

WIDC 2010

Director Participants



ASNA ADHAMI
Halifax, NS

Asna Adhami's insatiable curiosity for people and their stories began early, really early. Just ask her mother. Asna's destiny as a storyteller was firmly in place by the age of 12, as the popular gossip columnist/music reviewer for an indie, elementary school newspaper. This work laid the foundation for an education and career as a writer, broadcaster and journalist, and includes affiliations with the Aboriginal People's Television Network, CBC Television, CBC New Media, CBC Radio, and with Black to Business and Touch Base magazines, to name a few.

Asna was recently selected to compete in the 29th Atlantic Film Festival (2009)'s Inspired Script program. Her fresh and funny idea for a romantic comedy feature film was transformed from a five-page treatment to a first draft script - in four months. Prior to that she completed Phase 1 of AFSCOOP's Film 5 (2008) program, and wrote a script adaptation of her poem, Angry Tea. She plans to seek financing and partners to produce and direct these projects in the near future. Asna's work has a local, national and global reach. Asna produced almost a hundred Artist Profiles for CBC Artspots, which presently reside on the internet. She also produced over 100 public service announcements for CBC Radio and CBC Television, for local, regional and national broadcast, and a documentary, WHERE ARE YOU FROM? for CBC Radio's Maritime Magazine show in 2000, examining multiplicity in cultural identity.

Asna specializes in telling intercultural stories, in singular and plural contexts. She also worked with the Aboriginal People's Television Network as a Video Journalist, traveling the Mi'kmaki region (areas also considered to include the Atlantic Provinces) researching, writing, preparing, coordinating, shooting and editing a variety of stories presented from Aboriginal communities to Canadians of all perspectives. Asna's passion for the resilience of the human spirit manifests in her work on justice and equity initiatives aimed at transformational societal change on a local, national and global level. She also applies this sense of equity to her media work by participating in programs that offer media access, awareness and training, often to those who may have previously been underrepresented in the media industry.

Asna's poetic works are ignited by spirit, love, nature and simple moments in human experiences. Urdu, Persian and English poets inspire her, and especially the traditional Sufi poetry of her elders and ancestors. Asna regularly engages audiences with her provocative poetry, headlining shows and performing at cultural and human rights events. Asna created and runs the outdoor summer series Poetry in the Park, in Halifax. She enjoys designing collaborative opportunities for intercultural poetry offerings such as Fusion Infusion and Light of the Heart; an Iftaar Party.

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ELIZABETH BECKER
Vancouver, BC

Elizabeth first became active in the entertainment industry when she was hired by Canada's YTV in 1988. Over a period of seven years, she segued from in front to behind the camera, and was involved as writer, director, segment producer and host for shows such as 'YTV Rocks', 'Rock 'n Talk', '28:48', 'Streetnoise', 'NBA Dunk Street' and 'Recroom'. Drawn by the passion to tell dramatic stories, Elizabeth left the network to pursue a career in film.

Elizabeth has written, directed and produced six short films. A *NEW LEASH ON LIFE* (1993) won Canada's Canpro Award for best short fiction, sold to CBC, Canal Plus in Spain, and screened at almost two dozen film festivals. *MISINTERPRETED* (1995) won Best Film, Best Director, and Best Editing at the Simon Fraser University Film Awards and the Canadian Academy of Cinema and Television's National Apprenticeship Training Program where she worked alongside and was mentored by Arthur Hiller (*LOVE STORY*), Rob Bowman (*THE X-FILES*), and Gary Harvey (*MADISON*).

In 1997 Elizabeth moved to Los Angeles in 1997 where she completed the short films *REPRISE*, *MISS TRUDY*, and *LOCOWEED & OTHER DISCOVERIES*. After returning to Canada in 2002, Elizabeth finished *THE TULPA* which she wrote, directed and produced.

Elizabeth holds an Masters of Fine Art from the prestigious American Film Institute's Directing Program (1999) a BA in Film Studies from Simon Fraser University (1995).

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CATHERINE BRUHIER
Toronto, ON

Catherine Bruhier is an award-winning actress; *THE SACRIFICE* marks her directorial debut and first project from co-founded production company *BREAKING GROUND PRODUCTIONS* devoted to diversity in filmmaking. To date the film has screened at 12 festivals and has won 4 awards. Upcoming she will direct the short film 'Clean Teeth Wednesdays'. Born in Belize, Central America raised in New Brunswick a Saint John High School honor student and scholarship recipient, Catherine moved to Toronto where she completed her formal education. A graduate of the George Brown College Theatre Program, she also attended York University and has studied in Los Angeles with renowned coach/director, Jim Pasternak in his *Art & Technique of Film Directing* and *Private Consulting & Coaching Workshops*. Her career has been mainly as an actor performing in leading roles in theatres across Canada, most notably: Shaw Festival; Grand Theatre London; Factory Theatre; Theatre New Brunswick; Theatre Passe Muraille; Theatre Plus Toronto and in the Dora awarded production of the teen play, *Carrying the Calf*. For the screen most recognizable: 3 seasons as *Elaine Besbriss* on the Paul Haggis created Gemini awarded CBS/Alliance series *Due South*. The show aired in 62 countries rating 'top pick' on the UK's BBC network. Most visible to young audiences she co-hosted *The Polka Dot Door* for 2 seasons, which also aired around the world. Other screen credits include: *Soulfood* (Showtime), *Yes Dear* (CBS), *Frasier* (NBC), *Angela's Eyes & Missing for* (Lifetime), *Forever Knight* (USA/CBS) – and recurring on the ABC soap *Port Charles*. Noted films: *Bram Stoker's Shadowbuilder* and starring with Catherine Disher in the BRAVOfact film *For Lease*.

One of Catherine's earlier achievements was on the main-stage of Theatre New Brunswick: in David French's *SALT-WATER MOON* directed by playwright Sharon Pollock, co-starring Eric McCormack. Being a minority as the female lead, the play was considered untraditional casting. Based on her experience in *SALT-WATER MOON* she wrote an article called *DARKNESS VISIBLE* published in *THEATRUM MAGAZINE*. (Sept.'90 issue). The article went on to be republished in part by Prentice Hall Canada as an inspirational piece for grades 7 to 9 in a school textbook entitled *PLAY MAKING MAGAZINE*. Ms. Bruhier was an invited jury member of the *CANADIAN ACADEMY OF CINEMA AND TELEVISION* choosing the performers to be nominated for the 1995 Gemini Awards. She is a member of CAEA (Canadian Actors Equity Association), ACTRA (Alliance of Canadian Television and Radio Artists), S.A.G. (Screen Actors Guild) and previously a member of Women in Film Toronto and L.I.F.T (the Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto). Upcoming, Catherine recently starred in the Steve Peros film *Footprints* due out in 2010. (Peros was also the writer on the highly successful film *The Cat's Meow* starring Kirsten Dunst) and in the short film *SOFIA* co-starring Art Hindle at the 2009 Montreal World Film Festival.

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GERALDINE CARR
EDMONTON, AB

Geraldine Carr is a director-filmmaker with a passion for story, cinema and the creative process. Geraldine embraces ensemble work and tells stories from a unique perspective. Prior to writing and directing her own projects (DANCE OF THE KALEIDOSCOPE, LOVE-GOD LYING, ROSE'S RISING), Geraldine established herself in Alberta's film and television industry working as a Casting Director and has worked on regional, national and international projects spanning sixteen years.

Geraldine's foray into storytelling began as a child when she was influenced by the rich heritage of classical music in her immediate family – her grandfather was a conductor of numerous musical groups, which formed the Thunder Bay Symphony after the Second World War. She trained musically (violin and piano), until, as a teenager, she discovered the theatre while working front-of-house at the Shaw Festival Theatre in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Over six summer seasons, Geraldine soaked it all up. It was during this time she decided to become an actor's director. In order to justifiably accomplish this goal, Geraldine trained as an actor in Toronto and New York City. Following her training, Geraldine worked as an actor in theatre and film. Her formative theatre experience involved work with the late Marie Hopps and George Ghent of Studio Seven Theatre Productions in Toronto. For five years, Geraldine and an ensemble of actors, produced, wrote and performed various productions under the umbrella of Studio Seven.

In 1989, Geraldine established Edmonton as her home. During an audition with former Casting Director Leslie Swann, Geraldine expressed interest in working as a casting assistant which led to work in Extras Casting. When Ms Swan left the world of casting, Geraldine became Edmonton's resident Casting Director and for the next ten years she enhanced her storytelling skills by working with actors and production companies. But still the call to create her own work echoed from deep within.

In 2004, Geraldine shot her first project TA DA! During filming, Geraldine decided it was time to go to film school to learn the technical aspects of filmmaking. She applied to and was accepted in the Film Production program at Confederation College in Ontario. While at school, Geraldine wrote, directed, and edited four short films, a documentary, and smaller projects. While at Confederation College, Geraldine garnered her first national award as editor and producer on a group project – a 2007 BEAC Award for Best Video Corporate PSA Short.

In 2008, Geraldine joined the Film and Video Arts Society-Alberta (FAVA) as Executive Director and began her NFB and the Edmonton Arts Council funded project DANCE OF THE KALEIDOSCOPE

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MICHELLE LATIMER
Toronto, ON

Michelle is an award-winning filmmaker, actor, and producer. Most recently she produced the documentary JACKPOT that premiered at the 2009 International Hot Docs Festival and was one of twenty directors chosen to participate in the Toronto International Film Festival's 2009 Talent Lab. She's currently in development with The Movie Network on a dramatic series she co-created, and is directing the short animated film CHOKE (Bravo). Michelle has written and researched for the films: TRIAGE: DR. JAMES ORBINSKI'S HUMANITARIAN DILEMMA (White Pine/NFB, Sundance Film Festival), REEL INJUN (Rezolution/NFB, TIFF '09), *The National Aboriginal Achievement Awards* (Global/APTN), and *APTN's 10th Anniversary Special*. Her short film TOMORROW, which she produced, wrote and directed was commissioned by LIFT / imagineNATIVE. Prior to this she mentored for two years under acclaimed filmmaker, Peter Raymont. In 2008, Michelle joined the programming teams of both the Hot Docs and ImagineNATIVE Film Festivals. She is currently the Director of Programming for the ImagineNATIVE Festival.

As an actor, Michelle has appeared on stages and screens across Canada. Most recently she co-starred with Adam Beach in the comedy series MOOSE TV, (CFTPA Indie Award for Best Comedy Series), and is reprising her role as Trish in season three of the internationally syndicated series PARADISE FALLS (Showcase/Here TV USA). Between filming seasons of *Paradise Falls* and *Moose TV*, Michelle has starred in critically acclaimed stage plays across Canada. *Chekhov Longs* (Theatre Smith-Gilmour, Winner of 4 Dora Awards) was presented at the Factory Theatre (Toronto), the Festival des Ameriques (Montreal) and the Magnetic North Festival (Ottawa). She has also performed in theatrical productions of, *Director's Cut* (Crow's Theatre/Factory), *Interrogation* (Modern Times Theatre, NOW Magazine Citation for Best Ensemble), *Unidentified Human Remains* (Crow's Theatre/Buddies In Badtimes), *Unnatural and Accidental Women* (Native Earth/Buddies In Badtimes/Now Magazine Citation for Best 2004 Production), and the one-woman show, *Idiot* (Factory Theatre/Winner of the Contra Guy Award/NOW Magazine Citation for Best Performance). Michelle has also guest starred on *Naked Josh*, *Puppets Who Kill*, *This Is Wonderland*, and *Train 48*, and has appeared in the feature films, *Resident Evil* and *Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen*.

Michelle was recently recognized with the 2009 Golden Sheaf Award for Best Emerging Filmmaker, awarded the 2008 WIFT/Astral Media Mentorship and was nominated for the prestigious Don Haig Award (2008) for her contributions as an emerging filmmaker. She has been featured as a "Humanitarian and Artist to Watch" on APTN's *7th Generation* and is a graduate of Concordia University. She is a member of The Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto, The Canadian Academy of Cinema and Television, and the Association of Canadian Film, Television & Radio Artists.

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ANNETTE MANGAARD
Toronto, ON

Annette Mangaard has written, and directed fifteen films in more than a decade as an independent filmmaker. She has recently been nominated for a Gemini for Best Director of a Documentary for her one hour documentary, *GENERAL IDEA: ART, AIDS, AND THE FIN DE SIECLE* (for TVO, Bravo, SCN, Knowledge) about the celebrated Canadian artists collective which premiered at Hot Doc's in Toronto then went on to garner accolades at the Vancouver International Festival, DOCSDF Mexican Documentary Film Festival and Asolo International Art Film Festival in Italy (among others).

Mangaard is currently completing a one hour documentary about the changing face of the Inuit artists of Cape Dorset for Bravo, TVO and APTN.

She is also in post-production of a performance film that follows a group of dancers including Peter Chin and the Coleman Lemieux Troupe to Mongolia during the 2008 solar eclipse.

Recent films include *INTO THE NIGHT*, a film noir of the night produced by the National Film Board of Canada, as well as *THE MANY FACES OF ARNAUD MAGGS*, a one hour documentary on the celebrated Canadian artist/photographer Arnaud Maggs for TVOntario. Mangaard was recently lauded with a retrospective of her art films at the Cinemateque Palais de Kino in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Mangaard has several feature length screenplays in development including *LARSOPIA* with Zentropa (Lars von Trier's company) in Denmark.

Mangaard's series directing includes 4 episodes of *Heart of A Poet* produced by Makin' Movies for BRAVO.

FISH TALE SOUP (1997) starring Remy Girard marked her debut as a feature film writer and director. *FISH TALE SOUP* screened theatrically at the Carlton Cinemas in Toronto and in a number of other theatres across Canada. The 1998 City TV premiere garnered much critical praise.

Born in Lille Vaerlose, Denmark, Mangaard emigrated to Canada, as a child, with her family. Mangaard's richly imaged film style is anchored in her studies between 1976-80 at the Ontario College of Art where she earned an honours degree in painting and printmaking.

Her films have shown at festivals around the world including: The Experimental Film Coalition in Chicago, The Collective for Living Cinema in New York, the SESC de Pompeia in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Ozfun Australian Tour, The Ann Arbour Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, Vancouver Film Festival, San Francisco Film Festival, Asolo Arts Film Festival, Italy, and the Kino Arsenal Cinematheque in Berlin.

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E. JANE THOMPSON **Toronto, ON**

E. Jane Thompson is an award-winning director with over fifty hours of dramatic television series, an MOW, and two short films to her credit. She has guided many actors to Gemini nominated and Award-winning performances and has herself won two Gemini Awards.

Born in Montreal, Jane studied film with Peter Harcourt and graduated from Queen's University with an Honours B.A. She got her start in the industry in Calgary and Winnipeg editing commercials, industrial films, and a documentary for the NFB. She also produced, picking up a Silver Plaque in the Local Television category from the Chicago International Film Festival for *BEGINNINGS*, a documentary that followed a Winnipeg choir to Israel to trace the roots of the Christmas story.

With her move to Toronto, she continued to work in post-production as she embarked on a self-directed program to learn to direct drama. She studied in Maruska Stankova's intensive Acting, Writing and Directing Workshop, audited acting classes with Kurt Reiss. Her long connection with NSI – Canada started with director training in Drama Lab, a six month program in association with the University of Alberta Drama Department and the NFB.

Jane's directing career began with *AT THE LAKE*, a short film which Jane also wrote and co-produced. Broadcast to critical acclaim, it won prizes at film festivals throughout North America. Her second short, the period drama *LETTER FROM FRANCIS*, won a Gemini Award for Best Short Dramatic Program.

Jane has directed episodes of many Canadian prime time dramas including *Cold Squad*, *The Associates*, and *Traders*; the romantic comedy *Nothing Too Good for a Cowboy*; *'da Kink in my Hair*; family dramas *My Life as a Dog* and *Caitlin's Way*; and youth dramas *Ready or Not*, *Edgemont*, and *Madison*. She directed forty-six episodes of the breakthrough improv dramedy, *Train 48*.

At her first casting session, Jane was startled by the realization of how very little she knew of the acting talent in Canada. She has since developed a love for theatre and remains committed to frequently seeing Canadian actors perform on stage. She also travels often to London and New York City to binge on plays. Her passion for theatre has fueled Jane's yearning to direct long form drama. In 2007, Jane was selected to participate in NSI's Features First program.

Currently, through her production company Cabiria Pictures Inc. and with producing partner Dan Bekerman, Thompson is developing three feature films: *MATHILDE*; *THE BERLINGER COMPLEX* with executive producer Jennifer Jonas of New Real Films; and *WILD MOUTH* with executive producer Phyllis Laing of Buffalo Gal Pictures.

A founder of WIFT-T, she is consultant to NSI's Drama Prize Program. Jane lives in Toronto with her partner Fred Brennan in a small Victorian house that backs onto a verdant if occasionally neglected garden. She retreats to a lakeside paradise near Perth, Ontario whenever she possibly can.

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ADA VAUGHAN **Toronto, ON**

Ada Vaughan is best known as the founder of SableFilms in 2007. Her passion for film and making movies about the passions of women, has resulted in the production of five short films with increasingly complex themes. Each has also required greater skills from the cast and crew. It also enabled Ada to develop her skills in writing, producing and directing.

The shorts include: 'If Only...' about misunderstanding, 'The Assault' about fear, 'The Tease' and 'The Dawning,' about love from unlikely sources. 'Fantasy745', is about giving up a memory and moving on.

SableFilm's work has been shown in numerous film festivals throughout the world, and received many accolades. In 2007, she was named as one of the emerging 20 at ReelWorld Film Festival in Toronto, Ontario. In 2009, she won the Bronze Remi at WorldFest Film Festival in Houston, Texas.

Ada's education began with a B.A. at the U. of T. in Film Studies and various film courses at Ryerson U. These were complimented by numerous workshops and courses at Women In Film and Television, Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto, Canadian Screen Training Centre, and Hart House Film Board.

Present projects include 3 feature films in development: 'Suki', a tragic story about passion set in a Kabuki theatre; 'Crystal', a sci-fi about the survival in a waterless world; and 'Marco, about child prostitution and exploitation. Ada is also executive producer on a pair of short films, 'The Competition' and 'Waiting for Dorothy,' and an adviser on the feature, 'Waiting for Summer.'

As the accolades roll in on Ada's films, she continues to develop larger and more provocative projects that will be entertaining audiences around the world for decades.