



## Minutes

### AGM of the VRSC/ARAC Thursday May 12th at 16:00 pm at the Ottawa Arts Council - Conseil des Arts d'Ottawa, 2 Daly Ave., Ottawa, ON, K1N 6E2.

**In attendance:** Elspeth Domville (Chair), Nancy Marcotte (Vice Chair), Kelley Fry (Treasurer), Emma Kehayas (Secretary), Laura Lucas, Celeste Mackenzie, Mia Webster, Odette Desormeaux, Kathie McKenna, Sonja Carr, Pamela Grimaud, Julietta McGovern, Janet Torge, Tom Puchniak and Wayne Pender.

**Regrets from board members:** Laura Blaney and Roy Harris

**Minutes:** Emma Kehayas

**Meeting called to order:** 4:40pm

#### **Appointment of officers**

Mia Webster is stepping down from the board. The position of Secretary has remained unfilled since Helena Raposo stepped down last year. Sonja Carr nominated Emma Kehayas for the position of Secretary. Mia Webster seconded.

Vote: all were in favour.

#### **Report from Quebec (presented by Nancy Marcotte)**

Mia Webster created a Google spreadsheet containing contact information for archives around the world and has input a large amount of information, along with other members. All members are encouraged to use it and to continue to contribute to it.

The Quebec chapter created a "Best Practices" document which was translated into English and is now up on the VRSC/ARAC website.

Gemeaux Awards: Nancy is following up with the jury for the "Best Research" category, which can now include visual researchers.

Marie-Josée has been in contact with Ragnhild at the NFB regarding public domain footage and making an effort to have the per second rate for this material reduced.

Focal Awards Jury (Mia Webster read a report prepared by Marc Pitre):

The Focal Awards jury session went well. Marc was joined by Edmund Duff and Tom Puchniak. They reviewed materials individually, then met at the CCA on a Saturday morning to view the submissions sent on DVD. The quality of the submissions was very good. They took an hour to narrow down their choices and deliberate the top three. Submissions were submitted from all over the world, including the UK, Germany, USA and Italy, but there weren't many submissions from Canada. The category they were deliberating was: Best Use of Footage in an Entertainment Production.

The Quebec chapter is currently planning a workshop on technical skills. It is to be a two-hour workshop conducted by a representative from the NFB and will be held on June 13th or 14th (TBD) from 6-8pm in French. There might be an English language session put on in Toronto at later date.

Pool footage: Nancy noted that it is getting very difficult to access pool footage now. Radio-Canada will no longer sell any Pool footage at all. The difficulty is in knowing who has shot it, as it isn't labelled. Mia will look into who we might be able to raise our concerns about this issue with.

Nancy met recently with member Sophie Moreau and they will be discussing strategies for how the VRSC-ARAC can reach out to new markets.

**Facebook and Twitter Report (Elspeth Domville presented Elizabeth Klinck's report):**

Do consider following the VRSC/ARAC on both Facebook (a closed group) and Twitter for up to the minute information on copyright, new collections, jobs, and information on member's films and activities. This is our account:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/12118633367/>

You need to send a request to join and then you will be admitted. All information is private to members of the group and not shared as a public page.

Our Twitter account (run by Elizabeth Klink and Gina Cali):

<https://twitter.com/vrscarac>

**Education Report (Elspeth Domville presented a report on Roy Harris's behalf)**

We are revitalizing our workshop program and will be presenting a workshop on Hollywood and Canadian dramatic TV clearances. It will be held in English in Toronto on June 2nd. Laura Blaney will be speaking about Hollywood clearances and Helena Raposo will speak about clearances for Canadian films. The information from this workshop will be summarized in a PDF that will be circulated to members and also posted to the website. There is interest in putting on a French language version of this workshop to be held in Quebec.

These are ideas for possible upcoming workshops:

- Visual Research 101 - a half day workshop covering the basics for new-comers
- Workflow in Archive Management - a discussion group where participants will learn via brainstorming and sharing ideas about managing a project from beginning to end.
- The Basics of a License Agreement
- The Basics of a Deal Memo
- What is Public Domain?
- Using YouTube as a source? (this could be expanded into a wider topic on investigating sources provided by researchers and editors such as Flickr, etc.)
- Tax Strategies for Freelancers
- How To Promote Yourself as a Researcher Today.

Please send in ideas for other workshops if you have them. Laura Lucas suggested that we could have a workshop around creating personal archives, cataloging for individuals data management, as it is something that is coming up in some of the work that she is doing, and could be a potential further source of work for members.

**LAC Report (presented by Mia Webster):**

Tomorrow we will tour two LAC locations and will meet with Lynn Lafontaine and Mathieu Sabourin. We want to discuss how to better order from them and the possibility of getting more direct access. LAC is working on improving their website and are open to having members from our group on the committee. Anyone that is

interested should let Mia Webster know ASAP. This is progress as this process began four years ago and LAC is finally more open to having these discussions now than they've been in the past.

**FOCAL Awards Jury (Toronto jury) Report (Elspeth Domville read Jivan Nagra's report):**

This January the Toronto FOCAL jury was made up of Jivan Nagra (Chair), Kathie McKenna and Gina Cali. They judged the FOCAL the "Jane Mercer Footage Researcher of the Year" and it was a daunting task. Due to the number of submissions and the length of the films, the process required hours (maybe even days!) of viewing. We were in awe of the quality of work and agonized over our task of finding "the best". After three days of deliberation we were able to whittle down our choices to our top three and then a final winner - with the British and U.S. juries in agreement with our final pick! This was a laborious, yet enjoyable judging year and, most happily, an affirmation of how significant visual research is.

**Website Committee Report (Elspeth Domville read Mary-Rose MacLaclan's report):**

Committee members Mary Rose MacLachlan (Chair), Elspeth Domville, Emma Kehayas, Marc Pitre and Webmaster Cindy Jacobsen continued with their work to complete the upgrade of our organization's website. Here is a summary of our progress:

1. Procedures for new member requests have been finalized and have been running fairly smoothly.
2. Content updates are done monthly. Chairs of the various committees send updates directly to Cindy who then updates the website as necessary.
3. Plugins and Wordpress updates are updated and backed up when necessary.
4. Odette is finalizing the French translation and those updates will be made when the translation is ready.
5. Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

As soon as the French translations are complete and the final tweaks have been made, a membership-wide email will be sent to the membership (a soft launch) asking for them to explore the site and send in their suggestions/feedback. Once those have been addressed and final changes made to the site we will have a broader launch to the wider community.

**Getty Customer Service and Pricing (Up-date on discussions presented by Elspeth Domville):**

As most members are aware we have been having numerous problems since our rep was taken away. Elspeth gathered letters from half a dozen VRSC/ARAC members which were well written and supported the issues raised with detailed accounts of their experiences.

The problem is two-fold:

1. Poor customer service
2. Pricing

The issues are covered by separate departments within Getty and our first concern has been addressing the poor standard of customer service we're receiving. Our contact for this issue is Brandt Buell. Brandt is reluctant to set up a dedicated rep for the VRSC/ARAC until he has had time to monitor our workflow with Getty himself to see the issues first-hand. He has, however, agreed to be available to help directly if our members have any problems at all in the next few weeks and he and Elspeth will reassess later in June. Elspeth will be sending out an email to the membership proving this up-date and the strategy going forward, along with our new discount promo code. So please make sure to reach out to Brandt whenever you have a customer service based problem. (He is not in a position to help with pricing issues.)

Regarding pricing - we have hit a brick wall as they are not open to discussing pricing at all at this point. There is new leadership at Getty now who want to focus on the big revenue generating accounts like feature film studios and advertising clients. If they see that VRSC/ARAC members are spending a lot of money with them they might consider improving our discount rate and/or lowering the threshold for what is considered a volume

purchase. They monitor VRSC/ARAC sales numbers by watching for purchases made with our discount code so it's very important for all members to make sure that they enter that code when making a purchase online or mention that they are with the VRSC/ARAC when doing it by phone so that Getty will continue to monitor the revenues that our group specifically brings in. Janet Torge mentioned that she was able to recently negotiate a 30% discount on some Public Domain photos from Getty (after creating "a big stink"). Kathie McKenna mentioned that she recently received a 20% VRSC discount on a BBC online clip.

### **Membership Committee (presented by Janet Torge):**

The members of this committee are Roy Harris (Chair), Mia Webster, Kelley Fry, Nancy Marcotte, Janet Torge and Elspeth Domville (who receives all the applications and forwards them to the committee.)

1. Our job is to vet people who want to become members
2. There was a lot of discussion this year about who should be admitted as new members which led us to consider who we are as an organization: Professionals? Anyone who does visual research? Solely Visual Researchers who work full time at it?
3. We agreed that we see the VRSC/ARAC as a professional organization and that our new criteria for acceptance would be limited to those who can demonstrate that they have either one year of experience as a full-time visual researcher or have had three credits/contracts over the last few years.
4. We understand that many of us do more than visual research – only the privileged few can make a full time living at it.
5. We also understand that we can open our doors to Editorial Researchers who have some background or knowledge of visual research.
6. How the application/admission process works:
  - Applicants apply, handing in a CV that prioritizes their visual research
  - They state why they want to join
  - Membership committee votes on inclusion and whether we should interview the person if we're not clear, or are divided on their application
  - We rotate the job of interviewing candidates when needed
  - A simple majority vote decides
7. We welcome any discussion from all of you about our definition of the organization and our application process.

This was followed by discussion about the appropriateness of including editorial researchers, as well as the potential to introduce an associate (junior) membership level. Kelley Fry pointed out that the membership by-laws will have to be amended if we choose to proceed with an associate membership level as they are currently limited to one level. Julietta McGovern mentioned that there is a group of visual researchers at the University of Calgary in the science department that we may wish to reach out to. Janet Torge brought up the idea of mentorship and said it could be a good idea for us to create a list of members who would be willing to acts as mentors for novices. Eventually this might lead to them getting jobs and further experience and ultimately they could become eligible for membership.

With respect to the acceptance criteria, the Membership Committee proposed formally that it admission be limited to those who can demonstrate that they have either one year of experience as a full-time visual researcher or have had three visual research credits/contracts over the last few years. Editorial researchers would also be accepted if they can demonstrate some level of experience/familiarity with visual research. In cases where there is doubt, a member of the Membership Committee will interview the candidate. It was also agreed that the committee needs to be prepared to show some degree of flexibility in cases where an applicant is very close to meeting the criteria but has not quite fulfilled all. Lucas Lucas moved to accept the membership criteria as proposed. Seconded by Nancy Marcotte. Vote: everyone was in favour.

It was decided that the membership committee could look into introducing an associate membership level.

Sonja proposed that we put a call out to the membership to see who would be willing to be on a list of mentors.

Discussion of former members that haven't renewed yet but are still on the email distribution list. Elspeth and Nancy have been reaching out to these people individually. Many are choosing to renew membership. Kelley Fry has been, and will continue to monitor the membership dues being paid closely as we transition to all dues paid January of each calendar year.

Mia moved that we have a 30 day grace period for payment of membership dues following the renewal date notice (which are now due annually on January 1st). Failure to pay the fees by that date will result in the person's membership being cancelled. Celeste seconded. Vote: everyone was in favour.

**Adoption of 2015 minutes:**

Kelley proposed changes to the 2015 Minutes to allow for greater clarity on the adoption of revised by-laws that facilitated the application for the Certificate of Continuance of the Corporation.

Nancy moved to adopt the 2015 Minutes as revised. Kelley seconded. Vote: all were in favour.

**Financial Report and Membership Update (Kelley Fry):**

Janet Torge moved to adopt the Oct 1 - Dec 31 2014 Financial Statement as presented.

Laura Lucas seconded. Vote: all were in favour

Laura Lucas moved to adopt the Jan 1 - Dec 31 2015 Financial Statement as presented. Kathie McKenna seconded. Vote: all were in favour

2014 membership figures were close to 100 members. 2015 membership figures - 84 fully paid members. 2016, 8 new members so far.

**Other Business: (Elspeth Domville):**

Elspeth Domville extended a big "thank you" to Celeste Mackenzie & Mia Webster for organizing the 2016 AGM and archive tours in Ottawa. She also offered her profound thanks to former Chair Elizabeth Klinck for her support and guidance during this transition period which Elspeth has found to be absolutely invaluable. Special thanks also to members Nancy Marcotte, Kelley Fry, Mia Webster, Roy Harris, Laura Lucas and Janet Torge for all the hours of work they have volunteered to the organization over the past term.

Adjournment: Sonja Carr moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:09 PM, seconded by Nancy Marcotte.