

Annual Report from DOC National to the BC Chapter

The Documentary Organization of Canada (DOC) celebrated its 25th birthday this past year. What started long ago with a small group of documentary filmmakers angry at the exclusion of their genre by Telefilm has now grown into a mature member-driven advocacy organization of over 800.

There are eight active chapters – BC, Alberta, Winnipeg, Quebec, Toronto, Ottawa- Gatineau, Atlantic and Newfoundland – all with their own regional focus and professional development initiatives. What brings us together is the larger, mostly issue driven undertakings that impact our opportunities to make and distribute documentary films.

We find strength in numbers. DOC National is called upon to present the view of documentarians to such decision makers as the CRTC, CTF, Telefilm and Heritage Canada; participate in crucial discussions regarding terms-of-trade and copyright; and expand services to all members.

In the past two years DOC National has added several benefits to being a member of DOC, such as **DOCspace** -- an online data bank soon to be a distribution resource for doc makers; **Getting Real 3** -- this third edition provides an ongoing quantitative look at the industry of documentary in Canada; **Doc Agora** – a new media initiative; an expanded **POV magazine** celebrating Canadian doc makers, and the new and very popular insurance program.

2008 was a difficult year for documentary and in truth -- for all Canadian filmmakers. Several public sources of funding are being eliminated and in particular -- the CIFVF which has been so supportive of emerging documentary makers -- and the ONLY fund not broadcaster driven. Now that the election is over, it is clear there will be much to do to maintain and improve the environment for making documentaries in this country.

In the next 12 months we are faced with an enormous amount of advocacy work on your behalf. All require many, many hours of concentrated work, both by experienced people and DOC volunteers.

Some of the pressing issues are.

- **License Renewals:** all major networks are up for renewal:
- Re-instating the **CIFVF:** we're already hard at work on this.
- Working to modify new proposed **CRA guidelines:**
- **Terms-of-Trade** negotiations:
- **CRTC** review of new media:
- **CTF**, working towards more suitable documentary regulations:
- **Meeting with Heritage** to discuss future intentions vis-à-vis:
CTF, Telefilm, CBC, NFB etc. and emphasizing general importance of culture
- Meeting with, and reacting to any further cuts by Government:

So twenty-five years later, we are still fighting for the documentary genre. It will take all of us to be successful.

Michaelin McDermott
Co-Vice Chair, National

*The voice of the independent filmmaker
La voix du cinéaste indépendant*