



Gender Parity in Key Creative Roles

Progress Report

January 31, 2023

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' 2023 progress report on our commitment to achieve gender parity in key creative roles for all big budget drama series by 2025, and the work we have done to achieve greater gender representation across other genres, 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. Additionally, we have made concerted efforts to support greater diversity, equity, and inclusion across all of our original content, providing new opportunities for women of color. Our series are populated with strong female voices, both in front of and behind the camera.

Among the English-language dramas that Corus broadcast in 2021-22, we are proud to be able to report that we have reached gender parity in the fields of writing, producing, editing and showrunning. We are also pleased to see growth of female leadership in the factual genre¹, which is historically male dominated. We achieved gender parity in writing and producing categories and saw an increase in female directing in factual. In lifestyle programming, we continue to see women perform key leadership roles (e.g., Showrunner/Series Producer, Post Production Supervisor) as well as behind-the-scenes roles (e.g., Story Editors, Editors). We have also seen growth in female leadership in producing and writing roles, specifically female showrunners, across all genres and often surpassed gender parity in that category. Further specifics can be found in Appendix "A".

¹ Category 02B Long-form documentary and category 11(b) Reality television

At Corus we are purposeful in bringing gender balance to all of our 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.

2021-2022 saw an overall a slight increase in representation of women editors across factual, drama and lifestyle. Looking forward, a key area of focus for us will be to continue to increase 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 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 2021, leads a team of three senior female executives who are advocates for the advancement and inclusion of women and diversity in our industry and in our shows.

Corus' strong Original Content team includes industry veterans Rachel Nelson, Vice President, Original Content, Scripted, Factual and Kids; Krista Look, Vice President, Original Content, Lifestyle; and Julie Gordon, Head of French Specialty Channels.

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*, *Departure* and the up-coming series *Robyn Hood*. We are pleased to report that these original series have all achieved a significant balance of women in key creative roles. Rachel also oversees ET Canada which saw some significant changes and advancement in female leadership this past year and also welcomed a new female Production Executive, Factual to the team.

Krista, an exceptional industry leader and head 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. As part of her role, Krista has been a mentor and key leader in productions such as *Island of Bryan*, *Pamela's Garden of Eden*, *Top Chef Canada*, *The Big Bake*, *Big Brother Canada*, *Trading Up with Mandy*

Rennehan and Styled. Many of these titles have broadcast not just in Canada, but around the world through sales to Discovery, Hulu, CW Network and other broadcasters, and have achieved gender equity in key creative roles.

Julie Godon is a recognized leader in the Quebec media industry. She manages the programming, acquisitions, original productions, dubbing and creative services teams for Corus' French channels. Julie is on the board of directors for the Academy of Cinema and television (French division) as well as President of their rules committee. She is also on the board of directors of the Fondation de l'INIS, the foremost school to train new TV production talent in Quebec. Both organizations currently have a strong focus on gender parity and on shining a light on new diverse talents.

2021-2022 saw significant change to Corus' flagship Entertainment News program *ET CANADA (ETC)* which is committed to continued female representation and gender equity. In fact, 60% of its staff currently identify as female. *ETC* saw 14 new hires in 2022, of which 64% are female, with 40% of those identifying as BIPOC, including 2 Indigenous producers. Several promotions occurred this year, providing female leadership in the following roles and greater female and cultural representation on screen: Sangita Patel was promoted to *ETC* host, joining Cheryl Hickey. Brittnee Blair joined the team as an on-air reporter, bringing *ETC* female on screen talent to 71%. 60% of our female on screen talent identify as BIPOC. Behind the scenes, several women were promoted in more senior or managerial and decision-making roles, including women of color. Currently 57% of our managerial team is female, and 75% of women self-identify as diverse. In addition to the countless amount of content produced by and promoting women, in 2022 *ETC* produced its first 30-minute primetime special celebrating and recognizing International Women's Day, which aired on March 8, 2022.

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)** – 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.
- **Corus.Futures Scholarship Program** – Launched in 2022, the Corus.Futures Scholarship program supports Canadian students from underrepresented communities in their final year of post-secondary studies. The Susannah Therrien Radio Scholarship is specific to supporting individuals who identify as female pursuing Radio studies through financial assistance, a three-month paid internship and mentorship opportunities.
- **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 principles required for future leaders. Sara Chan, Corus' Head of Rights Management and Legal Operations and Associate General Counsel, 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 – Young Adult Scripted** – Corus' approach this year was to focus on underrepresented voices and perspectives from talented industry professionals interested in the young adult scripted genre. Five individuals were chosen from a wide variety of backgrounds, three of which identify as female. The 2022 cohort received a pass and travel stipend to attend BANFF 2022 mentorship opportunities with key development

executives and a two-week paid internship placement on a Corus-supported young adult production between June 2022 and June 2023.

- **Black Women Directors Accelerator Program** – Corus has partnered with the Directors Guild of Canada and the Black Screen Office in this newly-created program that offers training and mentoring to five experienced Black women Directors culminating in the opportunity to direct an episodic TV show as a guest director.
- **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.
- **OYA Black Arts Coalition** - Corus has partnered with OYA Black Arts Coalition to facilitate the *Corus Unscripted Internship Program*, a newly created training, networking and mentorship opportunity for recently graduated Black students interested in pursuing a television career in the lifestyle and factual genres. The *Corus Unscripted Internship Program* will also provide two students with an eight-week paid internship placement on a Corus-supported unscripted production in 2023 (both students identify as female).
- **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.

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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