



FOCUS ON WOMEN

A Report on gender (in)equality in the Canadian independent screen-based production industry

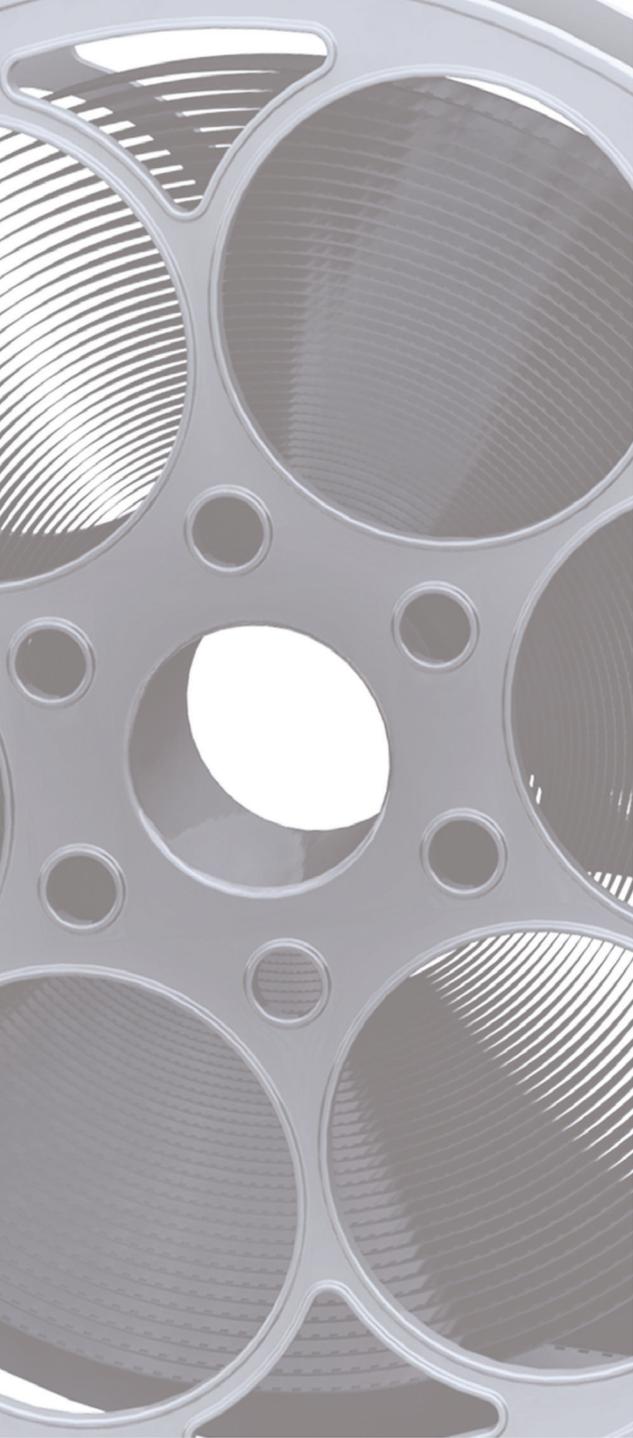


CUES
Canadian Unions
for Equality on Screen

A report of Canadian Unions for Equality on Screen (CUES)

Prepared by Dr. Amanda Coles

Associate Researcher, Interuniversity Research Centre on Globalization and Work (CRIMT) Lecturer,
Graduate Program in Arts and Cultural Management School of Culture and Communication
University of Melbourne



Focus on Women is an examination of gender equality in the Canadian independent screen-based production industry. In 2012, representatives from the Alliance of Canadian Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), the Directors Guild of Canada (DGC), the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the

United States, Its Territories and Canada (IATSE), the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians - Ontario (NABET 700-CEP), Writers Guild of Canada (WGC), Union des artistes (UDA) and Women in View, began a collective discussion on how to advance women's careers and work opportunities in the production of screen-based content in Canada. The conversation built upon Canadian and international industry events that had focused on the question of women's access to labour markets, jobs, career paths and industry leadership opportunities in the past few years.¹

The mandate of Canadian Unions for Equality on Screen (CUES) is **to achieve gender equality in the production of screen-based media by raising awareness of the issue, and generating discussion within the industry by:**

- Recording annual employment and gender-based statistics from industry unions, guilds and associations;
- Reporting annually to stakeholders and the public on these employment and gender statistics; and
- Developing a gender equality checklist for voluntary use in pre-production of projects in Canadian screen-based media

Focus on Women is the mark of a mature and world-class independent film, television and convergent media production sector in Canada.² It reflects the importance of the role that unions play in the lives of cultural workers, the highly collaborative and interrelated nature of working in the screen-based industries, and the depth and breadth of talent in the Canadian industry that produces award winning internationally exported screen-based product that is seen all over the world.

Culture is big business. In 2012, independent film, television and convergent media made in Canada represented \$4.99 billion in production volume and 104,100 full-time equivalent jobs.³ But screen-based content is about more than the economy and jobs. Media both reflects and shapes the way that we see the world. Scripted television programming, dramatic programming in particular, consistently draws more audiences than any other genre.⁴ According to the Motion Picture Production Association of America, 68% of the Canada/U.S. population, or 225 million people, went to the movies at least once in 2012.⁵



As UNI-MEI states in their 2011 General Assembly Resolution on Equality in the Media, Entertainment and the Arts,

“...the media, arts and entertainment sectors are the framework of political, economic and social developments. At the same time they are a powerful tool for creating public opinion and people construct their perception of the world through what they are seeing in the media.”

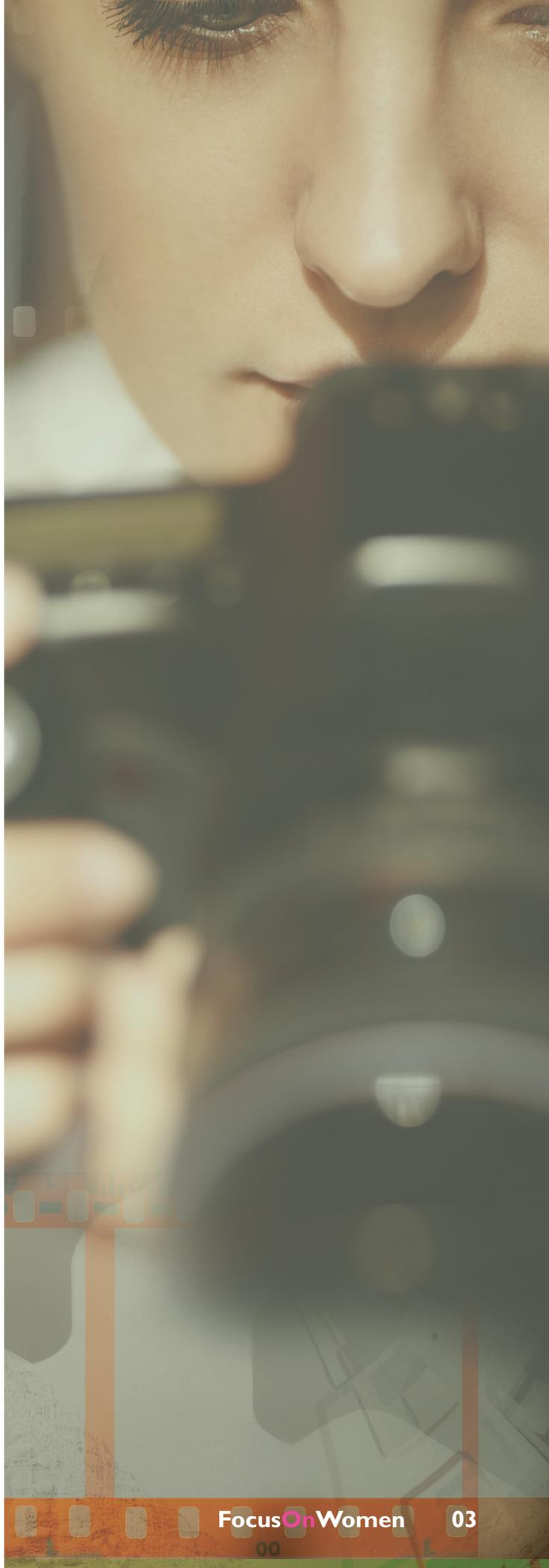
Consequently, our interest here is also to prompt a discussion on *who* gets to tell *whose* stories, and what this says about the vibrancy and diversity of the Canadian media landscape and the career paths of the women who work within it, both on and off screen.

Based on data from national union offices this report is historic for several reasons:

First, our findings represent the first gender-based analysis of the unionized independent screen-production industry workforce in Canada. Where national data was not available, we worked with union offices in Vancouver, Montreal, Toronto and the Atlantic Region to capture both the regional complexities and broad trends in highly unionized film and television production labour markets.⁶ These markets account for over 75% of the independent sector total production volume across the country, providing statistically robust data for analytical purposes. Our statistical analysis is based on data provided by ACTRA National; DGC National; Writers Guild of Canada; IATSE Local 891 British Columbia and Yukon; IATSE Locals 411 and 873 Toronto; IATSE Local 514 Montreal; IATSE Local 849 Atlantic; International Cinematographers Guild IATSE Local 669; International Cinematographers Guild IATSE Local 667; NABET Local 700-CEP; and Union des artistes between July 2012 and April 2013.⁷ This strategy allows us to compare and contrast findings with the in-depth research that has been done in the media sector more broadly, as well as that which is regionally focused.⁸

Second, by bringing together union representatives from across the full spectrum of creative, technical, logistic, and administrative workers involved in creating screen-based content, **Focus on Women** reflects and captures the highly collaborative nature of working in the screen-based production industry.

Third, **Focus on Women** is the inaugural edition of a series of reports that will track the progress of gender equality in the

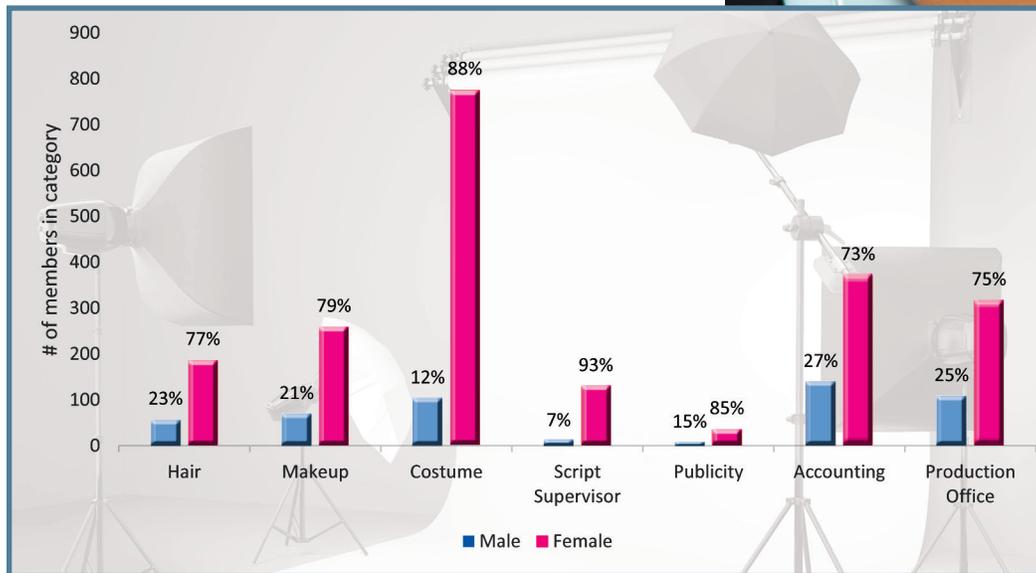


Canadian independent screen-based production sector through statistical analysis and scholarly research. The objectives of the report – the first such report issued by CUES – are to highlight the opportunities and challenges that women face in their careers as cultural workers in the screen-based industries; identify areas that require further examination; and make recommendations to, and work with, industry and policy stakeholders to advance gender equality as a human right in the workplace and as a matter of the public interest.

WHAT WE KNOW – Behind the screen

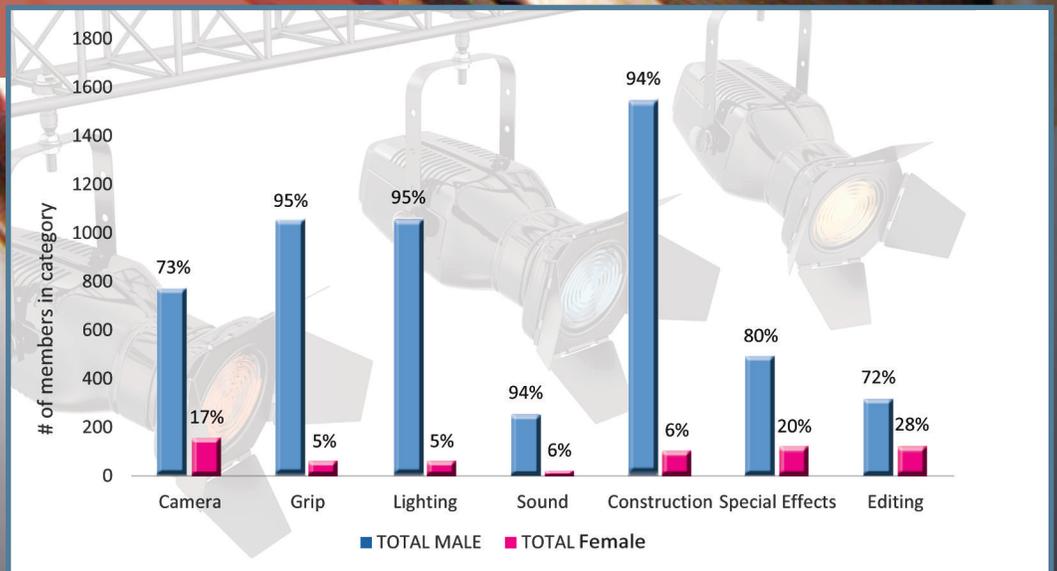
The division of labour in the film and television industry is highly gendered, based on traditional gender roles. Women are overwhelmingly concentrated in areas that are traditionally considered to be “women’s work” such as hair, makeup and wardrobe, script supervision and publicity, and office and administrative jobs.

Figure 1:
Female dominated occupational categories, as a percentage of membership by department



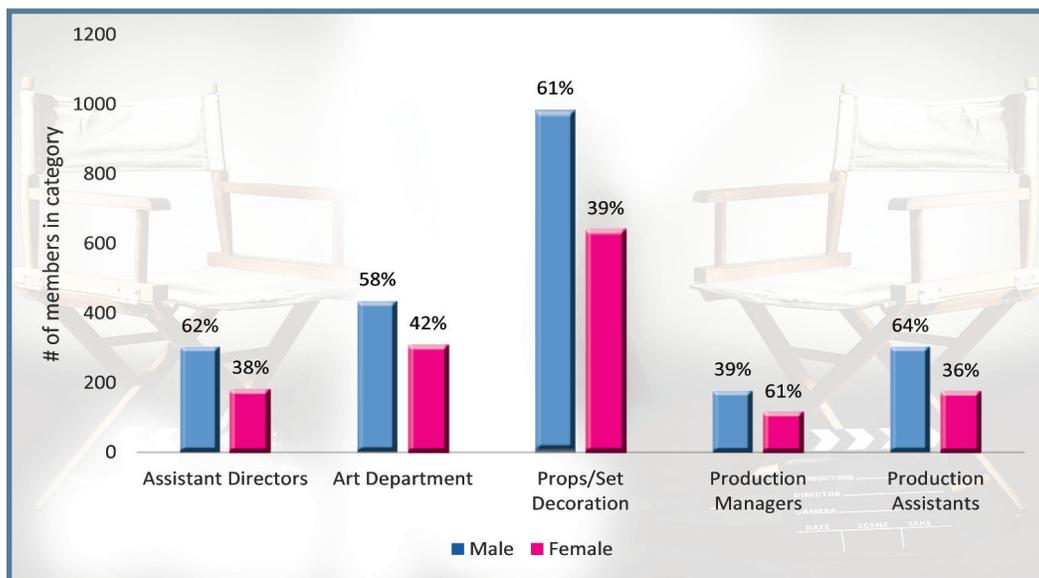
First, our findings represent the first gender-based analysis of the unionized independent screen-production industry workforce in Canada. Where national data was not available, we worked with union offices in Vancouver, Montreal, Toronto and the Atlantic Region to capture both the regional complexities and broad trends in highly unionized film and television production labour markets.

Figure 2: Male dominated occupational categories, as a percentage of membership by department



Technical positions such as camera, grip, lighting, sound, construction and special effects are overwhelmingly male dominated.

Figure 3: Gender balanced occupational categories, as a percentage of membership by department



There are several departments that approach or fall within a gender equality zone of a 40-60% representation of men and women either way.⁹ These include Production Managers (an important decision-making position); the Art Department; Assistant Directors; Props and Set Decoration; and Production Assistants, although all are still male dominated.

YOU CAN'T BE WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE.

A gender balance of men and women within departments is more prevalent in entry level positions, such as Production Assistants and Camera Trainees. Yet as with other occupations and industries, the gender split within departments sharply favours men who progress up decision making levels, and income brackets, at much higher rates than women. This is particularly evident in some of the key creative positions that define Canadian content.¹⁰



the gender split

within departments sharply favours men who progress up decision-making levels, and income brackets, at much higher rates than women. This is particularly evident in some of the key creative positions that define Canadian content.

Figure 4:
Career path by gender, Directors

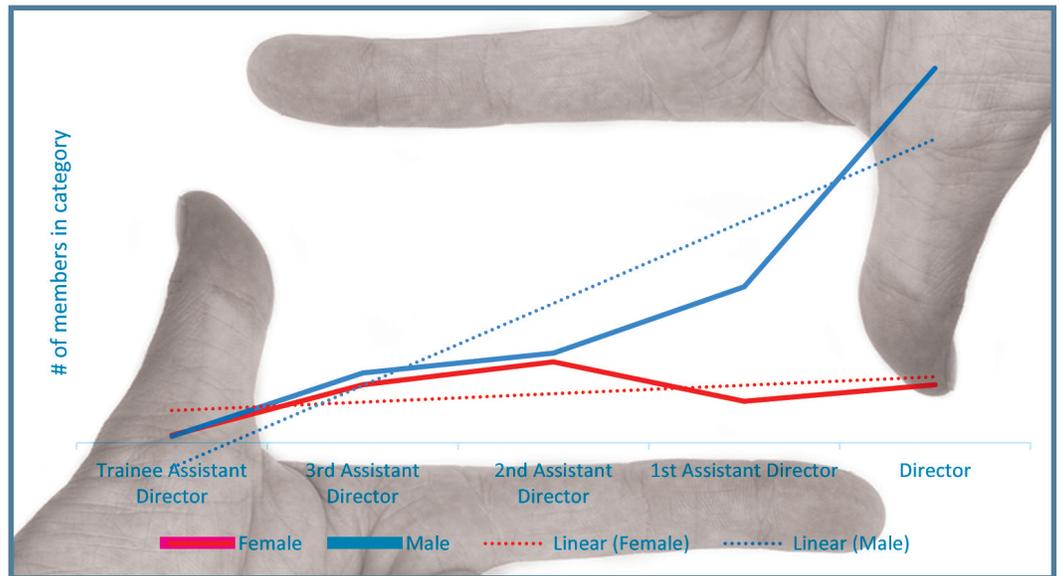
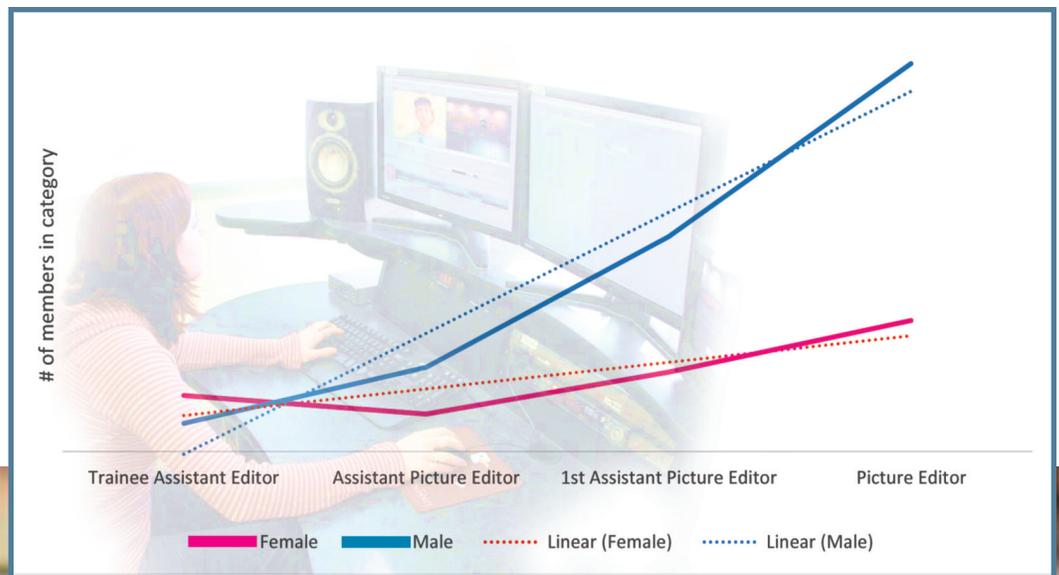


Figure 5:
Career path by gender, Editors



A recent report by Women in View shows that of 139 feature films released in 2010 and 2011 in Canada, women comprise less than 20% of the directors and 21% of the screenwriters.

Actors Tantoo Cardinal (left) and Michelle Thrush on set while filming *Blackstone* Season 2.

Figure 6: Career path by gender, Directors of Photography

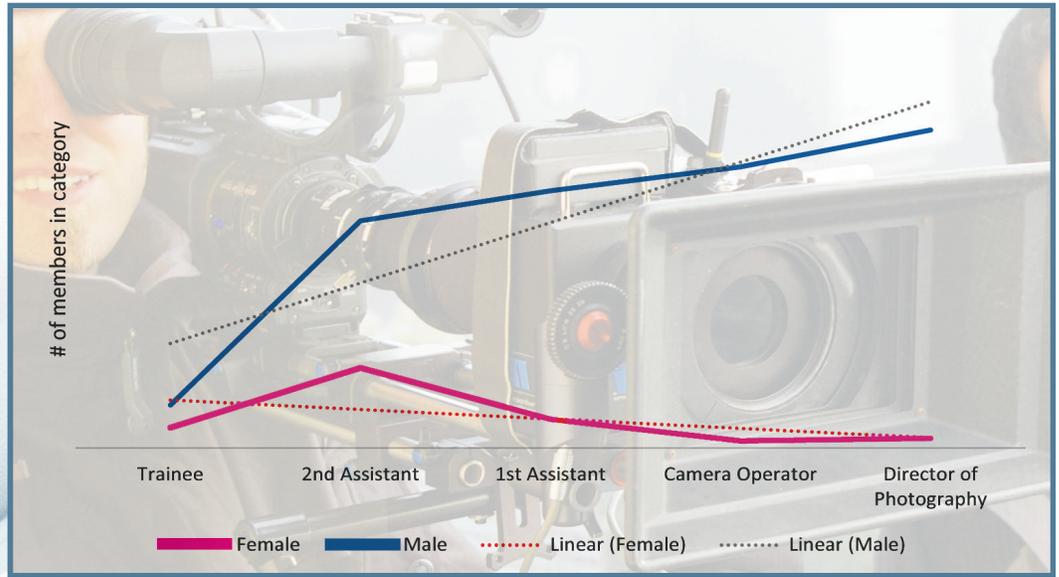
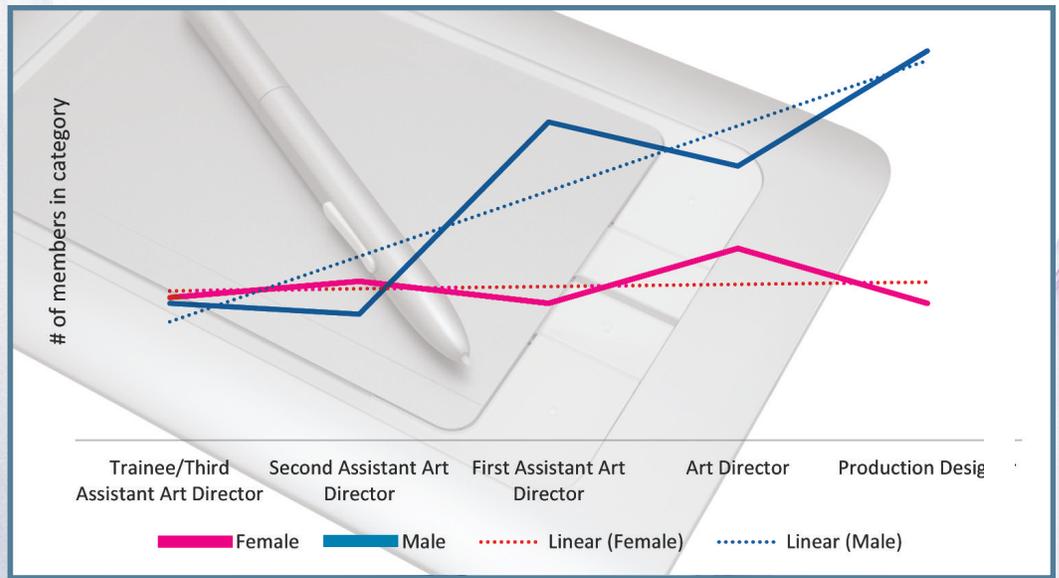


Figure 7: Career path by gender, Production Designers



A recent report by Women in View shows that of 139 feature films released in 2010 and 2011 in Canada, women comprise less than 20% of the directors and 21% of the screenwriters.¹¹ Women in View's 2013 report on Canadian television includes a gender-based analysis of the key creative positions in the 21 live-action television series which received the most significant levels of investment from the Canadian Media Fund in 2010 and 2011.¹² The results are shocking, but perhaps not surprising. Just over half - 11 out of 21 - of the series were directed entirely by men. Not one of the total 288 episodes in these 21 series engaged a female cinematographer. The situation for female screenwriters was better - of the 136 individuals engaged as writers of these series, 88 (65%) were men and 48 (35%) were women.

Data from the Writers Guild of Canada shows troubling statistics about the longevity of the female screenwriters' earning potential. The proportion of high income earners for male screenwriters remains steady between 35-55 years of age, at 35% for both age groups. Among the female members, while 48% of the top female income earners are in the 35-45 age bracket, this slips by half to 24% in the 45-55 age group. In the words of Jill Golnick, President of the WGC, "It makes no sense that women at the height of their careers, when they have mastered their craft and have deep experience, can no longer get work."¹³ We couldn't agree more.

The women working behind the scenes in Canadian media are facing systemic barriers to career advancement into the highest creative and decision making ranks. This is both an employment equity issue, as well as a social, political and cultural issue. A gender imbalance behind the screen shapes the stories we see on the screen – such as whether the role of a medical expert is played by a woman, or whether a girl's bedroom set includes science books and detective novels on the shelves. All these elements are part of the storytelling process that shapes our understanding of the world, and each other.



WHAT WE KNOW – On screen

What happens behind the screen has a major impact on what, and who, we see on the screen. As Réalisatrice Équitables demonstrated in their recent report on gender inequality in the Quebec film industry, not only are the great majority of films directed by men, but films directed by men are far more likely to feature male characters in leading roles; and female characters in films directed by men strictly conform to gender stereotypes in terms of age and appearance.¹⁴ Data from both Union des artistes and ACTRA clearly shows that female performers have fewer work opportunities than men, earn considerably less than men on average and that men's careers as performers last longer than women.

Figure 8: Number of working UDA members, cinema and television, by gender and age group, 2012

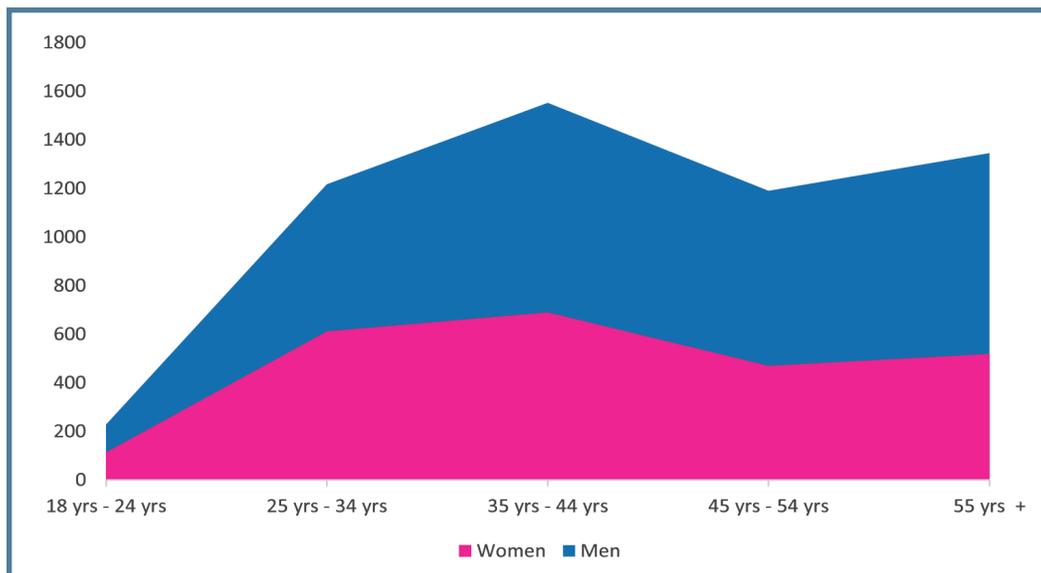
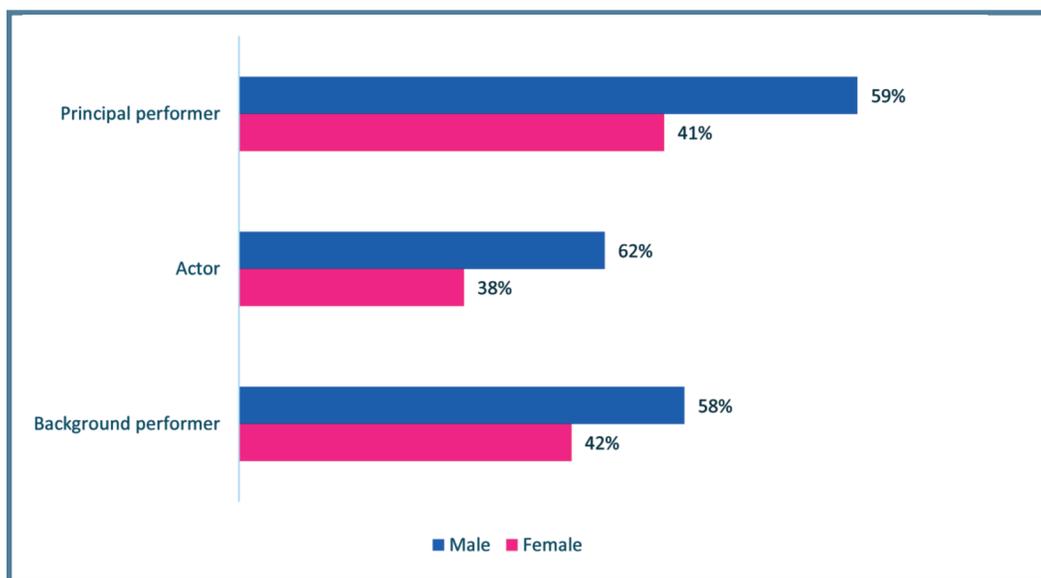
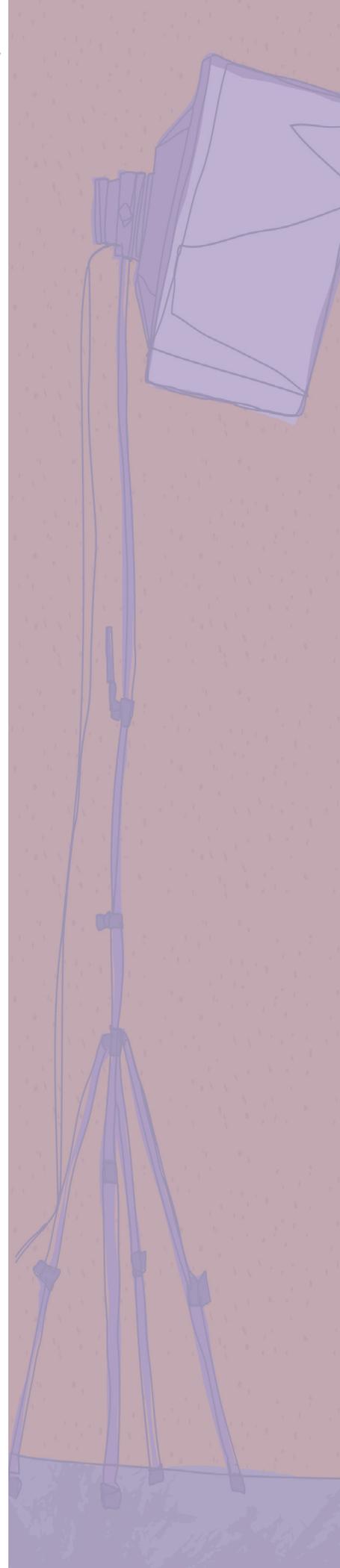


Figure 9: Percentage of working ACTRA members by performance category, by gender, 2010-2012



Both UDA and ACTRA data also show a persistent gender income gap. According to UDA, in 2004, female members' annual earnings averaged only 75% of male performers. In 2007, that number improved, and female performers in UDA were earning on average 81% of what male performers earned annually. Troublingly, that number had dropped again by 2012, when female performers' average earnings fell to only 79% of their male colleagues. This mirrors data from ACTRA. In 2010, the average annual income of female performers engaged in the actor category was 89% of what male performers earned. The income gap nearly disappeared in 2011, when the average annual income for females in actor roles rose to 96% of men's income. However, by 2012, the income gap widened again, with females in the actor category earning a mere 83% of what male performers earned on average in the same category, over the same period.

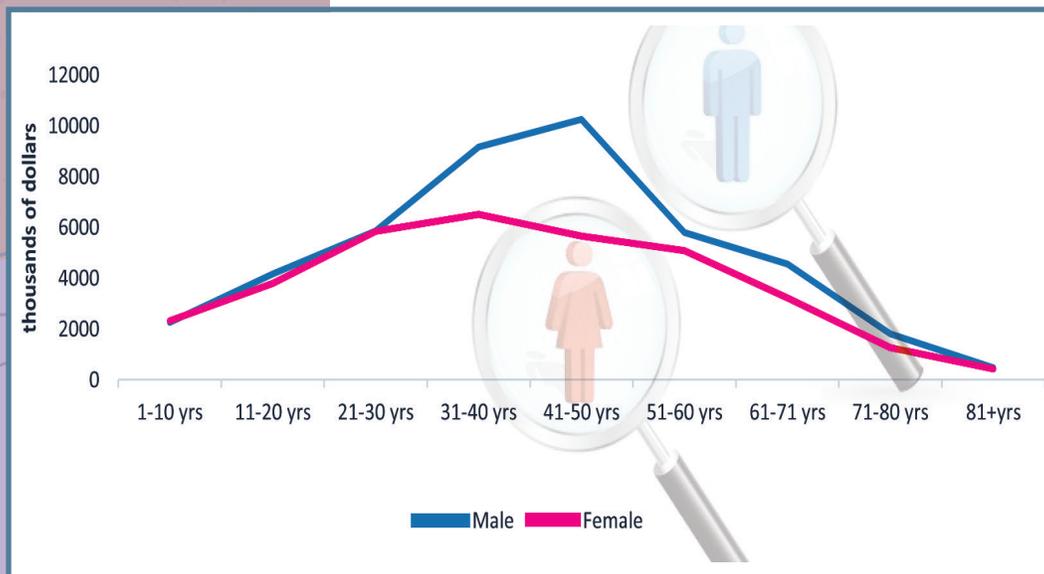
It is important to highlight that ACTRA data also shows a very promising trend at the highest earning category. In 2010, female principal performers earned on average 89% of what men earned. In 2011, women's average income as principal performers rose to 93% of men's income. In 2012, women's average income as principal performers exceeded that of their male colleagues, when they earned on average 101% of the average income of male performers in the same category.



Evidence suggests that female performers overall have considerably shorter, and less lucrative, careers than male performers.

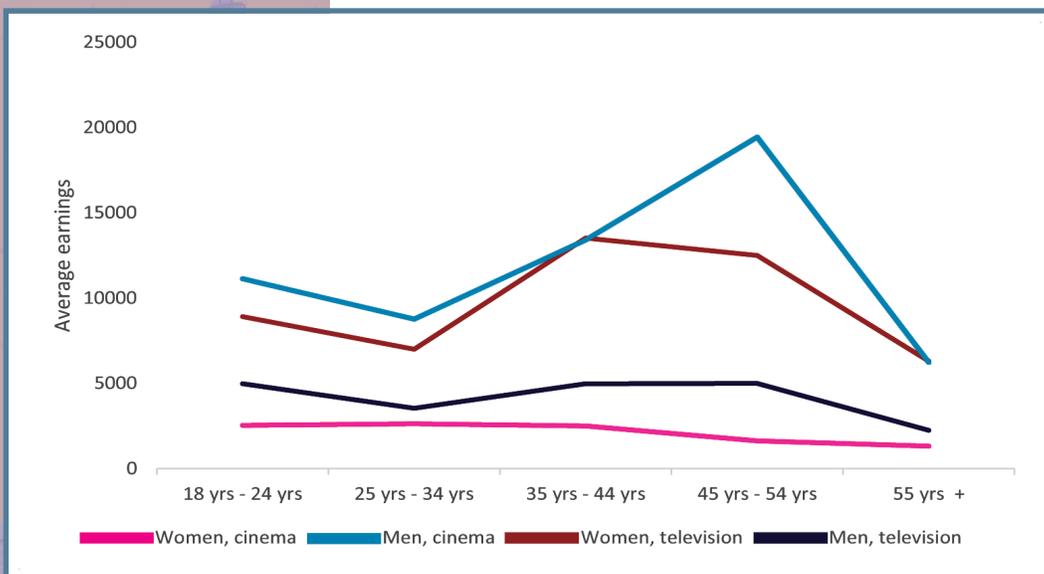
However, similar to the findings of the Writers Guild of Canada, evidence suggests that female performers overall have considerably shorter, and less lucrative, careers than male performers. In 2008, ACTRA did an analysis of average income for its members by age and gender. The results paint a stark visual picture of a major income differential between male and female performers that is directly tied to age as well as gender.

Figure 10: ACTRA member average earnings by age range and gender, October 2007 - September 2008. ¹⁵



Data from UDA also shows that men and women have differential access to feature film and television work. Both male and female performers earned more working in Quebec television than cinema in 2012. However, men earned considerably more, much later in their careers, than female performers in both formats.

Figure 11: Average performer income, by gender and format, 2012, Union des artistes



It is critical to remember that the gender income gap for directors, performers and screenwriters grows over time as a consequence of the compounded impact of residuals payments.

WHAT WE NEED TO FIND OUT

The numbers of women in entry level positions tell us that women are interested in working in the screen-based industries. Yet we do not see this translated into high numbers of women in leadership, key creative and decision making roles. Other studies suggest that there are several factors at play, simultaneously, that contribute to this problem.

Leaky pipelines? – Further research and data is required to determine the degree to which these numbers reflect a “chilly climate” for women in the industry. These include exclusionary networks, gender stereotyping and discriminatory hiring practices that systemically favour men over women in certain roles. Women face barriers to advancing in the industry, particularly in technical roles, as heads of department, as writers, or directors and performers.

Quality of life issues? – We need more research to examine the degree to which women experience professional “trapdoors” that cause them to leave the labour market and their careers. This may be a consequence of their role as primary caregivers at particular points in their lives – such as child and elder care – and how this interacts with the precarious, freelance nature of the industry, known for unpredictable schedules and excessive working hours that are hostile to family schedules and work/life balance.

Talking ‘bout my generation? – The higher number of women in entry and mid-career positions throughout the industry may also reflect changing industry patterns over time. We need to track whether the numbers of women in camera trainee positions in 2013, for example, translate into higher numbers of unionized female Directors of Photography in 10-15 years. More time series data going back a decade or more will help us to determine whether the past is a predictor of the future for women in the industry.

Hard numbers – Gender-based analysis of number of days worked per annum, income and earnings, and genre/format would provide rich information on how gender plays out in screen-based industries’ labour markets. We suggest that the key arms-length federal agencies, such as Telefilm, the CRTC, the Canada Media Fund, CAVCO and the provincial development agencies can play an important supporting role in gathering this type of data, and tracking the gender-based impact of public spending on the screen-based content in Canada. Data from these agencies would also capture labour market and gender-based data on non-union work in the Canadian screen-based industries.

Focus on Women is a first step in understanding the complexity of the issues that women are clearly facing as professionals in the Canadian independent screen-based production industry. The

point of this report is to build on existing research, and foreground gender equality as an issue that needs to be addressed in the Canadian independent screen-based production sector. It is in the public interest to have the content that fills our many screens represent the full range of abundant creative talent in Canada. So what can we do about it now?

and... ACTION! Next steps

"Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women" - UN Women, 2013 .¹⁶

Achieving gender equality will require the commitment and support of the full range of industry stakeholders in the Canadian screen-based industries. We need industry women and men, and their unions, professional associations, employers and policy-makers focused on and actively engaged in this issue.

We call upon industry stakeholders and key decision makers to commit to one (or all!) of the following action items in the next 12 months – and to tell us about what steps you’ve taken in your organizations to make gender equality a priority. We’ll make sure to let everyone know what a great job you’re doing.

1. **Form a Gender Equality Working Group or Women’s Committee with a clear mandate.** Commit organizational time and resources to ensure it is able to meet its mandate.
2. **Gather gender-based data for your organization. Do a gender audit of the decision making structures.** We are happy to help get you started.
3. **Adopt a gender equality statement for your organization. Read it at the start of meetings and events.** We are happy to provide examples that you can tailor to your organization.
4. **Put gender equality on your conference agenda.**
5. **Do gender-based professional development initiatives or gender equality training for your members/staff/employees/crew.**
6. **Join CUES! Help us get, and keep, gender on the agenda. One of our main goals is to develop a Gender Equality Checklist for the Canadian screen-based production industry.** For an example of what a gender equality checklist looks like, please see the one developed by The Swedish Union for Theatre, Artists & Media and Swedish Performing Arts at <http://www.fia-actors.com/uploads/gender%20equality%20checklist.pdf>



For more information on this Report or to get involved in CUES, please contact **Marit Stiles** at mstiles@actra.ca or **416-644-1518** or visit our website at www.cueonscreen.ca



¹ Some examples include the development of a gender equity checklist for the theatre by the International Federation of Actors (FIA); the Sex Money Media Conference hosted by Simon Fraser University & Women in View in 2010; the 2012 Women Making Waves Conference hosted by WIFT-Atlantic; and Resolution #5 on Equality in the Media, Entertainment and the Arts, passed by UNI-MEI at the 2011 General Assembly.

² Independent productions are defined as Canadian and foreign service theatrical and television productions that are not produced internally by broadcasters. According to data from the Canadian Media Production Association, in 2012, 79% of all film and television production in Canada was made by the independent production sector. Source: Canadian Media Production Association, Profile 2012: An Economic Report on the Screen-based Production Industry in Canada.

³ Source: Canadian Media Production Association, Profile 2012: An Economic Report on the Screen-based Production Industry in Canada. Figures were calculated by adding the total production volume and number of FTE jobs of the independent Canadian film and television production, foreign location and service production, and convergent digital media production figures. Broadcaster in-house production figures are not included in this report as the unions representing workers in the Canadian independent screen-based production industry do not represent workers in the in-house broadcasting sector.

⁴ See BBM Canada, Weekly Top 30 TV Programs. <http://www.bbm.ca/en/weekly-top-30-tv-programs>

⁵ Motion Picture Association of America. (2012). Theatrical Market Statistics 2012. <http://www.mpa.org/resources/3037b7a4-58a2-4109-8012-58fca3abdf1b.pdf>

⁶ The freelance nature of the independent production sector means that union members regularly move between genres, such as feature films, domestic television series, documentaries and lifestyle programming. Unions may give members dispensation to work on non-union projects that generally fall outside of their traditional jurisdiction. This produces a national labour market that is largely supported by film and television professionals who are members of a union, guild or professional association but who may not always be working under a collective agreement. See also: Conference Board of Canada. (2010). Cultural HR Study 2010 - HR Trends and Issues Report. Ottawa: Cultural Human Resources Council.

⁷ Other labour organizations have jurisdiction in localized regions, such as the Teamsters in British Columbia. The Canadian Media Guild and CEP also have jurisdiction in various public and private broadcasters across Canada, but does not represent workers in the independent production sector.

⁸ See also: Conference Board of Canada. (2010). Cultural HR Study 2010 - HR Trends and Issues Report. Ottawa: Cultural Human Resources Council. Ekos Research Associated Inc. and Paul Audley & Associates Ltd. (2004). Frame Work: Employment in Canadian Screen-Based Media — A National Profile. Submitted to Women in Film and Television - Toronto. Ference Weicker & Company. (2005). Women's Labour Issues in the Film and Television Industry in British Columbia. A report prepared for the BC Institute of Film Professionals. Lupien, Anna, en collaboration avec Francine Decarries et Réalisatrice Équitables. (2013). L'avant et l'arrière de l'écran: l'influence du sexe des cinéastes sur la représentation des hommes et des femmes dans le cinéma québécois récent. Women In Film and Television – Toronto. (2012). Framework II: Canada's screen-based workforce. Women in View (2012). Women in View on Screen, 2010-2011 report. <http://www.womeninview.ca/> Women In View (forthcoming). Women in View on Television.

⁹ The concept of a gender equality zone in media production is drawn, in part, from practices in film funding in Sweden. See International Federation of Actor (FIA). 2010. Handbook of good practices to combat gender stereotypes and promote equal opportunities in film, television and theatre in Europe. http://www.fia-actors.com/uploads/Engendering_EN.pdf

¹⁰ For scripted live action programming, the key creative functions for which Canadian content points are awarded include screenwriter, director, first and second lead performers, director of photography, art director, picture editor, and composer. For more information, see the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. (2013). Canadian Program Certification. http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/info_sht/tv11.htm

¹¹ Women In View. (2012). Women in View On Screen – 2010-2011 Film Report. <http://www.womeninview.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Women-in-View-on-screen-final-2.pdf>

¹² Each of these series received over \$ 1 million in support from the CMF.

¹³ Golnick, Jill (2013). "Writing Women into the Picture" Canadian Screenwriter, Vol 15(2): 3.

¹⁴ Lupien, Anna, en collaboration avec Francine Decarries et Réalisatrice Équitables. (2013). L'avant et l'arrière de l'écran: l'influence du sexe des cinéastes sur la représentation des hommes et des femmes dans le cinéma québécois récent.

¹⁵ Includes earnings for all full and apprentice members, with or without earnings, all status, all branches, not including UBCP.

¹⁶ Source: UN Women. (2013). <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>



Author bio:

Dr. Amanda Coles holds a PhD in Comparative Public Policy from McMaster University. Currently an Associate Researcher with the Interuniversity Research Centre on Globalization and Work (CRIMT), Amanda will be commencing her faculty position as Lecturer in the graduate program in Arts and Cultural Management at the University of Melbourne in June 2013. Her work on cultural labour and Canadian politics has been published in the Canadian Journal of Communication, the European journal Cultural Trends, and for the Canadian Cultural Observatory policy research branch. Amanda also consults on a range of labour market and policy issues for the screen-based industries.



Canadian Unions for Equality on Screen (CUES) participating organizations:



The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA) is the national union of professional performers working in the English-language recorded media in Canada. ACTRA represents the interests of 22,000 members across Canada – the foundation of Canada's highly acclaimed professional performing community



The Union des artistes (UDA) is a labour union representing artists who work in French in Quebec and Canada, which has as a mission "the identification, the study, the defense and the development of the social, moral and economic interests of the artists." The UDA counts 12 000 active members and trainees.



The Directors Guild of Canada (DGC) is a national labour organization that represents over 3,800 key creative and logistical personnel in the screen based industry covering all areas of direction, design, production and editing. The DGC negotiates and administers collective agreements and lobbies extensively on issues of concern for members including Canadian content conditions, CRTC regulations and ensuring that funding is maintained for Canadian screen based industry.



Women in View was officially founded in 2011 after the success of SexMoneyMedia, an international symposium on gender equity in media that took place in Vancouver, 2010. At Women in View we seek to understand and combat the forces behind the current downward trends in women's participation and the lack of movement we continue to see in women moving into senior level content determining positions. Women in View is supported by grants, private donations and industry partners who are committed to forwarding research and action based strategies that will create a more equitable and sustainable media industry for all Canadians.



NABET 700 CEP represents over 1,000 qualified film, television and digital media technicians in fifteen different departments and has serviced production in the Province of Ontario for over forty years.

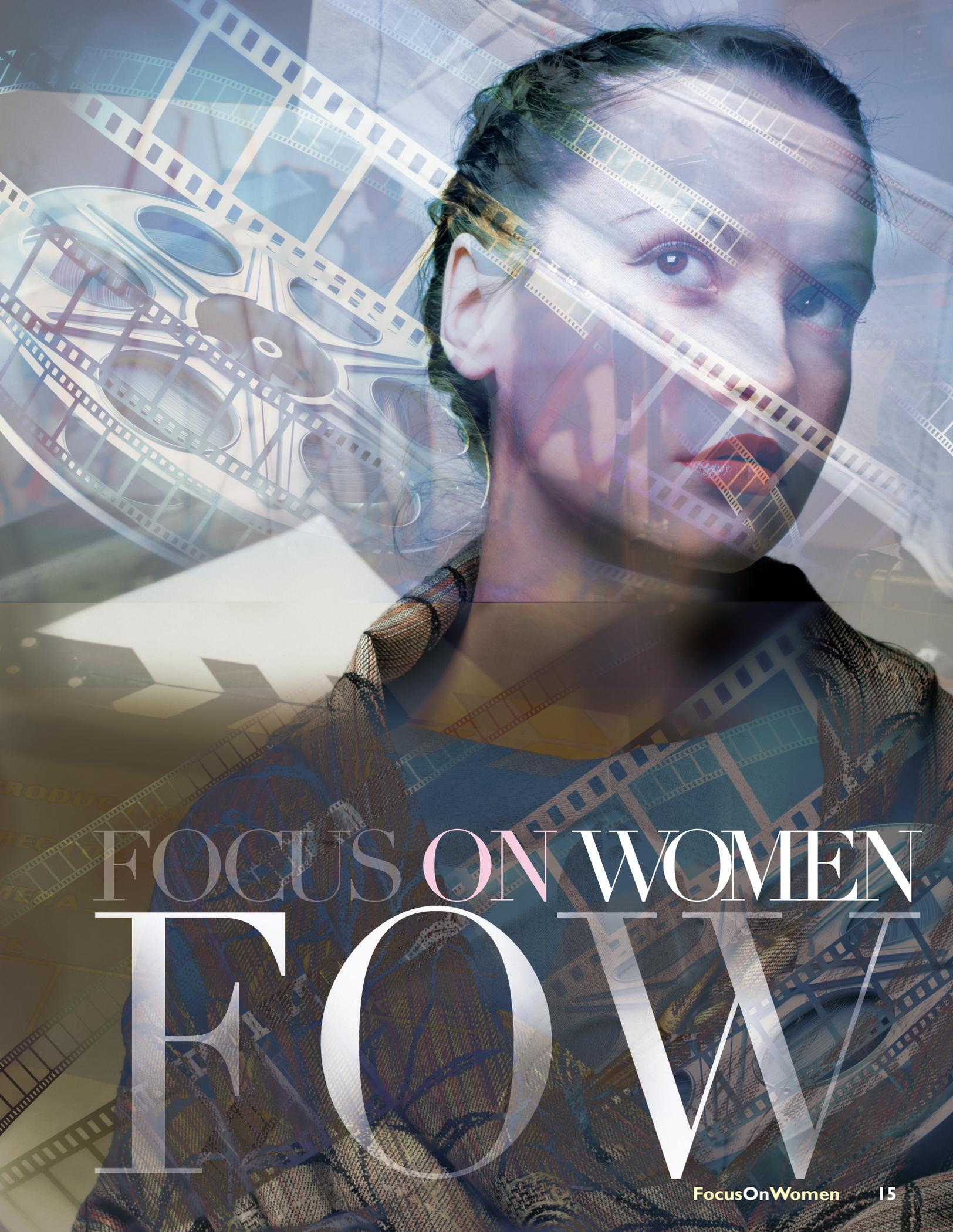


Writers Guild of Canada

The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) represents more than 2,100 professional English-language screenwriters across Canada. These are the creators who write the Canadian entertainment we enjoy on our televisions, movie screens and digital platforms.

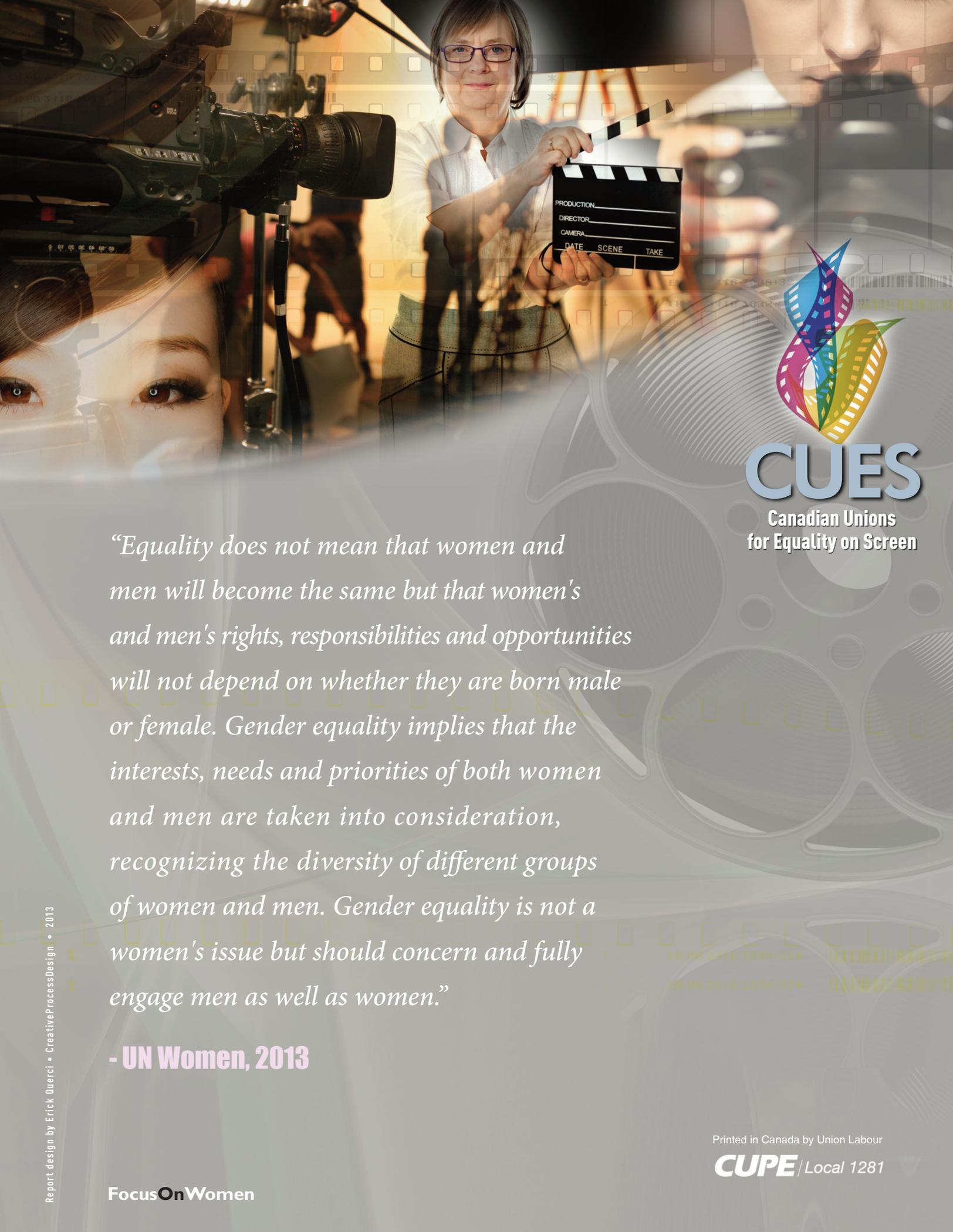


IATSE Locals 411, 514, 667, 669, 849, 873 and 891 supplied data for this report. The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, Its Territories and Canada (IATSE) was founded in 1893 and today is the largest union representing workers in the entertainment industry, with over 113,000 members. IATSE members work in all forms of live theatre, motion picture and television production, trade shows and exhibitions, television broadcasting, and concerts as well as the equipment and construction shops that support all these areas of the entertainment industry. They represent virtually all the behind the scenes workers in crafts ranging from motion picture animator to theatre usher.



FOCUS ON WOMEN

FOWW



CUES

Canadian Unions
for Equality on Screen

“Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women.”

- UN Women, 2013