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## The Board of Directors' Academy Special Awards go to eight game-changers

### At First Ever Canadian Screen Awards

**TORONTO / MONTREAL – Feb, 4, 2013** – The Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television is pleased to announce its Board of Directors' Academy Special Awards for the first ever 2013 CANADIAN SCREEN AWARDS. These awards are given to remarkable people and productions that have made their mark in the film, television and digital media industries.

"Our industry is filled with remarkably talented people whose contributions to our country must be recognized," says Academy Chair Martin Katz. "The Board takes great pride in being able to honour and celebrate their achievements through these Academy Special Awards. I am particularly gratified this year that the Academy Board has chosen to recognize the contributions of some of our members that have truly been game-changing for the industry," says Katz.

Here is a list of the Canadian Screen Awards' first ever Academy Special Award winners:

*(In alphabetical order by award)*

**Academy Achievement Award**—For Exceptional Contributions to the Canadian Television Industry

#### JEANNE BEKER

"Jeanne Beker's pioneering role in changing the way we watch television is honoured by the Board through the Academy Special Award this year. From the early days of *TheNewMusic* to the founding of *Fashion Television* and *FashionTelevisionChannel* as well as @Fashion on-line, Jeanne is recognizable around Canada and the world as a consistent innovator of lifestyle programming," says Academy Chair Martin Katz.

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**Academy Board of Directors Tribute**—For Outstanding and Enduring Contributions to Canadian Television

**FLASHPOINT**

"Flashpoint is well-recognized by Canadians as one of this country's most-watched television dramas. Those of us within the industry know, however, that it is also a leading light of international co-production financing which has brought together partners from Canada, the US and around the world. With *Flashpoint*, Anne-Marie LaTraverse and Bill Mustos have moved the goalposts in creating a highly entertaining series at home that is a huge export success as well," says Academy Chair Martin Katz.

**Academy Special Award** – For Exceptional Achievement in Canadian Film & Television

**IAN GREENBERG**

"As co-founder, President and CEO of Astral Media, Ian Greenberg's contribution to the Canadian media landscape cannot be overstated and the Board felt strongly it was time to recognize Ian with this year's Special Award for Television," says Academy Chair Martin Katz.

**Academy Special Film Award** – For Exceptional Achievement in Filmmaking or Service to the Film Industry

**VICTOR LOEWY**

"Victor Loewy has pioneered independent film distribution for over three decades through Vivafilm and Alliance and their operations across Canada and internationally as well," says Academy Chair Martin Katz.

**Digital Media Trail Blazing Award**—For an Outstanding Achievement in Canadian Digital Media sponsored by the Ontario Media Development Corporation (OMDC)

**ANDRA SHEFFER**

Andra Sheffer deserves recognition by the Academy this year based on her lifelong dedication to our industry, which included a decade as founding Executive Director of the Academy, but also more recently as the Executive Director of three important private funds dedicated to support of film, television and digital media in Canada. It's not an overstatement to say her influence has touched all of us who work in this industry," says Academy Chair Martin Katz.

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**Gordon Sinclair Award for Broadcast Journalism** (posthumously)—To Honour Exceptional Contributions in Canadian Television Journalism

**THE HONOURABLE LAURIER LAPIERRE O.C., PH. D**

"Laurier LaPierre's role in broadcast journalism changed the way news stories are treated in television, first in Canada, and then throughout the world. While sadly we lost him just a few months ago, his legacy lives on, and the Board was intent on recognizing that, especially for his pioneering work in the creation of the breakthrough news magazine series *This Hour Has Seven Days*," says Academy Chair Martin Katz.

**Margaret Collier Award**—For a Writer's Exceptional Contribution to Canadian Television

**HEATHER CONKIE**

"Heather Conkie has been a major writing force in this country from the early days of the massively successful *Road to Avonlea* series and most recently leading the writing room on six seasons of the hit show for *Heartland*," says Academy Chair Martin Katz.

**Outstanding Technical Achievement Award**—For Recent Canadian Technical Achievements

**IMAX Corporation for its suite of entertainment technologies**

"IMAX Corporation's suite of entertainment technologies are game-changing advances through which the Canadian-based company has had a profound impact on the movie-going experience for audiences around the world. As we have also seen this year, IMAX has also had a tremendous influence on the bottom-line fundamentals of the theatrical film business globally," says Academy Chair Martin Katz.

**Academy Special Awards**

**Academy Achievement Award**—For Exceptional Contributions to the Canadian Television Industry

**JEANNE BEKER**

[https://twitter.com/jeanne\\_beker](https://twitter.com/jeanne_beker)

**Academy Board of Directors Tribute**—For Outstanding and Enduring Contributions to Canadian Television

**FLASHPOINT**

<http://www.ctv.ca/FlashPoint.aspx>

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**Academy Special Award**—For Exceptional Achievement in Canadian Film & Television

**IAN GREENBERG**

<http://www.astral.com/en/about-astral/leadership-team>

**Academy Special Film Award**—In Recognition of Exceptional Achievement in Filmmaking or Service to the Film Industry

**VICTOR LOEWY**

<http://www.academy.ca/awards/specialawards.cfm>

**Digital Media Trail Blazing Award**—For an Outstanding Achievement in Canadian Digital Media

**ANDRA SHEFFER**

<http://bellfund.ca/about/administration/>

**Gordon Sinclair Award for Broadcast Journalism (posthumously)**—To Honour Exceptional Contributions in Canadian Television Journalism

**THE HONOURABLE LAURIER LAPIERRE O.C., PH.**

<http://www.academy.ca/awards/specialawards.cfm>

**Margaret Collier Award**—For a Writer's Exceptional Contribution to Canadian Television

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heather\\_Conkie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heather_Conkie)

**Outstanding Technical Achievement Award**—For Recent Canadian Technical Achievements

**IMAX Corporation for its suite of entertainment technologies**

<http://www.imax.com/about/experience/>

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## Sex & the City's Kim Cattrall honoured with Canadian Screen Award For Outstanding Artistic Contribution to Film & Television

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TORONTO, FEB. 28, 2013 – The Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television (Academy) presents Kim Cattrall with the **Canadian Screen Award For Outstanding Artistic Contribution to Film & Television** at the inaugural Canadian Screen Awards.

“We are truly honoured to award Kim with a special achievement award for her substantial contribution to the film and television industry,” says Helga Stephenson, Academy CEO. “She is a fabulously successful Canadian performer who proudly embraces both sides of the border. We congratulate Kim for her talent and accomplishments.”

The **Canadian Screen Award For Outstanding Artistic Contribution to Film & Television** is awarded to a remarkable person who has made their mark on the film and television industry.

“Kim is an international icon of film, television and the stage,” says Academy Chair Martin Katz, “After growing up in BC, she has lived and worked all over the world in some of the most memorable roles. She has previously been nominated for both film and television roles by our Academy, but it is a great honour to be able to recognize her body of work with this inaugural year of the **Canadian Screen Award For ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION TO FILM AND TELEVISION.**”

The Canadian-raised actress has had an extensive and varied career. In February 2011, Cattrall starred in the PBS mini-series *Any Human Heart*. Recent features include Keith Bearden’s *Meet Monica Velour* and *The Ghost Writer*, which won the Silver Bear for director Roman Polanski at the Berlin International Film Festival.

In Summer 2010, Cattrall appeared as Samantha Jones in the movie sequel *Sex and the City 2*, based on the HBO series for which she received a Golden Globe Award; two Screen Actors Guild Awards and five nominations; and five Emmy Award nominations.

Also an accomplished author, Cattrall has written *Sexual Intelligence* and *Being a Girl: Navigating the Ups and Downs of Teen Life*. She founded the Canadian company Fertile Ground Productions, which adapted *Sexual Intelligence* into an HBO documentary that afforded Cattrall a Gemini Award nomination for hosting.

In 2009 Cattrall was inducted into Canada's Walk of Fame, and in 2011 she received GLAAD's Golden Gate Award. This year, she can be seen in *Sweet Bird of Youth* at the West End's Old Vic in the U.K.

This fall Ms. Cattrall will be co-executive producing and starring with Don McKellar and Bob Martin in an adaptation of the BBC2 series *Sensitive Skin*. The production is being produced by Rhombus Films and will start shooting in Toronto September 2013.

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## CBC Saskatchewan's *Blindspot: What Happened to Canada's Aboriginal Fathers?* wins Canada Award

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TORONTO – Feb. 25, 2013 – The 2013 Canada Award is proudly presented to television documentary *Blind Spot: What Happened to Canada's Aboriginal Fathers?* by the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, it was announced today.

"This socially conscious and inspirational documentary captures the difficulties young adults experience in some Canadian Aboriginal communities," says Helga Stephenson, Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television. "We congratulate the creators of *Blind Spot: What Happened to Canada's Aboriginal Fathers?* and are honoured to recognize their achievements and the important message this film conveys."

The Canada Award honours excellence in mainstream television programming that reflects the racial and cultural diversity of Canada. The award will be presented on Wednesday, Feb. 27 at the Canadian Screen Awards Television and Digital Media Awards.

*Blind Spot: What Happened to Canada's Aboriginal Fathers?* is a one-hour television documentary filmed in North Central Regina, directed and produced by CBC Saskatchewan's Geoff Leo. The documentary sheds light on the largely unknown and unstudied problem of fatherlessness in the Aboriginal community, i.e. the "blind spot."

"We are incredibly honoured to be recognized with this Canada Award," says Blind Spot producer/director, Geoff Leo. "We really believe that the message of this documentary is one that Canadians need to hear; one that's been ignored for too long and we hope this Canada Award will give this important issue the awareness it deserves."

The program follows three First Nations men as they face their own personal demons on their quest to become better fathers – though the deck is stacked against them. The documentary's prime focus is on a 16-year-old abandoned by his father and about to become a dad himself.

We also meet the only Canadian academic who has studied this problem. She points out there's a similar problem with African-American fathers in the United States. But in that country there long has been a public and sustained focus on solutions—from the White House on down. By contrast, here at home the problem of absent fathers in the Aboriginal community is all but ignored.



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# Nova Scotia filmmaker Jason Buxton Wins Claude Jutra Award for *Blackbird*

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TORONTO – Jan. 29, 2013 – The 2013 Claude Jutra Award, sponsored by Telefilm Canada, goes to Nova Scotia filmmaker **Jason Buxton** for his debut feature film, *Blackbird*, it was announced today by the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television.

“The Academy is honoured to present filmmaker Jason Buxton with the Claude Jutra Award for *Blackbird* which is a cutting edge and socially poignant debut film,” says Richard Spear, Academy’s Quebec Chair.

*Blackbird* is a film that explores the power, and danger, of social media and cyber-bullying.

“I am absolutely thrilled with this honour. To be recognized by my peers for excellence in filmmaking is deeply meaningful, and looking back at the caliber of directors honoured over the past twenty years of the Award’s history is both humbling and reassuring,” said Jason Buxton.

The Claude Jutra Award honours outstanding achievement by a first-time feature filmmaker and was established in 1993 in honour of the late Quebec director Claude Jutra, best known for Canadian classic *Mon Oncle Antoine*.

In addition to winning the Claude Jutra Award, *Blackbird* is in the running for two Canadian Screen Awards: Best Original Screenplay for Buxton and Achievement in Editing for Kimberlee McTaggart. The film’s producers include Marc Almon, David Miller and Buxton, with distribution by A71 Entertainment.

*Blackbird* highlights the story of a troubled teen, Sean Randall (Connor Jessup), who is falsely accused of planning a Columbine shooting scenario. An unlikely bond between Sean (Jessup) and a preppy teenage girl, Deanna Roy (Alexia Fast) results in a violent confrontation. His only hope is to overcome his dark image, and prove his innocence to Deanna and to his community.

**Blackbird** had its world premiere at TIFF, where it earned the SKYY Vodka Award for Best Canadian First Feature Film. It went on to shine at events across Canada, including the Vancouver International Film Festival (Best Canadian Feature) and the Atlantic Film Festival (Best Atlantic Feature, Best Atlantic Director and Best Atlantic Screenwriter).

To date, **Blackbird** has made some significant progress internationally, including a key sale to France. Films Boutique is handling international sales.

Born in Farmborough, England, Buxton studied film production at Simon Fraser University and the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Prior to making films, Buxton worked behind-the-scenes as a camera assistant, where he learned the craft observing many established filmmakers at work, including James Cameron on *Titanic* and Lasse Hallstrom on *The Shipping News*.

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**About Blackbird:** *Blackbird* is produced by Marc Almon (Story Engine Pictures), David Miller (A71 Productions), Jason Buxton (Festina Lente Productions) and executive produced by Thom Fitzgerald and Chad Maker. It is supported by Telefilm Canada, Film Nova Scotia, Shaw Rocket Fund, The Harold Greenberg Fund and Super Channel. The film is being sold internationally, minus North America, by Films Boutique.