

## What's Wrong With This Picture?

### WIFTV supports CUES report's recommendations but questions Telefilm's commitment

**Women in Film + Television Vancouver (WIFTV)** commends Canadian Unions for Equality on Screen (CUES) for its in-depth report "*What's Wrong with this picture? Directors and Gender inequality in the screen-based production industry.*"

**WIFTV** is deeply concerned by persistent gender inequality in the production of Canadian film and television programming and the lack of concerted action by the federal funding agencies and the previous federal government to rectify this long-standing problem.

As the CUES study found:

*Key to understanding the issue of gender inequality is an analysis not just of discrimination against women, but of systemic advantage for men. Gender inequality in the film and television production industry is a systemic problem that affects women. Nonetheless, as this body of research clearly shows, the issue is not one created by women. Consequently, solutions to an issue of considerable economic and social significance require an industry-wide effort.*

**WIFTV** applauds Women In View and CUES for continuing to undertake research to statistically document and analyze the difficulties that women face in the Canadian industry and the necessity to address these barriers at the systemic level. We support the recommendations included in the CUES report.<sup>i</sup>

Following upon the CUES report, Telefilm Canada brought forward its own gender-related announcement. Telefilm has set itself the following objective:

*By 2020, have a more representative and diversified feature film portfolio that better reflects gender, diversity and Canada's Indigenous communities.*

We are pleased that Telefilm has set a goal, with a date, that focuses on gender as well as diversity and Canada's Indigenous communities.

However, we would like to see Telefilm set much more specific targets over this four-year plan and to include, as its goal, the achievement of full gender equity and representation by 2020. We feel that the current goal is too vague in that it seeks only to create a feature film portfolio that is 'more representative' and 'better reflects' the Canadian population. And, in this process, we would like to see a commitment from Telefilm to provide the public with a detailed implementation plan to achieve gender equity, focusing on all of the issues outlined in the CUES report.

To develop its solutions, Telefilm has formed a working group with the two main Canadian producers' associations, the Canadian Media Producers Association (CMPA) and the Association Québécoise de la Production Médiatique (AQPM), to "help us develop lasting and impactful solutions." We applaud the establishment of collaboration with the industry, but question why the working group includes only groups who have benefitted from, rather than those who have been marginalized by, the current system of financing and support, such as women, cultural minorities and Indigenous people.

As the CUES report indicates, a forward-looking vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is needed, one that boldly states without apology that Canada will create a gender-balanced and more inclusive film and television industry – not only because it is the fair thing to do, but because it is the smart thing to do. Any industry that depends on talent, imagination and originality for its success must draw upon the creative potential of its entire population.

In August of this year, Women in Film and Television Vancouver filed a submission with the CRTC in relation to the upcoming licence renewal hearing for the large Canadian broadcasting groups. We asked the Commission: What about gender?

The statistics for Canadian programming, including the programs that broadcasters license from independent producers, unequivocally demonstrate a serious under-representation of women in creative leadership positions. Projects that are led by women also receive a paltry portion of the total funding from Canadian broadcasters and the Canada Media Fund.

The CRTC has not undertaken a review of gender equity in the Canadian broadcasting system since 1992. In our submission, WIFTV urged the Commission to require the large Canadian broadcast groups to provide three year plans to achieve specific gender equity targets in their Canadian programming and implement accurate tracking metrics to assess progress and file public reports.

The Commission has a clear mandate under the Broadcasting Act (1991)<sup>ii</sup> to require this type of commitment from Canadian broadcasters, similar to the targets and reporting requirements the CRTC has established for official-language minority productions.

Women in Film and Television Vancouver calls on the federal government and its agencies, including Telefilm, the Canada Media Fund (CMF), the CBC and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) to commit to achieving gender equity across the board and through all funding for Canadian programming that is supported by taxpayers.

It is 2016, after all. Our Prime Minister is promoting gender equity and fair representation in all of his international meetings. It is time to put that stance into action in Canada's film and television industry.

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### **Women in Film + Television Vancouver**

Women In Film + Television Vancouver (WIFTV) is a member-driven not-for-profit society. WIFTV's membership is multicultural and our main objective is to further the artistic and professional development of all women, regardless of ethnic origin or status, in Canada's screen-based media production industries.

Responding to the limited opportunities for women in leadership positions in the film and television industry, WIFTV was formed in 1989 by a group of professional women working in the industry. WIFTV is one of the 35 worldwide chapters of Women in Film & Television International.

Full text of WIFTV's CRTC submission can be found [here](http://www.womeninfilm.ca/_Library/NEWS/WIFTV_CRTC_submission_-_Final_text_2016_08.pdf).  
([http://www.womeninfilm.ca/\\_Library/NEWS/WIFTV\\_CRTC\\_submission\\_-\\_Final\\_text\\_2016\\_08.pdf](http://www.womeninfilm.ca/_Library/NEWS/WIFTV_CRTC_submission_-_Final_text_2016_08.pdf))

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<sup>i</sup> CUES Report Recommendations:

1. Adopt gender equality as a core principle in policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation for the Canadian screen-based production industry.
2. Recognize that the implementation of equality and diversity practice is good for business.
3. Address implicit bias across the Canadian screen-based production industry by prioritizing inclusivity and diversity as core industry values.
4. Stakeholders from across the industry, including regulatory and funding bodies and public institutions, record diversity metrics and report annually on the degree to which public funds support storytelling by under-represented communities.

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ii Section 3 1) of **the Broadcasting Act (1991)** states:

*It is hereby declared as the broadcasting policy for Canada that...*

**(d)** *the Canadian broadcasting system should...*

*(iii) through its programming and the employment opportunities arising out of its operations, serve the needs and interests, and reflect the circumstances and aspirations, of Canadian men, women and children, including equal rights, the linguistic duality and multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society and the special place of aboriginal peoples within that society;*