

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT – DEGNZ AGM – 5 OCTOBER 2019

The last year has been incredibly busy for the Guild – I would say the busiest since the Guild was formed. Apart from our usual Professional Development events and Membership Services, we have been heavily involved in Lobbying and Advocacy on behalf of our members.

### BECOMING A UNION

At our last AGM you took the momentous step of initiating the process to register the Guild as a union. Today we will vote to implement the new constitution so that that process can be finalized.

### ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

#### The Hobbit Law Review

Last year the government initiated a review of the Hobbit Law prompting the industry guilds to come together and present a united front to government. The recommendations encompassed a new set of principles governing how film industry workers fit in industrial relations law. The recommendations proposed allowing contractors to collectively bargain at an occupation level within the screen industry. Any resulting collective contracts will apply to all contract work in that occupation. The right to strike would be given up in return for both parties in a negotiation agreeing to bargain in good faith. The collective bargaining process would be supported by a dispute resolution system.

The final recommendation was that the new model apply to all screen production work including film and television, since workers often move between the two. The Hobbit Law just applies to film – not television.

The Department of Workplace Relations was clearly impressed with the Film Industry Working Group's report and accepted it all – apart from one clause. The coverage of the new law would be restricted to film, TV drama serials, commercials and video games. Television and documentary would still be excluded. In other words, 10 to 20% of our industry would be covered by this. The rest of you – most of you – would still be unprotected and would break the law if you assembled to discuss minimum rates. It's called price-setting. We feel strongly that any legislation should apply to all workers in the screen industry and we are working to widen the coverage so that more directors and editors would be included.

#### Copyright

The government's Copyright Review is well underway. I attended a workshop on the Review process run by MBIE and we presented our submission in April. Our submission did not address all the issues raised by government. The Guild is a member of We Create (the old Copyright Council) and its submission covered issues such as safe harbour provisions, duration of copyright etc. Our submission

concentrated on the issue that is closest to our hearts – getting copyright for directors so that we can get economic rights in addition to the moral rights we are granted. We have engaged a couple of consultants to assist with planning our campaign.

In June Tui and I went to Tokyo for a group of meetings. We had a meeting at the Japanese Directors Guild, which was also attended by the Korean Directors Guild and a number of Collective Management Organisations from various countries, primarily Latin America and Europe. These CMOs distribute royalties to directors. We attended the Annual General Assembly of CISAC (the combined association of Collecting Societies). CISAC has clout – last year its societies had a combined annual income of 9.3 billion Euros. A number that big prompted the Japanese Prime Minister to turn up! We secured a visit to NZ by the Director General of CISAC, Gadi Oron. Gadi will meet various government ministers while here and address a reception in the Grand Hall at Parliament, promoting copyright for authors.

We attended a meeting of Writers and Directors Worldwide (affiliated with CISAC) which passed a resolution supporting the NZ Directors & Editors Guild in its fight for director's copyright. We also were party to setting up a new organization – the Alliance of Asia-Pacific Audiovisual Writers and Directors, a subset of Writers & Directors Worldwide – to, as part of its wider brief, promote authorship rights for directors in our region.

### Screen Sector 10 Year Strategy

In response to a government request, the Screen Sector Strategy Facilitation Group has been formed to formulate a strategy that answers the questions:

1. What is the industry's vision for the NZ screen sector in 2030?
2. What can the industry do to support its vision?
3. What role is sought from government?

This is big picture stuff but, given how fast the industry is changing, important.

We secured a seat on the group for Board member Michael Duignan who has prepared a set of questions for our members to think about and respond to. The responses will be passed along to Screen Sector Strategy NZ.

### Television Funding of Factual Content

I and the Guild ED attended a day-long hui organized by NZ on Air to get input on revamping its Factual Content funding. Their new strategy for this has been implemented.

### NZFC Funding of Feature Films with Non-NZ Creatives

In my absence Louise Leitch attended an initial meeting called by the Film Commission to seek input into its policy round the funding of feature films that have non-New Zealanders as either writers or directors. I then attended a follow-up meeting. We are strongly of the opinion that the Commission should not be funding films that have non-NZ creatives attached. The exception is co-productions where a non-NZer may come attached to a funding package. The conversation was robust. There was general agreement with our position.

## ASDACS

ASDACS is the Society that collects and disburses revenue to Australian and NZ directors that has come from overseas territories that recognize directors' authorship. Ex Guild board member Grant Campbell sits on the ASDACS Board representing our Guild. He is doing a sterling job on our behalf.

## Gender Equity

This year we continued our Emerging Women Filmmakers initiative to get more female directors into drama and feature film directing. We are pleased that female participation across our entire professional development programme sits at 56%. Finally, our Board continues to be evenly split along gender lines.

## Sex Abuse & Bullying

A subcommittee of Louise Leitch, Roseanne Liang and Michael Duignan worked on a policy, guidelines and documents for Sexual Harassment and Bullying. The policy and guidelines are available on our website. SWAG and Worksafe have organised workshops round the country to raise awareness of the issues. They are titled 'Professional Respect'. I attended one in Wellington and was impressed by both the content and the way it was run.

## Intimacy Coordinators

- We worked with Equity NZ to revise their Intimacy Guidelines.
- As part of the work around Sexual Harassment a new role of Intimacy Coordinator has been created internationally. British Intimacy Coordinator Ita O'Brien ran a series of workshops in NZ to introduce dealing with scenes of intimacy, nudity and simulated sex. DEGNZ board member Louise Leitch was the only director to attend all the workshops, along with a number of actors including Equity President Jennifer Ward Leland and Vice President Tandi Wright.
- Acting Coach Jennifer Ward-Leland ran a one-day workshop on directing scenes involving intimacy in Auckland for us, and Louise will run one in Christchurch.
- At the first Professional Respect Workshop, Tandi Wright, who has first-hand experience of the Intimacy Coordinator role, took us through how she works. I think it is a valuable tool for directors and actors, providing a safe environment for both actors and directors to do their best work. The techniques employed to work out personal boundaries are excellent.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Editor training

Board member and editor Annie Collins has spear-headed a drive to improve understanding of the Assistant Editor role.

- The Guild ran a two-day 'Basics' workshop for Assistant Editors in Auckland.
- Annie ran a two-day 'Advanced' workshop for Assistant Editors in Wellington with Dan Best and Jonno Woodford-Robinson.

- We also, in collaboration with SPADA, ran a 1-day workshop in both Auckland and Wellington for producers and directors on the technical side of post-production planning, budgeting and workflow. They were well attended.
- Complaints from post houses about the deliverables they are receiving from editors prompted Annie to initiate the creation of a Best Practice Guide for editors. A subcommittee of Annie, Margot Francis and Frances Glenday is working on this guide, which will pull together the technical requirements for delivery to all NZ Post Houses.

## Rehearsal & Performance

The Guild ran three Rehearsal & Performance workshops – two in Auckland and one in Christchurch. Facilitators were Jackie Van Beek and Chris Dudman.

## Director's Toolkit

A two-day drama directing workshop in Queenstown with Jason Stutter – our first in Queenstown

## Editor's Workshop - Documentary

We ran a one-day interactive editing workshop with US documentary editor/director/producer Doug Blush. We partnered with Loading Docs to bring Doug over from the U.S. On Day 2, Doug ran a Project Lab for three director-editor teams working on their projects.

## Howard Fine Director's Masterclass

DEGNZ and the Equity Foundation brought US acting teacher Howard Fine to Auckland to run a two day Acting Masterclass, followed by a one-day Masterclass for our directors.

## Screenlink

We continue to run panel discussions in association with other guilds. E.g. 'Fresh Eggs' – Writing and Directing TV Drama with Nick Ward and Britta Hawkins.

## Film Talks

We also continue to run Q & A sessions after film screenings of NZ films such as Merita Mita-How Mum Decolonised the Screen.

## Table Reads

Another popular programme allowing directors and writers to hear their scripts read by actors.

# MEMBER SERVICES

## International Relations

DEGNZ continues its strong relationship with the Australian Directors Guild, and ongoing contact with the Directors Guild of America, Directors Guild of Canada, and Directors UK. As mentioned above, we have forged an alliance in Asia with the directors and writer's guilds there as well as with the international authors bodies CISAC and W & DW.

## DVD Library

A day before Xmas board member Gabriel Reid alerted the Board to the closure of the Videon Video rental store and the sale of its DVD library. The Guild agreed to purchase the Directors' Collection as a resource for directors. However, the Guild is not set up to run a library. Consequently, a deal was done with Toi Whakaari which already runs a lending library of printed material. They have agreed to curate the DVD collection and make it available to directors for research. Our thanks to Gabriel for virtually single-handedly purchasing, labelling and transporting the collection to Wellington. It was a major task. Gabriel is also our representative on the Board of Film Auckland. Thank you, Gabriel.

## Guild Staff

I'd like to extend now a big thanks to our Guild staff—Caroline Harrow, our Accounts Manager and Tema Pua, our Events and Marketing Manager, who continues to take the pressure off Tui. And I would like to personally thank Tui for the outstanding job he has done over the last year, not least his fortnightly View from the Top editorial. Thank you, Tui.

## Board

I wish to acknowledge the Guild's Board members without whose dedicated commitment we wouldn't have an effective organisation. As I said at the start, this year has been exceptionally busy and everyone has stepped up to the plate.

I want to make a special acknowledgement here to Phil Gore as Treasurer, who keeps an eagle eye on our financials and accounts. It's an unpaid position and requires a significant amount of time. We do appreciate it, Phil.

We accepted Zoe McIntosh's and Helena Brooks' resignations, and we welcomed two new board members, editor Margot Francis and director Robyn Patterson.

## Funders/Sponsors

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to our funders. The New Zealand Film Commission is a major supporter of the Guild and a very special thank you goes to them. Thanks also to NZ on Air, Vista Foundation and the Australian Authorship Collection Society who, along with NZFC, lend financial support to our professional development efforts. Last but not least, a thanks to our sponsors Seresin Wines, Resene Paints, and particularly the accounting firm of Pieter Holl & Associates who ensure we remain financially viable. Pieter Holl & Associates has now been absorbed into the accountancy firm VCFO Group, who are continuing the sponsorship of the Guild. Thanks VCFO.

Howard Taylor  
President

