



WGC SCREENWRITING AWARDS 2020

CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS

WGC SCREENWRITING AWARDS 2020

APRIL 27, 2020

HOSTED BY GAVIN CRAWFORD • WRITTEN BY KYLE TINGLEY

THE PRESENTATION WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE
WGC'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL AT 8:00 PM ET

CHILDREN'S

Jennifer Daley, Tim McKeon, Andrew Orenstein, Jeff Sager,
Ashley Spires, Mark Steinberg, John van Bruggen

COMEDY SERIES

Jann Arden, Diana Frances, Jennica Harper, Daniel Levy,
Mike McPhaden, David West Read

DOCUMENTARY

Nance Ackerman, Teresa MacInnes, Michael McNamara,
Ariella Pahlke, Robert Sandler, John Walker

DRAMA SERIES

Seneca Aaron, Noelle Carbone, Ken Kabatoff, Vivian Lin,
Simon McNabb, Derek Robertson

FEATURE FILM

Katherine Collins, Wilson Coneybeare, Adriana Maggs,
Jane Maggs, Laura Phillips, Thom Richardson

MOW & MINISERIES

David Elver, Andrea Stevens

PRESCHOOL

Jennifer Daley, Rob Hoegge, J.J. Johnson, Amish Patel,
Andrew Sabiston, Christin Simms

SHORTS & WEBSERIES

Carmen Albano, Hannah Cheesman, Fabrizio Filippo,
Joe Kicak, Darrin Rose

TWEENS & TEENS

Cole Bastedo, Emma Campbell, Sarah Glinski,
Jesse Shamata, Courtney Jane Walker



Writers Guild of Canada

WGC SCREENWRITING AWARDS 2020

CELEBRATING CANADA'S SCREENWRITERS

The 24th Annual WGC Screenwriting Awards will go down in history as the first virtual edition of our awards. We continue to celebrate Canada's talented screenwriters and the outstanding scripts they write – just not on stage at Koerner Hall until April 26, 2021. And we want to take this opportunity to congratulate our nominees and winners on their achievements this year, regardless of venue. We'll also be presenting special awards, including the Sondra Kelly Award, the Alex Barris Mentorship Award and the WGC Showrunner Award.

The full presentation of this year's winners will be available on the Guild's YouTube channel. This year's WGC Screenwriting Awards categories are:

CHILDREN'S

COMEDY SERIES

DOCUMENTARY

DRAMA SERIES

FEATURE FILM

MOW & MINISERIES

PRESCHOOL

SHORTS & WEBSERIES

TWEENS & TEENS

Congratulations to our 2020 finalists and special awards winners!

We'd also like to thank Gavin Crawford, Kyle Tingley and Filip Vukcevic for making this year's presentation possible.



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



THE FINALISTS

CHILDREN'S

Corn & Peg, "To Taste or Not to Taste"

Written by **Jennifer Daley**

Cupcake & Dino: General Services, "Big City: The Documentary"

Written by **Jeff Sager**

Ghostwriter, "Ghost in Wonderland, Part 1"

Written by **Andrew Orenstein**

Hotel Transylvania: The Series, "Better Know Your Mavis"

Written by **Mark Steinberg**

The Most Magnificent Thing

Story by **Ashley Spires** and **John van Bruggen**

Teleplay by **John van Bruggen**

Odd Squad, "Who Is Agent Otis?"

Written by **Tim McKeon**



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



THE FINALISTS

COMEDY SERIES

Corner Gas Animated, "Tag You're I.T."

Written by **Diana Frances**

JANN, "The Big House"

Story by **Jann Arden & Jennica Harper**

Teleplay by **Jennica Harper**

JANN, "Weeknd at Charley's"

Written by **Mike McPhaden**

Schitt's Creek, "Love Letters"

Written by **David West Read**

Schitt's Creek, "Meet the Parents"

Written by **Daniel Levy**

DOCUMENTARY

Assholes: A Theory

Written by **John Walker & Robert Sandler**

Conviction

Written by **Nance Ackerman & Ariella Pahlke &**

Teresa MacInnes

Pugly: A Pug's Life

Written by **Michael McNamara**



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



THE FINALISTS

DRAMA SERIES

Coroner, "All's Well"

Written by **Noelle Carbone**

Coroner, "Confetti Heart"

Written by **Seneca Aaron**

Killjoys, "Three Killjoys and a Lady"

Written by **Vivian Lin & Derek Robertson**

Murdoch Mysteries, "Sins of the Father"

Written by **Simon McNabb**

Travelers, "Archive"

Written by **Ken Kabatoff**

FEATURE FILM

American Hangman

Written by **Wilson Coneybeare**

Goalie

Written by **Adriana Maggs & Jane Maggs**

Justice Dot Net

Written by **Thom Richardson**

Riot Girls

Written by **Katherine Collins**

Sweetness in the Belly

Written by **Laura Phillips**



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



THE FINALISTS

MOW & MINISERIES

Christmas Jars

Written by **Andrea Stevens**

Thicker Than Water

Written by **David Elver & Andrea Stevens**

PRESCHOOL

Abby Hatcher, "When Abby Met Bozzly"

Written by **Rob Hoegge**

Dino Dana, "Dino Flyer"

Written by **J.J. Johnson**

Dino Dana, "Dino Prints"

Written by **J.J. Johnson & Christin Simms & Amish Patel**

The Remarkable Mr. King, "Mr. King's Quiet Time"

Written by **Andrew Sabiston**

Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum, "I Am Johann Sebastian Bach"

Written by **Jennifer Daley**



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



THE FINALISTS

SHORTS & WEBSERIES

The AfterLifetime of Colm Feore

Written by **Hannah Cheesman**

Detention Adventure, "The Catalyst"

Written by **Joe Kicak & Carmen Albano**

One Last Last Heist

Written by **Darrin Rose**

Save Me, "Birdie's End"

Written by **Fabrizio Filippo**

TWEENS & TEENS

Bajillionaires, "Corporate Retreat"

Written by **Jesse Shamata**

Creeped Out, "The Takedown"

Written by **Emma Campbell**

Holly Hobbie, "The Dauntless Daughter"

Written by **Cole Bastedo**

Holly Hobbie, "The Salty Songstress"

Written by **Sarah Glinski**


Holly Hobbie, "A Whole New Holly"

Written by **Courtney Jane Walker**



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS





Bell Media applauds all
Nominees and Winners of
the Writers Guild of Canada
Screenwriting Awards

Congratulations

Jann Arden
Jennica Harper
Diana Frances
Mike McPhaden
Vivian Lin
& Derek Robertson
on your nominations.

BellMedia

We hope everyone is staying safe and healthy.

WRITERS IN PROFILE



Seneca Aaron

Seneca Aaron is a writer and producer from Toronto, Canada. Since writing feature film, *Hello October*, he has written for the CBC original drama *Coroner*, as well as *21 Thunder* and Global original series, *Nurses*. Seneca is a passionate storyteller with projects for both TV and film ongoing, and he continues to work with his peers to carry on the advancement of diversity in the arts across Canada and the industry as a whole.



Nance Ackerman

After 30 years as an international documentary photojournalist for the *Montreal Gazette*, *TIME*, *Canadian Geographic* and *The Globe and Mail*, Nance Ackerman turned her sensitive eye to filmmaking. With a uniquely raw intimacy, her films explore such issues as drug addiction, child poverty, xenophobia and aging. Her latest film, *Conviction*, is a creative collaboration with women inside Canada's prisons as they envision alternatives to incarceration.



Carmen Albano

Carmen Albano most recently completed production on Season 2 of award-winning series *Detention Adventure* for CBC Kids, which he co-created, co-wrote and co-produced. Carmen has long had a passion for writing, having been a stand-up comedian and recently completing his first novel. Carmen's artistic endeavors also include work in classical and stop-motion animation, illustration for graphic novels and a bachelor degree from OCAD University.



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Jann Arden

Jann Arden is a Canadian born, singer, songwriter, broadcaster and author. She has released 14 albums, winning eight Juno Awards, including Female Artist of the Year and Songwriter of the Year. And in the summer of 2018, Jann embarked on a new artistic challenge. She began shooting six-episode sitcom, *JANN*, which she co-created and headlines. It debuted Mar. 20, 2019 and has since become a national hit, with a second season set to air. Jann is also the proud recipient of a star on Canada's Walk of Fame.



Cole Bastedo

Cole Bastedo was one of Playback's Top Ten to Watch, is a two-time WGC Screenwriting Awards winner, and is currently uncomfortable discussing his staggering, unparalleled achievements. When not in Toronto, Cole spends his time socially isolating in Los Angeles with his award-winning (Playback Top 5 to Watch 2014) wife, Abby Ho, and their award-winning child, Elliot (Cutie-Bum-Bum International Champion 2019 to present).



Emma Campbell

Emma Campbell recently developed *The Ora Chronicles* for Guru Studio. Previously, she was a producer and writer on the new DHX/CBBC series *My Perfect Landing*. She wrote on the hit series *The Next Step* Seasons III, IV, V and VI (Family Channel/CBBC), which was nominated for a 2018 BAFTA Children's Award for Best International Live Action Series, and a 2019 CSA for Best Children's or Youth Fiction Series (nomination as producer). Early in her career, Emma was selected to participate in the CFC's Bell Media Primetime TV Program, as well as the prestigious Bell Media Fellowship.



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Noelle Carbone

Noelle Carbone is a screenwriter, producer and inadvertent activist who has written on hit Canadian TV series *Rookie Blue*, *Saving Hope* and *Coroner*. She is also a writer and co-executive producer of the award-winning series *Cardinal* and *Wynonna Earp*. She is a graduate of the University of Western Ontario, where she mostly just played varsity soccer, and yet somehow still received a BA in Media, Information and Technoculture (whatever that is).



Hannah Cheesman

Hannah Cheesman is a CSA-nominated writer, actor and director, recognized as one of Playback's 5 to Watch and a TIFF Emerging Canadian Filmmaker. Her work spans feature films (*The Definities*), shorts (*Cheese*, *Emmy*, *Brunch Bitch*, *The AfterLifetime of Colm Feore*), television (*Workin' Moms*, *Find Me in Paris*), web (*Whatever*, *Linda*) and commercials. Most recently, Hannah wrote and directed *Opium*, a short film featuring TIFF rising stars Deragh Campbell (*Anne at 13,000 Feet*) and Michaela Kurimsky (*Firecrackers*), to premiere this fall. Currently, she's developing two shows with Bell Media. Next up, Hannah will direct Telefilm-funded feature thriller *The Boathouse* (Circle Blue).



Katherine Collins

A writing graduate of UBC, York, and the CFC, Katherine Collins spent those early years writing while punching the clock at Canada's largest private investigation firm. She went on to write for *Endgame*, *Primeval: New World* and *Motive*. In 2015, Katherine joined the writing staff of NBC's *Blindspot*, worked with Neil Cross to develop *Iris* for Showtime, and is currently a writer and supervising producer on the Netflix series, *Lost in Space*. *Riot Girls* is her first feature.

Photo: Lindsey Brynes



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Wilson Coneybeare

Wilson Coneybeare has written sitcoms, radio dramas, children's adventures, stage plays, feature films, and now, fiction. He has created many television series and run his own children's entertainment company. He is a producer and director, and most recently directed Donald Sutherland in *American Hangman*. Wilson lives in Canada as well as the U.S. and is the father of a lot of kids and has a serious book-collecting problem.



Jennifer Daley

Jennifer Daley grew up on Prince Edward Island, but got her start in Vancouver at a B-movie company, where she cleaned toilets AND wrote an awful supernatural thriller. She used that masterpiece to springboard to a TV career, where she's worked in various genres like primetime comedy, animation, preschool and teens. She lives in Toronto with wife, Melissa, and son, Ollie. Jennifer was previously nominated in 2019 in the Tweens & Teens category.



David Elver

David Elver is a WGC and Canadian Screen Awards-nominated screenwriter whose credits range from one-hour genre drama and MOWs to cult comedy and animation. His past projects include *Thicker Than Water* (Crave/Incendo), *Glint* (IM Global/ProSieben/Muse), *Nerds and Monsters* (YTV/SlapHappy) and *Pirate Express* (Teletoon/Atomic). David is currently based in Vancouver, though he is free to travel, wherever work, or running from the law, may take him.



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Fabrizio Filippo

Fab Filippo is an award-winning actor, screenwriter, playwright and director. Most recently he wrote and directed the critically acclaimed award-winning series *Save Me*, which was nominated for 20 international festival awards and a Webby, alongside *The Daily Show* and *Jimmy Kimmel*. Along with writing for various TV genres, he also co-created and directed half-hour Showcase and ABC hit comedy *Billable Hours*, in which he starred. As a playwright, Fab was most recently nominated for a Dora Award for his play *The Summoned*.



Diana Frances

Diana Frances is a comedy writer from Vancouver who's getting used to calling Toronto home. She's been nominated for two Canadian Screen Awards for *Corner Gas: Animated*. She was thrilled to win the 2017 Sondra Kelly Award for her half-hour series *Given Up* (about her gong-show life with adoption), currently in development with CBC. Diana is an alumni of the CFC Primetime TV Writing Program and an excellent parallel parker.



Sarah Glinski

Sarah Glinski is an Emmy-nominated writer/producer who has made over 200 episodes of TV. She was the executive producer and head writer on *Degrassi* for five years and is currently showrunning *Holly Hobbie*, a series she developed for Hulu and Family Channel. Sarah has been nominated for three Emmys and has won three Canadian Screen Awards. When Sarah is not brainstorming ways to get characters into trouble, she is keeping her two young daughters out of it.



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Jennica Harper

Jennica Harper is the showrunner and co-creator of the comedy series *JANN*, starring Jann Arden (CTV/Crave). She also wrote on *The Order* (Netflix), *Fortunate Son* (CBC), and CTV crime dramas *Cardinal* and *Motive*. Her half-hour credits include multi-cam comedies *Some Assembly Required* and *Mr. Young* (YTV). Jennica has won a WGC Screenwriting Award and been nominated for multiple Canadian Screen Awards. She also writes poetry; her most recent book is *Bounce House* (Anvil Press, 2019). She lives in Vancouver.



Rob Hoeggee

Starting with the original *Teen Titans* for Cartoon Network, Rob has been head writer and story editor on an impressive list of award-winning animated series including *Legion of Super Heroes*, *Storm Hawks*, *Generator Rex*, *Slugterra* and *Thunderbirds are Go*. Rob is the creator and executive producer of *Abby Hatcher* (TVOKids/Nickelodeon), and as writer and executive producer, he won the 2016 Daytime Emmy for Best Animated Program with *Niko and the Sword of Light* for Amazon Studios.



J.J. Johnson

J.J. Johnson is the creative force and founding partner of Sinking Ship Entertainment. He is a three-time Emmy Award-winning executive producer, three-time Emmy-winning director, and Emmy-nominated writer, with international acclaim for more than 15 series and 500 episode credits. He and Sinking Ship Entertainment are globally recognized for such hit series as *Endlings*, *Ghostwriter*, *Annedroids*, *Odd Squad*, *Dino Dan* and *Dino Dana*.



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Ken Kabatoff

Ken Kabatoff has wanted to tell stories in the film & TV industry since he was five years old. First as a director, then as an actor, but eventually he found his passion: Writing. Ken spent eight years working in Vancouver's production service industry learning how to produce big budget genre series like Steven Spielberg's *Falling Skies* before joining the *Travelers* writers' room in 2016.



Joe Kicak

Joe Kicak is an award-winning Toronto-based television director and filmmaker, currently in post-production on the second season of his CSA-nominated series *Detention Adventure* (CBC). Joe is the co-creator, executive producer, writer, director and showrunner of the internationally acclaimed tween adventure series, which recently won Best Original Digital Series at the 2020 Kidscreen Awards. Joe also directed the award-winning shorts *Must Kill Karl* (Austin Film Festival 2018), *Frigid* (Calgary Film Festival 2018) and the NSI Drama Prize short *Distilled Love*.



Daniel Levy

Daniel Levy is an Emmy-nominated showrunner, and a writer, director, producer and actor. He is best known for his work on one of the most beloved shows on television, *Schitt's Creek*, which he co-created with his father Eugene Levy. In 2019, the show earned four Emmy nominations, including Best Comedy Series.



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Vivian Lin

Vivian Lin is a Toronto writer, director and producer. She is currently writing on *Holly Hobbie* (Family Channel/Hulu). Her previous writing credits include *Hudson & Rex* (Citytv), *Killjoys* (SYFY/Space), *Carter* (WGN/Bravo) and *Bajillionaires* (Universal Kids/DHX). She is a recipient of the Telefilm New Voices Award and the Bronze Prize at the Page Awards, and she was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award.



Teresa MacInnes

For more than 30 years, Teresa MacInnes's films have tackled some of the most crucial social justice issues of our time. She has won numerous awards and her films have screened at Hot Docs, VIFF, Margaret Mead, IDA, Barcelona, NY and Thessaloniki. In 2014, her documentary *Buying Sex* was named one of the top 10 feminist films streaming on Netflix by *MS Magazine* and her short film, *Mabel*, won the prestigious 2017 Banff Rockie Award for best Social/Political Documentary. Her last feature collaboration, *Conviction*, had a successful festival run before airing on the Documentary Channel, and her latest nature film, *Seals of Sable*, recently aired on CBC's *Nature of Things*.



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Adriana Maggs

Adriana Maggs wrote and directed *Grown Up Movie Star* (2010), which won breakout performance at Sundance, the Bird's Eye Film Festival Best First Feature in London, England. She wrote *The Wilkinsons* (CMT) and co-created/exec produced *Three Chords from the Truth* (CMT). She has also worked on *Call Me Fitz* (HBO Canada/Direct TV), *Saving Hope* (IFC/CTV/Ion), *Rookie Blue* (IFC/Shaw/ABC), *Aftermath* (Halfire/SYFY/Space), *Frontier* (Take the Shot/Netflix/Discovery), *Frankie Drake* (Shaftesbury/CBC), *Caught* (Take the Shot/CBC), *Little Dog* (Cameron Pictures/Take the Shot/CBC) and *Lady Dicks*, airing on CBC this year.



Jane Maggs

Jane Maggs, a CFC grad, is a writer who co-created and served as co-showrunner and executive producer on the series *Bellevue* (CBC/WGN America) starring Anna Paquin. Jane has written for *Anne With An "E"* (Netflix/CBC), *Mary Kills People* (Global) and *Little Dog* (CBC). Jane co-wrote the film *Goalie* (Blue Ice Pictures) with sister Adriana and is currently a writer/supervising producer on the U.S. drama *The Man Who Fell to Earth*, created by Alex Kurtzman and Jenny Lumet. She's reped by Harrison Artist Management in Canada and UTA and Industry Management in the States.



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Tim McKeon

Tim McKeon has been writing and producing kids TV for more than 15 years and has the lack of hair to show for it. Tim co-created and is executive producer of *Odd Squad*. Tim is also creator and showrunner for the Sesame Workshop/Apple TV+ series *Helpsters*. Other writing credits include Netflix's *Hilda*, Disney's *Gravity Falls*, and Cartoon Network's *Adventure Time*. In his spare time, Tim enjoys swimming and eating pie, but never at the same time.



Simon McNabb

Simon McNabb is co-executive producer of CBC's *Murdoch Mysteries*, where he is in his eighth season. His first feature, *Next Year For Sure*, is in development.



Michael McNamara

Michael McNamara is a Toronto-based filmmaker, screenwriter and director. In February 2002, he launched Markham Street Films with his partner Judy Holm, specializing in documentary and narrative projects that are edgy, smart, provocative and funny. He has written and directed more than 60 hours of award-winning film and television including *Celtic Soul*, *Pass the Salt*, *Catwalk* (with Aaron Hancox) and *Acquainted with the Night*.



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Mike McPhaden

Mike McPhaden started out as a playwright and actor before attending the CFC's Bell Media Prime Time TV Program. His credits include comedy for adults, teens and kids, including: *JANN*, *Seed*, *Spun Out*, *Men With Brooms*, *Insecurity*, *How to Be Indie*, *Inspector Gadget*, *Go Away Unicorn!* and *Magic School Bus: Rides Again*. Mike was nominated for two WGC Screenwriting Awards for TV movies *This Can't Be Happening at MacDonald Hall* (with Adam Barken) and *The Wizzle War*.



Andrew Orenstein

Born in Toronto, Andrew Orenstein has written and/or produced over 500 episodes of television. His first break came when he was hired to work on the hit series *3rd Rock from the Sun*. Other series he's written for include *Malcolm in the Middle* and *Everybody Hates Chris*. Mr. Orenstein also created the sitcom *Package Deal* for Citytv and *Just Add Magic: Mystery City* for Amazon Studios. Most recently he co-created *Ghostwriter*, for Apple+ TV.



Ariella Pahlke

Ariella Pahlke is an award-winning documentary filmmaker, media artist, curator, and educator living in Terence Bay, Nova Scotia. For the past 25 years, she's directed, written and produced feature documentaries, shorts, installations, and media projects that have screened around the world. With a background in philosophy, Ariella is a keen observer who is not afraid to ask tough questions. She has extensive experience writing and facilitating collaborative projects, and participatory process is at the heart of her documentary approach.

Photo: Wiebke Schröder



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Amish Patel

Amish Patel's life began as a classic fish out of water tale. From a young age he gained perspectives on both Indian and Canadian cultures and learned to deal with discrimination and xenophobia through humour. Amish loved comedy from day one, but he still obtained an Aerospace Engineering degree. After literally becoming a rocket scientist, he made up for lost time in comedy by writing and producing his own sketch comedy show called *Fade to Brown*. He then focused his attention on stand-up comedy and his online presence, building a loyal online following and racking up hundreds of thousands of views and becoming the host of Second City's Diversity Night. And Amish knows how airplanes work. Did we cover that? Great!



Laura Phillips

Laura Phillips became obsessed with adaptation, dramatizing the non-fiction bestseller, *None is Too Many*. Other adaptations include the novel *Fall on Your Knees*, British mysteries *Sacred Hearts* and *Mistress of the Art of Death*, and TV series *Nancy Drew* and *Jake and the Kid*. She's written for *Murdoch Mysteries* and the U.K.'s *As If* and *Peak Practice*. Laura's writing career began with Jim Henson for whom she wrote *Fraggle Rock*, *The Christmas Toy* and a version of *Labyrinth* that lives online in screenplay heaven.



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



WRITERS IN PROFILE



David West Read

David West Read is a writer and executive producer for the TV series *Schitt's Creek*. He is also the author of *& Juliet*, a new musical currently running in London's West End. The show has been nominated for nine Olivier Awards, including Best New Musical, and will receive its North American premiere in Toronto in February 2021. Other work includes: *The Performers* (Broadway), *The Dream of the Burning Boy* (Off-Broadway). Training: NYU, The Juilliard School.



Thom Richardson

Thom Richardson has worked with many of the finest Canadian film directors and producers, as a writer and creative partner. He's written feature films, TV miniseries and MOVs for Canadian, American and European producers and networks. Lyla Films and Iris Productions produced Thom's feature film, *Justice Dot Net*, released in 2019, and Incendo Productions produced the TV movies *Early Release* and *Sleeper* in 2016 and 2017.



Derek Robertson

Derek Robertson served as Executive Story Editor on *Killjoys* season five, where he was nominated for the episode he co-wrote with Vivian Lin, "Three Killjoys and a Lady." It marked his fourth season in the writing room of the series. Previously, Derek worked on *The Bold Type*, *A Simple Favor*, *The Kennedy's: After Camelot* and HBO's *Lewis and Clark*. He is currently developing a medical drama with Darius Films.



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Darrin Rose

Darrin Rose is a television writer and a writer/director of award-winning short films. His short film *One Last Last Heist* was an official selection of the Tribeca Film Festival. He wrote on the CBS sitcom *Happy Together*, starring Damon Wayans Jr., and on the shows *Mr. D*, *Spun Out* and *Still Standing*. He recently started a production company to develop comedy projects. He won a WGC Screenwriting Award in 2012. This is his fourth nomination.



Andrew Sabiston

Andrew Sabiston has been in children's television since his teens when he starred in the Nelvana-CBC-Disney series *The Edison Twins*. His development, story editing and writing experience includes *The Remarkable Mr. King*, three seasons of *Ranger Rob*, the Juno-nominated *Moblees* and the 2019 International Emmy-nominated *Super Wings*. A CSA writing nominee, he's also had multiple works in the YMA Awards of Excellence. His stage musical for grown-ups, *Napoleon*, has played in five countries and been translated into three languages.



Jeff Sager

After appearing on the soap opera *General Hospital*, Jeff Sager gained recognition as a member of the Brat Pack with roles in *Blame It on Rio* (1984), *St. Elmo's Fire* (1985) and *About Last Night...* (1986). His starring role in *Ghost* (1990), the highest-grossing film of that year, earned him a Golden Globe nomination. With further box-office success in the 1990s, this is shockingly his first WGC Screenwriting Award nomination. He's professionally known as Demi Moore (/də'mi/də-MEE).



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Robert Sandler

Robert Sandler has worked in television for many, many years. After two decades helping his own company, Creative Anarchy, Robert accepted a gig just as a co-writer with John Walker. Thanks to John's exceptional talent, he now has his first nomination as a writer. Robert used to joke that the best people never get nominated. Who knows what he'll have to recant if they win?



Jesse Shamata

Jesse Shamata is a versatile and collaborative writer/director currently developing the scripted, single-camera comedy *Feltworth* for Crave, and the gothic sci-fi family thriller series, *The Woods* for WildBrain. Jesse recently wrote and directed the single-camera comedy *Bajillionaires* for Universal Kids/Family Channel and created/showran the kids genre-bending International Emmy-nominated series *Gaming Show (In My Parents Garage)*. In 2019, Jesse was awarded the DGC Short Film Fund for *A Simple F*cking Gesture*, which is hitting the festival circuit in 2020. His short films have screened at festivals internationally, including the prestigious New Directors/New Films at New York's MoMA and Lincoln Center, as well as Palm Springs, Clermont Ferrand, Milan, Vancouver, London and JFL.



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Christin Simms

Christin Simms is an Emmy-winning producer and Emmy-nominated writer. She has worked across multiple genres on projects such as *Captain Flamingo*, *Producing Parker*, *Annedroids*, *Dino Dana*, *Endlings* and *Ghostwriter*. Christin is a recipient of a Canadian Screenwriting Award, the YMA's Emerging Talent Award and made Playback's Top Ten to Watch list. She enjoys good stories that defy gender stereotypes and being a proud member of the WGC's Diversity Committee.



Ashley Spires

Ashley Spires is the celebrated author and/or illustrator of nearly 30 children's picture books and graphic novels, including *Small Saul*, which was given to half-a-million Canadian elementary students through a national Grade One Book Giveaway program. Her bestselling book *The Most Magnificent Thing* has been translated into 19 languages, and was adapted into an award-winning animated short, and her *Binky the Space Cat* graphic novel series is now an animated TV show seen around the world. Ashley lives in Delta, B.C.



Mark Steinberg

Seventy-five words is not an insignificant number of words, especially when you are trying to stall and fill the space, and you realize you are probably not even halfway there – at best. Mark is a writer, story editor and baseball coach. This must be close to 50, which I think is more than fair.

Photo: Ryan MacDonald



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



WRITERS IN PROFILE



Andrea Stevens

Andrea Stevens has had a long career in scripted television writing including for *Charmed*, *Flashpoint* and *Continuum*, as well as on some lighter series for the Hallmark Channel. In recent years, Andrea has focused primarily on writing TV movies, including *Christmas Connection* (Hallmark Channel), *Christmas Jars* (Muse Entertainment) and co-writing *Thicker than Water* (Incendo Productions) with David Elver for which they just received a Canadian Screen Award nomination.



John van Bruggen

Fresh from art college, John got caught up in the madcap world of television animation, directing series such as *Beetlejuice*, *Franklin* and Jim Henson's *Dog City*. He soon tired of bossing people around, and so chose the solitary life of a writer instead. Twice-nominated for Gemini Awards in screenwriting, John is currently executive story editor on *Brave Bunnies*, a super-cute animated series produced by Glowberry in Ukraine.



Courtney Jane Walker

Courtney Jane Walker started her television career sitting in courtrooms as a researcher for the CBC drama *This is Wonderland*. Her other credits include *The Line*, *Living in Your Car*, *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, *Degrassi: Next Class*, *Holly Hobbie* and *Utopia Falls*. She is committed to making TV that she'd be okay with her daughters watching when they're teenagers. She can currently be found washing her hands.



WRITERS IN PROFILE



John Walker

John Walker is one of Canada's most prolific documentary filmmakers. He has won international acclaim for his films that are personal, lyrical and express a deep understanding of the human condition. They have been widely broadcast and have appeared at major international film festivals from Toronto to Tokyo. His passionate commitment to the documentary form led him to co-found the Documentary Organization of Canada. In 2018, he was honoured with a Hot Docs Focus On Retrospective.



SPECIAL AWARDS



THE SONDRA KELLY AWARD

Presented to Cynthia Knight

This award honours the memory of Sondra Kelly, who served on the WGC council from 1997 to 2003. She was the first writer's voice on the Actra Fraternal Benefits Society (AFBS) board (1998-2003), and AFBS is the proud sponsor of this award, providing the monetary prize. Her career as a screenwriter included developing her own projects and advocating for other women writers to do the same. This award reflects Sondra's dedication by helping to advance the work of a woman screenwriter who is undertaking a self-initiated project.

The WGC is pleased to name Cynthia Knight as 2020's recipient of the Sondra Kelly Award. Her project, *STEPMoms*, is a half-hour dramedy that explores the role of stepmother in a way that's not quite been done before. The series focuses on women who live in the in between – they're not mothers and they're not NOT mothers. And they have to navigate the strange, complex, often gratifying – and way more often, awkward and excruciating – world of stepmotherhood. The long overdue story of the joys and heartbreaks of being a stepmother focuses on a new kind of family that's not defined by our genes, but by who loves and takes care of us.

Cynthia is the co-creator and showrunner of *Mohawk Girls*. The Sondra Kelly Award prize will help her flesh out the pilot script for *STEPMoms*.



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



SPECIAL AWARDS



THE ALEX BARRIS MENTORSHIP AWARD

Presented to Nathalie Younglai

Alex Barris was a writer, broadcaster and journalist, a pioneer of Canadian television, and proud member of the WGC. He was also a wonderful mentor, giving his time and talent to new writers who were just getting started in the industry. The Alex Barris Mentorship Award was created after his death in 2004, to keep his name and spirit alive and to perpetuate the tradition of mentorship.

Granted biennially, the award acknowledges a mentor who has significantly helped a writer (or writers) get a start in the business. And the Guild is pleased to name Nathalie Younglai as its 2020 recipient.

She's recognized by her nominators as the "Godmentor of the new generation of Writers of Colour." Her tireless work in founding BIPOC Film & TV in 2012 and then advancing the only organization dedicated to providing safe spaces for all Black, Indigenous and People of Colour in the industry, has been invaluable for new talent looking to grow their careers.

Nathalie was also instrumental in the formation of the WGC's Diversity Committee and its Script of the Month program. As one of her nominators noted, "Whenever she can help, she does. Whenever she can shine a light on a new writer, she does. Whenever she can help our industry get better, she does."

As a screenwriter, she is currently a writer and co-producer on CBC's *Coroner*, and has written for *Dino Dana* and *16 Hudson*, to name a few. Nathalie is also the 2020 recipient of the Canadian Screen Awards Humanitarian Award.



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



SPECIAL AWARDS



THE WGC SHOWRUNNER AWARD

Presented to Dennis Heaton

More than just your Guild president, Dennis Heaton is also more than deserving of recognition for his day job as a showrunner. The Guild is proud to name him the recipient of the 2020 WGC Showrunner Award. From his first writing job on animated series *The Brothers Grunt*, to writer/producer roles on series such as *jPod*, *The Listener*, *Call Me Fitz* and *Ghost Wars*, to his turns as showrunner of *Motive* and *The Order*, Dennis has built his career on his outstanding skills as a writer and leader. As one of his nominators noted, "He's an amazing showrunner. And I am fussy about that shit. But he really does tick all the boxes."

He's been lauded for his writing abilities, as the author of funny, original and surprising work, and his clarity of vision that always delivers a unique series. And then there's his generosity and integrity. More than one nominator mentioned Dennis's drive to open the door to new writers and voices and mentor them.

As another nominator said, "Dennis Heaton is a showrunner who leads by example. He gives the gift of support, encouragement, and selfless guidance to any and every writer on his team. It's this kind of care that creates a family environment on a Dennis Heaton show."

And it's for these reasons, and many more, that the WGC is more than pleased to have Dennis join the family of WGC Showrunner Award winners. Congratulations Dennis!



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



SPONSORS

The WGC would like to give a special thank you to our sponsors that committed to support the WGC Screenwriting Awards prior to the ceremony's cancellation.

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THE JURY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The WGC thanks everyone who helped make the 2020 WGC Screenwriting Awards possible.

WGC Screenwriting Awards Committee

Anne-Marie Perrotta (Chair), Michael Amo, Mark Ellis, Marsha Greene, Dennis Heaton, Alex Levine, Andrew Wreggitt

WGC Screenwriting Awards and Special Awards Juries

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THE JURY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

And...

Host — Gavin Crawford, **Writers** — Gavin Crawford and Kyle Tingley; **Editing** - Filip Vukcevic; **Event Consultant** — Jeff Dinan; **Graphic Design** — Nancy Reid; **Sponsorship** — Nardina Grande/ARC Communications *in association with* Mireille Watson; **Statues** — MST Bronze Limited; **Awards Coordinators** — Lana Castleman, Tannis Stewart, Tamara Van Bakel, **WGC Executive Director** — Maureen Parker, **WGC President** — Dennis Heaton, **WGC Council Members** — Michael Amo, Mark Ellis, Marsha Greene, Alex Levine, Anne-Marie Perrotta, and Andrew Wreggitt; and all the **WGC staff**.

And a big shout-out to Deluxe Toronto Ltd. and TELUS Centre for Performance and Learning, Koerner Hall for their flexibility in helping us maneuver these difficult times! And thank you to all the sponsors that had committed to supporting the 2020 WGC Screenwriting Awards — we look forward to seeing you at our 25th Anniversary Celebration in 2021!



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



IN MEMORIAM

We remember the WGC members who have left us in this past year.

Graham Clegg

Writer, producer

Murdoch Mysteries, Cold Squad, Traders, Godiva's, ReGenesis

Andrew Angus Dalrymple

Writer

What's New?, Stereo Morning, A Quiet Day in Belfast (play), CBC News (News Editor)

Dorothy C. Fontana

Writer, producer

Gene Roddenberry's Earth: Final Conflict, Lonesome Dove II: The Outlaw Years, Star Trek

John Kastner

Writer, filmmaker

NCR: Not Criminally Responsible, Monster in the Family, Life With Murder, Out of Mind, Out of Sight

Leon Marr

Writer, director

Dancing in the Dark, The Second Time Around

Bruce Martin

Writer

The Nature of Things, Body Parts, Night Heat, Once a Thief: The Series

Peg McKelvey

Writer

Mr. Dressup, Fred Penner's Place

Desmond Cyril Scott

Writer, director, actor

Sound Reviews, Nightcap, Celebration, Vanishing Point, Startime

Munroe Scott

Writer, director

The Tenth Decade: End of an Era, Spectrum: 16 Days to Timbuktu, First Person Singular: Pearson – The Memoirs of a Prime Minister

Alf Silver

Writer

Clean Sweep, Rebel Angels of Song

Joe Wiesenfeld

Writer, producer

Anne of Green Gables, St. Urbain's Horseman, Booky Makes Her Mark, Boys and Girls



CELEBRATING CANADIAN SCREENWRITERS



See you next year!
April 26, 2021
Koerner Hall



Writers Guild of Canada