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The 24th Annual Gemini Special Awards Announced

OCTOBER 19 & 20, 2009 TORONTO, ONTARIO
NOVEMBER 14, 2009 CALGARY, ALBERTA

Premier



Lead



Partner



Sponsor



Broadcast Partner



Media Partner



Toronto, ON – October 1, 2009 – The Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2009 Special Awards, to be presented at the upcoming 24th Annual Gemini Awards Industry Galas, taking place October 19th and 20th in Toronto, Ontario and the Broadcast Gala, taking place November 14th in Calgary, Alberta.

“The Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television is proud to honour these individuals and their work which has, without question, influenced and impacted the careers of their colleagues and the industry at large,” says Sara Morton, CEO of the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television. “On behalf of the Academy membership, thank you and congratulations to this year’s Special Awards recipients for their exceptional contributions to the ongoing success of the Canadian television industry.”

This year’s recipients are:

Academy Achievement Award – *Allan King*

This award is presented to an individual for an exceptional, outstanding or ongoing contribution or service to the Canadian television industry. This year’s Award is presented posthumously to Mr. King, whose illustrious career and life-long commitment to and support of Canadian culture will have a lasting impact on the Canadian film and television industries. Widely regarded as a pioneer of the *cinéma vérité* style, Mr. King’s career spanned 6 decades, garnered countless awards and honours in Canada and abroad, and included work in various mediums, genres, and styles. Mr. King’s films include *Warrendale, A Married Couple, Who Has Seen the Wind, Dying at Grace*, and *EMPz 4 Life*; his work in television includes directing a number of popular and acclaimed series including *Road to Avonlea, Danger Bay, Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, as well as the mini-series *By Way of the Stars*. In 2003, Mr. King was named an Officer of the Order of Canada. Mr. King passed away in June 2009 at the age of 79.

Canada Award – *Club Native*

The Canada Award honours excellence in mainstream television programming which best reflects the racial and cultural diversity of Canada by fostering greater awareness among the Canadian public of the multicultural and multiracial nature of the country as well as promoting opportunities for ethnic and visible minority professionals within the broadcasting industry. Produced by Rezolution Pictures and co-produced by the NFB, *Club Native* is an affecting documentary that looks deeply into the history and present-day reality of Aboriginal identity. Through moving stories from a range of characters from her Kahnawake Reserve, Mohawk filmmaker Tracey Deer explores the divisive legacy of more than 100 years of discriminatory government policy and the ongoing challenges of belonging. The Canada Award is sponsored by CBC.

Earle Grey Award – Eric Peterson

This award is presented to an Actor/Actress for a body of work in Canadian television and/or for significant contributions to the international profile of Canadian television. An award-winning actor whose career has included work in film, television, and radio, Mr. Peterson most recently portrayed Oscar Leroy in the hit comedy series *Corner Gas*. Mr. Peterson's extensive credits include 7 seasons as "Leon Robinovitch" in the series *Street Legal* (a role which garnered him 3 Gemini Awards), roles in Canadian film and television movies of the week including *Trudeau* and *Earth*, and guest appearances on countless Canadian series including *This Is Wonderland*, *Slings and Arrows*, *DaVinci's Inquest*, and *Traders*.

Gemini Humanitarian Award – Susan Hay

This award is presented to an individual for their exceptional contributions and commitments to community and public service outside the Canadian television industry. Ms. Hay is a veteran broadcaster and TV host who is a committed spokesperson and an active supporter of multiple charities and causes, including Toronto's Ronald McDonald House, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada, the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario, and Reach for the Rainbow. In 2003, Ms. Hay visited Africa with World Vision to help children who have been orphaned by AIDS; she returned in 2005 and 2006 to build schools and help transform lives. Ms. Hay has garnered many accolades for her work in broadcasting and for her charitable contributions including the 2009 Rotary Youth Impact Lifetime Achievement Award, the 2007 Spirit of Giving Award for her work with children and young adults with disabilities, a Distinguished Diamond Award, and the Canadian Crime Victim Foundation Award of Honour. The Gemini Humanitarian Award is sponsored by Canwest.

Margaret Collier Award – Barbara Samuels

This award is presented to a writer for a body of work in Canadian television and/or significant contribution to the international profile of Canadian television. Known for crafting enduring characters and tackling challenging socio-political issues, Ms. Samuel's extensive screenwriting credits include *Mount Royal*, *The Jim Henson Hour*, *E.N.G.*, and *Chasing Freedom*. Additionally, Ms. Samuels co-created and exec-produced *North of 60*, a groundbreaking series which garnered 48 Gemini Award nominations over 6 seasons and spawned 5 MOWs, and *Black Harbour*. She also co-wrote and co exec-produced the award-winning miniseries *Answered by Fire*, the first dramatic co-production between the CBC and Australia's ABC. Ms. Samuels regularly mentors emerging screenwriters through her work with various organizations including the Canadian Film Centre, the Banff World Television Festival, and the Summer Institute of Film & Television.

For additional information on this year's Special Awards recipients, please visit www.geminiawards.ca.

The Gemini Awards recognize the year's best in Canadian English-language television. The presentation of the Gemini's 99 award categories and special awards will be divided over multiple nights. The **2009 Industry Galas** will take place on **October 19th** and **20th** in Toronto, Ontario at The Sound Academy. Documentary, News, Sports, and Lifestyle Awards will be presented on October 19; Drama, Children's, Comedy, and Variety Awards will be presented on October 20. The **2009 Broadcast Gala** will take place on **November 14th** in Calgary, Alberta and will air on Global and Showcase; venue and broadcast timeslot will be announced in the coming weeks

About the ACCT:

Established in 1979, the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television is a national, non-profit, professional association dedicated to the promotion, recognition, and celebration of exceptional achievements in Canadian film and television. Unifying professionals across Canada, the ACCT is a vital and integral force, representing all areas of the film and television industries.

For further information, please contact:
Judy Lung, Communications Manager
Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television
Ph: 416-366-2227 ext 238
E-mail: judy@academy.ca