

# The ACTORS Space

## ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

### Close-Up with Sarah-Jane Redmond

*schoolcreative's Artist In Residence is an accomplished actress who has an extensive list of credits on her resume including Millennium, X-Files, Da Vinci's Inquest, James Cameron's Dark Angel, Steven Spielberg's Taken and most recently The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants. She is currently working on a science fiction thriller, The Entrance.*

**What brought about your decision to become an actor?**

I would like to start by saying how thrilled I am that my words and experience may be able to offer advice, help or inspiration to any of those daring to pursue this craft. It is a gift given back to me to be able to do this and thank-you to schoolcreative for this opportunity. In regards to the question that brought about my decision to become an actor; I believe that some things need to be left as a mystery. Every person's reason to become an actor is different. What I will say is that I think you have to know absolutely that it's what you want to do. One of the great things that gave me respect for the craft was when I met Stockard Channing, backstage in New York after her performance of *Six Degrees of Separation* (John Guare). Up until that moment; I had always felt a bit shy in saying that I was an actress. Upon being introduced to her, the respect that she gave me by extending her hand made me realize that I needed to step up to the plate and give myself that respect as well.

**What did you do to get where you are today?**

I kept knocking, just keep knocking and keep moving forward and don't wait for the phone to ring.

Also a positive attitude will take you anywhere.

**How quickly did your work start to get recognized?**

It took me picking up the phone and making calls and getting things done.

**Do you still make the calls?**

All the time, but there's something to be said for sitting back and trusting that things will come.

**I have been told that you don't accept no for an answer. Can you give us an example of how this has worked in your favour?**

When you hear no in this business, there's only one way to survive that and for me that's just to realize that it has nothing to do with you and even if it does; it doesn't matter. It means, too tall, too short, too young, too old and *move on*.

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### Celebrity Juice

Move over Julia Roberts, Angelina Jolie is now first in line to be the highest paid actress after signing an advertising deal with St. John, the clothing line.

Hollywood is in love again! Demi Moore & Ashton Kutcher have triumphed over the skeptics by finally tying the knot

Strike Matt Damon off of the Bachelors List as he just popped the question to girlfriend, Luciana Barroso.



## Letter from the Founder & Artistic Director - Kirsten Clarkson

CLARKSON co-founded one of Vancouver's oldest acting schools, *STUDIO ON THE DRIVE* (Michele Sands Partridge) & owned *CTM INTERNATIONAL* Talent Agency. Kirsten is a writer (CBC), Director (*MOVIE CENTRAL*) and was Head of Development at *Free Form Productions*.

Dear Actors

I hope that you will find this newsletter a source of entertainment, inspiration and a resource. Every week we will include insights from Vancouver professionals, movie reviews, and interviews with the fabulous actors who study here. If any of you want to write a review, or have booked a gig that we can write about or have a funny onset story or anything you would like to add to the newsletter please email us and let us know.

Our first full time program is moving along brilliantly and the students are all looking forward to making their short film with Mark Sawers next year.

We have some great new teachers: Stellina Rusich teaches *Ace Your Auditions*. Linda Darlow is teaching *Beginner* and *Advanced* classes, I teach an *Intermediate* class and the *Full Time Program* and Elias Toufexis is teaching *Beginner* and *Teen* classes. Sarah-Jane Redmond is our *Artist in Residence* and she is helping us create the finest curriculum we can for our students as well as serving as an inspiration and mentor.

As you may know, September 30th is our first year anniversary and we are very proud and excited about all that has happened in the past year. We have excellent and inspiring actors

We are also proud to have such excellent and inspiring teachers aboard and some very gifted actors studying here. Please come help us celebrate from 4:00 - 11:00 Friday September 30th. Dress for the party is semi formal and there will be lots of fun to be had.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter and studying here.

Warm Regards,

Kirsten Clarkson

# Food For thought



"The inner life of the images, and not the personal and tiny experiential resources of the actor, should be elaborated on the stage and shown to the audience. This life is rich and revealing for the audience as well as the actor himself"

-Michael Chekhov-

## meet creative's team



**LINDA DARLOW** is one of Vancouver's best actors & most distinguished teachers. Some noted actors Linda has worked with: Toni Collette, James Woods, Drew Barrymore, Nicolette Sheridan, & Bob Newhart. She has taught thousands of actors over the years & is a warm, caring instructor with great insight & strict, high standards



**STELLINA RUSICH** has worked opposite Ray Liotta, David Paymer, Danny Aiello & Martin Sheen. Leo nominated, she is recurring as Lanora opposite Tony Shalhoub in *Monk*, has been in countless series & over 60 commercials. Stellina has a passion for encouraging great acting, & loves to help people get work!



**ELIAS TOUFEXIS** is an experienced award-winning NY Fringe Film, Television & Theatre actor. You may have seen Elias in *The Collector*, *Da Vinci's Inquest*, *Smallville*, *Dead Like Me*, *YTV's Fries with That*, & many more. He takes great pride in his student's acting achievements.



**SARAH-JANE REDMOND** is **SCHOOLCREATIVE'S ARTIST IN RESIDENCE**. Ms. Redmond is one of Vancouver's premiere actors. Notably, she's had major roles in works produced by Steven Spielberg & James Cameron and many more. For 7 years she has a recurring lead role in the award winning *Da Vinci's Inquest*.



# Artists Spotlight

Featuring Dalj Brar & Colin Neufeld

Dalj Brar and Colin Neufeld are two SchoolCreative students who are currently in the collaborative process of making a horror film, 'Beast of Rage'. Dalj and Colin are a testament that anyone who wants to can step up and turn their imagination into a reality. The ingredients; a little drive and a lot of belief.

## Q & A with Dalj Brar

### How long have you been acting?

I have been acting my whole life. Owning my own business has given me a leg up on other actors - you are the business. I started acting for real (film, commercials, etc.) in January.

### What projects are you currently working on?

I just finished a few short films that will be entered into some of the festivals around the world. My latest is a Public Service Announcement that will be shown across Canada called 'A Nations Dream' produced by Borderlessworld Productions. Currently I am producing a short film with my acting partner Colin Neufeld called 'Beast of Rage'.

### What made you decide to try your hand at producing?

The producing process has been very challenging for me thus far. I never realized so much went into each production that I was auditioning for. From securing locations, crew (there are so many positions that need to be filled), Insurance, Permits, Workers Compensation, Shooting schedule, Catering, Equipment rental, which camera to use, whether to use film or digital, to which actors best expressed the character that was developed. The process is enormous but with the team of people the film will be made.

### Who is your business plan modeled after?

Mel Gibson. He does it all: acts, writes, directs and produces films. His passion for what he believes in is very inspiring and I have based my plan around him for that very reason. The business plan has helped me achieve my goals and helped me overcome obstacles: Focus, Focus, Focus! Once I knew where I was starting and where I wanted to end up then

I had somewhere to go in between. I would set small targets for myself (i.e. I must go to one audition every week whether from my agent or on my own or meet a new person every week that was involved in the entertainment business or learn something about the business I did not know already). By giving myself little targets to achieve, I was getting closer and closer to my goal. Obstacles are everywhere. You just have to know how to overcome them.

### How can others benefit from their own business plan?

If you want to succeed in anything you must have a game plan, it's that simple. If you do not have a plan then you are just going in circles and it is much easier to lose focus when you come across an obstacle because you didn't know why you are doing it!

## Q & A with Colin Neufeld

### How long have you been writing for film?

I've always been influenced by movies, so my writing, has always had a descriptive, visual style to it, so in that sense everything I have ever written has kind of been its own little movie in my head. Beast is the first script I have completed. I do have other ideas for movies that that are kind of bodies looking for souls, so to speak. Inspiration can be a real pain in the ass sometimes.

### What can you tell us about the 'Beast of Rage'?

The idea for Beast started with Dalj saying "two guy's walk down the street and beat up everyone they see" And from there kind of spiraled into an apocalyptic, horror thriller where the camera goes around and basically watches people getting in fights. Seriously though, my favorite thing about the project, aside from the cool factor (it's gonna be really cool, man) is that it and its characters are both vicious and thoughtful, without being tacky or overly deep.

... *Continued on page 4*



## Learn to be Biz Savvy

Whether you are just starting to launch your business plan or have been on the runway for a while, take a few moments to check your business chutzpah for maintenance. Refuel, get ready for take off and land that role.

- ★ **Business Plan** – If you don't already have one, set up a meeting with Kirsten and get it started. Mapping out a route will keep your head clear on the direction that you want to go in.
- ★ **Budget** – Maintaining upkeep on your career can get pricey. Like any business, you will need money for start-up costs. Don't forget that these are more than one-time costs, avoid running out of funds by developing a financial schedule.
- ★ **Train**: If a track runner conceded or decided to take a break because they were too tired or overworked, then they would quickly find themselves lagging behind their competition. You need to keep your body tuned, your mind sharp and be emotionally alert; ready to sprint off towards an audition at a moments notice. Do this by keeping yourself trained; acting everyday will keep you at attention, at the front of the pack.
- ★ **Support System**: Acting can be a lonely profession if you don't surround yourself by like minded people. Avoid crash landings. Find a group of artists who will encourage you, help you with auditions, and mentor you.
- ★ **Health**: Prevent yourself from getting off course by keeping physically fit. You are in profession that demands a lot of your time and mental and emotional energy. You are also at the mercy of an industry that demands that you look good. Keeping in shape, will help you focus your energy and the bonus is that you'll feel good about yourself.
- ★ **Travel Bag**: Equip yourself with the items you need to continue chartering your course. Essentials are:
  - Business Plan
  - Business Cards
  - Headshots
  - Audition Log
  - Resume
  - Research
  - Demo Reel
  - Gym Membership
- ★ **Believe**: Acting is not a profession that you want to do- You are doing it. If you have already started your trip, it would be very unwise to shut off your engine in mid-air. You would never get anywhere. Network, Audition and never STOP!

**Close Up With Sarah-Jane Redmond, cont...****What do you do to prove that 'too short etc' is not the case?**

Think positively, the second you start to make it about you, you're going to crumble, easier said than done but it's a good rule to practice. At one point, I had asked the universe to work non-stop, which I got, I was working as a leading actress in three series day and night, I forgot to include the equation – I want to be happy. I had to let go of my career to realize that I could be happy without any of that, because that's not what brings happiness (sounds simple, but hey). I think that all experiences are the same; it's just how you choose to believe them. The real break for me came when I discovered that I could be happy with or without my career. Once I let go of my career, I really started to enjoy it.

**Do you mean in life?**

Yeah in life and in work; I've had one of the most challenging and best years of my life, I don't think it's the projects or what life brings, I think it's my perception.

**What artistic medium to you prefer working in, film, television or theatre?**

This is going to sound really corny but it really really doesn't matter. It's just your perception of 'hey I need some money right now' or hey I really need to feel creatively fulfilled right now, or I need to have some fun right now. Sometimes working really cheesy stuff can be a lot of fun. Of course, the ultimate experience would be a Broadway or Off Broadway show that has a long run...but I think everything has a purpose.

**Are you interested in exploring other markets?**

One market that I've always wanted to get into was the independent film scene in Canada, which for some reason didn't happen for me until this year. It wasn't until I decided to leave this career that it just sort of fell into place.

**Are you referring to The Entrance?**

In no small way. I could not have dreamed up a better experience.

**Have you done any other independents aside from the Entrance?**

Small parts here and there, it's funny though, I think that until you think you're really ready, no one else will. I don't know if you'll ever feel ready, you'll always have that feeling of *can I do it?*

**That never goes away then...?**

No. God I hope not.

*Check back in the next issue for more up a closer look at Sarah-Jane Redmond.*

**Q&A with Colin Newfeld, Continued from page 3****What made you decide to write a horror film? Is it a genre that you particularly favour?**

Dalj and I really have Kirsten to thank for getting the whole thing started. I was in her office one day just asking about how movies get made, when she says "You and Dalj should make a movie" And shazam, here we are. I love horror movies. Always have. Always will. Once, when living in Saskatoon, I had a week off of work and a 49 cent video store down the street. I decimated the entire horror section, then even found more misplaced in the action and drama sections. I like horror movies.

**Can you please provide some insight into what the writing process has been like for you?**

The writing process was a wild one. I thought about the idea for a couple of weeks, looking up Demons, reading the Bible, reading prophesies and books on cults and the apocalypse. I was on a steady diet of coffee, cigarettes and heavy metal music. Then, I sat down and just poured the whole thing out of my head and onto the page (in no discernable format). Then came re-writes. And re-writes. Put it together, take it apart. Repeat. It was a beautiful moment when I could finally sit back and say "OK, I like that"

**How have you managed to balance providing both a creative and organizational approach to this film?**

As far as the creative and organizational approach goes, focus has been the order of the day. I wake up everyday, have a coffee and make a list of everything I want to get done that day. I then spend the rest of my coffee thinking of all the cool things I could do if I could get my list done. I find that the more efficient I am and the more fun I have, the more I can throw myself into the my work (acting, filmmaking... you know, the little things). Some days it works, some days it don't.

**web hitz****Casting Workbook**

[www.castingworkbook.com](http://www.castingworkbook.com)

post your resume and headshots, a sign-up must for any serious actor

**Actors Access**

[www.actorsaccess.com](http://www.actorsaccess.com)

find out the latest auditions for student, independent and non-union projects



## Movie Review

### THE BROTHERS GRIMM

By Kirsten Clarkson

My dear friend, Tink (a well known genius most of the time) invited me to see "The Brother's Grimm". What a mistake. Although it was horrific torture, I am not taking him off the Christmas list for this -- he suffered enough sitting through the damn thing.

I have no idea what Terry Gilliam was trying to tell us with this film. In fact I was so turned off by the movie I wanted to take back my child hood and exchange it for one that didn't have a single Grimm Fairy Tale in it. I never want to think of this slice of screen sewage again.

Little Red Riding Hood is turning in her grave. The Brothers Grimm most famous stories ("Hansel and Gretel", "Little Red Riding Hood", "Snow White") are hinted at, in passing, but there is no real connection to the story on screen.

Brothers Wilhelm (Matt Damon) and Jacob Grimm (Heath Ledger) are shysters who get strong-armed into a convoluted scheme by a dense King and 'Malevolent Court Evil Dude'. Believe me it sounds a billion times more interesting than it was.

I can't tell you what happened next, because I walked out. What I saw was ugly, dark, disconnected, pointless, humourless, meaningless, had ridiculously bad production design, and was completely without merit. Not to put too fine a point on it.

There was absolutely no joy in Mudville.

Heath Ledger and Matt Damon had the combined energy of a three-toed sloth. Their chemistry was even less exciting. Their acting was uninspired -- they just showed up for work and did the lines. Who can blame them? These poor actors looked as though they were planning their funerals. To be fair to Ledger, he had a few interesting facial ticks, but nothing that made this un-watchable crap any less painful.

Long story short: It sucked and we left.



- schoolcreative Anniversary Party – Sept. 30, 4:00pm -11:00 pm  
[www.schoolcreative.com](http://www.schoolcreative.com)
- Vancouver Film Festival – Sept. 29 – Oct. 14  
[www.viff.org](http://www.viff.org)
- Celluloid Social Club – check website for details  
<http://www.alterentertainment.com/Celluloid/html>
- Vancouver Theatre Sports League presents The Imprentice  
[www.vtsl.com](http://www.vtsl.com)
- Vancouver Comedy Festival – Oct. 19 – Oct. 25, 2005  
[www.comedyfest.com](http://www.comedyfest.com)

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