

MEDIA RELEASE

SUPPORT FOR ACTORS' FUND OF CANADA ROLLS ACROSS PRAIRIES AS ACTRA MANITOBA CLIMBS ABOARD 50TH ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN

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For Immediate Release

WINNIPEG – The Actors' Fund of Canada's 50th anniversary fundraising and awareness campaign picked up speed today as ACTRA Manitoba announced a \$2,000 commitment to the Fund. ACTRA's Manitoba branch joins the Alberta and Saskatchewan branches in contributing to the Fund this year, making for a solid expression of support for the Fund by ACTRA members across Canada's prairie provinces.

The Actors' Fund is the lifeline for Canada's entertainment industry. Performers and those working behind the scenes in film & TV, theatre, music and dance can apply for emergency financial aid from the Fund, which recently set a new record for the amount of financial aid delivered to the performing arts community in a single year, topping half a million dollars in the 12-month period that ended on March 31. The Fund has helped over 10,000 entertainment industry workers recover from illness, injury or other circumstances causing severe economic and personal hardship since it was founded in 1958. The organization marks 50 years of service to entertainment industry members in 2008 with a campaign focused on raising awareness of its emergency financial aid program and uniting Canada's arts community to raise funds for the cause.

Commenting on the relevance of the Actors' Fund to the Manitoba film & TV production community, ACTRA Manitoba Branch Representative Rob Macklin said, "We're a pretty tightly knit group here in Manitoba. Whether we work on the producing side or we're members of ACTRA, I.A.T.S.E. or DGC, everybody knows everybody and it's easy to see the importance of all of us coming together behind an initiative like the Actors' Fund. The Fund is all about us helping each other. By pooling our resources in it over the last 50 years, entertainment workers in Canada have created a fund that can deliver a huge amount of help in a very short time, whether the person who needs it is here in Winnipeg or somewhere else across the country. When we contribute to the Actors' Fund, we're saying, 'we're all in this together'. We have the ability in this industry to help each other through difficult times and, when the occasion arises, we have to do so."

Actors' Fund Executive Director David Hope adds, "The demand on the Fund

has doubled in the past six years and we have just had a year when it hit a record high level. When we began this 50th anniversary campaign we thought that entertainment industry members would see the value in our work and respond to our call for support. We're extremely gratified to see that this is happening. We thank ACTRA Manitoba and our many other partners who are helping to ensure that we will always have the means to respond to our community's need for emergency aid, however large that need may be."

The Actors' Fund of Canada is a registered charity that has paid out over \$3.5 million in rent payments, grocery money, utility payments and other basic living expenses in the last 10 years. Performers, creators, technical staff and other production team members can benefit from the Fund, which receives no government funding and is wholly sustained by support from individuals and entertainment industry organizations.

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