

2016  
FESTIVAL

# MAY WORKS

CELEBRATING LABOUR AND THE ARTS



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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### APRIL

<b>28</b>	<b>ANNUAL DAY OF MOURNING - CANDLE LIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE</b>	11 AM
	<b>ANNUAL DAY OF MOURNING - LEADERS WALK</b>	11:45 AM - 12:45 PM
<b>30</b>	<b>ARABIC HERITAGE CELEBRATION</b>	6:30 PM

### MAY

<b>1</b>	<b>MAY DAY MARCH - CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WORKING CLASS DAY</b>	12:30 PM
<b>3</b>	<b>A LITTLE POLISH POETRY SYMPOSIUM</b>	7 PM
<b>5</b>	<b>MY NAME IS RACHEL CORRIE</b>	7:30 PM
<b>6</b>	<b>MY NAME IS RACHEL CORRIE</b>	7:30 PM
<b>7</b>	<b>MY NAME IS RACHEL CORRIE</b>	7:30 PM
<b>8</b>	<b>JANE'S WALK 2016</b>	11 AM
<b>12</b>	<b>SALT OF THE EARTH - A PLAY BY THEATRE ANYWHERE PRODUCTIONS</b>	7:30 PM
<b>13</b>	<b>MY NAME IS RACHEL CORRIE</b>	7:30 PM
	<b>SALT OF THE EARTH - A PLAY BY THEATRE ANYWHERE PRODUCTIONS</b>	7:30 PM
	<b>THE LEGACY OF THE WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE</b>	2 PM
	<b>MY NAME IS RACHEL CORRIE</b>	7:30 PM
<b>14</b>	<b>SALT OF THE EARTH - A PLAY BY THEATRE ANYWHERE PRODUCTIONS</b>	7:30 PM
	<b>FESTIVAL OF MANDOLINS</b>	8 PM
<b>15</b>	<b>1919 STRIKE TOUR</b>	2-4 PM
<b>29</b>	<b>ASSOCIATION OF UNITED UKRAINIAN CANADIANS SPRING CONCERT</b>	2 PM



# 2016 MAYWORKS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



**THURSDAY, APRIL 28 • 11AM**

## **ANNUAL DAY OF MOURNING - Candle Light Memorial Service**



### **Mental Health & Wellness in the Workplace**

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Auditorium, Union Centre, 275 Broadway Ave.

Please join us in marking the National Day of Mourning with a special Candle Light Memorial Services to remember and honour workers killed or injured on the job.

Light refreshments available starting at 10:45am.

To be followed by the *Safe Workers of Tomorrow Leaders Walk*.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 28 • 11:45AM-12:45PM**

## **ANNUAL DAY OF MOURNING - Leaders Walk**



### **Mental Health & Wellness in the Workplace**

275 Broadway Ave., Winnipeg

Route: The walk starts at Union Centre (275 Broadway, Winnipeg) and will travel west along Broadway to the Manitoba Legislative Building (450 Broadway, Winnipeg)

For more information: please contact us at 204-992-2988 or email us at [presentations@workersoftomorrow.com](mailto:presentations@workersoftomorrow.com)

**SATURDAY, APRIL 30 • 6:30PM**

## **ARABIC HERITAGE CELEBRATION**



Prairie Theater Exchange, 393 Portage Avenue  
3rd Floor, Portage Place

Arabic Heritage Celebration presents to the public the beauty of a culture and a civilization on stage that aims to promote ongoing awareness and appreciation of Arab values that Arab Canadians brought to Canada through arts, music, dance and cuisine to teach the geographical diversity and similarities between us by showcasing peace-minded dances from every country in the Arab World.

Canada has long prided itself through its cultural mosaic, the celebration of several identities coming together under one nation. Over the past decade, the geopolitical nature of the Arab world has added a number of dimensions to the already complicated identity crisis of our people. The Arab world has suffered so greatly from war over the past century... it seems no country is unscathed. The current crisis in the region is far too complex for many people to understand. Our new generation in Canada find themselves carrying the burden of stereotypes and a cause that is much larger than any single person. Exile, racism, etc. linger over their identity. The onus on shaping this identity lies on the shoulders of the new generation.

<https://www.facebook.com/Arabicheritagecelebration/>  
<https://www.eventbrite.ca/myevent?eid=19741919613>

Tickets: Available @ Second Cup (Downtown or Osborne locations)

For more information: email Rana at [abd@istar.ca](mailto:abd@istar.ca)

### **ICON LEGEND**

ACTIVITY



MUSIC



TALK



LITERARY



THEATRE





**SUNDAY, MAY 1 • 12:30PM**

## **MAY DAY MARCH - Celebrate International Working Class Day**



### **Protect the Natural and Human Environments**

Assemble at City Hall

Meet at 12:30 p.m.

March at 1 p.m.

Program:

12:40 Greetings

12:50 Presentation of Bruce MacKay Solidarity Award

The annual May Day march is organized by Winnipeg Labour Council in recognition of International Working Class Day. This year's march marks the importance of protecting the natural and human environments.

**MONDAY, MAY 3 • 7PM**

## **A LITTLE POLISH POETRY SYMPOSIUM**



McNally Robinsons Booksellers  
Grant Park Mall (in the Atrium)

### **FREE ADMISSION**

Readings in English and Polish of famous poetry from Poland including work from Nobel Prize winners. Read in Polish by the writer Margaret Kellerman McCullough and in English by the singer Liliana Romanowski. And new and selected poetry from Ron Romanowski.

Discussion to follow.

If poetry can inform about some very serious topics in world history then surely the poetry of Poland can add to the discussion. This is poetry from a country that experienced all of the horrors of 20th century life and has struggled is still struggling to create a modern nation. Racism. Nuclear annihilation. Fascism. Totalitarianism. Exterminationism. Religious intolerance. Capitalist Imperialism. Nationalism. These topics have all impacted Polish political and literary history. Our selection of the poetry, including work from Nobel Prize winners, will enlighten the audience as to these modern problems and their relationships in the unique voice of poetry.

For more information: Ron Romanowski  
poetryisparadise@shaw.ca or 204-667-6803

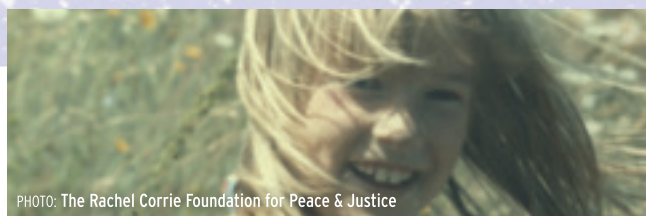


PHOTO: The Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace & Justice

**MAY 5-7, 13 & 14 • 7:30PM**

## **"MY NAME IS RACHEL CORRIE"**



**Theatre production presented by  
MAYWORKS-Derek Black &  
Andraea Sartison**

Irish Association of Manitoba  
654 Erin St, Winnipeg, MB R3G 2V9

Presented with the assistance of the association of the Tara Players Theatre Company of the Irish Association of Manitoba".

Director Andraea Sartison (One Trunk Theatre) uniquely stages this one woman show with an ensemble of top Winnipeg performers encapsulating the many sides to Rachel Corrie. The script is taken from excerpts of Rachel's journals and correspondence over the last decade of her life. The picture it paints is of a young woman who has a "fire in her belly"— an unquenchable thirst for justice, for hope and a poignant belief that a single person can change the world. She is both ordinary and extraordinary, a regular American GenX-er, yet set aside from her generation because of her talent and worldview.

**\*\*Debuting at MayWorks Festival of Labour and the Arts 2016\*\***

*"...Theatre has no obligation to give a complete picture. Its only duty is to be honest. And what you get here is a stunning account of one woman's passionate response to a particular situation. And the passion comes blazing through in Corrie's eloquent reaction to her father's inquiry about Palestinian violence. As she says, if we lived where tanks and soldiers and bulldozers could destroy our homes at any moment and where our lives were completely strangled, wouldn't we defend ourselves as best we could?..."*

From a review of the original production by Michael Billington

Tickets: \$25.00. Available @ Organic Planet-877 Westminster Ave, Winnipeg OR online @ mayworkswpg.brownpapertickets.org OR @ door of event.

For more information: drblack@mymts.net or andraealaurensartison@gmail.com



# 2016 MAYWORKS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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

**MAY 8 • 11AM** Tentative - confirm at Jane's Walk website

## JANE'S WALK 2016

### Heroes and Heritage: Victoria Park and the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike

**Location:** Walk commences at NW corner of James Street and Waterfront Drive

Come walk in the footsteps of the 35,000 men and women who participated in the General Strike of 1919. Banned from demonstrating on the city's streets, the Strikers and their supporters met each day for six weeks to rally in Victoria Park a lovely, river-side park, located just off Main Street, along what is now, Waterfront Drive. Many in Winnipeg are not aware of the past existence of the Park, along with its history and significance. The 1919 Strike is considered by many to be the single most important social and political event to have taken place in our city and Victoria Park is its symbolic heart. The General Strike was not only about fair wages, collective bargaining and improved working conditions but an extraordinarily courageous stand for human rights and a better living standard for all.

Stroll along the perimeter of the Park as it existed in the early 1900's. Imagine the city as it was with a fast growing, poor working class, many of whom lived in the crowded slum conditions in the North End, and worked long hours for low wages in difficult conditions. Thousands were newly arrived European immigrants hoping for a better life. All this existed in the unique political and social context of the post-WWI period. Walk in the path of the "Strikers" for a brief time and consider what the Strike of 1919 means for all of us today.

Further details and updates at:  
[janeswalk.org/canada/winnipeg](http://janeswalk.org/canada/winnipeg)



**MAY 12-14 • 7:30PM**

## SALT OF THE EARTH - a play by Theatre Anywhere Productions



Rory Runnells Studio

504-100 Arthur Street (Artspace)

Corner of Arthur and Bannatyne in the Exchange district.

One person play about William Henry Cliffe, a child labourer who left England for Winnipeg in 1911 to escape the class system.

This production is a remounting of the Winnipeg Fringe Festival play written and performed by Kevin Longfield about his grandfather who was a child labourer in the Cheshire salt mines before apprenticing as a blacksmith and emigrating to Canada in 1911. He worked on the Winnipeg Aqueduct before enlisting with the Royal Engineers in World War I and serving in Baghdad. During the play he tries to reconcile the attempts he made to make a better life with the economic system that held him back.

Tickets: \$10 available at the door

For more information: Kevin Longfield @ 204 489-2236  
or [kevin@theatreanywhere.ca](mailto:kevin@theatreanywhere.ca)

**ICON  
LEGEND**

ACTIVITY



MUSIC



TALK



LITERARY



THEATRE



**SATURDAY, MAY 14 • 2 PM**

## THE LEGACY OF THE WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE



### Brookside Cemetery Memorial Service

Brookside Cemetery Winnipeg

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. Last year through the efforts of MayWorks board members and the support of Brunet Monuments and Councillor Brian Mayes a stone was finally placed on Steve Szczerbanowicz's final resting place.

This year on Saturday May 14th at 2:00 p.m. we will gather at the gravesite of Steve Szczerbanowicz to pay our respects and honour the memory of this victim of Bloody Saturday.

Please join us!

**SATURDAY, MAY 14 • 8 PM**

## FESTIVAL OF MANDOLINS



Ukrainian Labour Temple  
591 Pritchard Avenue

The orchestra will perform a variety of selections including Ukrainian, contemporary, and some of a more popular nature. An arrangement of a Ricky Skaggs piece featuring mandolin, fiddle and guitar solos by orchestra members will be premiered at the concert.

Special guest artist: Lindsey White

Tickets \$20



**SUNDAY, MAY 15 • 2-4 PM**

## 1919 STRIKE TOUR



On May 15th, 1919, the Winnipeg General Strike began in support of the Metal Trades and the Building Trades Councils demands for fair wages and basic union rights. Over 30,000 workers shut down the city in one of the most important political moments in our culture and history.

The 1919 General Strike Tour will go through highlights of what happened in 1919, with a focus on the social and economic conditions that led to the Strike. The tour reflects on how the echoes of the Strike can be heard in Winnipeg of today – both inspiring some people and threatening others.

The tour starts in the north end, 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 Victoria Park.

This is a two hour bus tour. Cost is \$15 for employed adults, no charge for students, seniors, or those unemployed (it has been full booked for three years now so register early).

To reserve a seat - [commgroup@mts.net](mailto:commgroup@mts.net) or call 204 793 3289.

**SUNDAY, MAY 29 • 2 PM**

## ASSOCIATION OF UNITED UKRAINIAN CANADIANS SPRING CONCERT



Ukrainian Labour Temple  
591 Pritchard Avenue

**FREE ADMISSION** (donations will be accepted)

The annual Spring Concert will be part of the Ukrainian Labour Temple's participation in Doors Open. Featuring performances by the Winnipeg Festival Choir; Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra; the AUUC dance groups Yunist Ensemble and the School of Folk Dance.





Winnipeg General Strike  
1919

# The Fight for



**Canadian Union of Public Employees,  
proud to be part of the fight.**





Income inequality persists  
2016

# Fairness

# Continues.



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FOR  
FAIRNESS



# The Politics of Racism

BY DAVID CAMFIELD

It seems like racism is in the news every day. In January 2015 Maclean's ran a cover story that called Winnipeg the most racist city in Canada, pointing to the treatment of indigenous people here. In the federal election campaign, "Stephen Harper and the Conservative party peddled hatred of Muslims, fear of refugees, disregard for First Nations communities," as Toronto journalist Desmond Cole aptly put it.

Bilan Arte, national chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students, was clear: during the campaign "Time and again we witnessed the people running to represent our country pander to blatant racism." Racism was "harnessed and manipulated as a political tool." It's possible that we'll see something similar happen in the 2016 Manitoba election.

**It's people organizing against violence and harassment against indigenous women and people of colour that deserve credit, not journalists or governments that respond to their courageous efforts.**

South of the border, Donald Trump is skillfully using blatantly racist signals about people of colour as part of his maverick campaign to be the Republican candidate for president. Trump has called Mexican immigrants rapists and drug dealers. He has also pledged to keep Muslims from entering the US and claimed that in Jersey City thousands of people cheered when the World Trade Centre was hit on September 11, 2001. Meanwhile, as US journalist Paul Waldman points out, "his opponents tiptoe around the issue, unwilling to criticize him too severely."

Across Europe we're seeing a rise in racist words and deeds directed against Muslims. Repressive "national security" measures are spreading. France is just one example. In the wake of the November 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris, the Socialist Party (France's NDP) government proposed to strip dual citizens



convicted of terrorism of their French citizenship – a policy long advocated by the extreme right-wing National Front party, which is enjoying unprecedented support (the Harper government's Bill C-24 allows the Canadian government to do the same thing). The French prime minister has said in a speech that migrants "put the concept of Europe in great danger." The government is also pledging to maintain its repressive state of emergency measures until Islamic State has been defeated.

So what's going on? Racism isn't new. Although it hasn't always existed, it's been part of European society and countries founded by European settlers for several hundred years.

In Canada and the US, one reason that racism has been getting more attention recently is that indigenous people and people of colour have been shining a spotlight on it and demanding change. It's people organizing against violence and harassment against indigenous women and people of colour that deserve credit, not journalists or governments that respond to their courageous efforts.

But it's not just that everyday racism is getting more attention. Around the world, racism is being used as a political tool more frequently. In Canada, Muslims and indigenous people in particular have been targeted, though African-Canadians and other people of colour have been too.

Some politicians and pundits use racist scapegoating of certain groups of people to win votes and divert attention away from the many harmful things that governments and corporations are doing. They fan the flames of racism. However, they don't create it. Racism can be used as a political tool because racist beliefs already exist.

Those beliefs aren't part of human nature. Racist attitudes exist because of how our society is set up. They're perpetuated by racist realities. Certain groups of people who are seen as inherently and unchangeably different are oppressed on that basis. They're subjected to a specific kind of systemic harm – that's what racism is. They have less money, less power and worse jobs. They have worse health and are more likely to be jailed.

It's objective realities like these that racist ideas pretend to explain. After all, the racist thinker says, if so many "of those people" are poor or in jail it must be their own fault, right?

This kind of blame-the-victim thinking would have little appeal if those it targets weren't oppressed.

Who gains from racism? Although well-meaning people often say that racism hurts everyone and benefits no one, this isn't true. In our racist society, all white people have some advantages relative to people who face racism. Better access to jobs, better treatment by landlords, business owners, the police and the courts – these and other advantages are white privilege.

Yet racism benefits some people much more than others. Employers reap higher profits because racism divides and weakens workers, and bosses can make divided workers work harder. Workers who face racism are often forced to work for lower wages and in worse conditions. Also, governments have an easier time keeping people in line and implementing policies that hurt most people when indigenous people and people of colour are blamed for problems like unemployment, bad jobs and inadequate public services that are caused by capitalism. That's why white privilege isn't in the interest of white workers – it's poison bait.

Bob Dylan's 1964 song "Only a Pawn in Their Game" put it this way:

"But the poor white man's used in the hands of them all like a tool  
He's taught in his school  
From the start by the rule  
That the laws are with him  
To protect his white skin  
To keep up his hate  
So he never thinks straight  
'Bout the shape that he's in  
But it ain't him to blame  
He's only a pawn in their game."

Winnipeg today isn't segregated Mississippi, to be sure. But what Dylan sang about racist workers in the Jim Crow South still applies to working people who buy into racism today.

David Camfield is an Associate Professor of Labour Studies and Sociology at the University of Manitoba. His article "Racism Finds a Thousand Ways to Kill, Scar and Oppress" was published in the Winter 2016 issue of the magazine *Canadian Dimension*.



# Looking From The Left:

## The Ukrainian Experience in Canada

Responding to the Canadian government's offer of free land to settlers, and seeing an opportunity to provide a better life for themselves and their families, thousands of immigrants began to flock to Canada, with the first Ukrainians arriving in 1891. The government had hoped to attract people willing to settle the empty prairies and provide needed labour for the railways, mines and factories.

Despite the popular mythology, immigrants are rarely welcomed to a new country. For those Eastern Europeans who came to Canada in the late 1890's and the decades to follow, the reception was anything but friendly. Because of their language, dress or customs, they were often described as "dirty", "smelly", "lazy", or "pushy". They were too "foreign". They were accused of taking away jobs. The immigrants were not prepared for the hostility that was directed towards them. As well, the government that had encouraged their immigration, now turned on them. In 1914, on the eve of entering the war against Germany and Austria, the Canadian government was horrified when a Ukrainian Catholic priest, Bishop Nykyta

Budka, urged his fellow Ukrainians (who came from that part of Ukraine under Austrian rule) to support Austria. The government reacted by rounding up those Ukrainians with Austrian passports, labelled them "enemy aliens", and interned them for several years.

For a variety of reasons, the Ukrainian working class was naturally sympathetic to the labour struggles taking place. In September 1918, fearful of labour unrest, the government had proclaimed the War Measures Act, which resulted in the banning of the ethnic press and public meetings. With the Labour Temple under construction, the Ukrainian labour community had to turn to the trade unions for assistance in publishing appeals for funds and volunteer labour. When the Winnipeg General Strike broke out in 1919, the Ukrainian workers gave it their full support.

The business community, meanwhile, fearful of the strike's success, pressured the government to take drastic action. It responded by calling in the North West Mounted Police. The strike was broken.

**No one bore the brunt  
of the harassment more  
than the Ukrainian left.**





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

The events of the General Strike taught the federal government how it could use its powers to suppress any kind of unrest through the use of the War Measures Act. It also discovered how they could use the Royal Canadian Mounted Police not only to maintain public order, but as an instrument to spy, harass and intimidate any groups the government deemed a "security threat".

No one bore the brunt of the harassment more than the Ukrainian left. In the decades to follow its members were spied upon, their property seized, and their leadership interned.

Today, 125 years later, the descendants of those early Ukrainian immigrants have become part of Canadian mainstream life. But it is hoped that history will record the names of those in the progressive left, many of them Ukrainian, who fought, at a terrible cost, for better working and living conditions for all Canadians.

Written by: Lily Stearns



## Is UBER racist?

The behavior of taxi drivers who demand payment in advance from Aboriginal customers raises the question of racism in the provision of rides in the inner city.

When I took a taxi home from the airport that I realized the debate on racism should include the question, is the new form of taxi service, Uber, racist?

I chatted with the taxi driver who wants Uber. He knew he couldn't afford to own a taxi but he would be driving his own car the minute Uber started in Winnipeg. Then came the kicker.

The taxi driver said, "Then I won't have to go to... the poor areas." He complained about the regulations that force him to pick up riders everywhere. He indicated if he was driving for Uber he would only work the 'better off' areas. He made it very clear that he didn't like being forced to pick up 'Indians' in the inner city.

Under Uber he would be free of government control and able to choose who he gave rides to.

**"Then I won't have to go to... the poor areas."**

I remember the ugly racism of the southern states where black people were refused service in taxis and restaurants. That a service could exist in Winnipeg which would allow anyone to discriminate because of race should concern everyone in Winnipeg.

When taxi drivers act in a racist manner by demanding payment in advance from customers according to their appearance the Taxi Board has the authority to discipline drivers and owners.

Should Uber be allowed to 'redline' areas of the city that have high aboriginal populations? Our aboriginal population live overwhelmingly in the inner city. 35% of North Point Douglas and 45% of William Whyte are of Indigenous background. People living in inner city neighborhoods have fewer cars than River Heights and the Maples. They need taxis more than other communities.

There must be a clear process in place to ensure racists are not allowed to be taxi drivers or Uber drivers in our wonderful diverse city.

Written by: Sel Burrows

# Standing Under The Bridge

I was standing under the Provencher Bridge during a torrential downpour in Winnipeg just after hearing about the tragic death of Tina Fontaine at the memorial service for Faron Hall, Winnipeg's fallen hero. Faron is a symbol of kindness, love, giving, humility, and true selflessness. Faron Hall was a hero and, although he was homeless, he was rich in spirit and love. That is true richness. The kind of wealth that moves beyond the physical realm. Things of material value come and go but the kindness of one's heart and the strength of one's spirit last through all circumstances.

He was a leader in the homeless community and a hero to many people around Canada. He is a symbol of true humanity and giving because he gave everything he had to whoever needed it. I was moved by a story by a woman who shared that if it hadn't been for Faron's generosity on a cold Winnipeg Winter night how she would have froze to death. He gave what he had without thought.

It boggles my mind how we can become distracted by internalized conflict within our nations. We are playing into that colonial game of divide and conquer. It is a game that was taught and reinforced by our colonizer to keep us weak and unable to focus on ensuring strong and vibrant Nations. We see this in the institutionalized poverty by the federal government where the lack of funding causes a crisis in meeting even the most basic needs such as housing, food security, and clean drinking water. Such desperate circumstances often place community members at odds with each other. Instead of moving forward, we end up fighting for the crumbs provided by the federal government.

This is what neo-colonialism does...it dispossesses people to the point where we begin to oppress each other. It is a

sick cycle of lateral violence that makes it difficult to move forward as a cohesive nation.

Standing under the bridge that night I was reminded that we still have the skills to build a strong community. This requires focus on nurturing the human spirit. Our spirits have been hurt through the inter-generational impacts of residential school, child welfare, and Indian Act policies that were designed to kill our spirit within. Poverty of the spirit is the greatest poverty one can ever experience. For me Faron Hall is one of the wealthiest individuals I have ever known. His wealth was comprised of kindness, generosity, love, and humility. He possessed all that wealth within his spirit.

**"Poverty of the spirit is the greatest poverty one can ever experience."**

For those of you who are not aware, even Faron Hall's death was an act of sacrifice and giving. If it hadn't been for Faron, Tina Fontaine's remains may have never been found like the numerous other stolen sisters that are still missing

without a trace. I want to honour these two very precious lives by ensuring that we address issues aggressively with love. The first issue is ensuring that all persons have access to affordable housing, food, clean drinking water, and family. The second issue is to ensure we are successful in having an inquiry into Murdered and missing women while continuing to support programs for families who have either lost or are looking for loved ones.

Our time on earth is precious. Let's ensure we do not spend it fighting each other or saying words that inflict harm. Instead let's work together in the kind of selflessness, kindness, humility, and love shown by Faron Hall.

**Written by: Leah Gazan**





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

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# They're Taking It Away

WRITTEN BY IAN ROBB

## CHORUS:

Oh, they're taking it away,  
Yes they're taking it away  
They are taking all the good things  
You can hear the people say  
And they'll take it all tomorrow  
If they don't take it today  
From the poor and sick and helpless,  
They are taking it away.

Oh our government's elected in the democratic way  
A-whining at the cost of all the things they have to pay  
And the bully-boys on Bay Street, you can hear the bastards say,  
"To hell with paying taxes, pull the safety-net away!"

If you're down upon your luck and need to keep the wolf at bay  
Just don't rely on welfare or the dole to pay your way  
For the rich, they have decided not another cent to pay  
You can whistle for your supper for they've taken it away

If you're native, black, or Asian, if you're feminist or gay  
If you're just a little different from the most of us today  
If you want to make your point or if you want to have your way  
You can spit into the wind for they have taken it away

If you're battered by your husband and you need a place to stay  
You'd best get down upon your knees and quickly learn to pray  
For the women's centre's phone was disconnected yesterday  
And there's no-one left to talk to, now they've taken it away

If it's ever your misfortune in a hospital to stay  
You'd best not be impatient for a bed on which to lay  
For your health ain't worth the taxes that the healthy have to pay  
And the beds were too expensive, so they've taken them away

Oh there's those that have and those that don't and those that are okay  
And there's those who understand that fairness is the only way  
But there's those that are so comfortable they look the other way  
And they vote for all the villains who would take it all away

So if you've health and wealth and wisdom stop and spare a thought today  
For those who don't and those who can't, there is no other way  
Or we might as well give up the ghost and join the USA  
For there won't be any difference when they take it all away



**2016 FESTIVAL**

CELEBRATING LABOUR & THE ARTS

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