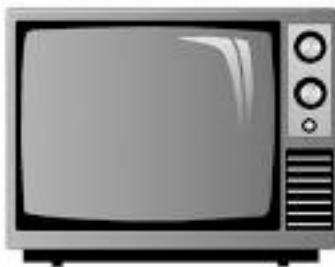


Equity on TV...



An impossible program? And the possible programs... !

Report presented by the group
Réalisatrices Équitables

Gatineau, February 5th 2008

Public hearing on radio broadcasting 2007-70

Concerning the Canadian Television Fund (CTF)
work group's report:

“Television plays a vital role in the cultural landscape of Canada: it facilitates sharing experiences and building community all the while reflecting our differences.”

Taken from the CTF's presentation document, 2008-2009
www.fondscanadiendetele.ca

Who are we?

- 1 Réalisatrices Équitables is a pressure group, created in January of 2007, that is comprised of around thirty women directors from Quebec, who work in all sectors, and who are of all ages. We have the continued support of over 140 women directors and of numerous sympathizers of both sexes who closely follow all of our actions. Our main objective is to obtain equity for women in the field of directing within the province of Quebec. We would like to obtain concrete measures so that public funding, intended for film and television, is granted in an equitable manner to women directors, and that a more just place is given to their concerns, to their vision of the world and to their imaginations.¹

What does a director do?

- 2 The craft of the director is little known, but it is as essential in the creation of an audiovisual work as is writing. The film and television director is the equivalent of the stage director in theatre. He/she leads every phase of a project and each creative decision comes back to him/her. He/she transforms the script into image, sound, music, decides on the treatment and on the outlook and approach by the thousands of artistic choices that this implies.

Influences, importance and dependence...

- 3 Due to the importance of television and of new emerging broadcasting platforms, the CRTC and the CTF have an immense influence not only on the Canadian audiovisual landscape, but also on culture as a whole and on society throughout the country.
- 4 Since the goals and objectives of these two groups, favour the production of quality programs that reflect all aspects of the Canadian population, we would like to share with you observations, preoccupations and suggestions concerning the position of women in the production and financing of programs in Canadian television.
- 5 With its considerable budget, the CTF has become an important organisation on which depend a large number of projects that are broadcasted on public networks as well as in the 'private sector'.²

¹ Please find a small biography of the spokespeople/directors in Appendix F. To know more : <http://www.realisatrices-equitables.org>

² *Private sector* is here put in quotation marks since, in Canada, it is largely financed (if not completely) by the different levels of government (CTF, tax crédits, Sodec, Telefilm etc...)

- 6 The CRTC's regulations, like the CTF's rules and directing principals, clearly affect the choices made by producers, broadcasters and distributors of programs that are to be financed and produced in Canada.

The similar objectives of the CRTC and the CTF

- 7 *"The 'raison d'être' of the Fund is to support the determining role of television as a vehicle for cultural expression."*³

According to the CRTC, the Canadian system should :

- *"Suggest a wide range programming that translates the attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and Canadian artistic creativity.*
 - *Respond to the needs and interests and reflect the conditions and aspirations of Canadian men, women and children by recognising equality on the level of rights, linguistic duality, and the multicultural and multiracial character of Canadian society."*⁴
- 8 It is reassuring to know that representing Canadian reality and creativity in its entirety are concerns of the two organizations. However, it is also known that often equality in rights is far from equality in reality. Due to this, in certain cases, there have been special programs created in order to balance power to ensure that certain communities, geographical areas and work sectors are represented in an equitable manner.
 - 9 With this in mind, the CTF has created programs specifically in order to finance and encourage special initiatives such as productions made by aboriginal peoples and linguistic minorities.

Surprising numbers

- 10 Despite the CRTC's and the CTF's clear mandate, and despite the initiatives here above mentioned, a recent IREF⁵ study shows that a large proportion of the Canadian population is under represented and is in fact badly served by CTF, that is women.

³ Excerpt from the presentation document, CFT 2008-2009, www.fondscanadiendetele.ca

⁴ Source: www.crtc.gc.ca

⁵ "La Place des réalisatrices dans le financement public du cinéma et de la télévision au Québec (2002-2007)", February 2008. A study carried out by Francine Descarries from the Institut de recherches et d'études féministes de l'UQAM (IREF).

- 11 In fact, for a few years, another type of acculturation is being drawn out: the under representation of the vision of women on the small screen (especially during primetime.) Though many women are screenwriters and producers, very few women are directors of programs and films that we watch every day.
- 12 If we look at the graph in Appendix A, we can observe that, between 2002 and 2007, the Canadian Television Fund gave 994 million dollars to 1540 projects (comprising all languages, geographical areas and types of projects) which means:
 - In number of projects :
419 were directed by women
27.2 % of the projects
 - In money :
Women received \$97 662 435
10% of the funding
- 13 The graph in Appendix B depicts the tendency curve of the last five years. It clearly shows a greater and greater disfavour regarding women directors.
- 14 The graph in Appendix C indicates the percentage of women that have directed the different projects and the proportion of the budgets, according to their type of program. Here again the graph is very telling. It confirms that women directors are under represented, that they are restricted to certain sectors, and that we allot them the smallest budgets.
- 15 In other words, this means that they are, on the average, three times more productive than their male colleagues or three times poorer or... Most of all this means that a double standard still exists today. Whatever the reasons may be, these gaps, which disfavour women, are unjustifiable in 2008 in a country such as Canada and in a sector largely subsidized by the State. The numbers from these three graphs, amongst many others⁶, confirm that the actual system greatly disfavours women and feeds an iniquity in women directors' salaries.

⁶ The report, *La majorité invisible ou la place des femmes à la télévision d'État*, presented May 25th 2007, in Montreal, to Heritage Canada's permanent committee as part of an in-depth study on the role of State run television, gives other findings, notably those regarding Radio-Canada. Radio-Canada manages 37% of the CTF's budget.

If this trend keeps up...

- 16 In conclusion, these numbers clearly show that... If the trend keeps up, women directors are to become extinct. Certain individuals will say that women screenwriters often have their fictional works shown. We could rejoice in this, if we were blind to the fact that the vast majority of these scripts written by women are directed by men, without the opposite being true.

Diversity of voices

- 17 The Canadian Television Fund was created for many reasons, one of which included the fear that there were to be excessive American programs on our waves, particularly during primetime. This did not mean that we thought less of our Canadian programs, that they were less appealing and of lesser quality... Rather, this meant that given the context and the numerous geographical, cultural, linguistic and demographic factors, Canadian productions needed help reaching their viewing audience and competing with their powerful neighbour.
- 18 The CTF's different programs, or special initiatives, were also established because we feared not having access to important parts of our culture, if it be linguistic minorities, aboriginal peoples or rural regions. We wanted to assure ourselves that, in a fair manner, there would be room for Canadian citizens of various cultures and languages.
- 19 These different specialised programs serve to finance, and make accessible to all, a great diversity of Canadian visions and realities. The plurality of voices and media's focus have important stakes... *"Because the presence of a diversity of voices is essential to the proper workings of a democracy."*⁷
- 20 The CRTC states that *"editorial plurality can be measured by the number of owners in a same market"*. We believe that a plurality of outlooks is measured by the differences and the singularity of each creator that works towards his/her creation.
- 21 A higher proportion of women directors would directly serve this diversity of outlooks that is so important. Furthermore, it could also stimulate a real variety of content and points of view in all types of programs.

⁷ Taken from the CRTC's presentation document, November 2007.

Ratings, quality and other important factors to calculate the feasibility of cultural products

- 22 It is fundamental to put forward content that is diverse and strong. The multiplicity of voices and of outlooks is essential for the proper workings of a democratic society, one that is open and egalitarian as ours.

Because of this, we agree with the CRTC's objectives:

"The Canadian system should:

- Safeguard, enrich and strengthen Canada's cultural, political, social and economic structure*
- Offer a wide range programming that conveys Canadian attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity."*

"Programming should have a high quality and:

- Be varied, reflecting Canadian interests and goals.*
- Suggest a wide range of programming that expresses Canadian attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity.*
- Teach, illuminate and entertain.*
- Offer the possibility to learn of diverse opinions, see contradictory."*

- 23 We believe that the real feasibility of strong television, for a country such as Canada, is to encourage the industry's participants to closely follow the objectives that are cited here. Favouring ratings or profitability often standardises, levels off or diminishes content.
- 24 The calculation of the budgets of the profitability of broadcasters should therefore take into consideration numerous factors that are more important and should not over value ratings. Furthermore, one cannot forget that, as researcher Francine Descarries points out: *"Ratings are used to sell advertising. This measurement is certainly not useful in determining what a program of quality is. Ratings are not even a reliable measurement in determining the public's favourite programs, since it depends a great deal on the broadcasting schedule of the program."*⁸
- 25 In fact, in Europe, there are other methods that are beginning to be used to evaluate the quality, the 'love' rating and the relevance of the broadcasted programs.
- 26 We firmly believe that the appreciation, and the financing, of a work should not be based on a simple commercial measurement. Consequentially, the CTF should not judge the "profitability" of a program solely based on the requirements of advertising sales or other commercial ratings. An even greater reason being, as in

⁸ Francine Descarries, IREF researcher and professor at Université du Québec à Montréal, during a conference on December 8th, 2007, in Montreal.

the Canadian system, that a large majority of television programs are financed by taxpayers dollars.

- 27 In this perspective, the Canadian Television Fund should do as much as possible, as is proposed in its objectives, *“to facilitate the sharing of experience and the building of community all the while reflecting our differences”*.
- 28 Looking for high ratings and the sales of advertising at all cost does not serve the public. This looks to neither share experience nor build community. On the contrary, this favours sensationalism and the “copy” style which dictates that what “works” best on another network and/or in another country... This does not stimulate creativity and the creation of more audacious programs, more original and with stronger content. The standardisation of content if it be fiction or documentary is not allied to a deep thought process, and development of differences.

Lack of diversity in our outlooks

- 29 In the graphs of Appendixes A, B and C it is clear that today’s television production does not reflect the “Canadian whole.” We can already predict the result of a lack of diversity of outlooks.
- 30 By rarely looking to women for their creative input, by not sufficiently reflecting the conditions and aspirations of women, and by under financing women’s projects, today’s television production does not respond to the needs and the interests of over half of society.
- 31 According to a recent pole, conducted by the Association d’études canadiennes⁹, 94% of the Canadian population states that equality of the sexes is one of their priorities. For Canadians, equality between men and women comes 2nd in the rank of important values, immediately after health. (For Quebecers, it comes in first place!)
- 32 Because the equality of rights of men and women makes up a fundamental part of the important values of Canadian and Quebec society, we regret that television production contributes insufficiently to broadcasting these values.

⁹ Which results were published in Le Devoir in May 2007.

My TV: my mirror, my model

- 33 The present disequilibrium not only wrongs the women who have chosen a career in directing. The impoverishment of content, the lack of diversity of outlooks and the narrowing of the imagination clearly has repercussions on society as a whole.
- 34 In 2005, a group of actors stated that “*Asserting a large place for women in the collective imagination is an essential battle for the survival of democracy and economy in our society... The battle of the imagination is as important as that of salaries and family support*”.¹⁰
- 35 The insufficient space given to women on our screens and behind the camera greatly contributes to negatively influencing the public’s perception. This perpetuates the idea that women are less important than men in our society.
- 36 The stories and concerns broadcasted on TV are models for all young Canadians – girls or boys. Consequentially, and particularly for our children, we must create and finance high quality television that fairly represents our entire society. It must give as much room to the country’s girls and women that it gives to its boys and men.

Recommendations

- 37 Due to the concern on equity towards all women, and in order to acknowledge to one of the priorities of the Canadian population, we recommend that the CRTC, and the CTF, add to its directing principals and objectives, equality between men and women.
- 38 We ask the CRTC and the CTF council – who have as their mandate that Canadian television mirrors Canadian society – to look closely at these findings and to do all it can to stimulate the deposition, and adequate financing, of a greater number of projects directed by women.
- 39 To do this, we ask the CRTC and the CTF to set up a series of measures, along with television broadcasters and all participants in the audiovisual world. It is essential that the outlook of half of the population not remain in the shadows for much longer!

¹⁰ In a message that women of the *Woman’s Committee* of the *Union des artistes* delivered before the “Comité de l’égalité des chances de l’Assemblée nationale du Québec” in 2005.

- 40 So that the present disequilibrium be soon fixed, a reinforcement of principals in the mandate is necessary. This should also be accompanied by concrete measures.

In the short term, we recommend that the CRTC set up the following measures:

- 41 Immediately create a committee (to include members of Réalisatrices Équitables) in charge of developing and counselling the CRTC and the CTF on policies and necessary measures needed to set the situation right as quickly possible.
- 42 Ask CTF and television broadcasters to keep precise and detailed statistics according to sexes in order to have a better grasp of the situation of women directors, and to make an annual report to verify the evolution of the situation.
- 43 Continue the research in order to identify the obstacles towards equity (the systemic factors of discrimination) for women directors.
- 44 Create a work group on the general situation of women in the television industry.

We recommend that the CTF sets up the following principals and measures.

- 45 Aim to reflect Canadian culture and values as well as the country's diversity while ALSO taking account of the equity between the country's men and women.
- 46 Look for a balance in the financing, production and broadcasting of men and women's projects.
- 47 Develop inciting measures which openly favour the creation of projects by women directors in all sectors of production.
- 48 Particularly favour women directors' presence in the sectors where they are the least represented (ex: the dramatic series.)
- 49 Establish measures that incite television broadcasters and producers to reverse the present unfavourable trend regarding women directors and establish specific and quantitative objectives towards this end.
- 50 Develop specific programs and inciting measures for women directors.

Direct and secondary beneficial effects

- 51 Special financing by the CTF towards the production of linguistic minorities or aboriginal peoples' languages which "*essential objectives of the section is to encourage the emergence of independent aboriginal peoples producers*" or the program on subtitling and dubbing which has as one of its key objectives "*to ameliorate the perspectives of employment of specialised Canadian artists and technicians*" are very strong incentives for the fragile sectors or those under represented in television.
- 52 And what about the modification of the CRTC law in 1991? The simple announcement: "*Programming should make a specific call to independent producers*", caused an explosion in the birth of production houses and gave a large number of talented producers, men and women, the opportunity to emerge.
- 53 A ruling from the CRTC and CTF favouring a greater participation of Canadian women directors in the programs produced here would most likely generate the same phenomenon. The blooming of talented women directors would create a snowball effect.
- 54 For the moment, their vision is cruelly absent from our TV.
- 55 We believe that inciting measures such as inserting in the Law the requirement to call upon more women directors in all sectors¹¹ and also to make more room for their imaginations, will bring about an effervescence of creations and of women's talents. In addition to having a positive influence on women directors and on the whole industry, this will benefit the whole population: all ages, origins and languages.
- 56 We firmly believe that the equitable presence of points of view, of stories, of concerns, of mise-en-scenes and of women characters in TV is a formidable stimulant for a society that encourages equal opportunity in all sectors.
- 57 Society has all to gain by encouraging and valuing women's imaginations. The whole population will benefit from the CRTC's and the CTF's leadership on the subject of equity.

¹¹ Notable sectors include documentary, dramatic series and variety

Conclusion

- 58 At the dawn of the XXIst century, it is surely important to discuss new technologies and television's financing. We believe however that it is even more urgent to lean on this important disequilibrium that, to our great astonishment, has worsened over the last 20 years. Firstly, this concerns us due to the quality of our many women directors, but equally this affects us as citizens and audience members that represent the majority of the Quebec and Canadian population.
- 59 All ages of the population identifies itself with the characters and stories broadcasted on electronic media. This influence is even more apparent with the young generation. How will young women and girls construct their identities if the models they derive from television characters are creations made from a viewpoint that is almost exclusively masculine?
- 60 It is undeniable that the content of broadcasted programs on television, and on new platforms, play an important role in developing society's model. The missing presence of the visual, feminine imagination, and the under financing of works directed by women is inexcusable in 2008.
- 61 We fervently ask the CTF and the CRTC to act urgently and in a thorough and diligent manner on this subject. Be assured that we are entirely at your disposal to participate in any exchanges and in order to collaborate with you on this subject.

Marquise Lepage

In collaboration with

Isabelle Hayeur

Lucette Lupien

Marie-Pascale Laurencelle

Translation from the original French by

Vanya Rose

For Réalisatrices Équitables

Also present at the public hearing:

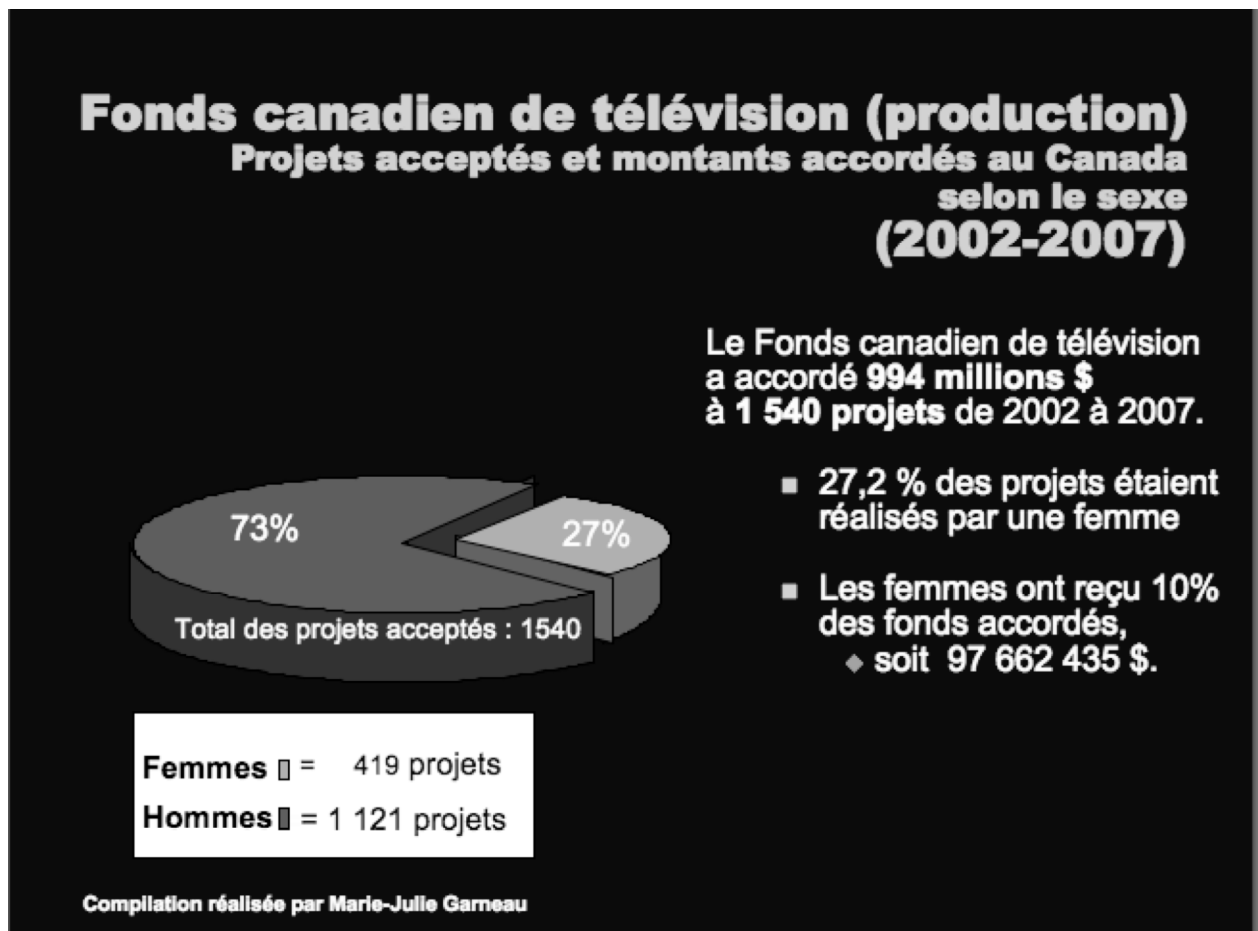
Myriam Fougère

Ève Lamont

Vanya Rose

<http://www.realisatrices-equitables.org>

Appendix A



Canadian Television Fund (Production)

Projects accepted and amounts funded in Canada according to sex (2002-2007)

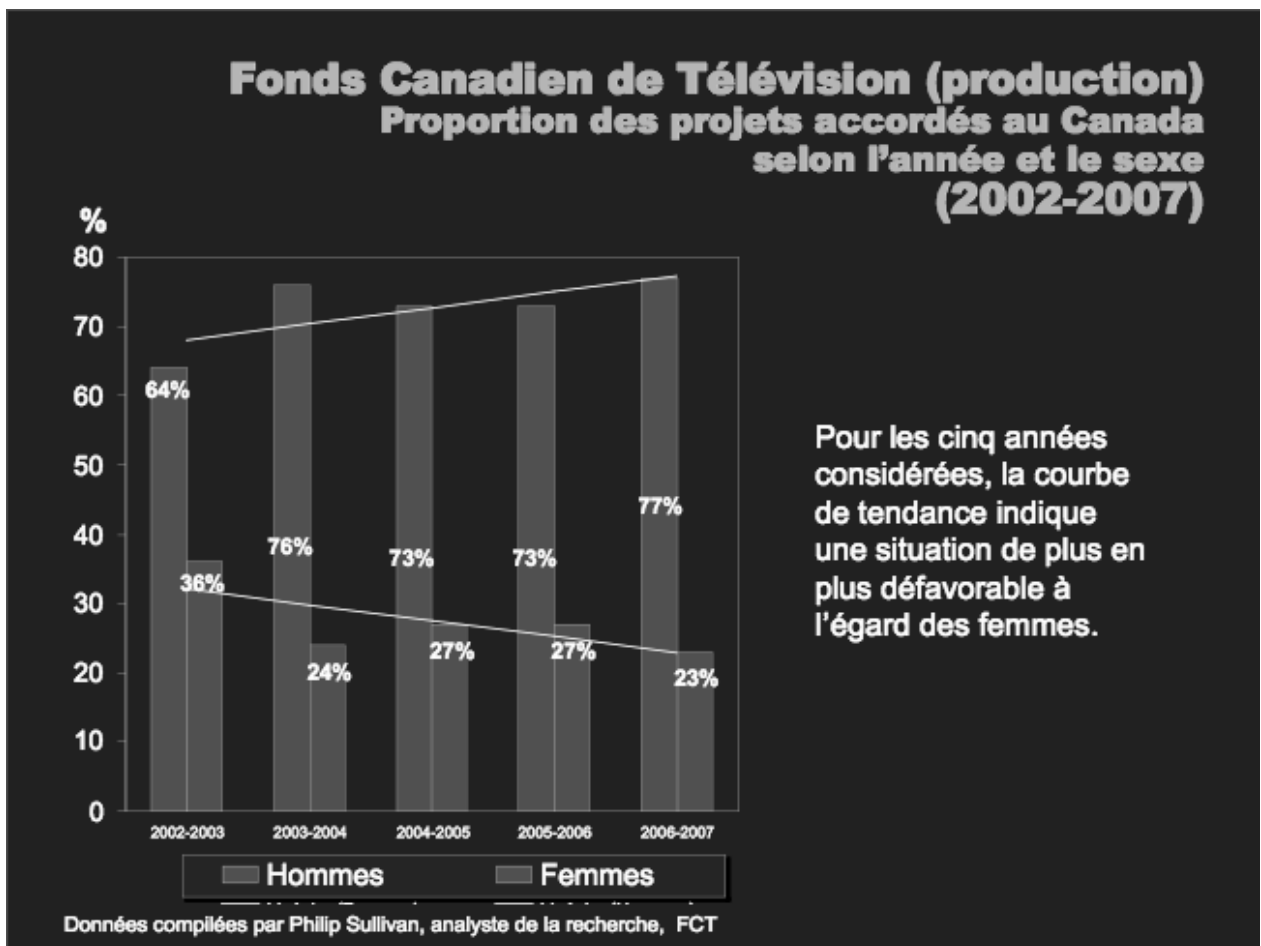
The CTF gave \$994 million to 1540 projects from 2002-2007

- 27.2% of the projects were directed by women
- These women received 10% of the given fund or \$97 662 435

Women: 419 projects

Men: 1 121 projects

Appendix B




Canadian Television Fund (production)


Proportion of funded projects in Canada according to year and sex

For the five years the tendency curve indicates a situation that is more and more unfavourable regarding women.

Appendix C

Fonds canadien de télévision (production) Projets réalisés au Canada par les femmes selon le type d'émissions (2002-2007)		
		
Catégories	Femmes	
Type d'émissions	Nombre et montants accordés	% des productions % des budgets
Jeunesse (enfant et ado)	82 27 073 198 \$	30,3% 13,7%
Documentaire	282 37 379 623 \$	31,9% 18,2%
Séries Dramatiques et Comédies (télé et film)	39 30 350 138 \$	16,5% 5,5%
Arts	6 466 796 \$	27,3% 3,9%
Variétés	10 2 392 680 \$	7,9% 10,1%
Total	419 97 662 435 \$	27,2% 10,0%

Compilation réalisée par Marie-Julie Garneau



Canadian Television Fund (production)

Projects in Canada directed by women according to types of programs (2002-2007)

Categories	Women	
Type of programs	Number and amounts given	% of productions % of budgets
Youth (children and adolescents)		
Documentary		
Dramatic series and comedies (TV and film)		
Arts		
Variety		
Total		

Appendix D

Objectives and mission of the CRTC

(source www.crtc.gc.ca,)

Article 3(1) - within the framework of Politics of the Canadian radio broadcasting - 1991.

A system made up of public, private, and community based elements in order to maintain and valorise the national identity and Canadian diversity.

Objectives :

The Canadian system should:

- Protect, enrich and reinforce the cultural, political, social and economic structure in Canada.
- Suggest a wide range of programming that translates Canadian attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity.
- Answer to the needs and interests and reflect the condition and aspirations of Canadian men, women and children by recognising their equality on the level of rights, linguistic duality and the multicultural and multiracial character of Canadian society.
- Remain adaptable to scientific and technical progress.
- The programming should be of high quality.

The programming offered should:

- Be varied, answering to the interests and tastes of Canadians
- Teach, enlighten and entertain
- Use local, regional, national and international resources
- Offer the possibility to learn about diverse opinions, see contradicting
- Make a noteworthy call to independent producers

Appendix E

The objectives and directing principals of the CTF

Source: CTF, presentation document, 2008-2009, www.fondscanadiendetele.ca

Let us remember certain objectives and goals that the Fund tries to touch upon within its different financial aid programs for production of television programs:

General program:

This financial initiative has as its goal to encourage the production and broadcasting of televised Canadian programs of high quality, in the under represented categories during primetime.

- The CTF continues to ensure the development of political strategies and directing principals of the programs, the research and the report of results from the hearings and on financing.
- The CTF grants financial aid to admissible Canadian programs through five programs, characterised by an orientation of the evaluation criteria and the mechanisms of specific financing.

Aboriginal people's production program:

The CTF recognizes the unique situation within the televisual market of aboriginal peoples languages and of the community of aboriginal producers. The essential objectives of the program is to encourage the emergence of independent aboriginal producers.

The subtitling and dubbing program:

The objective of the program is to allow Canadians access to a greater number of television programs supported by the CTF in English, French and in aboriginal people's languages... Other key objectives are to ameliorate perspective jobs for specialised Canadian artists and technicians.

Annexe F

Biographies *Réalisatrices Équitables spokespeople*

Marquise Lepage



Marquise Lepage is a director and screenwriter for film and television. She has made two feature length films, **Marie s'en va-t-en ville**, and **La fête des rois**, a series for children, and many docudramas and documentaries which include **Le jardin oublié** and **Des marelles et des petites filles**. Her creations were awarded numerous national and international prizes. She was president of the Association des réalisateurs et réalisatrices du Québec and has been honoured many times including as Woman of the Year in the arts, and Artist of the Year for peace. She is presently on the administrative council for the Académie canadienne du cinéma et de la télévision. She is editing her third feature length film **Martha qui vient du froid** (**Martha of the North**) which was filmed in Nunavut.

Isabelle Hayeur



One could say that Isabelle Hayeur devotes herself to doing something resembling B series woman's films with ridiculous budgets, delirious universes, complex intrigues, Shakespearian happy-ends and lots of pink. One can find a pool of blood in each of her three feature-length films (even the one for children), there has been a mention of unbearable eroticism (even if her characters remain clothed, except for David La Haye), and she has unscrupulously stolen from various fairytales, science fictions, vampire stories and also from Bergman and Zulawsky. Critics concede her an individual place in Quebec cinema, and quoting Homier-Roy, one could summarise her films as: "I understood absolutely nothing, but I adored it."

Kanasuta, Richard Desjardins performance, nominated for Best Music DVD ADISQ / **Le Golem de Montréal**, feature-length film / **Les siamoises**, feature-length film / **La chambre blanche**, dance film / **La bête de foire**, feature-length film, Luce-Guilbeault prize and nomination for Best Script at the Rendez-vous du cinéma québécois / **Londeleau**, short film, Best Script prize Festival International du Film de Sainte-Thérèse.

Ève Lamont



Director and camerawoman, Ève Lamont works as a documentary filmmaker and equally accompanies other projects with the marvellous tool, that is the camera. Directing documentaries for more than 15 years, she has stood out by bringing to the screen experiences that have ventured off the beaten track and by predominantly giving a voice to people whose reality and expression remain little seen on our commercial screens. Her engaged *films d'auteur* have been broadcasted on television, shown in many festivals, in educational and social group contexts, and are real instruments for social intervention, promoting thought and debate. With her most recent project, **Pas de pays sans paysans** (2005), she meets with farmers who abandon conventional production and citizens who fight against the agricultural industry. The documentary **Squat!** (2002), tells the history of a squat from the inside, from the side of the squatters who are hounded by the city and media. It received the Best Directing Prize in the feature-length documentary category at HOT DOCS 2003 in Toronto. **Méchante Job** (2001) deals with alternatives to unemployment and forced labour.

Vanya Rose



Vanya Rose is director of her creation company **time's thievish progress to eternity FILMS**. She has written and directed **Montreal Stories**, a series of short films portraying women living in Montreal throughout the 20th century. **Montreal Stories 1912** and **Montreal Stories 1971** have both appeared in various film festivals around the world; she recently completed the final instalment, **Montreal Stories 1944**. She is presently working on the second draft of her first feature film **The Montrealers**.

Myriam Fougère



Myriam Fougère directed **Déroutes et parcours** and co-directed **Within These Walls**. She has participated in numerous films as a camerawoman including **La Terre et le Feu**, **Pascale Archambault, sculpteure**, and **The Making Friends** series by Catleen Smith, to name but a few. She equally co-produced **Within These Walls**.

Within These Walls : selected as Best Independent Documentary at the Canadian International Annual Film & Visdeo Festival Competition 1998. Won the 1997 Hometown Video Festival Award for Best Documentary in the Public Awareness category and the Best of the Northwest Festival 1997 best documentary award. Also selected to screen at the 1997 Northwest Film Festival, Portland, Oregon, and the Rendezvous with Madness Festival, Toronto. Recently chosen to show in The Downtown Eastside Film Festival, 2003.

Fury for the Sound : won the Public's Prize at the Vermont Film Festival in 1998, as well as the Chris Award: Best Social Issue Documentary at the Columbus International Film Festival. It was nominated at Toronto's HOT DOCS for Best Political Film in 1998.

Marie-Pascale Laurencelle



Marie-Pascale Laurencelle has worked as a television director since 1997. A tireless globe-trotter, she began her career with **Bons Baisers d'Amérique** et **Taxi pour l'Amérique**, programs which allowed her to cross the continent. A fieldworker, her experience was gained doing numerous live reports and shooting on location, for current affairs and variety programs. Interested in content as well as form, Marie-Pascale also dabbles in advertising production. Sitting on the Association des réalisateurs et réalisatrices du Québec's administrative council since April 2006, she is passionate about the improvement of the professions working conditions and about an open dialogue between the different sectors of the industry. Her most recent challenge: directing and coordinating a new style of current affairs program called Bazzo.tv.