

## **Spirit Talker Key Creative Bios**

### **Shawn Leonard – Lead Character**

Shawn Leonard - is a heart-centred Aboriginal/Indigenous (Mi'kmaq) Spirit Talker aka...Psychic Medium. Shawn presently lives in Millbrook First Nation, Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia, Canada and has been working as a professional in his field for over 20 years.

Shawn takes an authentic approach to the Spirit world in his personal readings, Live events, workshops and teaching Spirit Talker Tribe, Radio and TV Appearances.

At 16 years old, just one year after losing his father to a massive heart attack, Shawn received a visitation and a message from his father in Spirit, "We all have a purpose and one day you will help people understand their lives and bridge the gap between the physical world and the Spirit World", said the spirit of his father. In the three decades since that night, Shawn has finely honed his ability as a Spirit Talker/Medium and his connection to the Spirit World.

His gift has allowed him to help people all over the world as he communicates with departed loved ones, spirits and guides. The insights they share help us better understand our journey here on earth and provides healing for many people struggling with grief.

Shawn is a proud aboriginal Mi'kmaq person who works with spirit to heal hearts. Fittingly, a respected Mi'kmaq elder gifted him with the name "White Eagle Spirit Talker."

### **Producer and Director – Gharrett Patrick Paon**

Gharrett Patrick Paon is an actor-turned-producer based in Mi'kma'ki / Nova Scotia. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from Dalhousie University ('17), is an alumnus of the Canadian Film Centre's - Producer's Lab ('17), and the National Screen Institute's Features First Program ('19).

Gharrett is the president of Rebel Road Films, a boutique film & television production company he founded in 2018. At the end of 2019 Rebel Road produced "I Syd Stone", a 6-episode queer web series by writer/director Denis Theriault, now streaming in six countries worldwide via OutTV. The company has also produced two seasons of "Spirit Talker" for APTN. Recently "The Mohel" by writer/director Charles Wahl, won best live action short at Palm Springs International Short Fest. Gharretts films have screened at SXSW, BFI-Flare, Frameline, VIFF, FIN:AIFF, Inside Out, Out of Competition at Clermont-Ferrand as part of Canada's Not Short on Talent showcase, and ImagineNative. Recently "Wildfire", a short two-spirit film by writer/director Bretten Hannam won Best Short Film at the Screen Nova Scotia Awards. The company will next world premiere "Wildhood", the feature length version of "Wildfire" that was shot in the pandemic summer of 2020 at TIFF21 followed by an Opening Night Gala presentation at FIN, and a subsequent robust fall Canadian festival tour.

Gharrett is the recipient of the prestigious Nova Scotia Talent Trust Young Artist of Excellence Award and the Shelagh Mackenzie Filmmaking Award. His performances on screen have been nominated for two ACTRA

awards. This summer, in between producing he's been filming a recurring role on the fourth season of "The Sinner" opposite Bill Pullman, while renovating a tiny houseboat moored in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia.

### **Executive Producer – Edward Peill**

Edward has been working in film and TV since 1996 and has a BA in Business & Economics from Acadia University. Since establishing Tell Tale Productions in 2003, Edward has produced more than 200 hours of award-winning blue-chip documentaries and factual entertainment for Canadian, American, and international broadcasters. The company also service produces for History, Discovery, National Geographic, and RMC Decouverte.

Prior to establishing Tell Tale Productions, Edward was the Director of Production for Topsail Entertainment and oversaw the development and production of more than 40 hours of drama, documentaries, lifestyle, and comedy series including the iconic Canadian mockumentary series *Trailer Park Boys* and the highly rated documentary series *Tall Ship Chronicles*.

Selected projects include: *Spirit Talker* Season 1-3 (APTN), *Newfoundland* (NDR Germany) *Drag Kids* (CBC POV Docs), *The Curse of Oak Island* Seasons 1-9 (History), *The Big Downsize* Seasons 1-4 (Vision TV), *Bay of Fundy* (NDR Germany), *Growing Sense* (AMI ), *Power of Play* (CBC Nature of Things), *Radical Age* (Vision TV), *Terror in the Woods* (Discovery) *Body Language Decoded* (CBC Nature of Things), *Free Reins* (CBC Firsthand ) *Lunenburg: Where The Land Meets the Sea* (NDR Germany), *Forever Young* (CBC Firsthand), *TV Renaissance* (CBC Doc Zone), *Santa Quest* (Super Channel), *Bounty: Into The Hurricane* (CBC), *Trek of the Titans* (CBC Nature of Things), *Bite Me* (CBC Doc Zone ), *BorderLine* (Super Channel), *Counterfeit Culture* (CBC Doc Zone), *Our Lady* (Vision TV), *FaceBook Follies* (CBC Doc Zone), *Web Warriors* (CBC Doc Zone), and *Land & Sea* (24 x 30 Min. Eps.- CBC).

### **Director – Dugald McLaren**

Dugald holds a First-Class Honours degree in Linguistics, Anthropology, and Film, and graduated with an award for Outstanding Achievement in Philosophy. He is a graduate of the Producer's program at the National Screen Institute in Winnipeg.

His professional career began at a young age on feature film sets and big television series where he worked in many departments including Locations, Art, and even stunts. After a few years he transitioned to primarily television and became a PM, then Producer, and eventually VP of Production at Ocean Entertainment where he worked for more than a decade. During that time Dugald was part of the development team, was a Series Director, and Produced almost 200 hours of quality television. Genres included food, ob-doc, reality, renovation, documentary, crime, travel/adventure, and recreation. He has travelled to over 50 countries and filmed in most of them.

Many of his projects have won and been nominated for awards, including a Gemini nom for Dugald himself on a Food Network special that he wrote, produced, and directed called *A Chateau Dinner*. It was also up for a prestigious James Beard Award in New York City.

In 2008 Dugald made a foray into the commercial world and enjoyed producing large and small commercials. He also directed pieces for Toyota, NSGEU, Sodexo, Craft Brewers of Ontario, political parties, and more.

In 2015 he moved to the mountains of British Columbia, where he continues to grow and work as a Producer on the acclaimed series Highway Thru Hell for Discovery Network.

Recently he directed Spirit Talker, for APTN, and is the Supervising Field Producer on Season 9 of Highway Thru Hell, and maintains his position as the owner and CEO of Neo-Pioneer Entertainment.

### **Director – Clarence Leblanc**

With 30 years of experience in the film and television industry, Clarence LeBlanc made his debut the Unit department on the film sets Montreal. While he was working Cinélande as a Production Manager, he heard more and more from a company in his home province of Nova Scotia: Salter Street Films (SSF). During a visit to Halifax, he met Paul Donovan and after 6 months of being his Executive Assistance, he began a 10 year position with SSF Int. For the next decade he travelled the world selling the rights of Films and TV shows all the major networks on the planet. He has sold over \$ 33 million worth of programming to Sci FI UK, Canal +, SVT Sweden, NHK Japan, Travel Channel UK, RAI, DR TV, YLE, and several others.

In the last 10 years he has been focused on developing his own projects. These include the super successful ‘Trajectories’ series for RDS/Bell Media, currently in pre-production of season 8! He has also Co-Produced a feature Film with the recently departed legend, Roch Demers, ‘The Outlaw League’. He has also recently begun guest directing on projects he is passionate about such as APTN’s, Spirit Talkers.

### **Writer – Donna Gabriel**

If there’s a story there, Donna Gabriel will sniff it out and find the best way to tell it for a TV audience. A journalist by trade, for the past 25 years Donna has specialized in documentary series production with writing credits on dozens of shows for such broadcasters as APTN, CBC, CTV, VISION, DISCOVERY ID and SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL. While a big fan of both true crime and the paranormal genre, as a passionate storyteller, Donna is happy to dive into any subject under the sun and has tackled quite a range of topics from food history and culture, to shipwrecks and gardening for the visually impaired. Before deciding to specialize in documentary television production, Donna spent a decade with CBC Radio, where contracts as a producer and broadcaster sent her off telling stories in a variety of Canadian cities and locales. A stint as a morning show researcher in Quebec City gave her the chance to put her French language skills to the test, and in Yellowknife and Iqaluit a job as a reporter offered her an immersion in indigenous culture. Landing back in the Maritimes, Donna transitioned from CBC to discover her professional calling as an independent TV researcher and writer and hasn’t

looked back. While not cranking out scripts for television shows, Donna wears her landlord hat for rental properties that keep her way too busy but she always makes time for her kids, dog and cat, singing in a local choir and regular boot camp workouts.

### **Writer – Jennifer Adcock**

A veteran of the Canadian television and documentary scene, Adcock, has been writing, directing and producing in the field of television and documentary production for over twenty years. Several broadcasters have showcased her work including the CBC, IFC Canada, The Movie Network, The Space Channel, Vision and AMI.

She was part of the CBC's Emmy award winning show 'Street Cents' for eight seasons before moving on to work for IFC Canada. As an independent she has directed and written the documentary 'Nightmare in Canada: Canadian Horror on Film' which won a Gold Remi in 2005 at the World Fest in Houston and more recently 'The Halifax Explosion' which aired on CBC, AMI and was part of the Atlantic Film Festival lineup in 2017. Her most recent doc series 'The Big Downsize' is now in production for its second season on Vision.