

# The Eastern Script

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## GET IN TOUCH

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## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS



Long-time staffer Mark Woodland has stepped up to the plate for this issue, writing all of it and getting me off the hook for the first time ever. Thank you, Mark! He has found some interesting items about the status of copyright law not only in Canada but globally. The latter piece reminds me why we refer so many copyright questions to production counsel. It's a complex area.

The company turns thirty years old on September 2. Those years have seen many people come and go from our team. One of the longest-serving colleagues retired in July, twenty-plus year veteran Denise (Archer) Wood. As she exits, Maggie Spencer enters. We have a bit more on both Eastern Script favorites in the following pages.

Like all of you, we are wondering how bad things will get work-wise as the industry labor actions continue. We have been through other strikes (and a pandemic) in our thirty years, all potentially back-breaking events from which we emerged intact, eventually. This summer has been quieter than usual for us, no surprise. I am hoping that the complex issues on the table can find some resolution so that everyone can return to "full steam ahead."

Best summer wishes to you all and thank you for your continued business.  
We are grateful.

Anne Marie Murphy  
President



## CANADA EXTENDS COPYRIGHT PROTECTION



Photo by Janko Ferlič on Unsplash

Canada has made a significant update to its copyright law, extending the general term of copyright protection from 50 to 70 years after the death of the author. Under the new law, creative works – literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic pieces – have an additional 20 years of protection before entering the public domain. This means that no new works will be released into the public domain in Canada until 2043.

The update, which took effect at the end of 2022, brings Canada in line with United States law and international standards, most notably Europe, South America, Australia (though not New Zealand, which maintains life of author +50 years) and many other countries.

The new law has been welcomed by some creators but met with ire by those who rely on public domain materials (cue the wrath of librarians and public domain archivists). Public Domain day, until recently, was celebrated with glee in Canada, but those celebrations have been postponed for the next 20 years.

Among the ‘casualties’ of delayed access to the public domain is J.R.R. Tolkien's iconic "Lord of the Rings" intellectual property. Canadians who were excited for this I.P. to go public will now have to twiddle their thumbs for an extra two decades, perfecting their patient Gandalf impersonations in the meantime.

It should be noted that, unlike Europe, the extension of copyright protection is not retroactive. Works created by artists who passed away before 1972 are still available in the public domain in Canada. This maintains the status quo for existing works, enabling continued access to a wide range of historical and cultural content without any legal repercussions. For example, the works of authors Ernest Hemingway, Sylvia Plath and James Bond creator Ian Fleming have entered the public domain in Canada but are still protected in most of the world.

Aligning itself with global standards while still preserving public domain works pre-1972 reflects a balanced approach that maintains cultural accessibility without retroactive constraints, setting Canada on a distinct path in the realm of creative rights. That said, the year 2043 seems a distant, lengthy span for creators and enthusiasts to wait for the eventual inclusion of new works in the public domain, unburdened by copyright constraints.

## COPYRIGHT RULES AROUND THE WORLD: WHO'S PLAYING BY THEIR OWN TUNE?



Photo by Farzad Mohsenvand on Unsplash

While most countries follow the Berne Convention – the international set of rules for codifying copyright law (life of author plus 50 years), or the current international standard (life of author plus 70 years) – there are some countries that went ‘rogue’ and decided to implement their own ideas. Some of them are pretty interesting!

Take Mexico, for instance, which really goes the extra mile when it comes to protecting creators’ rights. Copyright lasts a whopping 100 years after the life of the author, which is like giving their creative works a century-long VIP pass. This appears to be the longest form of copyright protection in the world.

Another honorable mention is Jamaica, where the law extends from life of author plus 95 years. The only caveat to this law is that “a typographical arrangement” – layout/presentation of a published work – gets life plus 50 years protection.

But on the flip side is the small island nation of Dominica. They’re all about getting works into the public domain quickly. In Dominica, copyright protection sticks around for life of author and only 25 years. That’s like a speed run to letting everyone enjoy and use creative stuff without legal worries.

Good old Spain decided to mix it up. Spanish law states copyright extends to life plus 70 years for authors that died on or after December 7, 1987. However, for authors that died before December 7, 1987 the law is life plus 80 years.

The global copyrights scene is a mixed bag. From Mexico’s century of protection to Dominica’s speedy public sharing, and Spain’s unique rules, it’s a fascinating copyright landscape out there. Copyright law is no cakewalk and if you’re navigating this maze, it’s wise to seek advice from the experts who can help steer you through the twists and turns.

## SAYING GOODBYE TO A LONGTIME STAFFER



Photo by Cristian Escobar on Unsplash

With mixed emotions, we say goodbye to a long time member of our team, Denise Wood, who retired at the end of July. We are sad to see her go but also happy as Denise wished to spend more time with her family, especially the grandchildren!

Denise had been with the company since 2001, the year that marked the debut of Harry Potter on film and the very first Apple iPod (gosh, now we feel old). During her tenure she witnessed many technological changes, from using fax machines to searching TikTok profiles, that have changed the nature of this work in so many ways.

Denise's career at Eastern Script spanned more than two decades, a notable achievement in today's work environment. Amidst changing trends, her dedication has been highly valued by us and we shall miss her, her hard work and good humor. We wish her all the best and happiness for the future.

## NEW STAFF FEATURE

With the impending departure of Denise, in May we welcomed our newest member to the Eastern Script team, Maggie Spencer. Maggie is a graduate of Carleton University, Ottawa, where she earned a BA in Psychology with a minor in Law. Her love of legal research and an interest in film made her the perfect fit for the role of legal researcher. She has been with us just over three months now and has truly taken to the work. Learning this job is challenging and takes time, so let's hear from Maggie about her experience of the last three months.

**ES:** Please provide a brief introduction to yourself.

**MS:** Most of my previous experience is in transcription, creating transcripts of audio and video materials. In doing that you learn to be very meticulous. I became a paralegal which was really exciting for me, I love doing legal research. I was lucky enough to be able to do some work at a legal aid clinic, mostly doing research regarding landlord and tenant cases and disability claims. I also have a love for film and television. In university, whenever I had the opportunity to take a film class, I took it. Being able to find this role in script clearance is like the best of both worlds.

**ES:** What are your first impressions of the work?

**MS:** I've been enjoying it! In terms of skill set, it is similar to some of the things I have done before. There is a focus on details and a client-centredness that is a through line. But it is also just plain cool to be able to play a small role in the process of creating a movie or a television show.

**ES:** What has been the most challenging aspect of the learning process?

**MS:** With every role, you worry about whether you've caught everything. Coming in, I knew the broad concepts but I didn't necessarily know everything that went into a clearance report or the best places to start when researching in this arena. So there was a lot to pick up! But the training process is very smooth, there is a lot of space to get accustomed to how things work.



ES: What has surprised you about learning this job?

MS: I was surprised at how much collaboration there is between colleagues here. You never feel like you're on your own even though we work remotely.

Hats off to Anne Marie Murphy for fostering such a great environment. The work is always going to be better when there is input from multiple sources.

ES: What has been your favorite part of the job so far?

MS: There's something new every day! Before starting, I underestimated how different each project would feel, even if you are going through the same processes. Each project presents its own issues and sometimes you come across something you've never seen before. There's a lot of variety in what we're asked to look at, from children's shows to horror movies, and you never know what you're going to get which can be exciting.

ES: What films or tv series would you love to work on if you got the chance?

MS: Tough one! My favourite things tend to have an aspect of reality to them, which also makes them a little bit more complicated in terms of clearance. Something like *Succession* would be really interesting and challenging. I imagine that a lot went into the clearance process for that show.



Photo by Ajeet Mestry on Unsplash

## RECENT PROJECTS

**LATE BLOOMER** (TV Series) – “Canadian streaming service Crave has partnered with Pier 21 Films on eight-part series “Late Bloomer,” created by and starring Jasmeet Singh Raina, also known as Jus Reign. The series is inspired by Raina’s life as a Punjabi Sikh millennial and online celebrity. The show follows burgeoning content creator Jasmeet Dutta as he tries to balance his ambitions for success with his commitment to his family, community, and culture. Production is underway in Toronto and Hamilton.”

By Namam Ramachandran, Variety [variety.com/2023/global/news/jus-reign-late-bloomer-crave-pier-21-1235590610/](https://www.variety.com/2023/global/news/jus-reign-late-bloomer-crave-pier-21-1235590610/)

**SON OF A CRITCH** (Season 3, TV Series) – “Canadian comedy *Son of a Critch* is establishing itself as a mainstay of CBC’s schedule as it is greenlit for a third season before the second has finished airing. CBC said Season 2, which finishes next week, is the pubcaster’s most-watched English Canadian comedy series and most-watched show with 18-49 year olds. The series is produced by *Schitt’s Creek*’s Andrew Barnsley and created by Mark Critch, who plays a fictionalized version of himself based on his award-winning memoir, with *The Office* scribe Tim McAuliffe.”

By Max Goldbart, Deadline.com [deadline.com/2023/03/son-of-a-critch-renewed-for-season-3-by-cbc-1235307872/](https://deadline.com/2023/03/son-of-a-critch-renewed-for-season-3-by-cbc-1235307872/)

**HUDSON & REX** (Season 6, TV Series) – “Season 6 of Canadian cop show “Hudson & Rex,” one of the world’s most successful television brands, has been given the greenlight. The new season has been added to the sales slate of Beta Film at next week’s MipTV television conference and market in Cannes.”

By Leo Barraclough, Variety [variety.com/2023/tv/global/hudson-and-rex-season-6-miptv-1235582440/](https://www.variety.com/2023/tv/global/hudson-and-rex-season-6-miptv-1235582440/)

**OUT COME THE WOLVES** (Feature Film) – “[Adam] MacDonald is directing *Out Come the Wolves* from a screenplay by Euka Okuma, based on a story they crafted with actor Joris Jarsky of *God’s Country*. The story centers on a woman who brings her male best friend to meet her fiancé at her family’s secluded family cabin in the woods. As tensions grow between the two men, they set off into

the wild on a deer hunt, before a pack of ravenous wolves forces them to face the darkest side of nature.”

By Cody Hamman, [www.joblo.com/out-come-the-wolves-filming](https://www.joblo.com/out-come-the-wolves-filming)

**SILENT PLANET** (Feature Film) – “Elias Koteas (*Shutter Island*) and Briana Middleton (*The Tender Bar*) have been set to topline *Silent Planet*, a sci-fi thriller written and directed by Jeffrey St. Jules (*Bang Bang Baby*), which has wrapped production in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, and been picked up for worldwide distribution by Quiver Distribution.”

By Matt Grobar, Deadline [deadline.com/2023/06/elias-koteas-brianna-middleton-silent-planet-sci-fi-thriller-1235426428/](https://deadline.com/2023/06/elias-koteas-brianna-middleton-silent-planet-sci-fi-thriller-1235426428/)

**WITCHBOARD** (Feature Film) – “*Witchboard* is a forthcoming American supernatural mystery horror film; it is a reimagining of the 1986 movie of the same name by Kevin S. Tenney which initially spawned two sequels: *Witchboard: The Devil’s Doorway* (1993) and *Witchboard III: The Possession* (1995). Directed and co-produced by Chuck Russell (*Paradise City; I Am Wrath; The Scorpion King; Bless the Child; Eraser; The Mask; The Blob; A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors*) from a screenplay co-written with co-producer Greg McKay (producer of *Book of Fire; Night of the Demons 2010; Brain Dead 2007*) based on characters created by Kevin S. Tenney.”

[moviesandmania.com/2023/07/23/witchboard-supernatural-mystery-horror-movie-film-2024-by-chuck-russell-teaser-trailer/](https://moviesandmania.com/2023/07/23/witchboard-supernatural-mystery-horror-movie-film-2024-by-chuck-russell-teaser-trailer/)

**YOUNG WERTHER** (Feature Film) – “Douglas Booth, Alison Pill and Iris Apatow have joined an adaptation of the Johann Wolfgang von Goethe classic “The Sorrows of Young Werther.” The film, simply titled “Young Werther,” is produced by Toronto-based film and TV outfit Wildling Pictures, which describes the project as a modern retelling of the book.”

By Manori Ravindran, Variety [variety.com/2023/film/global/douglas-booth-alison-pill-iris-apatow-young-werther-1235612099/](https://www.variety.com/2023/film/global/douglas-booth-alison-pill-iris-apatow-young-werther-1235612099/)