

VIWFF 2021: IWD PANEL #ChoosetoChallenge PARTICIPANT BIOS

PANELISTS



VALERIE CREIGHTON

Valerie Creighton is an industry leader in arts, culture and media, recognized for reenergizing some of the country's most important organizations in the sector over the last thirty-five years. An expert in organizational change, Valerie has been recognized as a visionary in promoting Canada's cultural wealth.

Currently serving as President and CEO of the Canada Media Fund, Valerie positions Canadian programming at the forefront in world markets advocating successful, innovative Canadian content and software applications for current and emerging digital platforms. Valerie has taken part in foreign trade missions and is regularly called upon to present the CMF model internationally. She has been recognized with numerous awards nationally and from her home province of Saskatchewan.

Valerie holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Saskatchewan. She was invested into the Saskatchewan Order of Merit in 2016 and the Order of Canada in 2019. She was named one of 2016's 20 most powerful women in global television by The Hollywood Reporter, was recognized in 2017 by Women in Television and Film – Vancouver for her major contribution to promoting gender equality in media, and was bestowed the Honorary Maverick Award at the 2017 Female Eye Film Festival. Most recently, she received C21's 2020 Content Canada Impact Award.



CHRISTA DICKENSON

Christa Dickenson is the Executive Director of Telefilm Canada. She has over two decades of experience spanning broadcast television, technology, telecommunications and interactive digital media, having worked at CTV, CPAC, Rogers and Interactive Ontario. Ms. Dickenson possesses an un-paralleled talent for innovation coupled with a strong business acumen. With brand advocacy expertise honed over many years, she is a highly effective screen-based industries advocate and spokesperson. In addition to a professional background spanning both the creative and business sides of the broadcast, technology, telecommunications and interactive digital media industries, Ms. Dickenson has a BAH and Masters of Fine Arts in Film Studies.



PREM GILL

Prem Gill is Chief Executive Officer of Creative BC. The organization is designated by the Province of British Columbia to focus on uniting, sustaining and growing British Columbia's dynamic and diverse creative sector including motion picture, music and sound recording, interactive and digital media, and magazine and book publishing.

Prem has been named one of Canada's 100 most powerful women, Vancouver Magazine's "Power 50" and received the Community Catalyst award from the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. She brings more than 20 years of experience from the digital media and entertainment industries to her current role as CEO, where she is responsible for delivering a wide range of programs and services that will expand B.C.'s creative economy to reach its economic, social and creative potential both at home and globally.

Before Creative BC, Prem spent eight years with TELUS, most recently in the role of Director of Production & Original Programming. Her commitment to the advancement of B.C.'s creative economy can be seen through her achievements there, including the successful development and launch of the STORYHIVE program and TELUS' Optik TV community channel.

For many years, Prem has championed Canadian creativity as a representative and spokesperson to media, industry and government at all levels. Previous roles and responsibilities have included government and regulatory affairs, independent media consultation, cross-platform marketing, communications, research, public affairs and multicultural programming.

Prem is currently on the Board of Directors of The Bell Fund, a not-for-profit organization. The Bell Fund's mission is to support Canadian Media content makers in creating for and connecting with, audiences here and everywhere.



JILL GOLICK

Jill Golick is the co-author of Women in View's two most recent research studies on the participation of women in Canada's film and television industry: WIVOS19 and WIVOS20, which will be released in 2021. Jill served as Executive Director of Women in View in 2019 and as president of the Writers Guild of Canada from 2010-2018.

A screenwriter by trade, Jill is fascinated by how streaming, bingeing and fan culture are changing how we watch TV. In response to these changes, Jill champions an audience-focused approach to TV series development. With Annelise Larson, Jill co-hosts [Story + Audience](#), a podcast about creating stories that connect deeply with audience. Since its release a year ago, Jill's free step-by-step screenwriting guide, the Pandemic Pilot Program, has helped dozens of writers complete a first draft of an original script. Throughout the pandemic, Jill's Zoom classes on creating TV series for streaming platforms and developing season arcs have been wildly popular.

Jill has spent much of COVID pretending she's on a yoga and writing retreat and has some new work as a result. She is shopping pilots for an hour-long character-driven cyber thriller and a half-hour dramedy while having a great deal of fun developing an original sci fi epic for family audiences.



JOAN JENKINSON

Joan is the inaugural Executive Director of the Black Screen Office where she works to support Black Canadians in developing talent, accessing funding, and in assuming decision-making roles in television, film and digital media. She fosters relationships with federal funding agencies, broadcasters and distributors to eliminate anti-Black racism in the screen industries.

Joan is a founding Partner/Producer at Artemis Pictures which is focused on developing and producing high-end scripted content for television and the cinema, for international audiences. Joan was Vice-President of Independent Production for ZoomerMedia Limited, Television Division. She commissioned, developed and executive produced hundreds of hours of award-winning creative content in all genres for VisionTV.

Joan spearheaded VisionTV's ground-breaking DiverseTV/NSI initiative which produced award-winning comedy and drama programs and earned her a Visionary Award from the ReelWorld Film Festival. For five years, Joan served as Executive Director of Women in Film and Television - Toronto (WIFT-T), where she established professional development training and networking opportunities for women in screen-based media.



CLAUDE JOLI-COEUR

Claude Joli-Coeur has been an influential figure in the film and audiovisual industry throughout a career spanning more than 30 years. He is the 16th Government Film Commissioner and Chairperson of the National Film Board of Canada.

Mr. Joli-Coeur began working at the NFB in 2003 and served as Assistant Commissioner from 2007 to 2014, leading Government Relations, Strategic Planning, Business Relations and Legal Services. In 2014, he became Acting Commissioner, a position he also held in 2007. He has served as Commissioner since 2014 and was re-appointed for a second term in 2019, for a period of three years.

Mr. Joli-Coeur is known for his ability to motivate and inspire, a leadership style focused on results, and his strong commitment to Canadian communities. That commitment, combined with his interest in Canadian culture, has led him to undertake numerous initiatives, particularly with major national museums and cultural institutions. Mr. Joli-Coeur has also supported many projects in French-speaking communities throughout Canada and other minority communities across the country, including the first multi-party agreement with English-speaking Quebecers.

In March 2016, he made a strong commitment to parity: the NFB, already an industry leader in gender equity, will commit 50 percent of its production budget to films by women and at least half of its productions will be directed by women by 2019. In March 2017, this commitment to parity was broadened to include the goal of having women occupy 50 percent of the NFB's key

creative positions for animated, documentary, and interactive works in production in the year 2020.

In June 2016, he received the “Please Adjust Your Set Award,” presented by Women in Film & Television Vancouver, for his “major contribution to promoting gender equality in film, television or screen-based media.” In June 2017, Mr. Joli-Coeur also announced a three-year plan to redefine the NFB’s relationship with Indigenous peoples. Guided by recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the plan outlines 33 commitments, such as allocating at least 15 percent of overall production spending to Indigenous-led production and making the NFB’s collection of Indigenous films more accessible.

Before joining the NFB, as an entertainment law expert in the private sector he contributed to several international co-productions between Canada and a number of European countries. From 1987 to 2002, he held various leadership positions within the Astral Entertainment Group, Groupe Coscient (Motion International), TVA International, and Zone 3. Mr. Joli-Coeur earned a law degree from the Université de Montréal and has been a member of the Quebec Bar since 1979.



Doreen Manuel

Doreen Manuel (Secwepemc/Ktunaxa) MFA, Film Production, is the daughter of renowned international leader, the late, George Manuel and spiritual leader Marceline Manuel. She is the first Indigenous woman to: hold a position on the board of Directors of Knowledge Network; and to hold the position of Director of a major film centre in Canada. She is the 2019 Woman of the Year for Women in Film and TV Vancouver (WIFTV); the recipient of the Leadership in Education Award; and many other film industry and education leadership awards both provincially and nationally.

Doreen holds positions on the Motion Picture Production Industry Association of BC Equity & Inclusion Committee and WIFTV Equity & Inclusion Lobby Group. She is a member of the Telefilm Indigenous Working Group and is a Telefilm partner with the Talent to Watch funding program. She is an advisor and mentor to the Telus Storyhive Indigenous envelope production fund; a National Screen Institute (NSI) mentor; and a Matriarch advisor to the IM4 virtual and augmented reality training program for Indigenous peoples, and is a founder and instructor of the esteemed WIFTV Tricksters and Writers feature film screenwriting program for Indigenous women.



BARBARA WILLIAMS

Barbara Williams joined Canada's national public broadcaster on May 1, 2019 as Executive Vice- President, CBC. Prior to that, Williams was Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Corus Entertainment Inc., where she oversaw all strategic and operational aspects of Corus' content across conventional and specialty television, Nelvana, digital, and radio properties.

Before that role, Williams served as Shaw Media's President, overseeing all aspects of the company's business. Prior to that, she was Senior Vice President of Content for Shaw Media, responsible for the creation of Canadian original productions, acquisition deals of top U.S. and international series and scheduling for the company's conventional network and 19 specialty channels. Before joining Shaw, Williams served as Executive Vice President, Content at Canwest Broadcasting, Vice President and General Manager of Toronto 1, and Senior Vice-President of Lifestyle Programming at Alliance Atlantis.

Williams holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Toronto and a Masters in Telecommunications from Syracuse University. She currently sits on the board of the Canadian Film Centre. She was previously a board member of Canada's Walk of Fame and the former Chair of the Banff World Media Festival.

She has been recognized with numerous industry accolades, including being named one of Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 by the Women's Executive Network (WXN). She also received the Outstanding Achievement Award from Women in Film & Television (WIFT), the Chair of Distinction Award from Women in Communications and Technology (WCT), and was named one of the 20 Most Powerful Women in Global Television by The Hollywood Reporter.

MODERATOR



ANA DE LARA

Ana de Lara is a Filipina-Canadian director, producer, and screenwriter. She has earned over 30 accolades in North America and Europe for her films and screenplays and was recently nominated for the 2020 CMPA Kevin Tierney Emerging Producer Award.

Ana produced the Telefilm Talent to Watch feature, ALL-IN MADONNA, and the 2020 Best Picture Leo Award nominee OPEN FOR SUBMISSIONS. She was the recipient of the 2016 MPPIA Short Film Award to direct her script, GOOD GIRLS DON'T, which won over a dozen festival prizes.

Ana is currently developing two feature screenplays, the coming-of-age absurdist comedy, THE VIRGIN MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB (Telefilm Development Fund for Racialized Persons), and the Filipino supernatural psychological thriller THE CHOSEN ONE (The Indigenous Screen Office, BIPOC Film & TV, and The Racial Equity Media Collective Solidarity Fund.)