

Filed Electronically

27 January 2014

Mr. John Traversy
Secretary General
Canadian Radio-television and
Telecommunications Commission
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N2

Dear Mr. Traversy:

Re: Cultural Diversity Report for ZoomerMedia Limited for 2013 Calendar Year

Please find attached the Cultural Diversity Report from ZoomerMedia Limited for the 2013 Calendar Year. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information.

Very truly yours,

Gord Poland

Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer ZoomerMedia Limited

Encl.









## **2013 CRTC Cultural Diversity Report**

#### ZoomerMedia Limited

## 31 January 2014

#### A. INTRODUCTION

ZoomerMedia Limited (ZML) is pleased to submit its 2013 Cultural Diversity Report for our television services: VisionTV, ONE: Body Mind Spirit Love Channel, CHNU-TV Fraser Valley (JoyTV), CIIT-TV Winnipeg (HopeTV) and The Beautiful Little Channel (BLC).

We are proud of our consistent and exceptional reflection of diversity in all facets of our operation. ZML takes diversity beyond the four designated groups (women, visible minorities, Aboriginal Peoples and people with disabilities). We are also champions of advocating the interests and welfare of our aging population and diverse religious communities.

#### B. ON-AIR REFLECTION OF THE DESIGNATED GROUPS

During 2013, we aired two (2) new series whose central storyline focused on the trials and tribulations women faced in the mid-1900s and in modern times:

### Call the Midwife

Based on the best-selling memoirs of Jennifer Worth, it is a true-to-life look at the colorful stories about a group of midwives in a poverty-stricken area in the East End of London during the 1950s.

# **Prisoners' Wives**

Centers on the stories of women who struggle to cope with social stigma as their loved ones tackle imprisonment.

We also showcased movies that featured independent women in strong, central lead roles:

## Joanne Kilbourn

A Canadian detective, political science professor and later radio commentator who uses her talent in solving mysteries while putting her life in harm's way. She is also a single mother who is trying to deal with her husband's sudden passing.

#### Melanie

A bright but uneducated woman goes to Los Angeles to reclaim her kidnapped son from his father.

#### Sabah

A middle-aged immigrant from Syria living in Toronto was born to a traditional Muslim family who forbids her to adapt the modern Western lifestyle. By befriending a non-Muslim man, she finds her own voice and courage to follow her dreams and aspirations.

Diverse casts and characters were featured in a number of series and programs on our channels:

## The Steve Harvey Show and Family Feud

In Steve Harvey's daily talk show he meets real people with real issues and brings his funny, fresh, insightful and common sense approach to everyday problems. As the host of the popular family game show Family Feud, Steve engages competing family members in hilarious repartee and his honest reactions to their responses have brought a fresh sense of comedy to the show.

# Touched by an Angel

Monica and Andrew, under the supervision of Tess are tasked with bringing guidance and messages from God to various people who are at a crossroads in their lives.

# **Crazy for Love**

A unique series that delves deep into the union of two people faced with challenges stemming from the different cultures and faiths that make up GTA's ethno-cultural mosaic.

#### **Bollywood Hollywood**

This movie pokes fun at the traditional Indian stereotypes. It features Rahul Seth as a young, Indo-Canadian living in Toronto whose widowed mother is eager to get him married after the sudden death of his fiancée.

### The Sweetest Gift

Two neighboring families in Florida, one Black and one White, struggle with the problems of race, poverty, prejudice, and absent fathers, as their children become friends over the course of one summer and fall.

Further, during the past year, various programs were aired to tell the inspiring stories of people who are physically and/or mentally-challenged:

#### **Sue Thomas F.B.Eye**

Based on a true story, this program follows the adventures of Sue Thomas whose talents for reading lips help crack crimes and serve as a tribute to the ability of the human spirit to overcome adversity.

### **Henry and Verlin**

Set in a small rural community during the Great Depression "Henry and Verlin" is the story of an unusual friendship between a nine year old silent boy, Verlin and his autistic uncle Henry.

### The Diving Bell and Butterfly

This movie tells the story of Elle France editor Jean-Dominique Bauby, who suffered a stroke that paralyzed his entire body, except his left eye. He used this eye to blink out his memoir, serving as a testament to the indomitable human spirit.

## Wildflower

Two sisters happen upon a cabin where Alice, a young, partially deaf girl with epilepsy is being kept by her abusive stepfather. The three soon become friends and hope to get Alice an education and help her escape from the torture she undergoes daily.

Programs that are relevant to the Aboriginal Peoples were also a significant part of our daily and weekly schedule:

# **Spirit Alive**

An Aboriginal voice of hope, sharing the spirit of faith through teaching and interviews with Host Roma Fisher.

#### **Tribal Trails**

Interviews and music with First Nations people across Canada. First Nations people share the message of God's love and forgiveness through Jesus Christ, to encourage believers.

#### River of Live

Scripture study with Pastor Ray Martell including interviews with guests of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal background to spread the faith of Jesus and bring encouragement to the body of Christ.

ONE continues to focus on providing an alternative viewpoint to women of all ages. In 2013, various programs with diverse hosts and casts premiered on ONE:

### Arrange Me a Marriage

Aneela Rahman is happily married after an arranged marriage many years ago and she challenges family and friends to use the Asian way of networking to find the perfect match.

# Seven Ages of Love and Seven Ages of Marriage

Journalist Cherry Healey immerses herself in the lives of seven women each at a different stage of her life, to explore the issues of "looking for love." She also investigates seven marriages and attempts to figure out why women get married and when is the right time to do it.

## **Starting Over**

Follows six women who come from all walks of life and overcome issues that have held them back from leading a fulfilling life. One of the mentors in this program is renowned author, life coach and inspirational speaker lyanla Vanzant.

## The Secret Language of Girls

Based on the best-selling book of the same name, this documentary sets out to prove that women share a language and a bond that is uniquely their own.

# ZoomerLife: Health, Wellness and Longevity

Presented by CARP, this one-day event brings the world's leading artists, adventurers, authors, doctors, scientists, scientists and technologists together to discuss important topics that affect Canada's aging population.

## C. DIVERSE ORIGINAL PROGRAMMING

In 2013, ZML commissioned several culturally diverse documentary and music programs.

In May and June we broadcast a special series of documentaries on religious extremism. They include:

#### Jew Bashing: The New Anti-Semitism

An investigation, using hidden cameras, to show the toxicity of a new wave anti-Semitism that is growing worldwide.

## **Facing Extremism**

Through the exchange of stories from perpetrators and victims of hate crimes and terrorism, we find out what goes into the making of any extremist, and into breaking that mindset.

## Jews and Money: Investigation of a Myth

Although the perception of the Jews as world bankers, lenders and traders is by fragments rooted in reality, it more accurately represents the continuation of a myth that spans the ages. The tragic twists and turns in the kidnapping for ransom of a young French Jew Ilan Halimi, begins an exploration that takes us

around the world and across the centuries, in search of the origins and of the myth of Jews and money.

## The War on Faith: Religious Persecution around the World

A round table discussion on religious persecution worldwide. The panel discussion is hosted by Libby Znaimer with special guest commentators: His Eminence, Thomas Cardinal Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, historian and author Conrad Black, documentary filmmaker Martin Himel, Rabbi Yossi Sapirman from Toronto's Beth Torah Congregation, the President of the Islamic Information & Dawah Centre, Shabir Ally and Pandit Roopnauth Sharma, Spiritual Leader of the Ram Mandir Temple, and Vice-President of the Ontario Multi-faith Council.

#### **Persecuted Christians**

Filmmaker and foreign correspondent Martin Himel, along with Rev. Majed El Shafie, human rights advocate and founder of One Free World International, explore some of the atrocities that Christians are facing in Middle Eastern countries including Egypt, Iraq and Pakistan.

On the lighter side of things, music programs showcasing diversity prove to be our viewer's favorite:

#### **God's Greatest Hits**

Through breathtaking performances, historical footage and interviews with critics, world-class musicians and religious experts, we experience songs with the power to move us, lift us and inspire us.

# The Carols of Christmas

Celebrates what we all love most about the holiday season: music! Recorded at the newly built Public Performing Space at Zoomerplex, this television special highlights some of Canada's most cherished singers, musicians and holiday songs.

### Gospel to Go

A wide range of diverse soloists, duos, groups and musicians from the Canadian gospel scene perform inspiring songs of God and share their personal stories.

## **Time to Sing**

Viewers at home are invited to sing-along with the series hosts and choir as they perform old favorite hymns and gospel music.

#### D. MULTI-FAITH AND MULTI-CULTURAL CONTENT

VisionTV continues to be the gathering place of multi-faith and multi-culture TV viewing. In 2013, over 90 independent producers from a range of faith groups had broadcast

opportunities on Vision TV. Saturday from 9AM to 2AM features South Asian programming primarily in Punjabi, Hindi, and Urdu that showcase the dynamic Canadian South Asian community and a wide variety of long established entertainment content.

#### E. CONTENT ACCESSIBILITY ON-AIR

In 2013, ZoomerMedia implemented new workflows to ensure closed captioning is in place for all English-language programs and to improve the quality of our Closed Captioning on-air. We now have two (2) dedicated staff to monitor and implement our close captioning policies and procedures.

On Vision TV for the past year, 99.9% of its Cornerstone programs were closed captioned. English-language programs on ONE were 97% closed captioned while CHNU-TV and CIIT-TV were at 99.2% and 99.7% respectively. Our channels will be 100% closed captioned by 2014.

As for Described Video, we broadcasted a total of 733 hours programs with described video on VisionTV last year, 378 hours on ONE, 651 hours on CHNU-TV and 560 hours on CIIT-TV. These programs were from various genres including documentaries, music, drama series, panel discussion and interviews.

We continue to strive for better ways to enhance the viewing experience of the hearing and visually impaired.

## F. REFLECTION OF THE DESIGNATED GROUPS IN THE WORKPLACE

As a company, we encourage and welcome diversity. Policies are in place against harassment and discrimination. We provide our employees benefits over and above the minimum statutory requirements which includes religious observance, special leave, compassionate/bereavement leave, maternity/parental leave "top up", sick leave and more.

In 2013, more than 50% of our total personnel were women; 33% were visible minorities and 8% comprised of people with disabilities. We are also proud to report that two of the three senior management roles in our TV Division were given to women.

# G. CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY - SENIOR EXECUTIVE IN-CHARGE OF DIVERSITY

Joan Jenkinson, Vice President of Independent Production and Multi-faith Content serves as the Senior Executive In-Charge of Diversity. In cooperation with various groups in the company, ZML organized a number of staff events that cultivate diversity, such as:

Swami Saraswati presented his pilgrimage to Camino de Santiago in which he shared his experiences and reflections – March 2013.

**Screening of** *Jew Bashing: The New Anti-Semitism* with staff, guests and members of the media – April 2013.

Screening of two (2) short films produced by staff member – October 2013.

**Diwali celebration and information session** of its history and significance – November 2013.

**Zoomerplex tour** to introduce staff to all members of the Zoomer family and learn more about their business unit's endeavor – December 2013.

The Cultural Diversity Committee meets every two (2) months to find more ways to involve staff and nurture inclusiveness.

ZML also has other special initiatives to support our constituents as follows:

#### Mosaic Production Enhancement Fund

Let the Quran Speak – Production consultation, shooting and editing for this weekly program.

Mosaic Production-Post Production Workshop offered in Toronto, ON and Surrey, BC to over 40 producers.

Aaj Kal Enhancement - Production Consultation, shooting and editing for this weekly program.

Producers Audio Training held in Surrey, BC.

## TV & New Media Awareness Fund for older adults

CARP Writer in Residence program

## **National Screen Institute**

ZoomerMedia Bursary provided to Maureen Bradley for her project Two 4 One.

#### H. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Moses Znaimer, President and CEO and Joan Jenkinson, Vice President of Independent Production and Multi-faith Content attended various meetings and consultations with community leaders to discuss VisionTV's future, mandatory carriage, and to strengthen our relations with the following diverse faith groups:

#### One Free World International

Meeting with Rev. Majed El Shafie (Founder/President), Sam Plett and Chantel Desloges, One Free World International about persecuted Christians in the Middle East.

## Interfaith Dialogue

Meeting with Richard Landau, Producer and Author of What the World Needs to Know about Interfaith Dialogue.

#### Soka Gakkai International Association – Buddhist

Meeting with Tony Meers, General Director

### **Centre or Israel and Jewish Affairs**

Meeting with Shimon Fogel, CEO

## **Adath Israel Congregation**

Meeting with Rabbi David Seed

## **Beth Tzedec Congregation**

Meeting Rabbi Frydman-Kohl

#### Sikh Leaders

Meeting with Inderjit Bal and Igbal Mahal

Regular meeting and consultation sessions with our Mosaic Programming Management Group's (MPMG) constituents were held with the following items undertaken:

Advice to achieve balance programming in the Mosaic program schedule.

Advice on the current network philosophy with the added Zoomer emphasis on the 45+ demographic.

Concerns about the mission and identity of the channel.

Issues related to adherence to the Code of Ethics and Program Practices.

Relevant issues in their respective faith community.

Report on the Mandatory Carriage - Protect Your Vision Campaign.

VisionTV Licence Renewal.

Studio 64 Use and Rate Card.

To support, enrich and strengthen the Independent Producer community, our Vice President of Independent Production received pitches and provided mentorship to diverse participants at:

Hot Docs, Rendezvous session on April 28, 2013.

Innoversity Creative Summit May 28, 2013 – pitch meetings,

Banff Television Festival at "Take a Decision Maker to Breakfast" and "Face-to-Face" speed pitching meetings on June 11, 2013.

ReelWorld Indie Film Lounge Cocktail Reception, September 2013.

Merging Media Conference – Vancouver, November 2013.

World Congress of Science and Factual Producers, Montreal, December 2013.

#### I. CONCLUSION

Diversity is a core value for ZoomerMedia. It informs all of our programming, daily operations and management decisions. Our corporate culture is committed to fostering a fair and equitable work environment and these are reflected in our human resources policies and practices. VisionTV continues to provide diverse communities with access to broadcasting that encompasses many different religions and beliefs. On VisionTV, the MPMG fulfills its mandate to ensure balance and diversity in our Mosaic schedule. The multi-faith and multi-cultural programming on all our channels reflects the diversity of Canada's citizenship. We fully understand that diversity is our strength.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this report.

Respectfully yours,

**Gord Poland** 

**Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer** 

ZoomerMedia Limited