

# W MAY WORKS 2015 FESTIVAL

## THE LABOR MOVEMENT!

THE FOLKS THAT BROUGHT YOU...



**POWER CONCEDES NOTHING WITHOUT A DEMAND. IT NEVER DID AND IT NEVER WILL. FREDERICK DOUGLASS**

CELEBRATING LABOUR & THE ARTS  
[www.mayworks.org](http://www.mayworks.org)

For further information  
contact 204-788-4941

# KEEPING MANITOBA GOING AND GROWING

Every day, 40,000 MGEU members across the province deliver the services Manitobans rely on. They're hard at work on the frontlines and behind the scenes keeping our province going and growing.



**MGEU**

Manitoba  
Government  
and General  
Employees'  
Union

[www.mgeu.ca](http://www.mgeu.ca)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE .....	2
2015 MAYWORKS CALENDAR OF EVENTS .....	3
2015 MAYWORKS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS .....	4
<b>FEATURE: THE LABOUR MOVEMENT</b> .....	8
STAND TOGETHER .....	12

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### MAYWORKS BOARD 2015

#### Executive

Glenn Michalchuk, President;  
Derek Black, Vice-President; Mike  
Welfley, Secretary; Ken Kaltornyk,  
Financial Secretary

#### Members

Stan Rossowski; Mitch Podolak;  
Hugo Torres-Cereceda; Ruben  
Kantorovich; Catherine Stearns

MayWorks Programme

#### Funding provided by:

Manitoba Government and  
General Employees' Union

United Food and Commercial  
Workers Local 832

#### Design:

Doowah Design Inc.

#### Front cover art:

Ricardo Levins Morales  
[www.rlmartstudio.com/](http://www.rlmartstudio.com/)

#### Printing:

Transcontinental LGMC

#### Feature "The Labour Movement":

Scott Price

#### Event compilation and editing:

Selena Bewsky

#### MayWorks Publicity:

Dora Carroll

### MAYWORKS FUNDERS (AS OF MARCH 31, 2015)

Canadian Labour Congress  
(Prairie Region)

Manitoba Federation of Labour

Unifor Local 7

CUPE 500

American Income Life

*MayWorks would also like to thank  
the following:*

Ed Varney, Curator International  
Union of Mail Artists, for  
providing the "Mail Art" show

Millennium Library for its support  
of the "Mail Art" show

CKUW 95.9FM for its coverage of  
MayWorks

Open Door Press

UNION BUG HERE

## ICON LEGEND

ACTIVITY



ART



MUSIC



FILM



TALK



LITERARY



FOOD



THEATRE



DANCE



**NOTE:** The cover image is by American artist Ricardo Levins Morales. As such, it uses the American spelling of certain words and employs terminology not commonly used in Canada.





## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MayWorks draws on both the historical and contemporary experience of art that reflects the working class and the struggle for social change. It is held in Winnipeg each year in the month of May to honour and promote the many positive contributions made by unions and working people.

The first MayWorks Festival was organized as part of the celebrations to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike in 1994. Since then we have continued to hold the Festival in the month of May as part preserving and developing culture which reflects the struggles to defend and extend the social, political and economic rights of all.

It is fitting that the theme for MayWorks 2015 is **Celebrating Labour History**. It is in recognition of the significant role the labour movement has played in the struggle for social progress. In the program you will find a feature on the labour movement which delves into a part of this history and some of the significant achievements.

And, in terms of further contributing to the history of the Winnipeg General Strike, this year MayWorks will be unveiling

a memorial to the other worker known to have been killed in the events of Bloody Saturday June 21, 1919. The unveiling on June 20th culminates a long effort to reclaim these two workers who were all but forgotten by the "official" history of the General Strike.

No introduction to the Festival would be complete without recognizing the importance of the union support we receive and the artists who have responded to be part of the Festival.

Whatever your interest we invite you to come and participate in the events that are part of this year's MayWorks Festival of Labour and the Arts. Enjoy this program book as part of that offering.

Glenn Michalchuk

President MayWorks Festival of Labour and the Arts



# 2015 MAYWORKS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## APRIL

**28 TUES**

**ANNUAL DAY OF MOURNING MARCH**

Starting at 10:45 AM

**p4**



## MAY

**1 FRI**

**CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS DAY**

6 PM

**p5**

**4 MON**

**BOOK LAUNCH OF: A READER'S GUIDE TO THE UNNAMEABLE BY RON ROMANOWSKI**

7 PM

**p5**

**7 THURS**

**WHAT IS LOVE**

11 AM

**p5**

**9 SAT**

**FESTIVAL OF MANDOLINS**

8 PM

**p6**

**12 TUES**

**RED AND GREEN ALLIANCES THE LABOUR MOVEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES.**

7 PM

**p6**

**15 FRI**

**96 YEARS LATER - THE LEGACY OF THE WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE**

7 PM

**p6**

**24 SUN**

**1919 BUS TOUR**

2-4 PM

**p6**

**All of May**

**MAYWORKS ON CKUW  
MAYWORKS MAIL ART  
Millenium Library**



PHOTO: L.B. Foote. Courtesy of Archives of Manitoba

## JUNE



**7 SUN**

**WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE BOOK SIGNING WITH MICHAEL DUPUIS**

2-4 PM

**p7**

**20 SAT**

**THE LEGACY OF THE WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE MEMORIAL STONE UNVEILING**

2-4 PM

**p7**



PHOTO: L.B. Foote. Courtesy of Archives of Manitoba

# 2015 MAYWORKS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

## ALL OF MAY

### MayWorks on CKUW

All month long CKUW 95.9FM will be carrying news and coverage of MayWorks events.

Tune in to "People of Interest" Mondays to Wednesdays from 8 to 9am.

### MayWorks MAIL ART

Millennium Library  
251 Donald Street

**FREE ADMISSION**

The MAIL ART exhibit is part of the world's largest collection featuring the theme of work.

MAIL ART is a worldwide cultural movement started in the 1960's. The idea behind the movement is to bypass the elitist gallery/museum system of art. There are no hierarchies, no rules, all participants work is shown to the public. MAIL ART is non-commercial, no entry fees, no sales and the yearly call is universal.

## TUESDAY, APRIL 28 • 10:45-11:45 AM

### ANNUAL DAY OF MOURNING MARCH

10:45 AM • Gather in Room 2c, Union Centre Auditorium, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor 275 Broadway

11:00-11:35 AM • Memorial Ceremony

11:35-11:45 AM • Marshall for the Safe Workers of Tomorrow Leaders' Walk from the Union Centre to the Manitoba Legislature

On April 28th, take part in the annual Day of Mourning march from the Union Centre to the Manitoba Legislature. Sponsored by the Safe Workers of Tomorrow project, the theme for this year's ceremony is "New, Vulnerable Workers". Participating will be union activists and leaders, Members of the Legislature, representatives from the workplace safety community, and Manitoba Workers.





# 2015 MAYWORKS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**FRIDAY, MAY 1 • 6 PM**

## CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS DAY



Assemble at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall  
March begins at 6 p.m.

Winnipeg Labour Council celebrates International Working Class Day with a march starting and returning to City Hall. This year's theme is: "HOPE is COMING". Bring your banners and demands for a better world. Duration of the march is about one hour.

\*\* Everyone welcome to gather at the Kings Head Pub after the march. Reserved area.

**MONDAY, MAY 4 • 7 PM**

## Book launch of: A Reader's Guide to the Unnameable by Ron Romanowski

McNally Robinson Booksellers (in the Atrium)  
1120 Grant Avenue Winnipeg

**FREE ADMISSION**

Tickets not necessary.

CONTACT:

Email: [poetryisparadise@shaw.ca](mailto:poetryisparadise@shaw.ca)

Telephone: 204-667-6802



**THURSDAY, MAY 7 • 11 AM-3 PM**

## WHAT IS LOVE



Old Market Square  
Exchange District

**FREE ADMISSION**

Vancouver artist Angela Fama, with her project "What Is Love", is travelling this spring and summer across North America in a pop-up photo studio, setting up in collaboration with MayWorks and the support of the City Of Winnipeg. Fama will invite interested passersby to participate, conversationally questioning the word "love" and photographically capturing the micro-expressions shared in the process. "What Is Love" aims to reveal through this collaborative performance and comparative photography the strength and beauty of vulnerability that can be found within adults, regardless of age, race, nationality, income, sexual orientation or gender. "What Is Love" dedicates itself to unify communities across Canada and the United States through creating kinship and understanding beyond borders and perceived differences.

For more information visit:

[www.wabisabibutterfly.com/whatislove](http://www.wabisabibutterfly.com/whatislove)





# 2015 MAYWORKS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**SATURDAY, MAY 9 • 8 PM**

## FESTIVAL OF MANDOLINS



Ukrainian Labour Temple  
591 Pritchard Avenue

This year will be the twenty-second annual Festival of Mandolins. The program will feature the Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra under the direction of Annis Kozub and guest artists. The orchestras selections will include light classical arrangements of folk melodies by Ukrainian and Russian composers.

Tickets: \$20 (\$10 for children 14 years and under; free for children 5 years and under)

For information call Brent Stearns: 204-488-1008

**FRIDAY, MAY 15 • 7 PM**

## 96 YEARS LATER - The Legacy of the Winnipeg General Strike



Ukrainian Labour Temple, 595 Pritchard Avenue

### FREE ADMISSION

Danny Schur hosts a concert of selections from his musical *Strike!* followed by a panel discussion about the legacy of the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike—at the national and provincial historic site, the Ukrainian Labour Temple—site of events during the strike.

Coffee, tea and pastries will be served during the intermission.

For further information: 204-227-1167

**TUESDAY, MAY 12 • 7 PM**

## RED AND GREEN ALLIANCES The Labour Movement and Environmental Issues.



The HIVE - Northeast corner of Lockhart Hall at the University of Winnipeg.

This panel will discuss the history of the labour movement's engagement with environmental issues, as well as the possibilities for current alliances to protect the earth for the benefit of Canada's working people.

Hosted by Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition.

**SUNDAY, MAY 24 • 2-4 PM**

## 1919 BUS TOUR



The 1919 Strike Tour will take people through highlights of the General Strike, with a description of the social and economic conditions of the time. An important part of the tour is a reflection on how the echoes and shadows of the strike can be heard and seen in Winnipeg of 2014.

The tour starts on Selkirk Avenue, goes to the residential area south of the Assiniboine River and then ends in the Exchange area of the city, particularly on the Red River at the site of Victoria Park. This route touches on areas of the city that was home for the working class, the ruling class and the site of the major demonstrations that took part in June 1919.

This is a bus tour with stops that takes two hours.

Cost: \$10 for employed adults, no charge for students/seniors/unemployed

To reserve seats, e-mail: [comgroup@mymts.net](mailto:comgroup@mymts.net)



PHOTO: L.B. Foote. Courtesy of Archives of Manitoba

# 2015 MAYWORKS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**SUNDAY, JUNE 7 • 2-4 PM**

## WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE



**Michael Dupuis**

**McNally Robinson Bookstore  
Grant Park Shopping Centre**

A book signing of *Winnipeg's General Strike Reports from the Front Lines*.

gravestone for one of the victims, Mike Sokolowski. Through his efforts and the support of Brunet Monuments Mike Sokolowski was no longer "the forgotten immigrant".

However, one man was still lost to history and members of the Mayworks Board of Directors decided to undertake the task of having a gravestone placed on the site of Steve Szczerbanowicz's burial plot.

Through the efforts of two members of the board and the musical contributions of many local musicians two concerts were organized to raise funds to cover the costs of the gravestone for Steve Szczerbanowicz.

This year on June 20th at 2:00 PM Mayworks will be unveiling this memorial stone. It is 96 years since the events that occurred that cost the lives of two unarmed workers. This will be an opportunity to pay our respects and honour the memory of the second victim of Bloody Saturday.

Special Thanks to Brunet Monuments for their assistance and support in this project

Also Special Thanks to Brian Mayes for his assistance.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 20 • 2 PM**

## THE LEGACY OF THE WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE



**Brookside Cemetary**

Steve Szczerbanowicz was one of two workers killed on Bloody Saturday June 21st 1919. He actually died on the 23rd of June from the gunshot wounds from June 21st and was buried on the 29th of June 1919.

There was no gravestone placed on the site, just the usual foot marker with the plot number on it. Like the other victim of the violence of that day both lay unknown, unrecognized until these many years later.

Through the efforts of Danny Schur and his research for his musical play *Strike! The Musical* interest was rekindled in the events of 1919 and the result was the erection of a





Today there are many who are lamenting of the loss of decent jobs, benefits, pensions and even unions and worker power in general. What one must remember is that all of these things were not gifts from kind and benevolent management or governments. It was the bravery and solidarity of workers that gained important victories like the eight hour day, living wages, and pensions. While the questions of where the labour movement and working people are headed is important, one must not lose sight of the past struggles and sacrifices that workers and unions made to get these important victories. It's not simply about remembering past events and struggles, it's about learning from the past to make future gains and victories. The history of working people and unions is one of immense struggle and sacrifice that is just as much a somber reminder as it is a rallying cry for a better world.



# THE MEAT PACKING INDUSTRY

The Meat Packing industry in Manitoba has a long history of militant trade unionism. This was an outgrowth of the immense struggle workers in the industry had to undertake over several decades to get union recognition in the 1940s. One of the first union actions taken on in the Meat Packing Industry was a strike in January of 1917. The union and the strike were crushed, although these same workers were also involved in the General Strike of 1919. Later in the March of 1934 members of the Food Workers Industry union went on strike, this strike was also crushed but it was one of the first instances of industrial unionism

in the meat Packing Industry in Manitoba. By the end of World War two all three major meat packing plants (Canada Packers, Burns, Swift) were unionized. The attainment of unionization was due in large part to large one day sit down strikes in 1943 and 1945 respectively. After almost thirty years of struggle the meat packing industry was largely unionized. In the Post World War two period the meat packing locals maintained their militancy, having numerous strikes as well as being highly organized and militant trade unionists.

# THE SERVICE SECTOR

The low paid service sector is one of the hardest work places to organize with high staff turnover and vicious anti-union managers. Even so some coffee shops around Canada are starting to organize. In Halifax, Nova Scotia coffee shop workers at several workplaces have started to come together to try to transform the low wage, precarious work of baristas into something better by forming unions with the Service Employees International Union Local 2.

In Early February of 2015 several workers at Tim Horton's stores in Winnipeg began to talk about organizing their workplaces through the organization Workers United. Management quickly responded

with worker intimidation and firing of one of the workers. The union also responded quickly, filing an unfair labour practice and a labour board hearing was scheduled for March 16th and organizing allies and started an online petition to reinstate the worker. The campaign worked and the worker was reinstated. Workers have also gotten the chance to have a store meeting to talk about unionization.

While these campaigns are a good start there is still more to do but workers in the low paid service sector deserve a living wage and dignity at the workplace just as much as any worker does.

# THE EIGHT HOUR WORKDAY

In June of 1872 under Prime Minister John A MacDonalld the Trade Union Act became law making unions legal in Canada. The back story to this law is not one of benevolent leaders looking out for the masses but of working people organizing and forcing the political establishment for concessions. This was gained by the "Nine Hour Movement" which sought to institute a nine hour a day, six days a week work week, which would be a precursor to the demand for an eight hour work day.

The "Nine Hour Movement" was a loosely organized campaign that included union members, non-union members, men and women. It was the first workers movement of its kind in Canada. Starting in January of 1872 there were a series of actions around the call for a nine hour day. On April 15 there was a massive demonstration in Toronto which saw ten thousand people in the streets. On April 18 John A Macdonald introduced legislation that legalized unions. While this law has molded labour relations since 1872 it is important to remember that this was gained through a popular workers movement that defied several legal obstacles.



PHOTO: L.B. Foote. Courtesy of Archives of Manitoba



PHOTO: L.B. Foote. Courtesy of Archives of Manitoba



## THE RETAIL SECTOR

While the retail sector is marked by low union presence, low wages and little benefits the retail grocery sector in Manitoba is an anomaly in this regard. This anomaly is due to a series of strikes taken on by United Food and Commercial Workers local 832 (formally Retail Clerks union local 832 until 1979 when UFCW was created). These strikes were the Dominion strike of 1973, the Safeway strike of 1978 and the Westfair (Superstore) strike of 1987. These strikes demonstrate the militant potential in retail stores and the retail sector in general.

All three strikes saw impressive displays of picket line solidarity and large mass pickets supported by the labour movement in Manitoba that led to a series of breakthroughs for the workers in the retail grocery sector. The Dominion store strike was over a pension plan for retail workers, which was later achieved in collective bargaining. The Safeway strike saw large mass pickets and led to good wages and job security. The Westfair (Superstore) strike of 1987 was a challenge to union representation itself, which the company lost. In all three cases militancy and solidarity gained workers a fair wage, job security and benefits.



# STAND TOGETHER

**When workers stand together they get results: good wages, pensions, paid holidays, health care and benefits, parental leave, safer workplaces and pay equity to name a few of the many achievements.**

What they got at work they also sought to extend to everyone else by demanding that governments address these needs.

Here are a few of the things that have been achieved by workers standing together, as described in the Canadian Labour Congress' Together Fairness Works campaign:



## PENSIONS:

For generations, workers either stayed on the job until they died, or because they were too ill or old to work any longer, retired into a life of poverty.

Workers negotiated pension plans in their workplaces. They arranged for part of their wages to be set aside, so that it would be there for them when they retired and they got employers to contribute from the profits they made.

Workers didn't just demand dignity in retirement for themselves. They demanded public pensions for all Canadians, whether in paid work or not. Workers fought for and won Old Age Security in 1952, the Canada Pension Plan in 1965, and the Guaranteed Income Supplement in 1966. Together, this country's public pensions are responsible for Canada having one of the lowest old-age poverty rates in the industrialized world.

## DECENT WAGES:

The labour movement also advocates for a higher minimum wage and for employers to pay a living wage, so that all workers earn a wage that allows them to make ends meet

## DECENT WORK HOURS:

Canadian workers went on strike in 1834 for a 10 hour day, and again in 1872 for a 9 hour day. By the late 1800's, workers began to organize and challenge employers to further reduce working hours to 8 hours per day. There is still much work to be done, as most provinces still do not have an 8-hour work day and many full-time employees still work more than 40 hours a week in many provinces. Moreover, as more Canadians are forced into precarious, part-time jobs, many workers find themselves cobbling together multiple jobs, working very long hours in an effort to make ends meet.

## GOOD HEALTH CARE:

Historically, Canadian families drove themselves into bankruptcy paying doctor's bills and dealing with lost wages when a family member got sick. Workers were at the forefront of fighting for universal public healthcare and were instrumental in winning Canada's national Medicare program in 1966. Workers also fought in the workplace for insurance against sickness and accidents

These successes cannot be taken for granted. Indeed, the gains that have been achieved are under an unprecedented attack. It requires a new effort to protect and extend social and economic rights!

**Tara Peel, Special Projects Coordinator  
Manitoba Federation of Labour**



Today's victories are because  
of yesterday's struggles.

---

 **UFCW**  
your **VOICE** at work in Manitoba  
**LOCAL 832**  
**1-888-UFCW-832**  
**[www.ufcw832.com](http://www.ufcw832.com)**

# THERE IS POWER IN A UNION

**Song Writer -Joe Hill**

Published by Lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC

**Would you have freedom from wage  
slavery, Then join in the grand  
Industrial band;**

**Would you from mis'ry and hunger be free,  
Then come! Do your share, like a man.**

**CHORUS: There is pow'r, there is pow'r**

**In a band of workingmen. When they  
stand hand in hand,**

**That's a pow'r, that's a pow'r That  
must rule in every land --**

**One Industrial Union Grand.**

**Would you have mansions of gold in the  
sky, And live in a shack, way in the back?**

**Would you have wings up in heaven to fly,  
And starve here with rags on your back?**

**If you've had "nuff" of "the blood of  
the lamb," Then join in the grand  
Industrial band;**

**If, for a change, you would have eggs and  
ham. Then come! Do your share, like a man.**

**If you like sluggers to beat off your head,  
Then don't organize, all unions despise,**

**If you want nothing before you are  
dead, Shake hands with your boss and  
look wise.**

**Come, all ye workers, from every land,  
Come join in the grand Industrial band.**

**Then we our share of this earth shall  
demand. Come on! Do your share, like a  
man.**

First published in the 6 March 1913 edition of the Industrial Worker  
"Little Red Songbook."



**2015 FESTIVAL**

CELEBRATING LABOUR & THE ARTS

[www.mayworks.org](http://www.mayworks.org)