth Yake.

The Workbook will be for sale through WIFTV, Reel West and at Biz Books; WIFTV members will receive a discount on the book when purchased from our office or on our website. As of early May, at the writing of the report, the Workbook is at the printers and a launch party at Biz Books is being planned for its arrival.

## **AWARDS & BURSARIES: Kate Green, Vice President**

WIFTV's growing mentorship program is concerned with connecting women to the next stage in their career. Although the industry has been hit hard this past year, gratefully many of our partners and sponsors have been able to continue with their involvement. This year several awards and accolades were granted to WIFTV members.

### **The 2009 Whistler Film Festival Mentorship**

The 2009 Whistler Film Festival Mentorship was granted to Shawna Cox. Shawna was granted the opportunity to attend the WFF 2009 and meet with several industry decision makers as well as having been given the opportunity to meet with a local mentor to guide her through the pitching and packaging of her show. A panel of industry experts and past winners chose Shawna's application as the winner.

### **Artistic Merit Award, VIFF 2009**

Since 1995, Women in Film and Television Vancouver have presented the Artistic Merit Award. It is a chance for us to recognize a BC woman Film maker or Performer whose Feature work shines and who exemplifies the definition of what it is to be an artist in the Film Industry in British Columbia. Past winners have included the talented: Jane Macgregor (Flower and Garnet), Sandra Oh (Last Night), Gwen Haworth (She's a Boy I Knew) and Tantoo Cardinal for her performance in Mother's & Daughters. This year the Artistic Merit Award was presented to Co-Producer Gillian Lowry and Co-Director Nimisha Mukerji, for their documentary film *65\_Red Roses*.

### **Vancouver Short Film Festival & Reel Stars Film Festival**

WIFTV supports emerging women filmmakers through sponsoring a number of awards throughout the year. The awards usually enable the winner to attend a WIFTV workshop, or to receive mentorship and other opportunities that will help these young women in their careers. The Reel Stars Film Festival is the Coquitlam School District's competition, held annually at the Evergreen Centre. In 2009, the Top Female Filmmaker award was presented by Robyn Wiener to Natasha Hefford, Michelle Kee, and Clarissa Poernomo for their film, *Smile*. Then in September, WIFTV was pleased to be able to present the Best Female Director award at the Vancouver Short Film Festival to our own Angeline Cantada for her documentary film *Let's Play Boccia!*

### **WIDC Bursary**

This year the WIDC bursary was awarded to Elizabeth Becker. Elizabeth participated in the WIDC workshop that takes places in Banff, Alberta at the Banff Centre for Fine Arts. The WIDC workshop is an opportunity for female directors to work with industry professionals while honing their directing skills through the making of a short film project.

### **WORKSHOPS: Linda Crain**

In association with UBC Continuing Studies - UBC Certificate in Entertainment Administration, and with thanks to BC Film, WIFTV held a PRODUCER'S WORKSHOP titled *MAXIMIZING YOUR KNOWLEDGE, OPPORTUNITIES, AND RESOURCES* on Sunday, November 29, 2009 with guest panelists Gigi Boyd, John Christie, Heather Hawthorn-Doyle, Lael McCall, Shono Miko Musgrave and Jill Sharpe. Moderated by Peggy Thompson and Roslyn Muir, this workshop offered the 25 attendees one-day access to an award-winning selection of Vancouver's Producers / Production Executives to increase attendees' knowledge of the three stages of a production: Development, Production, and Post-Production (from the Producer's point of view).

In association with FTX Events, and with thanks to BC Film, WIFTV held a WRITER'S WORKSHOP with Dara Marks, Hollywood's #1 rated script consultant on Wednesday, November 18, 2009. This was an exclusive afternoon with Dara, incorporating the principles of story development as taught in her book, *The Inside Story: The Power of the Transformational Arc*. This workshop focused on assisting approximately 20 writers in accessing and utilizing their own internal, creative vision to make stronger and more powerful story choices.

### **NETWORKING BREAKFAST: Linda Crain**

WIFTV hosted on the third Tuesday of every month, on average, 41 guests per month with thanks to the courtesy of the Grind and Gallery Café and with grateful appreciation for the volunteered time, & energy the following individuals gave of themselves to share industry knowledge, useful insight and experiences: *Eileen Hoeter, Katherine Di Marino, Nancy Rosenblum, Danika Dinsmore, Nancy Rosenblum, Rowena List, Sarah Dakin, Dawn Brennan, Dara Marks, Jacquelyn Brioux, Dr. Tannis MacBeth, Gwen Gnazdowsky and upcoming on May 19<sup>th</sup>, Tom Adair*. The past 10 months have succeeded in providing an opportunity where like-minded individuals can network and share information in an accessible, inexpensive and informal environment for networking. The breakfasts deliver a program that maintains continuity in WIFTV's community exposure and helps bring in WIFTV memberships. WIFTV thanks Deb Sears for her dedication and professionalism exceeding WIFTV's Networking Breakfasts.

### **WOMEN IN FILM FESTIVAL: Roslyn Muir**

This year, the film festival occurred outside of the 2009-10 fiscal year due to the timing of the Olympics and the availability of venues. Throughout the year, the festival committee (close to 20 core volunteers) continued to work and plan for the event which was presented April 17/18, 2010. Although reduced to two days over last year, the festival included for the first time an exhibitors showcase, one-on one pitching sessions, and networking lunch presentations from leading industry professionals. We received over 100 short film submissions and was able to programme 38 films. WIFTV thanks our many sponsors and partners who came on board in advance of the festival, including Legacy Filmworks (Legacy Awards).

### **WIFTI SHOWCASE: Clare Hodge**

Women in Film & Television International (WIFTI) is a global network comprised of some 36 Women In Film Chapters worldwide and over 10,000 members dedicated to advancing professional development and achievement for women working in all areas of film, video, and other screen based media.



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The WIFTI Short Film Showcase celebrated International Women's Day on March 8, 2010 through powerful films by women. On this one day, the showcase was presented at twelve Women in Film Chapters from Vancouver to Atlanta, Montreal to New South Wales Australia. The 5th Annual showcase featured highlights of programmes from preceding years. The films included Montreal filmmaker Vanya Rose's *Montreal Stories 1971*. This year's screening was generously hosted by Technicolor Creative Services at the Motion Picture Lab on Davie Street. We packed 37 people into their 40-seat theatre; admission was by donation. Many thanks to WIFTI Showcase coordinator Kimberley Skyrme, WIFTI's Sherry Richardson, and Martha Watkinson of Technicolor.

## **FIRST TUESDAY MIXER: Jacqui Ellis**

This event was started in October 2009 as an alternative, informal networking event held in the evening between 6pm and 8pm at The Edge on Granville Street. It is free for members and non-members are welcome to attend at a small charge of \$5. A big thanks to The Edge for hosting us.

## **MARTINI MADNESS: Robyn Wiener**

Martini Madness was held, as usual, during the Vancouver International Film Festival. The event was held at the Edge Social Grille & Lounge on Granville Street. Approximately 500 attendees came and filled the place. Live performances by Sabrina Prada and her team of performers livened up the atmosphere. Carol Whiteman presented the CTV CAM Award to filmmaker, Kelly-Ruth Mercier. Thanks to Carol, we once again hosted an Executive Hour prior to the start of the general admission.

## **A Special Thanks to our Martini Madness Sponsors:**

Thanks to Carol Whiteman and Creative Women Workshops Association, The Edge on Granville, Absolut Vodka & Red Truck Beer for their generous sponsorship.

## **SPONSORSHIP: Tracey Mack, Treasurer**

This year showed a decrease in sponsorship due to harder economics, the impact of the Olympics and a slowdown in production in Vancouver. For the 2009-2010 year, we received: **CASH DONATIONS of \$ 9, 750 and IN-KIND DONATIONS of \$ 18,160.**

**Cash Sponsors:** City of Vancouver (for WIV), Actsafe (formerly Shape), Annex Pro, BC Film, Capilano University, Creative Women's Workshop Association, Directors Guild of Canada -- British Columbia, I.A.T.S.E Local 891, NFB, Rainmaker Entertainment Inc., and UBC Continuing Studies.

**In Kind Sponsors:** Kodak Canada Inc., Reel West, Wendy D Photography, Front Row Insurance Brokers Inc., Playback, UBC Continuing Studies, Whistler Film Festival, The Women in The Director's Chair Workshop.

**Community Partners:** Banff Television Festival, Next Media, DOXA Film Festival, Vancouver Queer Film Festival.

## **MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS: Kay Leung**

This year a concerted effort was made to give WIFTV a clear voice within the social media sphere that was timely, engaging and would help position this organization and its strategic goals for the year. Utilizing Facebook, Twitter and Youtube has raised the profile of activities and events to both members and non-members. Based on weekly reports from our Facebook site, the WIFTV Facebook page gets an average of 800 views every

week. In addition, we have also been posting news related links and articles relating to women in film keeping these issues in the spotlight. In an effort to streamline corporate communication activities, the decision was made to stop producing the printed quarterly newsletter and in lieu, the electronic newsletter was re-established sharing information in a more timely and less labour intensive manner. Continuing into next year, the team will focus on redeveloping the current website.

## **MEMBERSHIP: Elyn Dobbs**

As of May 12, 2010: 283 active members, 29 life members (total 312 members). As members renew, we are upgrading industry professionals to the Executive level that was added at the 2009 AGM. Over the year, we have upgraded the online membership database software, and the majority of members take advantage of the online membership registration/renewal, as well as for purchasing tickets to events. In efforts to reduce our carbon footprint, membership information is online, and notices to members are sent via email. Members continue to receive reduced rates on many partner events, including Banff.

## **WEBSITE: Robyn Wiener**

This year, the website has an updated look thanks to the continued work and efforts of our website host, ExWare Solutions and Elyn Dobbs. The website continues to offer members up to date information on WIFTV and what is going on in the community at large. Kudos and thanks to Elyn for her hard work and dedication in keeping information current and informative for our members.

## **VOLUNTEERS: Elyn Dobbs**

Volunteers continue to be the life-blood of WIFTV. We couldn't do anything without you! Thank you for your continued dedication and the hours of work that you all put in to help WIFTV continue to support so many women in the screen-based media industry. Volunteering is one of WIFTV's privileges of membership and an excellent way to network, just ask our **2010 Volunteers of the Year:**

## **Elisa Meakin – Filmmaker**

Elisa attended VFS to learn writing and directing and soon found her niche to be comedy. She has directed three short comedies over the past year, two of which she has written, and all of which are complete and being submitted into film festivals. Her films are *Sound of a Star*, *Take me 2012*, as well as her short film *Chocolate* which was screened at WIFF 2010. Over the next couple of years, Elisa is planning to shoot a few more short films to hone her style as a director and then will be jumping into directing a feature film. She also just recently launched her production company, SunStar Productions.

## **Parisa Rostamabadi**

Parisa Rostamabadi was born in Iran and moved with her parents to Pakistan and then to Canada. She grew up stealing the family camcorder to make movies with her cousins. She completed her B.A. at SFU with a French Literature major and is also a Certified Court Interpreter. She speaks English, French, Farsi, and some Thai. She has lived in Thailand and France and hopes to continue her travels and learn more languages. She is currently a freelance translator and starting out as a Script Supervisor in film.

**CONGRATULATIONS go out to WIFTV Members for their outstanding contributions. A big thank you from all of us on the Board of Directors for your great support!**