

The Governor General's Performing Arts Awards' Mentorship Program was an incredible opportunity and one I will never forget. It's not often you get to meet your comedy heroes but to be mentored by one was a truly thrilling experience. I was lucky enough to be paired with Eugene Levy, one of the funniest people out there, whose work with SCTV and his collaborations with Christopher Guest are some of the reasons I got into comedy writing in the first place. Thanks to the Governor General's Mentorship Program and The Canadian Film Centre, I was able to not just meet Eugene Levy, but to spend time talking to him about his own career, but to have him read the script I was working on and give me notes. It's no surprise that his insights into the project I was working on were extremely helpful and improved the project immeasurably. One of the things I learned from Eugene Levy, and that I have thought of with every project I've worked on since then, was his advice to always work at the top of your intelligence level. It seemed such a simple notion but as he explained how important it was, I realized what it really meant. So often we can get lazy or mindless about some little thing in a script, some part that we just decide to leave as is, because it's good enough. But always bringing a respect for your audience and pushing yourself to write in the smartest way possible, means you end up with a better project. That's just one example of what I learned from him, there were many others: his awareness of what makes an audience laugh and how you can win them over is the reason he's been entertaining people the world over for so many years. Thanks to Eugene Levy and the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards' Mentorship Program, I was able to not just spend time with one of my comedy heroes but improve as a writer in the process. It was a truly special experience.

Daniel Perlmutter

Writer and filmmaker

2012 Protégé