



Gender Parity in Key Creative Roles

Progress Report

January 31, 2022

Introduction

On December 13, 2018, Corus was pleased to participate in the CRTC's Women in Production Summit, alongside Canada's largest public and private-sector broadcasters.

During the Summit, all participants agreed that, although there has been some progress in recent years, current data shows that women continue to face barriers to career advancement in the Canadian film and television production industry. Gender under-representation in key creative positions must be addressed. Progress on this front is not only good for women and society in general, but it also makes good business sense. Corus is committed to creating and fostering lasting solutions to ensure more women play leading roles in our industry.

In this report, we provide Corus' 2022 progress report on our commitment to achieve gender parity in key creative roles for all big budget drama series by 2025, across our portfolio of services.

Diversity Matters and Corus is Closing the Gap

Corus has been promoting diversity for many years as an important part of our content strategy. We have made it our mission to purposefully seek out projects led by women and have made important progress on expanding roles for women in our commissioned productions. Our series are populated with strong female voices, both behind and in front of the camera. We are actively developing and presenting opportunities to women on our shows.

Among the big budget English-language dramas that Corus commissioned during the 2020-2021 broadcast year, we are happy to report an overall increase in the percentage of women in key creative roles. More specifically, women filled 56% of producer roles, 62% of writer roles, and 33% of director roles. Corus is pleased to note that we are achieving gender parity in two of the three key creative roles which we previously identified as those where we can make the most impact. Further specifics can be found in Appendix "A".

We are purposeful in bringing gender balance to all Corus-commissioned properties. Together, we work with our production partners to train, hire and promote women and persons from diverse communities and to work towards gender equity in all key creative roles. We work to ensure that our scripts reflect the diversity of Canadian society, and do not exploit or condone violence, racism, or sexism.

Looking forward, a key area of focus for us will be to accelerate the number of women in the edit suites of our productions.

Women in Production at Corus

Corus is committed to fostering a strong, vibrant and sustainable media industry that is both domestically successful and globally competitive. Empowering women leaders is an integral part of this vision. Led by a team of talented women, over the past five years Corus' Original Content team has expanded from delivering hit series to our domestic channels, to becoming a leader in developing, producing and selling unscripted content in Canada and around the world.

We are proud to count talented women among our Original Content team in charge of our commissioning strategy. Lisa Godfrey, promoted to the role of Corus' Senior Vice President of Corus Original and Corus Studios in January 2021, leads a team of three female executives who are advocates for the advancement and inclusion of women and diversity in our industry and in our shows.

Corus recently announced strategic changes to the leadership structure of our Original Content team which sees Rachel Nelson promoted to the new role of Vice President, Original Content, Scripted, Factual and Kids; and Krista Look promoted to the new role of Vice President, Original Content, Lifestyle.

Rachel has been instrumental in developing the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategy for Corus Originals and will continue oversight of this important initiative. She has been a key leader in the production of hit Scripted series like *Mary Kills People*, *Private Eyes*, *Nurses*, *Family Law*, and *Departure*, commissioned programming that we are pleased to report have achieved a significant balance of women in key creative roles.

Krista, an exceptional leader of the Lifestyle Original Content team, delivers high-performance series both domestically and internationally with a continued focus in developing and executing on our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategy including Women in Production. In addition to her role, in the recent addition of the *Banff Showrunner program for Underrepresented Lifestyle/Unscripted Producers*, Krista has been a key leader in productions such as *Island of Bryan*, *Great Chocolate Showdown*, *Farmhouse Facelift*, *Big Brother Canada*, *Family Home Overhaul*, *Project Bakeover*, and *Big Food Bucket List*. Many of these titles broadcast not just in Canada, but around the world through sales to Discovery, Hulu, CW Network and other broadcasters, have achieved gender equity in key creative roles.

Corus is equally proud of the talented women who lead Nelvana, Canada's premier animation studio and a world-leading producer and distributor of children's content. Pam Westman is Nelvana's president. She works closely with Athena Georgaklis, Head of Development-Original Programming Scripted, Mellany Masterson, Head of Nelvana Enterprises, and Jane Crawford, Head of Studio Production.

Nelvana, continues to encourage gender balance and cultural diversity on-screen, on every writing team, and on every program/series that it produces. This includes ensuring non-human characters have gender balance with particular attention to assumptions and stereotypes (i.e. robots always perceived as male).

Efforts to assign director positions to women have been successful. In 2020-2021, women directed 33% of animation production. We are working with women in our studio on planning the steps necessary for them to fill key creative roles in the future. It is clear that this path is working. In the past year, three women at Nelvana have been promoted to Senior Production Managers setting them on the path to be becoming Producers; a new position was created within the Studio promoting Vanessa Esteves into the role of Supervising Creative Producer; and Ruth Ramirez was recently promoted to Senior Assistant Director, with plans for her to co-direct an upcoming production. At Nelvana, we are focused in our planning to ensure gender parity.

Off-Screen Initiatives

Corus recognizes that in order to ensure gender parity in key creative roles of production, we must ensure that we support women in all phases of their career and help to provide a path. Corus' ongoing off-screen initiatives to address the gender gap in the past year have included:

- **Women in Communications and Technology (WCT)** - Corus continues to support WCT, by sponsoring the Corus mentorship program, which is designed to help women advance to senior roles within communications industries. Cheryl Fullerton, Corus' Executive Vice President, People & Communications, is Chair of the WCT Board.
- **Women in Communications and Technology (WCT)** – The Toronto Chapter hosted a *Getting on Board* webinar that focused on the benefits of women joining a board as part of their networking and professional development. Cheryl Fullerton, Corus' Executive Vice President, People & Communications, was one of the featured panelists.
- **Women in Communications and Technology (WCT)** – Hosted a *Diversity XChange: The Role of ERGs, Mentorship, Sponsorship and Other Support Programs in Employee Diversity and Retention* webinar with Corus' Head of DEI, Lenore MacAdam, participating in a panel discussion.
- **Corus Chair in “Women in Management”** – Corus' commitment to the career progression of women of all cultures and backgrounds is recognized through its support of the Corus Entertainment Chair in “Women in Management” at the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario. The Chair was established by Corus to develop innovative research, teaching materials and outreach programs on Women in

Management and to broaden the impact of the school's unique teaching and research programs. This research explores culturally related themes such as the impact of race on perceptions of fairness in promotions and methods of evaluating the effectiveness of organizational diversity issues.

- **Women in Film and Television – Toronto Chapter (WIFT-T)** – Corus continues to be an active member of WIFT-T as sponsor of the Corus Media Management Accelerator program, which is designed for screen-based professionals and entrepreneurs with less than five years of management experience. Developed in conjunction with the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University, this program focuses on essential management principals required for future leaders. Susan Alexander, Corus' Production Executive, Original Content, Scripted, sits on the Board of WIFT-T.
- **Banff World Media Festival** – Corus continues to co-host the Global Women of Power Lunch with A+E Networks which brings together a panel of women in the industry to discuss the challenges and triumphs they have faced in their careers. With very candid conversations, the lunch is geared to women in screen-based industries.
- **BANFF Corus Apprentice Program – Lifestyle Showrunner** – Corus' approach this year was to focus on underrepresented voices and perspectives from talented industry professionals in television production, reality programming and documentary series who are looking to advance their careers in the lifestyle and unscripted genres. Five individuals were chosen from a wide variety of backgrounds, three of which identify as female. The 2021 cohort received a premium pass to BANFF 2021 Virtual Edition with access to panels, keynotes, master classes and networking opportunities from June to July, virtual mentorship opportunities with key development executives and a two-week showrunner internship placement on a Corus-supported lifestyle production between June 2021 and June 2022.
- **Forward Together** – Corus is a founding partner of *Forward Together*, a movement forged out of a vision to bring companies and professional women together to share best practices and resources internal to one organization with all women, to enable best in class learning across industries. Whether it is world-class training, top-notch speakers, or excellent facilities, companies leverage their internal resources that, when shared broadly, are used to benefits and impact significantly more women in our greater community.
- **Participating in Mentoring and other Industry Initiatives**
Corus' values include: "Win Together", "Think Beyond", "Make it Happen", "Learn Every Day", and "Show We Care". Each one of these is also important

and relevant to ensuring gender parity. We recognize that we have both an opportunity and an obligation to share and to learn.

Accordingly, members of Corus' Original Production team have always participated in industry initiatives that support diverse talent through festivals and programs such as Reelworld, imagineNATIVE, Hot Docs, National Screen Institute's Totally Television, Banff, and Whistler Film Festival, among others. This year, we expanded efforts to provide more opportunities for direct mentorship specifically focusing on diverse and BIPOC creators. Several team members are partnered with diverse talent through mentorship programs from Reelworld, WIFT, Whistler Film Festival "Women in Focus" and the Banff Netflix Diversity of Voices Initiatives. Corus team members also participated in the Creators of Color Incubator this year, which focused on Women of Color, as well as attended pitch meetings through BIPOCTV Mentorship Mondays a BIPOCTV Kids' TV Writing Bootcamp.

Similarly, Corus' Global News continues to build relationships with local communities, and meet with subject matter experts from underrepresented groups, in an ongoing effort to uncover new story ideas from these communities. One of these organizations is *Informed Opinions* which amplifies the voices of women and gender-diverse individuals for a more democratic Canada. *Informed Opinions* works to ensure the perspectives and priorities of women in all their diversity are equitably reflected in the news media and integrated into Canadian society.

Progress toward Corus' Voluntary Goal: Gender Parity in Key Creative Roles for Big Budget Drama Series by 2025

Corus is extremely proud of the work we have done to help close the gap for women, and for the important milestones that have been achieved across the industry in recent years. We are making progress towards our goals. Notably, we are pleased to report that the percentage of women in the key creative positions of our big budget dramas and other programming has reached, or is nearing, parity.

However, we recognize there is more work to be done. Going forward, we will work to encourage more opportunities for women. For example, as mentioned, a key area of focus for Corus will be to accelerate the number of women in edit suites on our productions. Moreover, we will continue to support women from underrepresented communities to build their careers in media. Progress is not only in the best interest for women and our society, it also makes good business sense.

A Whole-of-Industry Approach to Gender Parity is Needed

Corus remains committed to closing the gap for women in our industry. We will exert our decision-making powers to affect change, continue to support the development of

new creative talent through a range of initiatives, and use our power/influence to approve key creative talent in commissioned properties as a means to affect change in Canadian productions. However, as we have noted in previous years: we cannot do this alone.

While we will continue to do our part to drive the decisions we can control, we must not forget that CRTC regulations require us to purchase the vast majority of our high budget programming from independent Canadian producers, over whom we have limited control. We also cannot forget that large, unregulated Internet-based broadcasters now commission a significant and growing percentage of film and television productions in Canada.

We hope these other parties will join us in this important effort. Only together, with a whole-of-industry approach, which includes Canadian independent producers and digital media broadcasters, can we achieve lasting change for women in our industry.

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