

## WIDC 2006 ACTING ENSEMBLE



### **NELSON CARTER LEIS, Vancouver, BC**

Nelson's first role was as a toddler, pushing a dump truck down a hill in an Simon Fraser University student film (title unknown). At the age of eight he got the opportunity to voice cartoon sketches in French for the Canadian version of Sesame Street. It was a few years later when he was eleven that Nelson made the definitive decision to make acting his career. The momentous event that precipitated this decision was meeting Michael J. Fox in the cavernous bowels of the CBC. At that point, being an actor became a very real, tangible possibility for him. After high school, Nelson began his acting studies, first in Vancouver and then in New York at The American Academy of Dramatic Arts. He has also studied with the world-renowned coaches Larry Moss and Ivana Chubbuck. Nelson's TV credits include: DAINGERFIELD, a Canadian comedy pilot; JEREMIAH opposite Luke Perry and Malcolm Jamal-Warner; and BIG SOUND, where he was directed by comic legend David Steinberg. Nelson's latest role was in the indie horror INSECTICIDAL (Best Creature Feature, 2006 Phoenix Film Festival). Nelson's notable theatre credits include James McLure's LONE STAR, Patrick Marber's CLOSER, and Gardner McKay's TOYER. One of Nelson's proudest achievements was in 2004, co-producing and starring in the Vancouver premiere of Kenneth Lonnergan's play LOBBY HERO. His first collaborative theatrical experience was in 1995, co-writing and co-starring in IF IT'S TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, an interactive play that toured schools throughout BC. It was sponsored by the Attorney General's Office and the Children of the Street Society and had a mandate to promote awareness of the dangers of teenage prostitution. This experience informed Nelson for the first-time that as an actor he could positively affect the world – an awareness that he has kept at the forefront of his intentions. Nelson is an actor who thrives on challenging himself by working deeply in his preparation and taking risks in his performances. He looks forward to the WIDC workshop, which he imagines to be an energizing, challenging, imagination provoking, and collaborative experience.



### **ROGUE JOHNSTON, Toronto, ON**

Born in the United States, Rogue Johnston was raised in Canada, where he enjoyed an extremely successful career kickboxing. In 1991 he fought the amateur kickboxing Champion (Andre Blais) then quickly transitioned into acting doing a string of B-movie action films. In his first season of CBC's THIS IS WONDERLAND Rogue was nominated for a Gemini for his Recurring Principal role as Mr. Jackson (a homeless Schizophrenic man.) His other television appearances include MUTANT X, TRACKER, WITCH BLADE, LA FEMME NIKITA, QUEER AS FOLK, RELIC HUNTER, STARHUNTER, DUE SOUTH, ROBOCOP PRIME DIRECTIVES, KUNG-FU THE LEGEND, EDISON, THE WIZARD OF LIGHT, to name a few. His feature film credits include SKIN WALKERS, AGAINST THE ROPES, GET RICH QUICK OR DIE TRYING, THE SPREADING GROUND, THE THIRD MIRACLE, FREE OF EDEN, JUNGLE GROUND, JUNGLE LAW, NO EXIT, THE KILLING MACHINE, SURVIVE THE NIGHT among others.

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### **MILES MEADOWS, Vancouver, BC**

Miles Meadows, a familiar face to the performing community landed his first theatrical lead at age five and since then he has successfully established himself as an industry professional with an incredible respect for his craft. Currently residing between Vancouver and Los Angeles Miles has proven himself an asset to both diverse pools of talent. Most recently working on *SMALLVILLE* as Doug, a fanatic obsessed with Lex Luthor, Miles also recently finished filming the series finale for the series *LIL ROMEO* as the eager to please Lance. Miles' roles have ranged from a supporting lead in NBC's *CARRIE* as the insecure bully Kenny and his starring role as the sly calculating and violent antagonist Zana in the edgy dramatic feature *THE TRIBE OF JOSEPH* to his starring role in Artisans teen thriller *THE MANGLER 2.0* as every ones favorite comical aristocratic drug dealer Cory Banks and his lead in the highly acclaimed Showtime drama *HOMEROOM* as the emotionally conflicted hero next door Kevin Rhodes. Other credits include Showtime's *THE L WORD* as Cooper, MTV's *2GETHER* as Mr. Rochester, MGM's highest rated episodes of *JEREMIAH* as Jeff, a prisoner who finds himself begging for his life in a futuristic concentration camp, *DARK ANGEL* as Rolins a super powered thug, and many more. Down to earth with an intense presence and an incredible range this bright talented young performer is extensively trained, touring as lead vocals with jazz group 'Electric Mayhem' and dancing for Bravo Television's 'Eterne Sanguis'. Constantly busy expanding his skills and knowledge Miles Meadows greatest hope is to find the time to return to his first love, theater.



### **VICTORIA NESTOROWICZ, Toronto, ON**

Native to Lethbridge Alberta, Victoria grew up performing in this windy city's local Theater and Television. She attended *Augustana University* where she studied both Theater and English courses then moved on the theater program at *Sheridan college* in Oakville Ontario where she escaped from desks and spectacles to sing, dance, act and learn to strum a bit of guitar to serenade the boys (But soon learnt they didn't exactly swing her way...musical theater). In 2002 Victoria traveled to Tokyo and throughout Canada with Topological and Kagebushi Theater's production of *LULIE THE ICEBERG* a musical play written by The Princess Takamodo of Japan. When she returned Victoria hooked up with some friends and work shopped *EVIL DEAD I&II THE MUSICAL* which she performed two times, the show turned out to be one of Toronto's hit indie musicals and went on to be performed in Montreal at the *Just For Laughs Comedy Festival*. In 2004 Victoria landed a series regular role on the *Gemini award* winning teen series *RADIO FREE ROSCOE* airing on *Family channel* and *Noggin/Nickelodeon*. Victoria toured out to the sunny, seedy Los Angeles California for a couple of months last year where she studied at *SECOND CITY* with the talented David Razowski. This past summer Victoria performed at the *Just For Laughs Festival* with Albert Nerenberg's production of *THE STUPIDITY AWARDS 2005* with comic's like Penn and Teller, and the writing team of *THE DAILY SHOW with John Stewart*. Victoria recently completed writing, producing and starring in *REBIRTH*, a short film she began writing when inspired by a newspaper article in 2000. She is currently submitting the film to various festivals and hopefully will be accepted to a couple (oh please, mon dieu). Victoria continues to work alongside Ryan Ward with their production company *Reborn Films* ([www.rebornfilms.com](http://www.rebornfilms.com)) writing and applying scripts for various grants.

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### **MEGAN PARK, Toronto, ON**

Megan Marie Park was born in Lindsay, Ontario and caught the acting bug at age seven, when after much begging and pleading, her parents allowed her to audition and ultimately perform in a local production of *THE SOUND OF MUSIC*. After four years with the Original Kids Theatre Company, Megan was yearning to move forward with her career. At age fifteen, when her parents finally gave in, she partnered with one of the top agents in Toronto and soon booked her first series, *ACE LIGHTNING*. In between filming the first and second seasons, she kept busy working on another series, *THE BLOBHEADS*, and ABC/Disney *MOW, THIS TIME AROUND*. Megan made her feature film debut in 2004 playing a 1940's farm girl in *SOME THINGS THAT STAY*, directed by Gail Harvey, adapted from the award winning novel. Immediately Megan was cast to play the leading role of Becca, alongside Oscar winner, Marcia Gay Harden, in the critically acclaimed Lifetime *MOW, SHE'S TOO YOUNG*, one of Lifetime's highest rated movies. Megan was then signed by US representation, and in January 2005, decided to try her luck in Los Angeles. While in LA, Megan was cast in the title role in the independent film, *CHLOE*, written and directed by the Emmy winning writer and producer, Dan O'Shannon, (*Cheers*, *Frasier*, *Suddenly Susan*). Megan was very well received in Los Angeles, and can't wait to go back for a longer visit. 2005 continued to be a successful year for Megan. She recently completed three exciting projects. Megan was thrilled when she was chosen to star as Molly in the comedy pilot, *IN MOLLY'S OPINION*. She also joined the cast of the Emmy winning and Gemini nominated series, *DARK ORACLE* and in December, Megan wrapped her latest project, the sci-fi feature, *KAW*, playing the leading role of Gretchen, a young German Mennonite. The film also stars Sean Patrick Flanery and Rod Taylor.

In her free time, Megan enjoys reading, writing, shopping, and spending time with her friends. Megan also loves helping her mom and older sister, Alison, rehabilitate and release orphaned and injured wildlife for The Ministry of Natural Resources. Megan can't think of a more exciting way to kick off 2006 than participating in the Women In The Directors Chair Workshop. She feels truly honored to be given such a wonderful opportunity.



### **VALERIE PLANCHE, Calgary, AB**

An actor for over 20 years, Valerie has worked in Stage, Film and TV across Canada. Her recent credits include a role on a new series *TERMINLA CITY* out of Victoria and Ang Lee's new feature *BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN*. Valerie has been an instructor in text, acting and voice & movement for Stage and Film/TV for the last 7 years. A graduate of The National Theatre School of Canada, Valerie received a Betty Mitchell Award for her work in *THE GOOD LIFE* for Theatre Junction. She was also nominated in 2001 for her work with ATP in *PERFECT PIE*, 2004 for her work in *THE CONSTANT WIFE* for Theatre Junction and 2005 in *ELIZABETH REX* for Mob Hit. Thanks to Lunchbox Theatre's Emerging Director program, she will direct her first professional show: *THE DUPLEX* this spring, then on to perform in Eve Ensler's *NECESSARY TARGETS* for Urban Curves, a brand new theatre company on the scene in Calgary.

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### **STEFANIE SAMUELS, Toronto, ON**

Stefanie has worked as a professional actor in theatre, film, television and radio for 20 years. As a child in the eighties, Stefanie appeared on *DEGRASSI JUNIOR HIGH*, participated in theatre festivals at the Tarragon Theatre in Toronto and attended the Claude Watson School for the Performing Arts where she majored in Drama with minors in Dance and Music. Stefanie also studied dance (ballet, flamenco, modern, jazz) at the George Brown College School of Dance's pre-professional program and sang with the Toronto Mendelssohn Youth Choir as a mezzo-soprano. Stefanie joined ACTRA in 1989 and CAEA in 1992 after performing with a touring musical company for young audiences. After graduating from the performing arts school, Stefanie trained as an actor at Ryerson Theatre School and the University of Toronto Drama programme. Highlights of Stefanie's theatre background include working with Anne Marie MacDonald in new play development at Nightwood Theatre's Groundswell Festival, Djanet Sears on the CBC Radio Drama adaptation of Ben Orki's *THE FAMISHED ROAD*, and with Peter Hinto, Sandra Oh and Waneta Storms on the Equity Showcase Production of the Jacobean tragedy, *THE WITCH OF EDMONTON*. Stefanie was also delighted to put her dance and martial arts training to use with the expert fight choreographer John Stead in a Young People's Theatre Production of *MACBEAT*, starring Rick Roberts.

Recent television and film acting and principle credits include roles on the 11<sup>th</sup> HOUR, SUE THOMAS FB EYE, KEVIN HILL, DOC, WONDERFALLS, cable features ANONYMOUS REX and the Emmy Award-winning REDEMPTION. Feature film acting credits include KAL HOO NAA HO and CHILDSTAR. This year Stefanie was seen in theatres everywhere playing the role of Miriam/Evan's Wife in *FOUR BROTHERS*.

Stefanie has also performed her own work, including adaptations of June Jordan's poetry in staged solo acts, performed comedic material with Elvira Kurt's all-female ensemble in *THE HOLIDAY GRRRLIE SHOW* and researched and narrated the SEX TV television documentary production of *THE JOSEPHINE BAKER STORY*. She is also in the process of developing two film/TV projects as a co-creator and actor.

Stefanie's artistry is enhanced by her academic work as a scholar and teacher. In addition to her performing arts and acting background, Stefanie has earned an Honours BA from U of T and an MA from York both in Women's Studies. Stefanie is currently in her 3<sup>rd</sup> year of study for her PhD at York. She looks forward to continuing to grow, broaden her horizons and develop her talents as a life-long student, actor, artist, writer and storyteller.

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### **PAULA SHAW, Vancouver, BC**

Growing up in the confined concrete harshness of the Bronx (NYC) required an intense, sensitive soul like Paula's to seek creative outlets early in her life. Fortunately for her emotional health, she began acting when she was fifteen, at NYU Bronx campus which was an all-male school that sought actresses to play their female roles. She became "hooked" and her future fate was sealed. Excelling academically in high school, she garnered full scholarships to Bard College and off she went as a drama major to play roles in the classics for four years. After a remarkable education, she luckily and immediately began her professional career in NYC off-Broadway in an original musical revue (DIGGING FOR APPLES) followed by a play from New Zealand, THE WIDE OPEN CAGE, in which she played a half-Maori prostitute. She also participated in the "Theatre of the Ridiculous" scene, playing such roles as KARMA MIRANDA in GORILLA QUEEN and replacing the famous drag queen, Candy Darling, as NOLA NOONAN, GODDESS AND STAR in GLAMOUR, GLORY AND GOLD, playing opposite ROBERT DE NIRO at Bastiano's Cellar Studio (definitively "off-off" Broadway!).

Her numerous New York theatre credits include THE RAINMAKER (LIZZIE), RAIN (SADIE THOMPSON), VERA CHARLES in the Broadway touring company of MAME (at 26 years old!) and a multiple standby role as actress, dancer and singer, covering three Broadway stars in NOEL COWARD'S SWEET POTATO. She also co-produced three seasons of summer stock in upstate New York playing many leading roles including MARTHA in ...VIRGINIA WOOLF (first at age 27, reprising this role ten years later for four months in Los Angeles). The leading role of SANDY in the 1969 off-Broadway hit GEESE (which gained world wide notoriety, introducing nudity and happy endings for homosexual couples on the New York stage), brought her to Los Angeles in 1970 where she began her career in movies and television, playing roles in many films, sitcoms, MOWs and episodics. Meanwhile, in 1971, she became a lifetime member of the ACTORS STUDIO where she periodically continues to act, write (member of the Playwright/Directors Unit), and to moderate sessions in acting and improv. Her improv skills were honed when she joined SYNERGY TRUST in 1971 where, for the next four years they performed material from scratch and she taught weekly open workshops.

Out of a profound experience within herself, she was moved to participate heavily with the est organization as a graduate seminar leader. The knowledge she gained trained her to lead her own mix of acting/awareness workshops, eventually bringing her to teach in Vancouver in 1982 where she also began to get film and television work. In 1994 she became landed and in 2004, took Canadian citizenship. She also began leading self-expression workshops at Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California in 1988, which, in between acting assignments, she continues to do to this day.

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### **ANGELA VERMEIR, Dartmouth, NS**

Born in Winnipeg, Angela spent her childhood as the daughter of a United Church minister, moving from town to town in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. She studied Early Childhood Development at the Nova Scotia Community College and Theatre at Mount Allison University and Humber College. She also trained in improv comedy at Second City in Toronto. After an extensive career on stage in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, she settled down to raise her two children – Ella, 13 and Max, 11. No longer able to commit to theatre tours, she focussed her career on film and television. She has worked as a performer on numerous series, MOW's and short films – including LEXX, BLACK HARBOUR, SEX TRAFFIC, BLESSINGS and three award-winning MocDocs. She served as co-writer and performer on a sixty-five episodes of EL MUNDO DEL LUNDO for Halifax's Salter Street films. She also created her own lifestyle series - serving as host and creative producer for WTN's MARRYING WELL. Working with her husband, Gary Vermeir, she has written episodes of Halifax Film Co.'s Lunar Jim and is currently working with that company on a new children's series for CBC. Film/television is the family business. Her husband, Gary, is a screenwriter and the Branch Representative of ACTRA Maritimes. Her children are both ACTRA members and her brother, Russ Cochrane, is a writer on the television series, Whistler. His partner, Meline Nadeau, is a writer and segment producer for CMT. Angela is one of the busiest voice performers in Halifax and works regularly in ADR and commercials. She is also sought after as a teacher and acting coach. She teaches Acting for Camera for the Nova Scotia Community College and is the instructor of ACTRA Maritimes' on-going Acting for Camera Refresher.