A History of the Directors Guild of Canada

(from a series of articles that appeared in the DGC Newsletter, written by Tonia Addison)

THE PIONEERS

A DGC History: 1962-1972

pi·o·neer (*pi`o*neer*") n. 1.One who ventures into unknown or unclaimed territory to settle. 2.One who opens up new areas of thought, research, or development: a pioneer in aviation. 3.A soldier who performs construction and demolition work in the field to facilitate troop movements. 4.Ecology. An animal or plant species that establishes itself in a previously barren environment.

Diefenbaker. JFK. Jackiemania. Beatlemania. Marshall McLuhan. Lester B. Pearson. The Centennial. Pierre Berton. Trudeaumania. The Guess Who. The Vietnam War. Anti-war protests. The Quiet Revolution. Gordie Howe. Robertson Davies, the Centennial, Expo '67, the Trans-Canada Highway, Leonard Cohen, IMAX...These were the bookends of a 1960s Canada. Names, titles and events that would set the framework of a rather turbulent period for the nation's identity. A nation largely populated by a new generation of immigrants that in subsequent decades would transform Canadian society. These were unquestionably political times. The possibilities were endless.

Perhaps the most powerful vehicles that exhibit and preserve a nation's identity for the generations that follow, are its artistic and cultural offerings. They demonstrate who we are as a people – our politics, customs, loyalties and values. Film and television was a perfect place to exercise all of these things. In producing entertainment, this industry was producing testaments of a time. The Americans were doing it – they were building a library of Citizen Kanes and I Love Lucys. In comparison, Canada had... ambivalence.

Here, rules were non-existent. Alliances were few. Hollywood North was a zygote, feeding gingerly off the brilliant reputation of the NFB along with the prolific birth of CBC television nine years earlier. In 1961 the Canadian film and television industry was made up of several fragmented populations of craftspeople - directors, producers, editors and camera operators among others. Some were contained by the public sector, others stood outside of it. Those on the outside were struggling to solidify a steady career. The independents would regularly face the cold shoulder of established American crews to the south, and often be excluded by the CBC at home.

It was without question, an extremely difficult time to be a filmmaker in Canada. No one had faith in the capabilities of directors working in the private sector despite their production of quality dramatic and industrial documentaries for years. Heading into the 60's if you wanted to be a filmmaker in Canada there were only two places to turn for work – the NFB, who rarely turned to outside people and the CBC, who used outside people even less. 1961 marked the birth of a second national network, CTV. It helped a great deal in terms of opportunity, but financially, the network just didn't have any money yet. For a filmmaker at the precipice of developing a career, the options had to be surveyed carefully.

But what other options were there? They could go south or sovereign – to the U.S. or England where opportunities were more fruitful. It was either that, or accept the crumbs being offered here at home. The independent filmmaker couldn't make a living this way. It was too hard, too frustrating. Something had to change. That November, something did. The independents became a collective.

It began with Don Haldane. An Albertan who had made a home for himself in New York, Haldane spent most of the 50s traveling and working extensively throughout Canada with the NFB. During this time, he joined the Directors Guild of New York, a largely intellectual organization whose many members gathered regularly to view each other's work. At the time, it was considered undignified for directors to be involved in discussions of establishing a pay structure and better working conditions, though several members of the Guild argued that they should. " Shortly after this we discovered that cameramen were making $125 per day while directors made $75. We decided that was even more undignified." To address this immediate concern of pay equity, Haldane along with four other DGNY members founded a new guild, the Screen Directors International Guild (SDIG). Within weeks, the majority of remaining DGNY members had joined them and helped establish locals in Chicago and Dallas.

When the NFB asked Haldane to direct the pilot of the TV series *Jake and the Kid*, he agreed, on the condition that he be paid his salary of $125 per day. They refused. Fortunately for Haldane, W.O. Mitchell refused to undertake the task of writing the series without him. Mitchell insisted on Haldane and the NFB gave in, landing the director back in Canada.

The CBC would later cancel the series, infuriating both Haldane and Mitchell. That was only the beginning of many problems Haldane faced upon returning to Canada. "Starvation led me to start my own company. I really did want to do entertainment films when I came back to Canada but I ran up against a brick wall. There was just nothing here. The reaction was terrible," Haldane recalls. Hoping for a more prosperous future, he and his first wife, Lee Gordon, established Westminster Films whose primary base was industrial film projects.

It was around this time that Haldane was approached by George L. George, the Secretary Treasurer of the SDIG. George wanted to expand the Guild by establishing a regional office in Canada and was hoping for Haldane's assistance. Armed with a breadth of experience with the NFB, along with a fair amount of time spent working in the United States, Haldane felt ready to assist in the undertaking.

On November 16, 1961 a group of 18 directors assembled into the screening room of Haldane's Westminster Films at 5 Balmuto Street, for the first meeting of a prospective Canadian chapter of the SDIG. In attendance were Robert Anderson, Syd Banks, Bob Barclay, Allen Cullimore, Clarke Daprato, John Foster, Lee Gordon, Don Haldane, T. Knight, Roy Krost, David Lanstroth, Jack Lingeman, Dean Petersen, Gerry Richardson, Bob Rose, Jim Swackhammer, Mel Turner and Don Wilder. George was there to address the group, with an offer of $5000 backing to help get the branch off the ground. Syd Banks, a director and producer of commercials and variety programs, was the first to rise with a point of dissention. " If this organization is going to be just another local of a goddamn American union – I don't want any part of it!"

By expressing this, the spirited Banks achieved two things. He expressed his commitment to investigating problems within the Canadian film and television industry, thus becoming the first elected president of the Screen Directors Guild of Canada (SDGC). Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, he ushered this new Canadian guild away from a looming power struggle between the SDIG and DGA south of the border. "I d been through it so many times. Not that I was being anti-American, but I was being pro-Canadian. I had many friends in the American film industry. It was nothing to do with patriotism – these were practical things. The whole idea of the SDIG was fine, but it wasn't right. They were very kind to us but they were having their own problems with the DGA. I just didn't see us getting involved in that situation. No way." Banks reflects.

The DGA, a large and powerful union on the west coast sought to expand their jurisdiction eastward and into the north, where the SDIG had already solidified itself. While the two duked it out, this new Canadian guild held their inaugural meeting at the Westbury Hotel in Toronto, March 16, 1962.

The SDGC had a lot of work ahead of them if they wanted to prove that they were serious about organizing and lobbying for the change they needed. Banks remembers their motivations. "Our goal was to build the strength of the collective, set pay structures, protect the directors from being shoved aside, and also, to try to stop the influx of American collectives." They were simple goals that involved going up against complex layers of bureaucracy and at times, what was viewed by the Guild as a blanket of ignorance that covered those who officiated over their profession.

The group set to work immediately. They deliberated over the details of a constitution, eventually dropping the word "Screen" from its name in the hopes of one day including stage and art directors in their membership. With that agreed upon, the DGC was free to tackle the issue of a pay structure. As the late George Gorman (1966 DGC President) once stated in his description of their early years, " The paramount task of the Guild Executive that first year was to establish a schedule of rates of pay and working conditions which would form the basis of an agreement that the Guild was determined to sign with all the producers in the Toronto-Montreal-Ottawa triangle." When these figures were settled, Gorman also noted "this marked the first time that minimum rates of pay had been promulgated for freelance directors in Canada."

With their second year underway, Don Haldane was elected president and their attention was directed towards implementing the rules they had set out to govern the working conditions of directors. This, in tandem with their pay structure would form the DGC's Basic Agreement for producers. Working out of the DGC headquarters (Haldane's Balmuto

Street office), the Guild began collecting dues and accumulating members. They were slowly creating order and with some of the initial bureaucracy taken care of, began to lobby the government. "I wanted the bloody government to begin putting up money to help the development of the entertainment industry here very much. I knew that we could do it if we had a large number of people here in the Guild that began to insist on being heard. [The government] had screwed around so much. It's obscene, the things that are going through my mind." Haldane recalls his main incentive. He and George Gorman made frequent visits to Ottawa meeting with the Department of Trade and Commerce and pressing them for the financial support necessary to expand and solidify a feature film industry in Canada.

It was around this time that a government study was released by Pearson's Secretary of State, Maurice Lamontagne entitled "Whether There Should Be A Feature Film Industry In Canada". Encouraged by the opening of this discussion and the creation of an Interdevelopmental Committee on the Feasibility of a Feature Film Industry in Canada, Guild members were convinced that their collective could assert some power and become a real catalyst for change in the industry.

Now it was 1964 and Dick Ballentine's turn to push things forward. The 29 year-old found himself elected the third president of an infant DGC while already elbow-deep in a struggle with the CBC.

A frontrunner of the cinema verite form, Ballentine produced an acclaimed documentary on Hugh Hefner a few years earlier. The film titled *The Most* followed the man behind the bunny logo, documenting the impresario and all that was Playboy. Fresh on the heels of this success Ballentine was approached by Ross McLean to direct a similarly-styled piece on Lester Pearson for CBC. A freelance producer at the time, Ballentine had done several commercial spots for the Liberals in the past, and was quickly cleared by the Party to film the PM's three-week visit to New York.

" I showed it to CBC. They said they were happy with it. Unbeknownst to me they arranged – I guess they were asked, or maybe commanded – to have a screening with the PM and the liberal hoopdedoos – which they should never have done." Ballentine attended the screening with Pearson and his advisors, and what happened next was the beginning of a controversy that would involve six years of push and pull between Ballentine and the network. CBC refused to run it, citing technical failures on behalf of the film. However false or accurate these claims were, Ballentine had a clause within his contract that said the film was his property until the network had paid for it *and run it*. Aside from that legal knot, the network also hadn't paid him. So he held a screening of the film for the Ottawa press. Rave reviews followed, including a front page story in the Globe & Mail, discrediting claims of the film's technical flaws. For Ballentine, it was vindication.

"They're very sensitive people, politicians. Sensitive people look at a portrait of themselves with a wart on - they're going to ask the artist to remove the wart...There is no question that the Liberal government didn't want it run. And there is no question that they convinced or forced or twisted the CBC brass in Ottawa not to run it. But of course they couldn't say that so they used all of these other ridiculous reasons." The film finally aired in 1969, on the first anniversary of Pearson's retirement, seven years after it was originally shot. By then it was old, and Ballentine felt that nobody cared.

Unfortunately, it wasn't terribly uncommon for the CBC to cancel programming or face criticism at the time. From the day CBC Television launched, it was widely understood by independent filmmakers throughout the industry that radio producers were empowered to do the job of television producers – which denied freelancers access to the most powerful (and just about the only) employer in the country. "Frustration" is the word repeated by many local directors when they reflect on this situation.

"CBC was run by people who didn't really know the business, and didn't have any vision of it. Major decisions were made in Ottawa and they were so out of touch with what was required to get the television culture and industry moving. It was kind of sad." Dick Ballentine moved around the CBC for many years early in his career, eventually producing the CBC program *Close Up* (a precursor to Allan King's *This Hour has Seven Days*). At one point, he and other members of the producer's association went on strike and eventually left, having tired of dealing with the bureaucracy. "I wasn't alone in that… It was just the fact that these guys were all old radio people. They didn't understand TV at all and kept making policies and decisions. So it was just a matter of freedom. I wanted the freedom to do what I wanted to do when I wanted to do it."

The DGC was established on the heels of that strike, hoping that they could use their collective power to gain some entry to "The Kremlin" (as it was affectionately nicknamed by the independents). However quick they were to identify an opportunity, there were many industry challenges to face and perhaps they knew that this one would be the most difficult. "At no time did we entertain the idea of going to the CBC and organizing the directors of the CBC. That was not our function – our function was independent directors. We did not want to encroach on the in-house situation of the CBC." Syd Banks notes that it was a cooperative deal they were after and some kind of recognition as a separate entity. "We gave it a cautionary try, but it just didn't make any sense, we didn't have any muscle really," Banks recalls. They would eventually gain CBC recognition, but not access. "They still don't offer a contract to the DGC. It's the only place we don't have jurisdiction," says DGC president Allan King (1970-73). " When they were doing films they had to have DGC directors and assistant directors and DPs on crew, but it was not a close relationship and it was always a matter of friction. CBC would probably have had a lot more support from the DGC had it had a contract with us." In defense of the CBC, the strength of this Canadian institution was admirable. These were vulnerable times and there was an appetite for television. However misguided, their power was consistently recognized.

So in 1964, Dick Ballentine's primary concern for the DGC was about to become Bill C-204 – the new Canadian Film and Development Corporation. With the assistance of the Guild, he composed a brief detailing, as DGC President Bob Barclay (1978-80) would later write, "the essential elements he felt the industry most needed – and that the government could reasonably afford." In the meantime, Maurice Lamontagne announced the creation of the Fowler Commission to investigate the broadcast industry in Canada. Bob Barclay fine-tuned the brief to the Fowler Commission, highlighting "the creation of an Honourable Trusteeship" of people from the industry to regulate the entire field of broadcasting in Canada including the CBC." The Pearson government backed this idea and in 1968 established the Canadian Radio and Television Commission (CRTC).

From the outset, the DGC placed tremendous importance on cementing a foundation of financial assistance for the film industry. As Syd Banks reiterates, the objective was clear. "There had to be leniency given to an emerging industry because we really did not have a film industry per se. We had to grow. The only way to grow was to get some kind of assistance."

The creation of the CFDC, however pivotal, would be the result of many more discussions and arguments. The Bill had a poor first reading in the house and the DGC was driven towards correcting its flaws. Judy LaMarsh replaced Maurice Lamontagne as Secretary of State and to strengthen the DGC's voice in government proceedings, Ballentine recruited David MacDonald for the fight. A Conservative MP from PEI, MacDonald was aware of Canada's cultural climate and well-versed in matters concerning the arts. His was an opposition critic with a voice and precisely what the Guild needed to have theirs heard.

By the end of1966, George Gorman took over as DGC president and the Guild prepared for the Bill's Second Reading on February 3rd, 1967. With the Guild in the House gallery and MacDonald on the floor, the debate was lively. The DGC would follow closely, noting contentious points and arming MacDonald with arguments for alterations when the house recessed. Having introduced arguments for amendments, MacDonald provided Canadian filmmakers with an opportunity for vindication. As the Bill's sponsor, LaMarsh would accept some of these amendments and incorporate them into the legislation. It was a huge victory – the governmental recognition of a viable feature film industry and the promise of a better future for those within it.

There were reasons to celebrate. In 1966, the DGC introduced awards for a director and an editor to the producer-driven Canadian Film Awards. With 1967, brought Centennial celebrations and Expo 67 in Montreal, along with that, the multi-screen outdoor films that would serve as the foundation of IMAX. And in 1968, the heady excitement of Trudeaumania ushered in the promise of a new government while the DGC harnessed their optimism in a new president, the late John Trent. These were political times, and Trent was connected. His charm and charismatic nature romanced Cabinet Ministers, while he laid out careful plans for a Capital Cost Allowance that would boost feature film investment in tandem with the CFDC. (The Capital Cost Allowance would prove to be a lengthy and turbulent campaign over the next 10 years.) The DGC would initiate and fail at a deal with the CBC, but perhaps more disappointing were complaints over the CFDC's inequity of funding distribution and general malaise generated by this apparent neglect of its original goal.

By the time 1970 came around, the landscape of the Canadian film and television industry was much different from when the Guild started out. They had a few more resources, but needed the right direction to achieve new goals as they entered the decade. That year Allan King began his DGC presidency, and the Guild needed the prestige that he brought to the position to usher them into this new phase of industry development.

King was fortunate to have tremendous international experience very early on in his career. He lived and worked among a community of expatriates in Ibiza, interviewing famous personalities for CBC. He shot documentaries in Africa and India, and set up a studio in London. But the patriotic lure of Centennial celebrations was too much for him to resist and the Vancouver native found himself back in Canada, setting up a studio in Toronto "when the flower children were blooming." Like so many others at the time, he felt a metamorphosis was taking place. "The whole culture had changed so dramatically through the 60s and 70s. It was really an extraordinary emotional and social breech or shift from the Eisenhower years to the Kennedy years. The younger generation was taking over from the generation which had really been enormously dominated by the temperament and the experience of the Great Depression and the Great Wars." One would think that this shift would generate more room for filmmakers to work in the industry – more independent production companies, more networks. It did, but it was a slow process and would take years for initiatives like the CFDC and the Capital Cost Allowance to create the opportunities they were conceived to deliver.

King would serve as president through 1972, and drive the DGC to its 10th anniversary. A new phase was beginning and this younger generation was leading the way. The days of pioneering were over. The Guild had claimed their land and cleared the way for future Canadian directors. From 18 members at its start, membership had amplified to150. At this landmark anniversary, each of these members, however seemingly insignificant, had made a contribution simply by believing their profession was worth fighting for when few others did.

The DGC was a catalyst for change. How? Perhaps Dick Ballentine puts it best. "The Guild gave everyone a sense of pride in their profession and choice of art. We began the coalescence – up to that point we were all moving in our own individual ways and never even got together to discuss anything. There was no way of getting together to discuss basic things that concerned everyone in the business. From that came a level of power that allowed us to go and talk to the CBC or Minister of Culture – which no individual could ever have done. We got them to do something – even if it was the wrong thing – before that they weren't doing anything at all. From there everything moved in an organic way that allowed the film industry as we have it now to develop."

rev·o·lu·tion·ar·y n. 1. a person who starts or supports a revolution, especially a political one 2. a militant in the struggle for revolution. 3. a supporter of revolutionary principles. adj. 1. [usually before noun] connected with political revolution: a revolutionary leader / movement revolutionary uprisings 2. involving a great or complete change: a revolutionary idea

Why should there be a feature film industry in Canada?
When posed in 1964 by Prime Minister Lester Pearson's Secretary of State Maurice Lamontagne, for directors across Canada this was a laughable question at best. The newly formed Directors Guild of Canada set about composing a detailed answer; that it was not only feasible, but also economically and culturally beneficial for the country.

The result of their argument was the formation of the Canadian Film Development Corporation in 1968 – in theory, a government-funded bank that would assess and fund dramatic film productions across the country. Years later, the CFDC, a staggering disappointment from its intended purpose, the once laughable question seemed to boomerang back to the heart of the industry, and it was no longer funny.

Welcome to the 1970s - a decade where almost everything around an optimistic Canada was in a depressed state. The FLQ Crisis, a Trudeau wedding and divorce, the death of Prime Ministers Louis St. Laurent, John Diefenbaker and Lester B. Pearson, the Energy Crisis, separatism, Watergate, Nixon's impeachment, the '76 Olympics in Montreal (a financial disaster), the Parti Québécois, Joe Clark, etc. Things were, at best, murky.

Canadian films were indicative of this time and sentiment. Claude Jutra's *Mon Oncle Antoine* (1971), Don Shebib's *Goin' Down the Road* (1970), Silvio Narizzano's *Why Shoot the Teacher* (1977), Michel Brault's *Les Ordres* (1974), Allan King's *Who Has Seen the Wind* (1977) and Peter Pearson's *Paperback Hero* (1973) to name a few. All were outstanding, successful films either set in the Depression or carrying a sense of despair. "Artists…reflect their time and place and concerns. They can't impose happy ever after endings on a culture where most people are unemployed, frustrated angry or whatever," says DGC president Peter Pearson of *Paperback Hero* and other films of this generation. "There's no doubt that all of us in some kind of weird way were feeling very alienated from mainstream Canada, from the culture. You see it in those films. All of those films had a great similarity. The similarity reflects roughly how we all felt. It wasn't that we were together as a common voice – it was reflecting a common mood. Which was that Canada was falling apart."

It was 1972. The DGC had just celebrated its 10th year. They had 280 members and it was time to reassess.

Those from the DGC who spurred the creation of the CFDC believed they were securing a bank that would help guarantee the production of Canadian dramatic features. What they got was a $4 million budget for the fund with a portion being released for productions each year. By the mid-70s, this budget would grow to $10 million. When you look at the cost of making a feature film, it is true that not many could be made each year on a $2 million budget – even in 1972. This cap on funds, while necessary, was a source of frustration for directors.

There was a bigger issue at hand, an issue directly responsible for the success or failure of the Canadian film industry: distribution. This was huge. Simply put – Canada did not possess control over the distribution system within the country. In the eyes of the many, until it did, Hollywood would continue to have control over the success of Canadian films.

The old frustrations lingered. The CBC refused to sign a collective agreement for its freelance directors. Frustration made the Guild reluctant, but willing to go at it again. The NFB was primarily a house for documentary production more than anything else.

"The film board and the CBC essentially ruled all the creative filmmaking in the country. The CBC controlled TV and the NFB (had) the right to be not only the producer of material for the federal government, but to advise the federal government on all matters relating to film. So they tyrannized any initiatives to develop feature films, to develop any kind of outside productions and those little companies that tried to make a go of it - they were constantly up against the film board and bureaucrats," says Peter Pearson (DGC President 1973-76).

"People underestimate the effects of the 1972 OPEC Crisis. The oil crisis went roaring through the sky for the first time and we went into a depression. Having no background in the financial aspects of movies in Canada, people were afraid to invest. There were two industries that survived this depression with flying colours – one was the brewing industry, the other was the movie industry – that was the experience in the US but not in Canada," says Barclay (DGC president 1978-80).

Peter Pearson succeeded Allan King as DGC president in 1973. He had all the credentials the Guild was after. He had an understanding of Canadian politics (a distant relative of Lester Pearson) but wasn't a politician. He had a background in the Canadian film institutions, having worked for CBC as a story editor for *This Hour Has Seven Days* and following CBC's cancellation of the program, spent two years as a director with the NFB. Having studied in Rome, he also had some international experience. Perhaps most importantly, with the widely successful film *Paperback Hero* among his list of directing credits, he had the clout that the Guild looked for in a leader. All that was left to determine was if he had the finesse to negotiate between a career as a filmmaker and the many hats you must wear as DGC president. Part lobbyist, part politician, part office manager and part filmmaker, it wasn't an easy position. It demanded that you be a revolutionary.

Pearson set out to achieve two things. First, to give the Guild solid footing by going after CBC, CTV, NFB and independent broadcasters for signed agreements with the Guild. Second, to go after the federal government to get a handle on the nation's movie infrastructure in whatever ways possible. Pearson may have been the first to truly recognize that the root of so many of the industry's ailments could be found at home rather than looking south of the border. "The big battle I think all along was as much against the Feds in Ottawa as it was against the Americans. I always thought it was a misconception that Hollywood was portrayed as the dragon – to the extent that the real repressive structures were within the CBC and the film board."

In charge of no fewer than eleven agencies related to film, Trudeau's Secretary of State, Hugh Faulkner was Pearson's principal target. He had a wish list; at the topping the list was seizing the infrastructure back from the U.S. and if not, quotas, levies and restructuring. A seizure was a drastic move – an American affront of this magnitude would have likely affected all other Canadian-American economic relationships and therefore, other ministries. They set to work on the rest.

Meanwhile, Pearson had also become First Chair for the Council of Canadian Filmmakers (CCFM). This lobby group represented all facets of the industry (with the exception of producers, who refused to have anything to do with it) – actors, performers, writers, cameraman, and technicians among others, including the DGC. However dedicated to the fight for change, Pearson quickly realized his dilemma. "There were three things that were totally in conflict – freelance film director, Guild president and CCFM chairman. I was always in a conflict of interest with myself."

In negotiations with people who might possibly employ him as Pearson the Director, his instincts as Pearson, the DGC President, would tell him to have the Guild threaten a strike on various operations. "I tried very hard to get the directors to walk out on the CBC – I thought we would win that one. But the members were not radicalized. I could see fear in their eyes."

As Pearson the CCFM First Chair, he would fight on their behalf in Ottawa, trying to impose quotas and levies that would guarantee the screening and broadcast of specific numbers of Canadian films each year. This would create a demand for content and guarantee some extent of distribution. Meanwhile, DGC members were desperate for work and it was Pearson's job to secure the contracts and guarantee as much of it as he could manage. "The members would ask what the hell we were doing trying to impose quotas and levies because they couldn't see the connector." Where Pearson was trying to spark a small chain of Canadian distribution within the structure, the Guild saw an imposed limit on their potential.

While there were several successes on the CCFM front for the production of commercials in Canada, advances on the feature film front were few. There was talk of having the government purchase Famous Players and Odeon and when that didn't fly, talk of imposing quotas. That didn't stick either, so the CCFM filed a legal suit against the studios for being party to a monopoly. Again, they were unsuccessful. In 1975, the two major chains consented to a 'voluntary agreement' to exhibit Canadian films four weeks per theatre per year. Pearson felt it an empty gesture at best.

By the time Christopher Chapman took over as DGC president in1976, Pearson the Revolutionary, was spent. He had devoted himself entirely to the task of shifting the structure of Canadian film distribution. Something that looked benign from a distance had become a fierce and exhausting fight upon closer examination. "I had such high expectations for succeeding and I felt my failure so monumental because I got annihilated on all three levels – I got labelled a shit-disturber by everybody, whereas I had been a pretty successful director up until the time I finished doing this," says Pearson. "Afterwards it was like I was a pariah, an agitator or a radical filmmaker and a whole bunch of things that I'm not." He had fought the good fight and lost.

"On a collective level it was the last concerted shot to get Canadian distribution under Canadian control and we as a group lost – I think totally. From the point that we lost in 1975 to now, there hasn't been anything even comparable in the interim. The situation now is exactly the way as we left it," says Pearson.

After witnessing Pearson's hardships, Chapman was reluctant to step into the post of DGC president. He knew the DGC was troubled with many problems and wasn't sure he should be the one to give them the attention. "There was clearly a need for a high profile person to do the job otherwise you never got any credibility," says Pearson, explaining why Chapman was the ideal leader for the time.

An established documentarian, Chapman's *A Place to Stand* took Expo '67 by storm. The film used a series of independent moving images and wove them together to create a single landscape. Chapman coined this method the "multiple dynamic image technique" or dynamic frame. Not long after that, the film garnered two Academy Award nominations. It was the first time in history that a documentary was nominated in two categories and when all was said and done, the film walked away with one.

Having tasted American success, surely directors such as Pearson and Chapman wouldn't have to face the same industry struggles facing the majority of Canadian directors. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case. Pearson felt his career as a filmmaker was significantly bruised from his time as an "industry revolutionary", and by the time he became DGC president, Chapman was just making ends meet. "I haven't made any money in films really. It was not one of those great success things, and that bothered me but at the same time, I had to go on trying to look for the kind of work that I could believe in. It was a very challenging industry and balancing the two (roles) was a difficult thing. Some people could do it but I found it difficult – I felt I couldn't spend enough time on the challenges I felt were important to the Guild and also go on making films to survive."

John Roberts, the new Secretary of State emerged in 1977 with a fresh attitude and promises to unleash the industry from its American monopoly. However, Jack Valenti, the head of the American Motion Picture Producers' Association, threatened to upset every prosperous Canadian industry if the government dared to make such an alteration. "They would threaten the country with tariffs on wheat and lumber and the federal government thought – well who needs a film industry? They would just back off and give the Americans what they wanted. It was a boycott. As long as the government paid no attention to the distribution of feature films, we would never have a viable industry," says Barclay of the ongoing struggle.

Adding to the turbulence of the time, the fruits of a new initiative were beginning to ripen. In 1974 the Capital Cost Allowance, a lucrative tax benefit provision within the Income Tax Act was extended to feature film production. By allowing Canadians the ability to deduct 100 per cent of their investments in Canadian film production, it encouraged a new wave of private investment in the nation's feature film industry and it had prolific consequences. The problem was that these were still insecure times. There was an Energy Crisis, separatism was on the rise with the Parti Québécois, following the 1972 Olympic Crisis in Munich, a task force had been set up to address security for the Montreal Olympics and our hugely popular leader was losing his momentum. The only eligible portion of the population that could afford a $10 000 film investment were a small portion of the upper class.

"The Canadian Film Commission became a series of accountants and lawyers running across the country soliciting money from doctors, lawyers and airline pilots across the country as a way of cutting their tax burden," says Barclay. " A major complication of this (is that) they also assumed the role of producers. This is the huge fatal flaw – I'm not going to say that none of them knew anything about producing films – but there was no reason to presume that they did if their training had been as an accountant. You ended up having really crazy situations that happened."

For the industry as a whole, the Capital Cost Allowance opened up an amazing amount of production opportunity. But it became apparent for some, it wasn't as much about the films as it was about looping around one's taxes. As a result, a majority of the films produced were dubious, at best, but the new Guild president was determined to set the house in order before they arrived.

Bob Barclay, the accomplished director of Disney's *Magic Carpet Tour Round the World* and Guild member since its inaugural meeting 17 years prior, took over as DGC president in 1978 and began housekeeping. The Guild had 205 members, no money and one full time employee who hadn't drawn her salary in 6 months, leaving them $6000 in debt. There were only 12 signed contracts on file for work done by Guild members. There were regional offices in Montreal and Vancouver and provisions for District Councils but they weren't very strong.

"The Guild had to get up to speed across the whole spectrum because we really were in the doldrums. For me I was the luckiest person in the world because the challenge was obvious - it was total," says Barclay. "We weren't going from zero to sixty miles an hour – we had to get there fast. We were going from below zero, had no gas in the tank and had to get to sixty miles per hour before all these (Capital Cost Allowance) films started coming in."

He set to work immediately focusing his efforts internally. He ratified the contract putting in clauses for directors' rights and rates. Their rates hadn't changed in about a decade and Barclay felt it was time they reflect the reality the day. In the case of TV, he doubled them. The DGA was upset with them for the adjustment, but this wasn't about them – this was about survival. He added a pension clause, instructing producers to pay out a small percentage of the budget towards the director's pension.

"I came into the Guild saying – look, we really have to look after ourselves – we have to stand on our own feet, we have to insist on the things we're going to insist on and we have to be prepared to withhold our services. We can't do it any other way. If you're going to fight for something you have to be prepared to go all the way," says Barclay.

With all of these Canadian filmmakers in demand, the Guild set about ensuring that their contracts were signed. By the end of Barclay's presidency, the drawer that once held 12 signed contracts held 92.

Syd Banks and Lew Lehman would lead the Guild into the 80s and to its 20th anniversary. This was Banks' second presidency with the DGC and it would prove to be much different from the first.

"It was nothing like the excitement of the beginning, because the beginning was the unknown," he says. Banks had served as Guild president in 1962 for its inaugural year. To this day, he has never taken a government subsidy to finance one of his films. In the near 20 years that he had spent with the Guild since his last presidency, the ability to have this kind of control and success in one's projects, was an impressive thing to bring to the position. "You knew where you were going, what you were doing, what your relationship was with government and other benefactors of the industry. Internationally, you knew where you stood because you already established relationships. A lot of those things were not evident at the time we started", says Banks.

By the time Lew Lehman came into his presidency a year later the Guild had increased its yearly operating budget tenfold. An American ex-patriot lured to Canada by the advantages of Capital Cost Allowance, Lehman was a talented theatre and film director who would use his time with the Guild to address the lack of residuals for Canadian directors. This was a struggle that would take the DGC and the federal government well into the decade to resolve.

What Lehman, Banks, Barclay, Chapman and Pearson and the DGC presidents that preceded them couldn't know at the time was that all of their efforts were necessary to generate the initiatives that are present today. It would take their collective revolutionary attempts to spark development of the Broadcast Fund, Telefilm, and a residual position in their work in the years to come.

Each presidency held a bit of sacrifice, adjustment and success along with a great deal of frustration struggle and challenge. All of these amounted to a concentrated period of dedication towards a film industry that was both valid and necessary for the future.

As Pearson puts it," It was the point of departure for a lot of the stuff that we have now. We're now doing something like $5 billion worth of film and television in this country a year. When you consider that this stems from a bunch of guys who were fooling around in the early 70s, we've come a long way baby."

THE INDEPENDENTS – 1980s to 1990

in·de·pen·dent *adjective* 1 : not dependent: as a (1) : not subject to control by others : self-governing (2) : not affiliated with a larger controlling unit b (1) : not requiring or relying on something else : not contingent <an *independent* conclusion> (2) : not looking to others for one's opinions or for guidance in conduct (3) : not bound by or committed to a political party c (1) : not requiring or relying on others (as for care or livelihood) <*independent* of her parents d : showing a desire for freedom <an *independent* manner>

For those on the inside, the Canadian film and television industry isn't one that you necessarily love. It pulls you in with its creative beauty and pushes you out with its bureaucratic constraints and financial woes. Like almost every industry it has its drawbacks and benefits, its highs and lows, its egos and icons, its windfalls and money pits.

Coming into the 80s it was clear that the Directors Guild of Canada had come a long way and was on a steady path to solidifying a promising future for directors within the country. Some dominant problems of the past lingered – instability, lack of funds and lack or opportunities. Still, with every decade comes some sense of 'newness"– a fresh star, and old problems seem easy enough to repair.

The CRTC licensed specialty channels and Norman Jewison opened the Canadian Film Centre, but the 80's were rife with more shocking headlines. Who could forget the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, Mark Lepine's murderous rampage, Claud Jutra's suicide, or the names Ben Johnson and Ernst Zundel? Prime Minister Trudeau championed the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and a Progressive Conservative leadership under Prime Minister Mulroney led to ubiquitous discussions of the Free Trade Agreement.

But the 80s also brought with it an acute shift in popular culture. Suddenly we were a TV generation. Americans had excelled in creating the right dynamics of enough pulpy dramas and laugh-track heavy comedies, enough to consistently engaged audiences and increase the quality of television programming. Canada couldn't replicate that kind of strength in television programming and failed to satiate this need domestically in any sort of comparable way.

Despite its national foundation, the Canadian film and television industry lacked the sense of certainty that was necessary to push the industry in a prosperous direction. As a result of the stagnation, small independent pockets formed across the country, seeking solidarity and growth in the nature of the industry within a specific locale. For film and television in Canada, the 80s would mark the distinction of regional power and the attempt of filmmakers to stand on their own feet at any and all costs. The nature of the DGC would only prove to reflect this.

Coming off the heels of George Gorman, the shift would begin with Alan Erlich, who took over as DGC president in 1985. From a background in documentary and dramatic television production, Erlich came into his leadership of the DGC recognizing that the

pockets of the representations British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec presented clear communication difficulties and competing interests for the Guild.
A change in Quebec's labor codes allowed filmmakers an opportunity to step outside of national Guild policy whenever they shoes, citing that they weren't allowed to be a part of a national organization says Erlich.

Meanwhile, with an influx of American productions heading north, filmmakers in British Columbia were starting to make more money. Erlich points out that the bulk of filmmakers working in BC were production managers and assistant directors primarily servicing Americans, and their interests differed from those of Ontario directors. British Columbia focused their energy on attracting American business and the success of this was viewed by some, as a direct threat to Toronto – oriented and Toronto – based indigenous television productions.

What was really the beginning of the decentralization of power in the film and television industry, sparked a nationalistic examination of American production presence in Canada. It began with the CBC. The broadcaster hired an American director to do two new pilots. As Erlich explains it was established that DGA members working in Canada had to sign a DGC contract. "The CBC-who didn't acknowledge our existence –signed a contract with the DGA." So Erlich led a DGC motion that no Canadian director worked for the CBC until they signed a DGC contract. It was carried unanimously and adhered to. "We came to an agreement that they would pay rates that the freelance market was paying. That was a considerable increase, plus the equivalent of our fringes. It was a great lift for us, because everybody got increases and the CBC started to pay as though they were independent producers." Initially this created an excitement and anticipation that was refreshing for the industry, but by the time Erlich had completed his Guild presidency it only underlined the fact that very few hands controlled the industry.

Concerns differed provincially but everything came back to the same struggle- getting work. The DGC became a collection of separate voices speaking over each other, says Erlich. "It was a mirror of our own countries. What was happening on the national stage of the country was happening on the nations stage of the DGC. It was about power – who had power and who could do what to whom. People didn't want to give an inch."

Well Keith Cutler was determined to get a foot. The first West coast president of the Guild, Cutler came into the position in 1987, following John Juliani. Cutler had a great deal of commercial television production experience to his credit. His knowledge of the business end of industry was the solid foundation that the Guild needed to direct them towards a better balance between the creative and the financial. Plus, he understood firsthand why the BC representation of the Guild began to surge independently.

"The problem there is that we recognized in the west that if we didn't find some way to make an agreement with the DGA they would simply just walk into Canada," says Cutler. "They would walk into the west coast and establish a branch and we'd be poor relatives." A reciprocal agreement eventually allowed DGA members to come into Canada provided that they were legitimate DGA members. “In other words we would automatically issue them a permit,” says Cutler, recalling the ensuing resent by those in the industry who disagreed with this position.

However, there were other orders of business to address. Cutler prepared Ontario for its own office and a clean separation from that of the National Guild. The proximity of the two offices proved a definite adjustment and their reliance on each other would take the bulk of the decade to reconcile. Some of their finances became confused and vanished over this transitional period, pushing money management and business acumen to the forefront of the DGC concerns, for both the organization and the industry as a whole.

“I particularly feel that Canada has lacked a sense of the business of the film,” says Cutler. “It’s an industry – not just an art form. It’s fine to look upon filmmaking as an exciting creative thing, but in effect, the success of the film industry in the United States is that they look at it as a business, and we’ve got to get more of that thinking.”

Harvey Hart was next in line as DGC president in 1989. Cutler remembers him fondly. “Harvey was a wonderful person to work with, very fair,” he says. “When you look over all the directors that we’ve produced I think he was the closest to that quintessential person of integrity and artistic integrity that I think the DGA has become so famous for. I think with Allan King and on, the guild is now known for its directors, and not just for its production managers and assistant directors.

Don McBrearty would take over as acting DGC President following Hart’s death in 1990. McBrearty would wrestle with the same issues as his predecessors dealing with provincial autonomy when the district councils for British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia were established in 1991.

No one anticipated the growth that was about to happen in the 90’s, but the transition of the 80’s created room for competing interests to exist. The future challenge was to decide which among them mandated national recognition and how best to address the ones that didn’t. It was time for the DGC to build a bridge between independence and a collective.

THE ARCHITECTS – 1990 -- 2002

ar·chi·tect n 1. A person skilled in the art of building; one who understands architecture, or makes it his occupation to form plans and designs of buildings, and to superintend the artificers employed in their construction. 2. A contriver, designer, or maker. 3. A person who designs and guides a plan or undertaking

There isn't any questioning the fact that good leadership requires terrific foresight. It's not just a matter of carrying out the task at hand, but imagining how its completion fits into the collective goal. It's about drafting a blueprint that navigates people through the halls of innovation and imagination, to the rooms where anticipated prosperity and fulfillment lie. Schematically, a good leader can position you in any hall of a structure they have created and have the space where one's past and future lies in clear sight. Leadership isn't just the capacity to envision the future; it's coupling that capacity with a blueprint detailing how to get there.

As a nation, Canada faced many events in the 1990s that made it very much a 'here and now' period for its population. One thought towards the future would be followed by an event that would resoundingly draw preoccupations back to the present. Introduced by conflicts involving military force - the Oka Crisis and the Gulf War - the 90s also brought its fair share of adversity with the Westray disaster, Ice Storm and Manitoba floods. Prime Minister Mulroney's resignation introduced Canada to its first female Prime Minister in Kim Campbell, Sue Rodriguez focused the legal and media spotlight on the euthanasia debate, and with the single word 'no' the Quebec Referendum brought the nation to a standstill. Nunavut, Liberal leadership under Prime Minister Chrétien, the Confederation Bridge, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, the GST, Y2K, email, cellphones, TITANIC, and the O.J. Simpson trial. Add these to the Somalia Inquiry, the recession, the Airbus Affair, South African elections and the death of Lady Di, and it is certain that this was a decade that shackled the nation with issues of social change. Sights may have been set toward the future but feet often had to be firmly planted in the present.

Coming into 1992, the Directors Guild of Canada was facing its 30th anniversary at a low. Stifled by the recession, there was barely any work in the film and television industry. In face of this monstrous problem, the Guild had to find a way to resolve ongoing tensions between DGC members in British Columbia and central Canada. With both the collective livelihood at stake and the backbone of the organization that serves to support it breaking, it became resoundingly clear that the DGC needed to make some changes. The industry might not turn around on the strength of the Guild alone, but the resolve of Canadian filmmakers might turn on the strength of the collective. The value and prosperity of the DGC was at stake – in the wrong hands infighting that had loomed over the 80s might escalate, and draw energy away from improving the bargaining power and strength of the Guild. A rescue effort of this magnitude would demand superb leadership and all of the foresight that comes along with it.

Enter Allan King.

A former DGC president from 1970 to 1973, King had already amassed tremendous respect for his work and longevity as a filmmaker. His national and international expertise lent a reassuring amount of recognition to the Guild and a fair amount of international weight to the DGC name throughout the industry. All of the qualities that made King an ideal choice for DGC president in 1970 remained, but in the time that had passed King had also chaired the Ontario District Council. As chair, he had managed to successfully transform the financially strapped office into an organized and effective powerhouse, further separating the local from the interests of its national counterpart. King understood every level of the DGC and the demands that a presidency involved. He was fueled by the challenge that managing the diverse interests of the National Office presented and up for the task. There was no question. He was what they needed.

Internal conflict would be the first of thing that King needed to address. As a result of the geographical relationship between the National Office and the young Ontario local, members of the Ontario District council wanted to assert more control over national policy initiatives than they were entitled to. "Ontario thought that it was the guild and it was very hard to persuade Ontario that it wasn't - that the other councils were just as important and had as many rights as they did." Still chairman of the Ontario District Council, King was intimately aware of the issues at hand. "Ontario always seems to think of itself as the centre of the country and in fact the country itself and so it's very hard for other people not to get irritated with that." If not entirely fair, this sentiment stretched beyond the Guild to the entire country. "There's a tendency to scapegoat the east on the part of the west sometimes with good reason, but sometimes not."

The district councils in their separate interests were mirrors to the geographical and cultural diversity of Canada itself. King recognized this and quickly identified that the way to resolve tensions was to work in conjunction to that diversity. Foreseeing that some regions would likely prosper over others, it seemed foolish to negate the differences in the nature of the industry between each region. This would only prove to make decision-making difficult on a national level. "Every entity (of the Guild) has its own particular character and its own needs and they are not the same as the other ones. To coordinate the distinctive and unique needs of British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Quebec Ontario and the Atlantic provinces is inevitable," says King. "You can't have an organization that doesn't have different internal objectives. It's the nature of the country, and in many ways its reflects the nature of the country in those respects."

After intense debates, King aligned himself with former DGC President John Juliani. The pair formed a magnificent alliance and managed to pull the DGC together opening the opportunity for King to set himself and the Guild towards two clear goals for the future. The first was to keep the Guild together and focused. This would be an ongoing test with every decision made and fighting position taken by the organization. As Canada stretched out of a recession, the film and television industry leaped out of a four-year decline. The Guild had to consistently protect the district councils along with its rapidly growing membership and the range of professions held therein.

King severely restricted the amount of Guild work being carried out by members, insisting that the board's job was to establish policy and the staff's job was to carry it out. This initiative increased efficiency, substantially altering levels of responsibility and the way work occurred within the organization. Meanwhile, the shifts in the economy led to a decrease in the value of the Canadian dollar and a boom in American production here in Canada. The intensity of this industry expansion elevated the necessity of the DGC and gathered more attention toward its mandate. In order to service the membership, these changes triggered an increase in the Guild's staff, improvements to the health plan, a stronger economic foundation beneath the organization and responsible management of their finances.

To reassert the Guild as a lobbying organization, was the second of King's principal goals and accomplishments during his presidency. "We were intensely concerned with Canadian content, making sure there was money going into Canadian production through the CRTC. We greatly improved the amount of money being devoted and required by the broadcasters to be put into production. We worked towards an increase in the number of hours of Canadian drama and other representative programming in prime time, and towards a better definition of prime time." These were a few of a series of initiatives that made for more work in Canada for Canadian filmmakers.

Growth remained steady and federal initiatives were put forth to support it that were often guided by, or based on Guild recommendations. More specifically, in1996 the federal government launched the Canada Television and Cable Production Fund. Offering $300 million towards the financing the production of Canadian television programs, money for the fund was partially provided by Canadian cable operators as a license condition. The CRTC adopted the Guild's recommendations for Cable, DTH and MDS Distribution systems in 1997 and in 1998, the "Review of Canadian Feature Film Policy" was launched by the Department of Canadian Heritage to examine "the challenges faced by theatrical films in Canada" and establish ways to address them.

The DGC would forge important relationships with the Writers Guild, ACTRA and other unions, which King felt were equally important to the international relationships he would also strive to establish. "If you don't have contracts and an ordered way of working, people exploit you. It's very simple. There are lots of crazy directors and producers who will run a crew 24 hours a day until they all drop and they just replace them as if they were bringing in bees to a hive. To work without a contract and work without defined conditions of work is disrespectful of the work. Furthermore its important to establish standards and lobby for policies that nurse the art and craft of the industry that you're living in."

The goal was to set up a tripartite agreement between the BECTU, the DGA and the DGC so that the three organizations could ensure conditions of work were respected in whichever territory their members were working in. Though the DGA wanted to set up an international association of directors, they grew to believe they were being misled and withdrew their interest, consequently irritating the other countries at the table. King found himself the architect of this meeting of international minds. Cultivating interest from the Germans, French, Italians, Australians and New Zealanders, King elevated the bargaining position of the DGC immeasurably. He convinced them not to beat up on the Americans and eventually convinced the Americans that he was not out to malign them. This was critical leadership for the DGC. King led the Guild into the resulting1998 formation of the International Forum of Directors Organizations (IFDO), with the DGC as one of its principal founders. In terms of international recognition, this put the DGC on the map.

Then there was the Monitor Report. In 1998 the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and the DGA conducted a study examining the 30 percent drop in U.S.-based production. The Monitor Report, as it was subsequently titled, pointed to runaway productions, those productions that took place in Hollywood North, as the source of the problem. Released in 1999, it attributed $8.3 billion in economic losses to "runaway production" that year, and claimed that of the productions that left the U.S. for economic rather than creative reasons (Canadian Content incentives), 81% of them had gone to Canada. Outraged, SAG and the DGA took out a full-page ad in Variety exclaiming, "Canada is killing the Television and Film Business in the United States."

The report was entirely erroneous and exaggerated. As a nation Canada was consuming far more Hollywood productions than it was producing and that fact remains. Debunking the myths, King noted in the DGC's three-page retort that Americans exercise a false-entitlement to control over the industry the world over, and that "an increasing proportion of Canadian production counts as "Canadian content" and is not runaway production at all." (A federal policy, Canadian content (CanCon) had been around since the 50s. Broadcasters were required to air a certain amount of Canadian content – programming that was "Canadian in nature". Structured on a point system, CanCon later grew to include incentives that would encourage Canadian film and television production. It provided incentives on salaries paid out to Canadian filmmakers involved in a production).

Later that year the CRTC would completely atler their Canadian Content expenditure requirements. For a number of years, the CRTC had bound Canadian broadcasters to spend a certain percentage of their profits on indigenous dramatic productions. They withdrew this expenditure requirement in 1999. The industry was in a good position at the time so it would not have an immediate effect, but in a couple of years this could prove to be a crippling cancellation.

It would be Alan Goluboff's struggle to deal with. Saskatchewan-born Goluboff became DGC president in 2000. He had come from a long history of working in Canadian television and film as a producer and director, and like King, was riding on the positive momentum of chairing the Ontario District Council.

The withdrawal of expenditure requirements remains a major source of concern. Though broadcasters had to maintain their CanCon levels, they didn't have to spend any money on it, as King explains. "What they did was put out a whole lot of low cost documentary series that really depreciated the quality of documentary work and took a lot of money out of drama because the broadcasters could fill their time slots with much less expensive documentaries and drop their series. "

"The expenditure requirements disappear and a year and a half later we have five one-hour dramas, as opposed to twelve in 1999. Twelve one-hour dramas employ a lot of the Canadian film community." Goluboff asserts that high-end dramas are the crucial to the Canadian television industry and what viewers truly want, despite broadcaster claims that this type of programming can't support itself. "Our view of life is diametrically opposed to that thinking. If broadcasters were committed to producing, promoting, programming and advertising it then there would be a higher success rate," says Goluboff. The DGC strives to heighten the quality and quantity of work opportunities, and through their tax dollars, so do Canadians. "Everything we take a position on we believe is in the best interest of the industry and that in turn, in the best interest of the Canadian public because the Canadian public has a stake in every single piece of film and television that gets made in this country."

Foreign and indigenous production is governed by public policy decisions. Goluboff believes that moving toward a more centralized structure is a way to have a voice in those decisions. "We can't think of ourselves as independent from one another. If we're all working together then that collective talent pool will benefit. If we speak with one voice and make policies that improve the environment for all members then that collective voice is more valuable than the vulcanized voices of the different jurisdictions across the country. It's the collective creative potential that exists in this country that I think is insurmountable." It's not about taking away authority the district councils have found in their autonomy, but finding a way to best use the strength in numbers to its maximum potential in a world of labour politics.

At nearly 4000 members, the Guild's membership has tripled in less than a decade. A centralized membership could increase the awareness of industry concerns for Canadian audiences. "We have to help the public understand that this industry is good for not just those of us who work day-to-day in the industry. It's good for the country. It's good for the economy. It's good for us as a culture. I think that's why its so important that we continue to pursue strengthening and improving the indigenous production environment in this country – that's what really reflects who we are as Canadians and there's a value to that. We have reason in this country to be proud of who we are."

Lacking money and distribution control, the feature film industry craves that support. This makes it difficult to accelerate. That Canada doesn't have a self-sustaining production sector does not the country unique. As King points out, with the exception of the United States and India most countries don't. Subsidies are a Canadian reality. "It's a problem to generate the kind of money to spend on distribution that you need to pour an audience in," says King, noting the emergence of a particular thematic nature. "Because of issues around distribution and how best to handle it, we tend to move into quite unusual films. This is good and bad. It has given us an international reputation for really extraordinary, interesting and unique kind of filmmaking, but it has made it difficult for some those films to have a large audience."

"The struggle for feature films in Canada is that they do not in any substantive way exist out there for the Canadian public," says Goluboff, who is frustrated by the ongoing nature of the problem. "They exist in form but they don't exist on screen."

It would be wrong to assume that the directors have the most at stake here in coming about a resolution. When a Canadian director works, it generally means that a Canadian editor works and Canadian set designer and so on. Their prosperity drives the employment of the rest of the industry. With this in mind, the DGC set up initiatives like Script to Screen and the National Directors Division.

Launched in 2000, Script to Screen was a collaborative seminar between the DGC and the Writers Guild. Beyond establishing a good relationship with the Guild, Script to Screen was developed to explore the relationship between writer and director and how that relationship can best serve the creative process.

The National Directors Division was designed to give a stronger voice to directors and encourage director involvement in the Guild. Goluboff insists that this is the best way to champion director issues. "Rekindling the directors interest in the organization that bears their name is paramount." With increasing numbers, directors are coming forward, understanding how vital the DGC is to their industry and dignity of their profession. "That's what I want. I want people to have an opinion and stand up to be counted. If you have a problem with the organization, stand up and speak about it. And champion the organization. Move the organization forward. It is all member-driven and member-financed – if I'm going to pay a lot of money to the Guild I'm going to make sure I have a say in where it's going," says Goluboff. "Even though they might be the minority, its refreshing that directors can take the rightful leadership role they should be taking within the Guild."

No doubt, the success of NDD is vital to Goluboff because of his initial personal mandate to service members in his presidency. "I was determined when I became president that I was going to work towards member-Guild relations. Guild and membership should be one." The DGC had a voice and it is important to Goluboff that the individuals it speaks for – and to – are not forgotten. "Film and television is a part of every single Canadian's lives. We have a duty to ourselves but we have a duty to everyone who turns the television on, or pays eight bucks to see a movie - we're contributing to that one way or another."

Today, tackling copyright authorship issues, making national constitutional amendments, and continuing the management of industry and membership expansion all remain on the DGC's "to-do" list. (Recently crossed off the list were growing the number of readers for the Guild's national award-winning film magazine, with *Montage*, and hosting the first annual DGC Awards, an unqualified success for the Guild).

A noteworthy ten years brought the DGC to 2002 – its 40th anniversary. Its leaders were architects. "We expanded it tremendously, took on new councils, created new councils, created a very effective efficient organization respected throughout the industry, gave leadership, paid for all sorts of lobbying that other organizations couldn't afford, gave them credit for it, mobilized them, and found ways to collaborate very effectively." King recalls the successes. These were the strokes that would draft a blueprint of industry and build a powerhouse of professional organization. Simple effective strokes. "It's not just about running it, it's about expanding it and making sure that really healthy and nourishing policies are affected and brought into place so that the opportunities for work and self-realization on the part of the money are greatly enhanced. That's why the members joined. That's why they paid their dues. That's what they expected. That's what they deserve."

Goluboff agrees. "We have a lot to champion as an organization. It's sort of un-Canadian to stand up and say we are wonderful, but the reality is we are wonderful on many levels. That's not something egocentric to say. That's the reality."