



## How To Become A PIONEER OF THE YEAR -

By MICHAEL KENNEDY

I WAS BORN A SMALL WHITE CHILD IN A TOWN CALLED NORTH BAY. IT IS A SMALL TOWN IN NORTH ONTARIO SIMILAR TO THE ONE NEIL YOUNG SINGS ABOUT IN HIS SONG "HELPLESS". IT GETS REALLY COLD THERE IN THE WINTER. THIS IS PREFERABLE TO THE SUMMERS, WHICH WERE SPENT SWIMMING IN FREEZING COLD LAKES AND DEALING WITH DEER FLIES SO LARGE THEY HAD BEEN KNOWN TO CARRY OFF SMALL CHILDREN. MY DAD WAS THE MANAGER OF THE ODEON THEATRE. THAT IS UNTIL HE PUNCHED HIS SUPERVISOR IN THE NOSE, THEREBY ENDING HIS CAREER WITH RANK ORGANIZATION.

AFTER SEVERAL LUCRATIVE YEARS AS A TRAVELING BEER AND EXOTIC PET SALESMAN DAD MOVED THE FAMILY TO TRENTON, WHERE HE BECAME THE MANAGER OF THE CENTRE THEATRE. THESE WERE HEADY TIMES! IT WAS A BIG DAY IN 1966 WHEN THE BEATLES MOVIE "A HARD DAYS NIGHT" OPENED. THE MOVIE WAS ACTUALLY RELEASED IN 1964.

WHEN I WAS IN GRADE 2 WE MOVED TO KITCHENER, WHERE I LEARNED TO SPEAK GERMAN AND EAT MENNONITE CHEESE. STRANGELY I'VE ALWAYS BEEN ON TIME SINCE THOSE DAYS.

IN GRADE 4 WE MOVED TO A LITTLE TOWN CALLED PLEASANT VALLEY, ON A STREET CALLED PLEASANT BOULEVARD, I WENT TO PLEASANT VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL AND STOLE CANDY FROM PLEASANT VARIETY. IT WAS PLEASANT. YET EERIE.

WHEN I WAS 12 WE MOVED TO BURLINGTON. IT WAS ALL APPLE ORCHARDS AND LOOSE WOMEN IN THOSE DAYS. BURLINGTON WAS WHERE I SAW MOVIES LIKE "MIDNIGHT COWBOY", "EASY RIDER", "WOODSTOCK", "VANISHING POINT", "THE GODFATHER", "5 FINGERS OF DEATH".....IT WAS ALSO THE FIRST TIME I SAW A WOMAN'S BREAST, AT LEAST A LIVE ONE.

FOR HIGH SCHOOL WE MOVED TO THE OTHER END OF THE CITY. THIS WAY I COULD START GRADE 9 NOT KNOWING A SINGLE PERSON IN THE SCHOOL. THAT KIND OF TRAUMA STAYS WITH YOU FOR YEARS. MY HIGH SCHOOL DAYS WERE MORE "CATCHER IN THE RYE" THAN "PORKY'S" BUT AT LEAST THE MUSIC WAS GOOD. THIS WAS WHERE I DISCOVERED PINK FLOYD, GENESIS, YES, DIRE STRAIGHTS.....AND THE ODD MIND ALTERING SUBSTANCE. I ONLY INHALED ON DAYS WITH "AY" IN THEM. I GUESS IT COULD BE CALLED A TURNING POINT. A LOVE AFFAIR WITH BEER BEGAN. GIRLS HOWEVER FOUND MY 5'11" 125 LB. FRAME SLIGHTLY DISTURBING. TEACHERS BEGAN TO SNEER. I GOT A JOB AS AN USHER AT A MOVIE THEATRE.

SINCE I HAD MADE SOME REALLY GOOD FRIENDS IN HIGH SCHOOL, IT WAS TIME TO MOVE AGAIN. SO I STARTED GRADE 12 IN ST. CATHARINE'S, WHICH OPENED UP THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CROSS BORDER BEER DRINKING. IT WAS THE DISCO ERA IN MOST PLACES. BUT NOT IN BUFFALO. THEY WERE STILL LISTENING TO SINATRA OR THE SEX PISTOLS. GOD BLESS THEM. AMERICANS LIKE BEER ALMOST AS MUCH AS I DO. THEY ALSO LIKE FIGHTING. I CALL THESE THE SINEWY YEARS.

I MANAGED TO BULLSHIT MY WAY INTO GUELPH UNIVERSITY. FOR ME UNIVERSITY WAS MOSTLY ABOUT, SPOUTING MARXIST LENINIST DOCTRINE, SMOKING ROLL YOUR OWNS WITH TOBACCO FROM BELIZE, WEARING COTTON SHIRTS WITHOUT COLLARS AND THE SAME JEANS EVERY DAY, GETTING AN EARRING, WEARING EYE LINER, PUTTING GEL IN MY "PAST SHOULDER LENGTH" HAIR, GETTING BEATEN UP BY ENGINEERS EVERY WEEKEND AND MEANDERING THROUGH A STREAM OF DEAD END RELATIONSHIPS WITH GIRLS WHO THOUGHT I WAS DARK AND MYSTERIOUS, THAT USUALLY ENDED WITH THE GIRL SAYING "GET THE HELL OUT OF MY HOUSE....LOSER". LEARNED TO PLAY THE GUITAR. THEN...

HAD TO GO TO WORK. PAY OFF STUDENT LOANS. MAKE \$250 A WEEK AT ASTRAL FILMS. LIVE IN SLUM-LIKE CONDITIONS IN DOWNTOWN TORONTO. TRAVEL BY TTC. EAT A LOT OF KRAFT DINNER. BUY A CLIP-ON TIE. GIVE UP MY IDEALS AND WORK FOR THE MAN. REMINISCE ABOUT THE DAYS WHEN WOMEN THOUGHT I WAS MYSTERIOUS; NOW THEY JUST KNEW I WAS BROKE. IT WAS AT THIS POINT THAT I DECIDED TO SCRUTINIZE MY SKILL-SET. SINCE I HAD NO DISCERNABLE EXPERTISE I WAS FORCED TO MAXIMIZE MY CORE COMPETENCIES. FORTUNATELY I FOUND A BUSINESS WHERE HAVING AN APTITUDE FOR DRINKING, GAMBLING, GOLFING, WATCHING SPORTS AND THE KNACK FOR SOME GOOD OLD FASHIONED IRISH BLARNEY, ARE CONSIDERED CORE COMPETENCIES. THERE IS AN OLD SAYING IN LIFE "I'D RATHER BE LUCKY THAN GOOD" AND I BELIEVE THAT. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT IF YOU ARE HONEST AND FORTHRIGHT, HAVE INTEGRITY, WORK HARD, DEMAND THAT OTHERS REACH THEIR POTENTIAL BUT ARE KIND TO THOSE AROUND YOU, THAT SUCCESS WILL FOLLOW. OK, WHO AM I KIDDING, I WAS LUCKY!

IN CLOSING, HELP THE PIONEERS BECAUSE THEY HELP PEOPLE WHO, THROUGH NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN, CANNOT HELP THEMSELVES. BE THOUGHTFUL! ENJOY EVERY DAY!

THANKS TO ALL THE "TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION" FRIENDS, CO-WORKERS, MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN WHO HELPED ME ALONG THE WAY; WITHOUT WHOM I'D BE PLAYING A GUITAR IN FRONT OF THE BAY STREET SUBWAY STATION FOR NICKELS. THANKS TO HEATHER FOR SEEING SOMETHING IN ME WHEN I DIDN'T SEE IT IN MYSELF. THANKS TO LAUREN FOR BEING AN AMAZING AND SPECIAL KID WHO WILL ACCOMPLISH ASTOUNDING THINGS IN THIS WORLD! THANKS TO MY BROTHER FOR BEING MY PAL. THANKS TO MY MOM FOR HER KINDNESS, PASSION AND INTELLIGENCE. I MISS YOU MA! AND THANKS TO MY DAD FOR HIS HONESTY, OUTSPOKENNESS AND REMARKABLE SENSE OF HUMOUR. AND THANKS DAD FOR PUNCHING THAT GUY IN THE NOSE. HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THAT I MAY NEVER HAVE LEFT NORTH BAY.

THANK YOU!



Michael Kennedy

# ANCILLARY AWARD RECIPIENT



## **BORN TO SERVE: FROM THEATRE THROUGH TELEVISION AND THEN ON TO FILM....**

AS A KID I USED TO GO TO THE MOVIES ALL THE TIME BUT I NEVER THOUGHT THAT ONE DAY MY CAREER WOULD TAKE ME IN THAT DIRECTION. TORONTO-BORN AND BRED, MY FAVOURITE NEIGHBOURHOOD THEATRES WERE THE NORTOWN, WHICH WAS NEAR THE HOUSE I GREW UP IN, AND THE EGLINTON THEATRE, WHICH WAS REALLY POPULAR WITH ME AND MY HIGH SCHOOL FRIENDS. ON VERY SPECIAL OCCASIONS LIKE BIRTHDAYS, OUR WHOLE FAMILY WOULD HOP IN THE CAR AND GO DOWNTOWN TO THE UNIVERSITY THEATRE. ...AND THEN THERE WAS FRIDAY NIGHT IN THE SUMMER WHEN OUR FAMILY WOULD LOAD UP THE CAR WITH A PICNIC BASKET IN TOW AND HEAD OFF TO THE DRIVE-IN.

I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO BE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE MPTAC FOR THE LAST 15 YEARS ... BOY, HOW TIME FLIES! A BIG THANK-YOU TO FRANK KETTNER, STUART FRASER, HOWARD LICHTMAN AND MICHAEL SCHER, ON BEHALF OF THE MPTAC BOARD AT THAT TIME FOR CHOOSING ME OVER THE SLEW OF OTHER CANDIDATES WHO APPLIED FOR THIS NEW POSITION AND GAVE ME THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME. I'VE HAD A WONDERFUL TIME IN THIS INDUSTRY AND HAVE MADE LIFELONG FRIENDS ALONG THE WAY. I ALSO WORK WITH OUR AMERICAN COLLEAGUES AT SHOWEAST, SHOWWEST AND CINEMA EXPO, AS WELL AS ORGANIZE AND OVERSEE OUR CANADIAN CONVENTION SHOWCANADA, AND NEVER TIRE OF THE "INDUSTRY GET-TOGETHERS", REGROUPING THE DIFFERENT SECTORS IN OUR DIVERSE INDUSTRY. I AM ALSO A "RECURRING VOLUNTEER" AND LOVE TO HELP OUT WITH ALL OF THE PIONEER EVENTS, WHERE I WILL USUALLY BE SEEN WORKING ON THE DOOR, OR COLLECTING AND/OR SELLING TICKETS, WHETHER IT IS THE GOLF TOURNAMENT, PIONEER LUNCH OR DINNER, OR EVEN GIVING GOODY-BAGS AWAY TO KIDS AT THE ANNUAL CHANUKAH AND CHRISTMAS PARTY.

TWO OF THE MPTAC UNDERTAKINGS THAT I AM MOST PROUD OF CREATING ARE THE "PIONEER PROJECT" THAT WE'VE EMBARKED ON WITH THE CANADIAN PICTURE PIONEERS, WHICH PUTS THE STORIES OF CANADIAN FILM INDUSTRY VETERANS ON VIDEOTAPE SO THAT FUTURE GENERATIONS OF INDUSTRY WORKERS WILL HAVE A SENSE OF THEIR ROOTS AND A KNOWLEDGE OF THE HISTORY OF A VIBRANT, VITAL AND EVER-CHANGING INDUSTRY THAT THEY ARE INVOLVED IN. AND THE SECOND IS THE OPENING UP OF OUR INDUSTRY CONVENTION — SHOWCANADA — TO INCLUDE EVEN MORE PLAYERS IN THE CANADIAN SECTOR, INCLUDING PRODUCERS, DIRECTORS, FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, AND MANY OTHER PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE JOINED US SINCE THE EARLY DAYS OF SHOWCANADA IN KANANASKIS SOME 22 YEARS AGO. WE WELCOME YOU ALL INTO THE FAMILY!

BEFORE COMING INTO THE FILM INDUSTRY, I WORKED IN TELEVISION WITH TV ONTARIO AS THE HEAD OF PROGRAM PROMOTION AND MARKETING FOR BOTH THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH NETWORKS.

I ALSO SPENT FOUR YEARS IN OTTAWA, FIRST AS A RESEARCHER FOR THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES (FILM TELEVISION AND BOOK PUBLISHING) FOR THE APPLEBAUM-HEBERT CULTURAL POLICY REPORT, WHICH TOOK A LOOK AT THE GROWTH OF ALL THE ART FORMS IN CANADA OVER A 25 YEAR PERIOD, AND THEN CREATED NEW POLICIES FOR EACH DOMAIN'S FUTURE GROWTH HEADING TOWARDS THE YEAR 2000.

AFTER THAT I WORKED WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT CULTURAL MINISTRIES, INCLUDING SECRETARY OF STATE AND STATISTICS CANADA, AND FINALLY AS A POLICY ADVISOR WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS - HERITAGE BRANCH; I SUBSEQUENTLY LEFT TO DO FREELANCE WORK IN QUEBEC, WHERE I SPENT FOUR YEARS WORKING IN THE MARKETING AND PROMOTION OF FILM, TELEVISION AND THE VISUAL ARTS.

I ATTENDED THE YORK UNIVERSITY ARTS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM WHERE I GRADUATED WITH MY MBA AND THEN SET OUT FOR THE HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL, WHERE I CONTINUED ADVANCED STUDIES IN ARTS ADMINISTRATION. MY WORKING CAREER STARTED IN THEATRE WHEN I WAS APPOINTED GENERAL MANAGER OF THEATRE PASSE MURAILLE, FOLLOWED BY THE BLYTH SUMMER FESTIVAL. EARLY IN MY CAREER I WAS INVOLVED IN MARKETING AND PROMOTION WORK FOR FACTORY THEATRE LAB, AS WELL AS THE SHAW AND STRATFORD FESTIVALS, WHERE I WON THE FIRST WILLIAM WYLIE AWARD FOR ARTS ADMINISTRATION.

*Adina Lebo*

# ANCILLARY AWARD RECIPIENT

BORN IN TORONTO, KEVIN NORMAN BECAME A FILM BUFF EARLY IN LIFE, RAISED BY HIS MOTHER AND FATHER WHO WERE BOTH STAGE AND FILM PERFORMERS IN ENGLAND IN THE 1940's.



DUE TO HIS INTEREST IN FILM, HE BEGAN BOOKING 16MM FILMS WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL IN VANCOUVER. HE OFFICIALLY STARTED HIS 32 YEAR CAREER IN THE FILM INDUSTRY IN 1975 WITH VICTORIA FILM SERVICE. TWO YEARS LATER HE TOOK A POSITION AT CANFILM SCREEN SERVICE AND BEGAN HIS WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH HECTOR ROSS, FRANK KETTNER AND DOUG ISMAN.

IN 1978, HE MOVED INTO DISTRIBUTION WITH ASTRAL FILMS, WHO AT THE TIME HANDLED 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY FOX, COLUMBIA, AND AVCO-EMBASSY PICTURES. TWO YEARS LATER DOUG ISMAN PERSUADED HIM TO JOIN EXHIBITION AND BOOK INDEPENDENT THEATRES WITH WESTCOAST THEATRE SERVICE. DURING HIS TIME AT WESTCOAST, KEVIN BECAME INVOLVED WITH THE PIONEERS, HELPING DOUG TO ARRANGE GOLF TOURNAMENTS, DINNERS AND EVENTS. KEVIN JOINED THE PIONEERS IN 1985.

THAT SAME YEAR HE MET HIS WIFE LOURINE WHO WORKED AT FILM CLASSIFICATION IN VANCOUVER. THE FOLLOWING YEAR THEY MOVED TO CALGARY WITH THEIR TWO CHILDREN RION AND RHEA, AS KEVIN JOINED THEATRE AGENCIES AND ROKE DISTRIBUTION, WORKING WITH HECTOR AND FRANK.

A YEAR LATER KEVIN BECAME THE MANAGER OF FILM BUYING AND BOOKING FOR LANDMARK CINEMAS OF CANADA WHERE HE HAS WORKED FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS.

KEVIN HAS ALSO WORKED ON THE SHOWCANADA CONVENTIONS IN KANANASKIS AND BANFF THAT STARTED IN 1987, ARRANGING THE PIONEER'S CASINO NIGHTS, AND ASSISTED WITH THE ENTERTAINMENT AND GOLF TOURNAMENTS.

*Kevin Norman*

# ANCILLARY AWARD RECIPIENT

AS PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MR. PAPALIA'S PRIMARY TASKS CONSIST OF OVERSEEING LES CINÉMAS CINÉ ENTREPRISE INC., A COMPANY FOUNDED BY HIS FATHER IN 1963. MR. PAPALIA'S TASKS CONSIST OF DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING FINANCIAL POLICIES, PROCEDURES, ANALYSES AND BUDGETS. HE HANDLES ALL EXPANSIONS AND ACQUISITIONS FOR THE CIRCUIT AS WELL AS OVERSEEING THE TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT AND PROJECTION ROOMS IN HIS EIGHT THEATRES ACROSS QUEBEC. MR. PAPALIA HEADS THE PROGRAMMING AND FILM BUYING DIVISION IN COLLABORATION WITH MR. JOE STREBINGER. HE HEADS THE MARKETING, ADVERTISING AND SALES DEPARTMENTS.



RECOGNIZED BY HIS PEERS FOR HIS INNOVATIVE IDEAS AND STRATEGIC VISION, MR. PAPALIA IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE FOLLOWING ASSOCIATIONS;

- PRESIDENT – A.P.C.C.Q. (DRIVE-IN AND THEATRE OWNERS ASSOCIATION OF QUEBEC)
- PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER – C.C.I.Q. (DRIVE-IN AND THEATRE INDEPENDENT OWNERS ASSOCIATION OF QUEBEC - PROVINCIAL CINEMA BUYING GROUP)
- BOARD MEMBER – M.P.T.A.C. (MOTION PICTURE THEATRE ASSOCIATION OF CANADA)
- BOARD MEMBER – N.A.T.O. – (NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THEATRICAL OWNERS)
- FOUNDER AND MEMBER – CBG LLD (CINEMA BUYING GROUP)  
AT THE REQUEST OF THE U.S. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THEATRICAL OWNERS N.A.T.O., MR. PAPALIA FOUNDED THE CBG LLD GROUP.
- IN 2006, WON “JUTRA” FOR BEST EXHIBITOR IN QUEBEC.

MR. PAPALIA BEGAN HIS CAREER IN 1981 WITH ODEON THEATRES WHERE HE WORKED BEHIND THE CONCESSION COUNTER AS WELL AS AN USHER, PROJECTIONIST AND DOORMAN. WITHIN TWO MONTHS HE WAS PROMOTED TO ASSISTANT MANAGER. HE REMAINED WITH THE COMPANY FOR 4 YEARS ON A PART-TIME BASIS WHILE CONTINUING HIS EDUCATION AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY IN MONTREAL. IN 1984, MR. PAPALIA TOOK OVER THE OPERATIONS OF LES CINÉMAS CINÉ ENTREPRISE INC.

DURING HIS 20 YEAR CAREER, MR. PAPALIA HAS BUILT A STRONG NETWORK AND SOLID RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS THE US AND CANADA WITH NUMEROUS HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS AND CINEMA RELATED COMPANIES.

*Raffaele Papalia*



## ANCILLARY AWARD RECIPIENT

DANISH VAHIDY WAS BORN IN KARACHI, PAKISTAN ON NOVEMBER 6, 1970. FOUR YEARS LATER, HIS FAMILY MOVED TO KINGSTON, ONTARIO WHERE DANISH WOULD START HIS LIFE IN CANADA. ALWAYS READY TO STAND UP FOR THE UNDERDOG, A YOUNG KINDERGARTEN DANISH DEFENDED HIS BROTHER AGAINST A THIRD-GRADE BULLY ON THE JUNGLE GYM AND WAS ASKED TO LEAVE HIS SCHOOL IN DISGRACE. BRANDED A MENACE TO SOCIETY AT THE TENDER AGE OF 5, DANISH AND HIS FAMILY MOVED TO ATTEND SCHOOL IN MALVERN IN NORTH SCARBOROUGH, WHERE HE WOULD SOON EARN HIS STREET CREDENTIALS AS THE “SMILEY FACE KILLAH” WITH THE HEART OF GOLD.

DANISH SOON NOTICED THAT SOME GIRLS ACTUALLY PREFERRED THE SMART BOYS. THIS WAS MOTIVATION ENOUGH TO TURN TO THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW. DANISH HIT THE BOOKS WITH ATYPICAL PRE-PUBESCENT FERVOUR. HIS ACADEMIC CAREER PEAKED EARLY WHEN HE WON THE AWARD FOR TOP STUDENT IN GRADE SIX. SEVEN YEARS OF SCHOLASTIC MEDIOCRITY FOLLOWED, PUNCTUATED FREQUENTLY BY MELANCHOLY NIGHTS SPENT LYING IN HIS ROOM, LISTENING TO MELODRAMATIC ALTERNATIVE ROCK. GROUPS LIKE *THE SMITHS*, *THE CURE* AND *DEPECHE MODE* TAUGHT DANISH TO EMBRACE HIS SENSITIVE SIDE AND BECOME ONE WITH HIS EMOTIONS.

EVENTUALLY, DANISH EMERGED FROM HIS ROOM SINGING “PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE LET ME GET WHAT I WANT” AND BEGIN THE PROCESS OF MAKING A LIFE FOR HIMSELF. HE COMPLETED AN HONOURS BA IN SOCIOLOGY AND BUSINESS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO AND THEN EARNED A POST-GRADUATE DEGREE IN SPORT AND EVENT MARKETING FROM GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE, AS WELL AS A MINOR IN FILM FROM RYERSON UNIVERSITY. IT WAS WHILE AT UNIVERSITY THAT DANISH ALSO MET THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE: SONYA. ELEVEN YEARS OF MARRIAGE AND ONE BEAUTIFUL SON NAMED AYDIN LATER, THEY ARE STILL GOING STRONG.

DANISH BEGAN HIS PROFESSIONAL CAREER IN 1994 WHEN HE LANDED AN INTERNSHIP IN THE MARKETING DEPARTMENT FOR METRO GOLDWYN MAYER. HE WAS SOON HIRED AS A BOOKER IN THEIR SALES DEPARTMENT. WHILE LEARNING THE JOY OF BOOKING BOOKS AND PRINT TRANSFERS DANISH WAS OFFERED A JOB AT THE NEWLY-FORMED POLYGRAM FILMED ENTERTAINMENT WHERE HE HELPED ESTABLISH THEIR SALES DEPARTMENT IN 1997. WHEN PFE SHUT DOWN THEIR OFFICES DUE TO A MERGER IN 1999, DANISH RETURNED TO MGM AND ROSE THROUGH THE RANKS TO BECOME THE CANADIAN DISTRICT MANAGER FOR THE CANADIAN DISTRIBUTION DIVISION. IN 2005, MGM CLOSED THEIR DOORS AND DANISH MOVED TO HIS CURRENT POSITION AS MARKETING MANAGER FOR THEATRICAL RELEASING AT MONGREL MEDIA, ONE OF THE LARGEST DISTRIBUTORS OF INDEPENDENT FILM IN CANADA. WITH A VARIETY OF BOTH INTERNATIONAL AND CANADIAN HIGH-PROFILE RELEASES UNDER HIS BELT, DANISH POSSESSES A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE IN THEATRICAL DISTRIBUTION AND MARKETING.

DANISH PROUDLY SITS ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CANADIAN PICTURE PIONEERS, ONE OF THE OLDEST PHILANTHROPIC FILM CHARITIES IN CANADA. “I HAVE SEEN HOW THIS GREAT ORGANIZATION HELPS IT’S MEMBERS AND I WANTED TO FIND A WAY TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY THAT HAS BEEN SUCH AN INTEGRAL PART OF MY LIFE. I WOULD ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO BECOME A MEMBER IF THEY HAVE NOT DONE SO”. DANISH WAS ALSO INSTRUMENTAL IN STARTING PIONEER PALOOZA, AN EVENT CREATED TO HELP INCREASE THE AWARENESS OF THE PIONEERS TO A NEW GENERATION OF INDUSTRY WORKERS.

IN ADDITION TO HIS WORK IN THE INDUSTRY, DANISH HAS VOLUNTEERED WITH SUCH ORGANIZATIONS AS THE CHILDREN’S WISH FOUNDATION, KIDS HELP PHONE, TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD, BIG BROTHERS OF CANADA AND THE CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY. DANISH IS ALSO CLASSICALLY TRAINED ON THE SPANISH GUITAR AND HAS COMPLETED LEVEL 5 CULINARY CLASSES AT KARACHI’S PRESTIGIOUS TANDOOR SCHOOL.

*Danish Vahidy*