

A black and white film strip border runs vertically along the left and right edges of the poster.

# TORONTO INTERNATIONAL DEAF FILM & ARTS FESTIVAL

A stylized grey hand is shown in the bottom left corner, with fingers spread in a way that suggests the ASL sign for 'Deaf'.

May 21 - 23  
Program Book 2009

# **f**ilm festival **WELCOME LETTERS**

Thursday, May 21 - Saturday, May 22, 2009

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Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Street, University of Toronto

Welcome to the 2nd bi-annual Toronto International Deaf Film and Arts Festival (TIDFAF)! We would like to take this opportunity to thank Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf (OCSD), for their recognition and as a host organization of the 2006 festival. The first festival was a resounding success with an overwhelming presence of both filmmakers and artists in attendance. It was a memorable weekend that was forever marked by the Deaf Culture Centre's (DCC) grand opening!

We have come a long way since and TIDFAF is now an independent body of filmmaker, artists, and community representation. We are thankful for Canwest Media Inc. for this year's sponsorship of, most notably, the high school film boot camp workshops held in January 2009. TIDFAF's 2009 goal is to encourage Canadian Deaf youth to pursue their education and career in the media arts sector here in Canada. The High School Film Festival is on Saturday, May 23rd and we will both showcase and award their talent.

TIDFAF would like to thank all the sponsors who have made this year's festival a success. Despite the current recession, we have managed to survive with limited funds.

We would like to thank all of our countless volunteers as they have been the driving spirit behind TIDFAF. Your gratitude and support means so much to us! We would like to extend a special thank you to the EC Drury School of the Deaf for their tremendous support in the festival's planning. It is the first time their Co-op students created the PSA-Public Service Announcement for Global Ontario and E! Hamilton. We extend immeasurable thanks to the board of TIDFAF for your valiant work and dedicated team spirit. Kelly Halligan, TIDFAF Artistic Director, who tirelessly worked with the students every week as a Placement Supervisor; Frank Folino, TIDFAF Finance Manager and Vanessa Floros, TIDFAF Communication Access of International Deaf Interpreters and Deaf Blind Intervenors accommodations for their amazing support and assistance.

We thank Karen Clout of Canwest, for her invaluable support in obtaining funds for the festival. Jill Andrew, TIDFAF Director of Media Relations, of Jill Andrew Media we appreciate the longstanding media, sponsorship and public relations support. The Suites at 1 King West, our luxury hotel sponsor, your enthusiasm and trust in the greatness of this festival has extended the scope of our festival by helping us accommodate even more VIPs from across the globe providing them with the best accommodations this great city has to offer! I'd also like to extend a warm thank you for TIDFAF's first ever Jury Programmers committee for film selection. We would also like to thank Shanna R Kelly, TIDFAF Director of Marketing, of 911 Maxim for the amazing new website design and Jeri Cripps for program books design. Just as we celebrated TIDFAF's first festival with the support of the DCC it is only fitting that the DCC will be the backdrop of this year's TIDFAF Networking Reception. It is clear that it takes an entire village to raise a Deaf Film Festival and we thank you all for your unparalleled support!

We hope you enjoy your stay in Toronto and have a wonderful time!

Yours Truly,

Catherine MacKinnon, BFA  
Festival Director

It is my great pleasure to extend greetings and welcome to everyone in attendance at the 2009 Toronto International Deaf Film & Arts Festival.

At the heart of Canwest is a commitment to culture and getting involved in the communities we serve. We are so proud to be returning as a founding sponsor this year, giving deaf and hard of hearing filmmakers a forum in which to showcase their talents and celebrating with you these rich expressions of our diversity.

Our congratulations go out to Catherine MacKinnon and the talented and dedicated staff of TIDFAF for putting together such an outstanding programme. On behalf of everyone in the Canwest family, I wish you all a memorable experience over the next three days.

Barbara Williams  
Executive Vice President, Content  
Canwest Broadcasting

Welcome everyone to the Toronto International Deaf Film & Arts Festival (TIDFAF) 2009!

Spring has sprung and what better way to celebrate than to indulge yourself in one of the most diverse and edu-taining festivals to explore the wonderful and complicated world of Deaf culture. Deaf is not a disability and it certainly cannot be defined through stereotypes. Deaf is an identity, a history, an experience, a way of life that, across the continuum, can be both challenging and immensely rewarding. At TIDFAF we explore these journeys through film and are thrilled to provide you with a VIP access into the minds of some of the most talented actors, actresses, directors and crews the film industry has to offer.

In 2006 we made history with our festival being a first of its kind in Canada and this year TIDFAF has made history once again by selecting opening night gala film *Universal Signs* starring Canadian actors Anthony Natale and Sabrina Lloyd directed by Ann Calamia and produced by Calamia, Catherine Miller and Lupe Ontiveros. At 108 minutes *Universal Signs* is the first full-length film in Sign Language.

While we have a stellar TIDFAF board of directors and outstanding festival committee members, we cannot express how much this festival owes to the tens of volunteers and hundreds of supporters across the globe who have been with us literally from day one either electronically or in person right here in Toronto! We couldn't have made it without you.

To all of our sponsors new and returning, thankfully too many to list here, we thank you for your unwavering support especially in these woeful economic times. Your commitment to this festival means that you recognize the necessity for programming that tells stories—multiple and diverse human stories on universal themes through a unique lens.

Creating and telling the stories is one thing but sharing the power of this festival has been another. For that, we thank Canwest Media Inc. our founding media sponsor, National Post, OMNI and all the print, radio and on-air coverage we have received from national and international press. We know the power of the press and are eternally grateful for the responsibility they have shown in playing a leading role in transporting the message and inspiration of TIDFAF across borders!

On a personal note, Catherine MacKinnon and Karyn Rosner the co-founders of TIDFAF had a dream many years ago. This festival is the culmination of hard work, support from many and a stern belief in their dreams. TIDFAF has surely inspired me to dream big and act boldly on those dreams. It has been an honour to have been invited as a hearing person on this amazing journey.

If nothing else we want you to walk away from this festival empowered having seen aspects of your own life on screen. We want you to be creatively charged! To the many students from EC Drury School for the Deaf and other schools who have participated in this year's TIDFAF through the creation of your own films, through our PSA please take this strong message with you into your future. You can be the founder, director and star of your own lives...starting today!

Fabulously yours,

Jill Andrew, PhD (cand.)  
Director of Media Relations, TIDFAF



Welcome to the Second Annual Toronto International Deaf Film and Arts Festival, May 21-23, 2009

Having the task of being the festival's artistic director is a busy one. I find myself looking back and wondering where did the time go? After the success of our first festival we are excited and so pleased that the interest still continues on!

I myself am amazed with the whole process of TIDFAF. There are so many talented people involved and their dedication is evident as we see this year's festival come together. We thank the TIDFAF Board of Directors and especially our newest Director of Marketing and Program Designer for their dedication. Every individual involved has been very supportive. We have an amazing team exuding an enormous amount of enthusiasm and dedication to achieving the very best.

I would also like to make a special mention that for the first time this year secondary school film students were involved in creating a film project for TIDFAF. I would like to extend a thank you to the E.C. Drury School of the Deaf for their exceptional support in the festival's planning. Also, a special thank you has to go to the E.C. Drury staff. I was honoured to be the Placement Supervisor for the Co-operative Education & Work Experience Program (Co-op) students this year. The two Co-op students, with whom I worked with, were very hard working and so dedicated to learning all they could to support TIDFAF. They were a pleasure to work with and I am extremely proud of the work they did. They did a fantastic job for the Public Service Announcement (PSA) that we created for TIDFAF.

TIDFAF has a remarkable worldwide and cultural film community. It has an intimacy and emotional honesty that can transport us to the different worlds through the creative diversity of the images we create on film. Through the artistic visual imagery of sign language, we can show others how we see the world around us. It can open up the minds of everyone around us creating thought provoking discussions. That is why we go, why we love it and why we always want more. Our hope is that we can enlighten and encourage change, to have everyone begin to see the world in ways both unexpected and delightful.

I look forward to meeting the many people who will join us at the Toronto International Deaf Film and Arts Festival. We wish you the most enjoyable and inspiring time at this most exciting event.

Sincerely,

Kelly Halligan  
Artistic Director

## PATTI TROFIMENKOFF: Master of Ceremony

Patti Trofimenkoff Co-founded Dancing Hands, is a performing artist, a teacher for the Deaf and a mother of two deaf children. She works at E.C.Drury School for the Deaf as a Deaf high school teacher for 17 years. She has been performing and choreographing for 32 years! She choreographed the original O'Canada in dance and A.S.L. plus many more that were performed nationally and internationally. Patti and her partner founded Dancing Hands in Milton, Ontario from 1992 to 2003. This troupe includes young Deaf performers (mostly in high school) who perform songs, skits, mime, and dance in ASL. We, Patti, Juan and Lisa have created a new troupe called ASL Waves and it is designed for performing adults. We performed at Nuit Blanche at the Deaf Culture Center and more. We are looking forward to see our group grow with skilled ASL performers! Presently she is a full time Drama teacher under Specialist High Sills Major. She will direct School Spring Drama called "The Enchanted Journey of Bella Wright". That will be held at E.C.Drury School for the Deaf on June 10th. Michelle Chung, her student is the playwright of this play.





Anthony Natale  
**Uni versal Signs**

# film festival **OPENING NIGHT**

Thursday May 23, 2009

Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Street, University of Toronto

Universal Signs, a groundbreaking “silent” film, presented in mesmerizing American Sign Language (ASL) with English subtitles, touches the hearts and minds of hearing and Deaf audiences alike.

After the death of his fiancée’s daughter while in his care, Andrew (Anthony Natale, *Mr. Holland’s Opus*), a Deaf artist, becomes a prisoner of his own mind. Tormented day and night by memories and self-blame, Andrew falls in a downward spiral of depression and anger that alienates everyone around him. It is only through a serendipitous friendship and new love with Mary (Sabrina Lloyd, *Sports Night*) that Andrew is able to sense the life around him – forgive himself, rediscover his muse and experience the transformative power of love.

An original score by Academy Award® winner Joseph Renzetti propels the story along with stellar supporting performances from Margot Kidder (*Superman*), Robert Picardo (*Star Trek: Voyager*), Deanne Bray (*Sue Thomas: FBEye*) and Ashlyn Sanchez (*Crash*). [www.universalsignsthemovie.com](http://www.universalsignsthemovie.com)

## Cast

Anthony Natale  
“Andrew d’Anjou”  
*Mr. Holland’s Opus*

Sabrina Lloyd  
“Mary Callahan”  
*Sports Night*

Directed and Written by:  
Ann Calamia

Produced by:  
Catherine Miller,  
Ann Calamia  
& Lupe Ontiveros

**5:30 PM**  
**6 PM**  
**7:30 PM**

Doors open  
Wine and Cheese Reception  
Screening  
Post Show Screening Q and A’s with the Special Guests



# film festival **FILM SCHEDULE**

Friday, May 22, 2009

Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Street, University of Toronto



For almost 200 years, the usage of sign language was banned, and the Portuguese education of the deaf was oralist. A committee of deaf people, parents and teachers of the deaf, eventually began

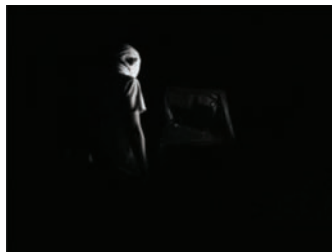
**10:00 - 10:50** Marta Morgado & Mariana Martini, Portugal  
**Lingua Gestual Portuguesa, 10 years of Portuguese Sign Language Recognition** *Running Time 50 min*

a movement, resulting in the National Assembly's 1997 recognition of sign language. 10 YEARS OF PORTUGUESE SIGN LANGUAGE RECOGNITION, 1997-2007 (LÍNGUA GESTUAL PORTUGUESA, 10 ANOS DE RECONHECIMENTO 1997-2007) questions how this recognition has affected those who fought for it, and those they

had hoped would benefit from it. While signing is no longer hidden, now an accepted language, acceptance has come with its own challenges. In the face of all these challenges many are asking, what the future holds, will it continue?

**11:00 - 12:00** Workshop FILM/TV WRITING-With Maria Monte De Rey

**12:00 - 1:00** Lunch (1 hour)



**1:00 - 1:08** Adrian Mangiardi, USA  
**Deprivation/Stimulation** *Running Time 8 min*

This experimental film explores the interaction between a sensory-deprived subject and his sensory input. It relates Mangiardi's

experiences using bilateral cochlear implants and his struggles to bridge his identity between "Deaf" and "Hearing."



**1:10 - 1:22** Alessandro Merlini, Italy  
**Io e il mio amico Nike (I and My Nike Friend)** *Running Time 11:57 min*

A splendid Labrador, Nike, is found abandoned by a man named Hamlet. A tender friendship is formed that will join them

for good or for evil in the land of Orden. **Italian Sign Language, Subtitles**



**1:25 - 1:40** Barbara Calcinati, Italy  
**La Fiamma Misteriosa (The Mysterious Flame)** *Running Time 15 min*

Little Oana's only way to survive is by begging strangers for charity. Desperate to stay warm she keeps her hands from freezing by using the language of the signs and a box of matches. Though they don't understand her language, passersby's find

themselves deeply moved, especially a woman named Tulia. The flame in Oana's hands reawakens her secret wish to become a mother, a profound wish that will stay in her heart forever... **Italian Sign Language, Subtitles**



**1:45 – 1:48** Pamela Witcher, Canada  
**The Experimental Clip** Running Time 3:14 min

A bit of history: Lue Ledoux, a musician also a LSQ interpreter watched the clip & fell in love with it. He was inspired by the visual music (it was originally without audible sounds) and

created and music suitable to the visual movements and beats. **Mixed with sign language and music from Montreal, Quebec**



**1:50 - 2:11** Lance Pickett, USA  
**The Blue Box** Running Time 21 min

Something has happened to a young woman. Something she can't remember. Every hour investigators force her to reenact the painful event she survived

in order to ignite her memory. Before long she realizes that there is more to the story than she's been told. **ASL with Subtitles**



**2:15 – 3:45** A. Bryan "Jade", USA  
**9/11 Fear in Silence** Running Time 88 min

9/11 FEAR IN SILENCE: THE FORGOTTEN UNDERDOGS is a compelling documentary about Deaf and Hard of Hearing people who were the FIRST citizens to become shut out from outside com-

munication and 'left in the dark,' and the LAST to receive access to critical information, or be delivered from danger on September 11, 2001. **ASL with Subtitles**

**3:50 – 3:55** Sneak Preview Trailers:  
"Cop Out",  
"Lexie Cannes" &  
"See What I'm Saying Deaf Entertainers"

# film festival **NETWORKING RECEPTION**

Friday, May 22, 2009

DEAF CULTURE CENTRE 55 Mill Street, Distillery District

**7-10 PM**

Deaf Culture Centre - Networking Reception:  
Mingle with Special Guests, Actors and Filmmakers;  
Presentations by Filmmakers on their experiences  
in producing a film etc.

# film festival **FILM SCHEDULE**

Saturday, May 23, 2009

Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Street, University of Toronto



**9:30 - 9:49** David Ellington, England  
**Over the Bridge** *Running Time 19 min*

What happens when two worlds collide? Possibly love. Olivia (Katarzyna Hadley) is deaf. Nathan (Sam Ross) is hearing. After an uncomfortable first meeting, the two spend an afternoon explor-

ing bridges and budding young love. By the end of it will Nathan have learned to experience the world in a new way? **British sign language and English voice over, subtitles**



**9:50 - 10:07** James Banks, England  
**Danny** *Running Time 16:36 min*

Young Danny is mourning the death of his beloved mother. He has distanced himself from his grief-stricken father and is being terrorized by two local bullies. Overwhelmed by sorrow and loneliness, his life begins to spiral out of control as the bullying escalates to brutality, lead-

ing him to an irreversible and desperate act. Loss and isolation is unflinchingly explored, this, paired with the final scene's imagery and heartbreaking performance by its lead Mason Hurley will leave audiences with a story they will not soon forget. **English and British Sign Language**



**10:10 - 10:55** Kimby Caplan, USA  
**Listen** *Running Time 45 min*  
**\* Winner of Student Academy Award 2005**

LISTEN is the story of one family's triumph over the obstacles of prejudice and technology to ensure that their profoundly deaf daughter will speak. LISTEN was written and directed by Kimby

herself. It is the story of one family's decision not to allow society to throw their daughter away. It is also a story of a Deaf woman who refuses to allow herself to fail. **Subtitles**

- 11:00 - 12:00** Workshop  
PANELISTS WORKSHOP: Maple Pictures, VP of Communications Toronto International Film Festival Group, et al, courtesy of the Toronto International Film Festival Group Film Circuit Group
- 12:00 - 1:00** Lunch (1 hour)
- 1:00 - 2:00** Workshop Creative Usage of ASL-Drama-Acting  
Workshop With Anthony Natale





**2:00 - 2:08** D-PAN-Deaf Performing Artists Network, USA  
**"Evergreen"** Running Time 8 min

The song to this video is called 'Evergreen' by Will Young. Fletcher performs by translating the words of a song into BSL (British Sign Language). She marries the

sound of music with music to the eyes, transforming the music into a truly visual experience. Film by Fletcher Edited by Fletcher & Angela Twigg



**"Beautiful"**

Sung by Christina Aguilera, The song's self-affirming message - "I am beautiful/in every single way/and words can't bring me down" is amplified and expanded through creative use of American Sign Language and motion graphics, becoming a powerful

proclamation of Deaf well-being and pride, as well as a visible demonstration of the beauty of ASL as a medium for creative expression. By Directed by Ron Dans, D-PAN Deaf Performing Artists Network. **ASL, subtitles**

**2:15 - 3:15** High School students films Running Time 1:15 min



**3:17 - 3:20** Braam Jordan, South Africa  
**Sipho the Lion** Running Time 2:32

Sipho the Lion was created and presented at the World Federation of the Deaf in Madrid, Spain 2007. The animation played a

huge role in South Africa's winning bid to host the World Federation of the Deaf in Durban, 2011. **International Sign Language**



**The Rubbish Monster**

Brightly colored and beautifully animated, "The Rubbish Monster," is set in a squatter camp littered with trash. After a man carelessly casts away an empty cigarette box, the vast amount of litter in

the camp suddenly fuses together, coming to life to create a gigantic humanoid rubbish monster. As it proceeds to attack the locals, quick thinking and conservation comes to the rescue.



**3:22 - 3:29** Tracey Salaway, USA  
**A Story of Ch'ien-niang** Running Time 6:37 min

An ASL storyteller, Monique Holt tells the story of Ch'ien-niang. Young Ch'ien-niang briefly leaves her family to venture on a new path that will change them all forever. By journey end Ch'ien-niang

and her family will be forced to confront a great secret that has never been spoken of. Inspired by a story "Ch'ien-niang," Chen Xuanyou. **ASL Sign Language**



**3:30 - 4:50** CJ Jones, USA

**What are you.... Deaf?** Running Time 80 min

In *What Are You.. Deaf?*, CJ Jones blends his unique style of visual imagery and storytelling. Combining voice, ASL and mine, along with recorded music and multimedia projections, Jones paints colorful, riveting pictures of his life experiences, revealing what it

was like to grow up in a tough St. Louis neighborhood, in the shadow of his deaf golden gloves champion boxer dad and on through the challenges faced during his quest to make it as a comedian and an actor in Hollywood. **ASL, voice over, subtitles**



**4:55 - 5:10** Jules Dameron, USA

**Glee!** Running Time 15 min

When your mother's a mortician smiles are hard to come by especially for this 8 year old girl who has never experienced one. After wishing upon a shooting star, happiness arrives in the form of her worst phobia: an Italian sing-

ing clown! Who knew? *Glee* is an unusual and entertaining musical, created by an all deaf crew, including director, producer, and director of photography.

**5:25 - 7:00**

Dinner (1 1/2 hour)



**7:00 - 7:03** Anne Madden & Michael Flores, USA

**Reel Life** Running Time 3 min

A filmgoer finds himself magically transported to the world of silent films. There, he meets a starlet

and learns to live in a world without sounds; a wonderful allegory about the intrinsic gifts of the deaf world.



**7:05 - 7:18** Pierce Starr & Bim Adjadi, England

**The Guest** Running Time 13 min

Valerie Clarke, a larger than life woman of a certain age and owner of a Bed and Breakfast, has made her first booking in over twenty years. No longer young and beautiful, Valerie's isolated life has been devoted to caring for her large, imposing, and troubled son, George. When a young handsome man arrives to rent

the room, Valerie is instantly, and at times comically, awoken from her depressing existence. With the gusto of her youth she sets out to entice her guest, inviting him to a party. As the party turns into something darker, rage and family secrets threaten to destroy them all. **BSL with Subtitles**

# TORONTO INTERNATIONAL DEAF FILM & ARTS FESTIVAL



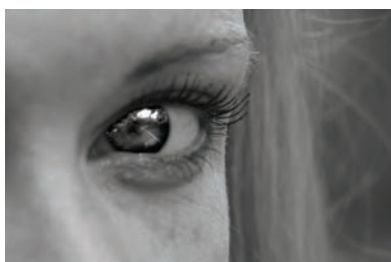
**7:20 - 7:41** Jose Saldana

**The Making of Agamemnon** *Running Time 24 min*

**\* Winner of Washington Filmmaker Award 2009 DCIFF**

Recapturing the vibrant history of deaf theater was one of theatre director Ethan Sinnott's goals. The other was to tell a story that explores the condition of deafness. The Making of Agamemnon documents Sinnott as he directs the drama using an all deaf cast and

crew. A metaphor for the deaf world, Agamemnon, is a production the documentary's director Saldana and the cast relate to beyond the stage. An absorbing documentary where art meets life. **ASL, Subtitles**



**7:45 - 8:06** Derek Scott, Canada

**Finding Oz: The Journey Home** *Running Time 26 min*

A story of three women who come to New York searching for the things that are missing in their lives. One lacks tenderness, one has lost her nerve, and the other can't understand how to move forward. First time writer/

director, Derek Scott, creates a film without a single word of dialogue. This modern day Wizard of Oz, reveals its narrative through visual imagery woven together with a sound track of 6 songs.



**8:10 - 9:10** Tom Linszen & Willy Lindwers, Netherlands

**Anna's Silent Struggle** *Running Time 56 min*

This remarkable documentary shares the harrowing and scarcely documented story of Anna van Dam, a deaf child who survived the Holocaust. Anna's family was murdered shortly after entering the Nazi Camps, forcing her to rely on lip reading, her loyal cousin, and instincts to make it out alive. Though the horror of the Holo-

caust is explored, Anna's story goes beyond tragedy to explore the transcending power of love and family. A poignant account that has long been neglected, Anna's Silent Struggle is not simply an important piece of deaf history but one that will take all viewers on a life-affirming journey. **ASL Sign Language, Voice Over, subtitles**

**9:20 - 9:50**

Closing Awards Ceremony

## Special thank you's for supporting TIDFAF: for the past several of months and at the Festival!

The MacKinnon's Family  
Jill Andrew Media  
Kelly Halligan, Artistic Director  
Frank Folino, Finance Manager  
Vanessa Floros,  
Communication Access  
Karen Clout, Canwest Media Inc.  
Jackie Moss, Canwest  
Lauren Wilson, Canwest  
Sarah Gould, Canwest  
Minna Rhee, Global  
Melanie Farrell, OMNI  
Andrea Radcliff  
Megan McHugh  
Lori Archer  
Sarah Moreland

Elizabeth Morris  
Pat Mills  
Barry Cheong  
Jevon Whetter  
Kalen Feeney  
Anselmo DeSousa  
Amanda Richer  
Mike Cyr  
Jeff Panasuik  
Tatiana Hutinec  
Tristan Kong  
Kayla Morden  
Ira Abinun  
Cari Haim  
Shanna R Kelly and Staff at  
nine one one maxim studios

James Baldwin, EC Drury  
Craig Hughes, EC Drury  
Patti Tromenioff EC Drury and  
to the rest of Staff at EC Drury  
School for the Deaf  
Chaka V.Reid  
Darren Holst  
Karyn Rosner  
Penny Schincariol,  
Right This Way Consulting  
Angi Tippet  
Wayne Betts Jr.  
Joanne Cripps CCSD/DCC  
Anita Small and  
Deaf Culture Centre Interns  
Ontario Cultural Society

of the Deaf Board  
Ontario Association of the Deaf  
Board and Staff  
National Post  
Sacha Pinto, of 1 King Suite Hotel  
ORAD  
Pride Toronto  
All the participating Schools in the  
Film Boot Camp workshops!  
Sarina Elliot  
Jim Cripps, DeafConnect  
Elizabeth Barrett  
Karen Lee, Marie Soza  
To all Deaf Interpreters:  
Wayne Nicholson, BJ Shresta  
and Nancy Blanchard



# film festival

## MEET THE TEAM

Catherine MacKinnon, Festival Director

Jill Andrew, Director of Media Relations

Shanna R. Kelly, Director of Marketing

Vanessa Floros, Communication Access

Kelly Halligan, Artistic Director

Frank Folino, Finance Manager

Jeri Cripps, Program Designer



**D-PAN** DEAF PERFORMING ARTISTS NETWORK

# Got Talent?

## Show us.

The Deaf Performing Artists Network is always looking for talent, ideas, and collaborators - if you're a Deaf or hard-of-hearing director, videographer, editor, effects wizard, motion graphics genius, or other video professional, we want to see your work!

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# film festival FILMMAKERS

Thursday, May 21 - Saturday, May 22, 2009

Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex Street, University of Toronto

## ANTHONY NATALE:



Anthony Natale's first memory of wanting to be an actor was in a residential high school of the deaf. Natale is known to moviegoers as the guy in the elevator during the pivotal scene from Jerry Maguire, signing "You complete me" to his

partner. He starred as the older son in Mr. Holland's Opus and has been also seen in Children of a Lesser God. He had a lead role in USA Network movie "His Bodyguard". Other films, City of Angels, Sorority boys. He also appeared in the suspense thriller Two Shades of Blue starring Rachel Hunter, Eric Roberts, Gary Busey, and Marlee Matlin. On Television, Natale has appeared in such series as Any Day Now, Once and Again, Seventh Heaven, Ellen, Beauty and The Beast, Pacific Blues, and Rude Awakening and has performed in numerous theatrical productions including One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, West Side Story, The Red Shoes, The Greatest Show on Earth, Godspell, Fiddler on the Roof, Oliver and Alice in Wonderland and most recently in "PIPPIN". Anthony is also the star of "How to talk to a person who can't hear." He attended Ernest C Drury School for the Deaf, Milton, Ontario and is thrilled to be here in Toronto for TIDFAF. He thanks his family and friends for their tremendous support throughout his career.

Anthony currently resides in Los Angeles.  
[www.anthonynatale.net](http://www.anthonynatale.net)

## TRACEY SALAWAY:



Tracey Salaway has been a Professor at Gallaudet University's Art Department in Washington, DC since 1997. She is a winner of a duPont Columbia University Award from Columbia University along with Larry Hott and Diane Garey of

the Florentine Film/Hott Production for the feature film, "Through Deaf Eyes," which aired on PBS/WETA stations. She is one of six deaf contributing filmmakers that created short video, "That's My Marshmallow." She's also won an "audience choice award" for one of her shorts screened at the Deaf International Film Festival in Rochester, New York. She gained further recognition for "Treetop Opera" that aired immediately after the feature film. Professor Salaway has taught various visual art/

digital media courses that include language of art and design, cinema, graphic novels, documentary film and video art.

## TOM LINSZEN & WILLY LINDWERS:



28 year old, Tom Linszen, born in Amsterdam, is a deaf Dutch director. His love of film began from a desire to make

movies simply for himself, his first being, "Water", Dromen zijn bedrog ("Dreams are Messing"), and a short doc, "Een bottenverzamelaar" (The Bone collector). Eventually this desire grew into a goal to experiment with the vast possibilities of film. After being refused admittance by the Dutch Film and Television Academy because of the belief that being deaf would impede his academic success, he went on to study at the Open Studio in Amsterdam and the New York Film Academy (NYFA). He has directed the documentary, "A deaf firefighter," and created "Linszen Productions," which aims to tell stories that interest both deaf and hearing communities. Anna's Silent Struggle was directed with Emmy Award winner Willy Lindwer. Linszen is currently working on two new projects, filming in the U.S., South America, Africa and the Middle-East.

## DAVID ELLINGTON:



In the past several of years, David Ellington has various of experiences of acting in TV, Film and Theatre that earned him to fulfill his desire into filmmaking.

David co-ordinated a Vision Sign Film Festival at Watershed Media Centre, Bristol (UK) in 2003 and after the success of the festival, he has gradually developed projects working with young Deaf people to create more short films. He owns and runs his production company, VS1, formerly of 'VisionSign' productions.

## JAMES BANKS:



In 2004, James's debut film making, 'A Deaf Person's Guide To The Sound Sensitive' was well hit in the numerous International Deaf Film Festivals, it was a hit at TIDFAF 2006 festival, he quoted 'This was my first crack at making

a short film and I loved every sweaty stressful minute of it. My aim was to allow deaf people the opportunity to poke and prod us hearing people for a change, and to allow us to see ourselves through their eyes'. As a result, he moved on to develop with some ideas to create the short films for the Deaf Community around in UK, he discovered his desire to create comedy stories.

## BRAAM JORDAAN:



Braam Jordaan, born to a Deaf family, has achieved outstanding recognition both locally and internationally. After graduating from TAS he worked at Wicked Pixels, Refinery and Condo, where he worked on a full range of projects, many of which won prestigious awards.

He is perhaps best known for his enchanting one-minute animation entitled, The Rubbish Monster, which garnered no less than eleven awards, including prestigious Seoul International Cartoon & Animation Festival, Multichoice Vuka! 2006 Awards, Kalamazoo Animation Festival and Animation Exchange Best of the Best. The Rubbish Monster has just been published in book form by Cambridge University Press, also written and illustrated by himself. He is currently working on the first animated American Sign Language dictionary for children that is being put together by the non-profit Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf and marble media. [www.braamjordaan.com](http://www.braamjordaan.com)

## MARTA MORGADO & MARIANA MARTINI:



Marta Morgado is a deaf sign language teacher working in the largest deaf school in Portugal. Mariana Martini is a sign linguist from the Portuguese Deaf Association. They are both very active within the deaf movement. 10 years of Portuguese Sign Language Recognition, 1997-2007, their first film, began with no intention of becoming a documentary, but rather a simple collection of statements from those that were involved in the recognition of Portuguese sign language.





**PAMELA WITCHER:**

Photo Credit:  
Jason Theriault

Pamela Elizabeth Witcher, a native Montréal from a deaf family, appreciates the quadrilinguality (Langue des Signes Québécoise, French, American Sign Language and English) of the beautiful multicultural city. She attended Mackay School for the Deaf, mainstreamed high schools, and received a BA of Social Work from McGill University. She's worked as a research lab manager at McGill University researching sign languages and cognitive development. She has also worked at La Maison des femmes sourdes de Montréal with deaf women living through domestic violence and sexual abuse. An artist to the bone, she enjoys experimenting with various mediums of expression, including photography, woodworking, and singing amongst many others. Her main creative channel is acrylic and oil painting. Her artworks had been exhibited at Café Lubu, Chez Baptiste and Café Placard in Montreal as well as at the Abilities Festival and Deaf Culture Centre in Toronto. Between exhibits, she's participated in Nuit Blanche as a live artist and her work has been appeared on book covers and in magazines. She is also a creator of ASL poetry, songs, and stories.

**PIERCE STARR & BIM ADJADI:**

Pierce Starre, labelled "Spectacular" by the London Fringe and "Impressive" by New York Theatre.com for his Acting work, Pierce Starre returns this year showcasing his writing and Co-Directing skills in his first short film supported by Ajadi 'The Guest'. Directing from an acting perspective, Northern based Starre sensed a real need to raise the level of acting within Deaf media. He has delivered several workshops with Aston Performing Arts Academy and projects with Deaf Media Resource, 491, and Skint to aspiring Actors within the Deaf community and mainstream. He believes that the necessity to fine acting craft is technique. Also a writer, he decided it was time to bring to life his script, 'The Guest', which was written in three weeks. Some of his credits include Wanabee (Leeds International Film Festival James 2003), MDBB (Off Broadway NY Gene Frankel Theatre, Mr. Wilfred 2006), Decided (Manchester NW Film Festival Boyfriend

2003), MDBB (London Barons Court, Manchester Zion and Wolverhampton Arena Mr. Wilfred 2006) and Dysfunction (UK Tour Voice Over 2006). Bim Adjadi, a Filmmaker and Editor with experience in both film and television across genres, including Light Entertainment, Music, Drama and Factual programmes Bim Adjadi joins forces with Pierce Starre as Co-Director and editor for 'The Guest'. Ajadi has worked at award-winning production companies, such as the BBC and Channel 4. He has written, directed and edited a wide range of projects including music videos, award-winning creative drama films, and opening titles. Ajadi also directed the award winning film Skye (2002), which was screened at various Film Festivals in the UK and abroad. After five years away from filmmaking in order to focus on Deaf Music videos and Broadcasting, Ajadi feels its time to raise the standard of visual and dramatic entertainment in the Deaf media world.

**LANCE PICKETT:**

On Christmas morning in 1996, filmmaker D. Lance Pickett unwrapped a gift that sparked his passion for filmmaking, his first

camcorder. In 1998 Pickett won the Gallaudet Film Festival award and decided to pursue a career in filmmaking. After graduating from Utah Valley University in 2006 with a B.S. degree in Multimedia Communications Technology with an emphasis in Film Production, Pickett founded R.E.M. Films in 2007. He is currently working on shorts and a feature length film. [www.remfilms.com](http://www.remfilms.com)

**ALESSANDRO MERLINI:**

Alessandro Merilini was born in Gallarate (Varese) Italy, in 1965. He's the only child in his family who is Deaf since birth. He joined the Senza Parole theatre company in 1984. He was trained and guided under Marcel Marceau, with the Grock and Marise Falk, and the supervision of Director Antonio De Peieri and Claudio Caramaschi, teacher and a director. He's one of the founders of "IPPOCAMPUS CIAK" with usage of Sign language, subtitles in Italian and English with short films have won awards from TIDFAF, London, Milan and Siena. Merilini is the Festival Director of his theatre company, as well as a professional drama and mime instructor where he taught at The School of Fashion IPSIA, of Parma Milan.

**BARBARA CALCINATI:**

Barbara Calcinati was born in Milan, Italy, in 1972. She was the only deaf child within a hearing family. Deaf since birth, Barbara speaks native Italian, English and Italian Sign Language (LIS).

Her artistic experiences began in 1998 within the dance company "Danza 98" in Milan. Then soon after, she joined with another group, the "Senza Parole" theatre company in Milan exclusively composed by deaf people where she learns the art of body mime and pantomime and where she develops her artistic skills partaking to several theatrical shows and pieces, from comic to dramatic genre, gaining awards recognition in Italy and abroad. Barbara creates and produces several of dance pieces and was featured in Italian TV channel, Antenna 3. In 2002 "Senza Parole" company expanded to include a motion picture department and re-named it as "Ippocampus Ciak". Within the motion picture department, Barbara acted in several of short films. She even directs and writes short films for deaf people and wins an award as "Best Actress" for the short film "La Forza dell'Amore". This year, she had a lead role in "La Voce di Barbara" (Barbara's Voice) directed by a hearing director, Andrea Bossoni, premiered in Milan.

**DEREK SCOTT:**

Derek just finished performing the lead role on Broadway (Helen Hayes) in the production of SLAVA's SNOWSHOW [www.snowshowusa.com](http://www.snowshowusa.com) He had previously performed it for 2 1/2 years off-Broadway. Winner of the 2005 DRAMA DESK AWARD Most Unique Theatrical Production. Derek performed in CanStage production of The Overcoat at the Barbican Theatre in London, the Adelaide Festival (Australia), Wellington Arts Festival (New Zealand) and Bergen Festival (Norway) and most recently A.C.T. in San Francisco where it won San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle: Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble and Best Touring Production. As a physical comedian, Derek has worked on Television shows throughout the globe including The Comedy Channel, HBO Comedy Special in the US and has appeared for 4 years at the Festival Just for laughs, in Montreal, Canada. He has appeared at the Koln Comedy Festival's RTL TV Gala and has hosted the Halifax Comedy Gala for many years. He has taken his physical theatre show all around the world. Derek Scott has been working professionally in the performing arts for over 20 years. He wears many hats, that of a actor, comedian and director. Finding Oz the Journey Home is his first film directorial debut. [www.derekscott.ca](http://www.derekscott.ca)

## ANNE MADDEN & MICHAEL FLORES:

Anne Madden is a graduate of the American Film Institute's directing program. This accomplished producer, writer, has been nominated for a plethora of awards, has served as a segment producer for Quincy Jones' *We Are the Future*, and is a 2008 fellow of Project Involve, as well as winner of the Martin Ritt screenwriting award from the American Film Institute. Producer Michael A. Lopez has worked in philanthropy for over 10 years, working in Development for non-profits, foundations, and politics. Michael Flores, director/editor, recently graduated from USC with an MFA in Cinema-Television Production. Prior to pursuing film, he majored in biology at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, studied in New Zealand, conducted medical research in France, and taught English in Spain. During the past few years, Flores has written and directed several short films, and has worked as an editor and an assistant editor on a number of documentaries, commercials, and music videos. In 2007, his short film *Esperando* (Waiting/Hoping) screened at the San Luis Obispo International Film Festival.

## KALEN FEENEY:

Kalen Feeney, writer/actor, was the recipient of a Rotary International Ambassadorial scholarship and earned a Masters in Screenwriting at Leeds Metropolitan University in England. She was invited back to the UK for a New Writers Residency with BBC Radio/Graeae Theatre. Feeney trained as an actor with the American Conservatory Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Deaf West Theatre, and toured with the National Theatre of the Deaf. Feeney was a Project: Involve Fellow in 2008 and most recently taught screenwriting workshops for the Toronto International Deaf Film and Arts Festival in Canada.

## CJ JONES:



CJ Jones is CEO, producer, director, writer, actor, comedian, musician, and motivational speaker. He has traveled with the National Theatre of the Deaf and toured with "Children of a Lesser God" on Broadway. He has also appeared on NBC's "Frasier," ABC Family's "Lincoln

Heights," the PBS television shows "Sesame Street" and "Rainbow's End," and was the host of "Happy Hands Kids Klub." In addition, he heads Hands Across Communications, producing events for international deaf artists

to share their talents and receive recognition for their artistic work. He founded Sign World TV in 2001 to help broaden the opportunities for Deaf people in entertainment. Jones was honored with an "Unsung Hero Award of the Year" for Black History Month, 2008-sponsored by KCET-WAMU of Los Angeles. He has also been honored with "NTID Alumni Association Outstanding Award 2008, presented by National Technical Institute of the Deaf - Rochester Institute of Technology at Rochester New York. When not pursuing these goals, he takes his one-man show on the road! He has experienced what he calls the "double whammy" of being an actor who is both deaf and black. CJ vigorously spreads the message that being different does not mean being less worthwhile. [www.signworldtv.com](http://www.signworldtv.com)

## JULES DAMERON:



Jules Dameron was born in Boone, North Carolina and raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Graduating top of her class with a B.A. in Television/Cinema from Gallaudet University, Dameron went on to receive an M.F.A. in Production from the University of Southern Cali-

fornia. Dameron has created over 25 official short films, and have been involved in over 50 film productions, including three feature films as an Assistant Director. She has been awarded, Best TFP 110 Short Film at Gallaudet University for "Fantasy," and "Best Direction" for "The Deaf Man" in Brussels, Belgium, a film she produced in 2008. She has directed a film in German Sign Language. In Spain and Germany, she also took part in acting workshops. Dameron currently lives in Los Angeles, where she produces & directs films. [www.damname.com](http://www.damname.com)

## A. BRYAN "JADE"



An award-winning independent filmmaker, Ann Marie "Jade" Bryan has been in the filmmaking business for more than 14 years. Since 1982,

Ann Marie has been known as Jade, an acronym for Jamaican-American Destinee-Empress, a woman with many goals who is 'destined' to make a difference by creating ripples in the film, television and entertainment industries. She is the founder of DEAFVISION FILMWORKS, INC., a not-for-profit company. Jade studied film at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University where she earned the distinction of being the first DEAF African-American woman to graduate with a B.F.A. in Filmmaking. To date, Jade continues to be

the only Deaf African-American woman with a B.F.A in Filmmaking. Jade plans to establish JADE FILMS, LLC, commercial and entertainment production company that produces low-to-medium budget motion pictures and videos for distribution.

[www.911fearinsilence.com](http://www.911fearinsilence.com)

## JOSE SALDANA:



Saldana was raised in Philadelphia, PA. By 2 years old he was deaf. He has studied film and video at Rochester Institute of Technology and Gallaudet University. His passions include adventure outdoors, creative stories,

documentary, thriller, and horror movies. His thriller short, "The Amazing Story" screened at the Chicago Festival for Cinema of the Deaf, the first deaf film festival in North America, in 2002. The Washington, DC Independent Film Festival 2004 selected his movie, "The Cellar," to debut as the first deaf film in the hearing festival. He traveled 18 countries, working as a documentary videographer for DeafNation.com narrator and founder Joel Barish on "No Barriers" programs in 2007. He is the recipient of the "Up and Coming, Washington Filmmaker" award from Washington, DC Independent Film Festival and the Deaf Rochester Film Festival for "The Making of Agamemnon" in 2009. He was selected by the Serac Adventure Films for Serac Adventure Film School to film the Teva Mountain Games in Vail, Colorado with 8 selected filmmaking students and director/instructor Michael Brown. In June 2009 our short films for National TV and Outdoor Film Festival will be released. The film shows Brown guiding the first blind person, Erik Weißenmayer, to the Everest; it is also the first HDTV camera on the Everest on May 25, 2001, historically.

## KIMBY CAPLAN:



Caplan received her undergraduate degree from the University of Colorado where she made half a dozen award winning experimental 16mm films. After a skiing hiatus where

she pursued her level 3 certification as a ski instructor, she moved to Dallas, Texas to pursue a Masters degree in Film Production at Southern Methodist University. Her thesis film LISTEN, a personal documentary about what it means to be Deaf, received First place at the Black Maria Film Festival, a Silver Remi Award from the Houston World-fest Film Festival, a 2005 Student Academy Award, and was qualified to be nominated for an Academy Award. Caplan attended the



American Film Institute in Los Angeles, graduating with an MFA in Cinematography, 2007. Her thesis film, as director of photography, *Song of David*, has been featured in international film festivals, screened at the Cannes Showcase and won Best Student Film at the 2008 USA Film Festival. She has 2 newly released 35mm shorts beginning their festival run. She is currently shooting a feature documentary about prominent Cuban exiles in the United States.

## D-PAN

### DEAF PERFORMING ARTISTS NETWORK:



Deaf Performing Arts Network D-PAN exists to bridge the gaps between the deaf/hard of hearing community, the entertainment industry, and the public at

large. We create media designed specifically to serve deaf audiences through the use of American Sign Language. (ASL) D-PAN is an emergent community in its own right—a networking of deaf and hard of hearing performers and professionals; their families and friends; in creating a cultural equality. [www.d-pan.com](http://www.d-pan.com)

## JAYNE ELIZABETH FLETCHER:



Jayne Elizabeth Fletcher, raised in Wolverhampton, England was born 3 months premature and deaf. The doctors gave her a small chance of survival. 25 years later this is her story. Fletcher started signing to songs at age 9, lighting a creative flame that

evolved into a lifelong passion for SignSong! At 14 she joined a SignSong group called 'A Different Beat', comprised of 7 Deaf young people performing throughout the UK. Later Fletcher went solo; calling herself 'Fletch@'. She has performed on stage with Ronan Keating (her personal pop idol) from Boyzone at the Wembley Arena, signing to 'When You Say Nothing At All.' Fletcher's love of SignSong has both empowered her and allowed her to bring about more Deaf awareness within society. As well as leading SignSong workshops Fletcher runs a Deaf & hearing Youth theatre that act and perform SignSong. Fletcher's goal is to teach famous people how to sign their songs. She also aims at inspiring hearing people to learn sign language, and show them all that Deaf people CAN do everything except hear. Fletcher's efforts in Deaf awareness are allowing Deaf people to have access to music like never before.

## RON DANS:

ASL Coordinator for "Beautiful" Professor/Consultant/Chairperson Ronald Dans serves as the Board Director for Deaf Performing Artist Network (D-PAN), a nonprofit organization that focuses on making music and music culture accessible to Deaf/HOH communities in Michigan and across the World Wide Web. Having involvements in a variety of organizations in two countries, Ron has worked as Public/Media relation and committee member of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and served as a Provincial Board Director for the Canadian Hearing Society. Ron has also been a Deaf Interpreter for Ontario Interpreting Services for 10 years. In Michigan he has developed and implemented the Interpreter Training Program for Baker College and Oakland Community College, as well as for eight years served as Adjunct Professor. He received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. and obtained his evaluation and training from the Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf. Throughout his career, Mr. Dans has been awarded accolades and recognition for his 17 years of commitment to serving to Deaf community.

## ADREAN MANGIARDI:



28 year-old Adrean was born in Indiana and raised in Allentown, Pennsylvania to a supportive hearing family. He became deaf at one years-old, after a high fever developed into chicken

pox ultimately sizzling both of his cochlea. Raised wearing hearing aids in order to communicate orally, by 24, he received a second cochlear implant, which had a profound effect on his hearing, contributing to a new ability to localize and differentiate sounds previously inaccessible. Adrean attended the Film and Animation program at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, NY, where his 2003 film *Paper Airplane*, an experimental/documentary garnered recognition. In 2005, he won the Deaf Rochester Film Festival Student Honorable Mention Award; subsequently Larry Hott of Hott Productions offered Adrean an opportunity to produce a short for Hott's PBS affiliated production, released in 2007. Award-winning, *Equilibrium*, was based on his experience with bilateral cochlear implants. In 2006, his senior thesis film, *The Calabrian's Feast*, won the School of Film and Animation Department Chair's Award at RIT. He is currently completing the Master of Fine Arts program at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

## High School Film Boot Camp Workshops January 2009



Photo Credit:  
Barry Cheong  
[www.barrycheong.com](http://www.barrycheong.com)

## DARREN HOLST: Jury Programmer



Born into a deaf family in Saskatoon and raised in Edmonton, Holst attended Alberta School for the Deaf, Gallaudet University, and York University majoring in deaf education. His educational accomplishments include, Student Parliament, Class of 1992 president at Gallaudet University, as well as involvement in the stage production "Can Do: A Revue," and Gallaudet's Bison Song Team. Holst is a long-standing teacher with Robarts School for the Deaf, where he's worked with various grade-levels and students

from diverse backgrounds, as well as an Educational Coordinator. Active in Ontario's deaf community, his roles have included board member and president for London Centre of the Deaf, board member and president for Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf, committee member and film selection jury member for the first TIDFAF. Holst is an avid fan and creator of ASL poetry, and song creator for the opening ceremony at World Federation of the Deaf in Montreal.

## KARYN ROSNER: Jury Programmer



Deaf since birth, Karyn Rosner was born in Brooklyn, New York and grew up in Long Island, NY. Upon graduating from Gallaudet University with a B.A. degree, she pursued a M.A. degree in Deaf Education from New York University. Karyn had taught at various places in Manhattan, NY; North Carolina; Edmonton, Calgary and Maryland since 1974. She presently teaches at E.C. Drury Elementary School of the Deaf in Milton. Karyn has dedicated herself to many civic organizations pertaining to the Deaf in which

she has received several awards for her diligent volunteer work. The profile of Karyn Rosner (formerly Goldstein) can be found in the Deaf Women of Canada. As one of the co founder of Toronto International Deaf Film and Arts Festival in conjunction with Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf, OCSD, her dream had come true to bring filmmakers from all walks of life to share diverse cultures among each other. Karyn served as a Jury Programmer for Festival 2009.

## CHAKA REID: Jury Programmer



Chaka V. Reid, of Chakra Media Ink, is recognized for her witty and edgy writing. Her work has appeared in O magazine, Elle, and Now. An avid music lover she has recently finished her first novel, Finding Lenny (inspired by Lenny

Kravitz). She has worked with the Toronto International Film Festival and begins Graduate School this fall for Cinema and Media studies.

[www.chakramediaink.com](http://www.chakramediaink.com)

## JILL ANDREW: Jury Programmer



Jill Andrew BEd, MA, PhD (Cand.) is thrilled to be on board with TIDFAF providing media relations and sponsorship support! Andrew is an award-winning journalist, social sciences, equity, media awareness educator and events host. She is also the producer of Curvy Catwalk Fashion Fundraiser, BITE ME! (Body Image Film/Arts festival), along with numerous other creative projects. Andrew's TV appearances have included City TV, OMNI, ET Canada with print in Metro, Star, Vervegirl etc, and she has

been the recipient of both the national 2007 Michele Landsberg Media Activism Award and the 2008 Endless Possibilities African-Canadian Women's Award. Andrew's obsessions include lottery scratch tickets and cats, and she one day plans to host not only a talk show but to run a million dollar cat sanctuary. She's got too many movies she loves to list a favourite but Dirty Dancing is definitely near the top. "No body puts baby in a corner!" [www.jillandrewmedia.com](http://www.jillandrewmedia.com)

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