

Our Past at a Glance

1983

The Labour Arts and Media Working Group (LAMWG) is born, a collection of artists, union activists, and educators.

1984

Brian Mulroney is elected prime minister.

1985

Catherine Macleod, a member of LAMWG, travels to Glasgow, Scotland, to see Mayfest. Inspired, Macleod proposes that LAMWG start a Mayday festival in Toronto.

1986

The first Mayworks Festival lineup includes Artists at Work; Art for Organizing; Drawing Conclusions; readings at the Rivoli; and Music in the Workplace.

1987

The Mayworks lineup includes visual art; a May Day parade; the Working People's Picture Show; Music in the Workplace; and readings at the Rivoli.

1988

Free trade talks begin. The Mayworks lineup includes Making Free Trade Visible; Northern Images; Shift Change; Nicaraguan Portraits; Music in the Workplace; and a May Day parade.

1989

NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, becomes law. The Mayworks lineup includes Artists and the Workplace; Photography at Work; The Working Image; Music in the Workplace; and the premiere of Womantalk.

1990

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) comes into effect. Bob Rae becomes the first NDP Ontario premier. The Mayworks lineup includes The Working Image II; film and video; Draw Your Boss contest; a screening of Michael Moore's *Roger and Me*; and Womantalk.

1991

A severe economic recession begins. The Mayworks lineup includes Music in the Workplace; National Day of Mourning ceremonies; Working Image III; an evening in solidarity with Oka; and film and video premieres.

1992

The recession deepens. The Mayworks lineup includes an all-Indigenous artists concert; Womantalk; children's theatre; Music in the Workplace; Lunch Bucket Art; and The Working Image IV.

1993

The Ontario New Democrats introduce the Social Contract. Kim Campbell is defeated by Jean Chretien and the Liberals. The Mayworks lineup includes visual art; a television special with the Steelworkers; Working Images V; Music in the Workplace; Womantalk; and Music in the Streets.

1994

The Mayworks lineup includes Working Images VI; Music in the Workplace; a mural project; Womantalk; theatre; and photography exhibits.

1995

Mike Harris is elected premier of Ontario. It is Mayworks tenth anniversary. The lineup includes Womantalk; video

and film premieres; photo exhibits; a preview of the Ontario Workers Arts and Heritage Building in Hamilton; Music in the Workplace; and Working Images VII.

1996

Unions and social activists in several Ontario cities, including Toronto, organize Days of Action to protest the policies of the Mike Harris government. The Mayworks lineup includes Womantalk; dance and cabaret; Images of Struggle posters; theatre; readings; and Music in the Workplace.

1997

The Mayworks lineup includes Womantalk; Children at Work; dance; Music in the Workplace; and Mayworks in the Community.

1998

The Mayworks lineup includes 40 Tiny Performances on Your Labour; Workshoping the Spirit of Resistance in School; Mayworks in the Community; and Mayworks in the Workplace.

1999

Mike Harris is re-elected. The Mayworks lineup includes the Art of Resistance; workshops and panels; Reels of Change; culture-jamming cabarets; and Womantalk.

2000

George W. Bush is elected president of the United States. In Seattle, the World Trade Organization meets, sparking massive demonstrations. These demos are the nucleus of a new "anti-globalization" movement. The Mayworks lineup includes Mayworks in the Workplace; McWork Sucks! panel; Reels of Change; a Sex Workers Cabaret, and Songs for Chiapas.

2001

During the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, thousands of protestors fill the city. On September 11, terrorists smash planes into the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon, killing thousands. The Mayworks lineup includes spoken and written word performances; a Provoke Action! workshop; Voices of Asian Canadian Workers; and Bookends bookstore photographic displays.

2002

Ernie Eves becomes Ontario's premier. The Mayworks lineup includes: Cartooning 101 workshop; CLC Action Forum; Strike Readiness Workshop; Working Images; and Reels of Change.

2003

The Liberal Party comes to power in Ontario. The war in Iraq begins. The Mayworks lineup includes Creative Resistance 101 workshop; Woman, Race, War and Resistance Forum; Reels of Change; and Bookends.

2004

George W. Bush is re-elected. The Mayworks lineup includes Mayworks in the Schools (inaugural year); cabarets/performance; visual art; film and video, forums and workshops.

2005

It is Mayworks' 20th anniversary. The lineup includes a Double Deck(ade) Cabaret; Working Images; an Action Caucus forum; the Bal Moderne community dance; the Turtle Gals Performance Ensemble; and a photo exhibit of stories from Chinese-Canadian women garment homeworkers.



Postcard from Steeltown, an exhibition held at A Space Gallery during the first Mayworks festival in 1986.



From The Working Image IV, Mayworks 1992.



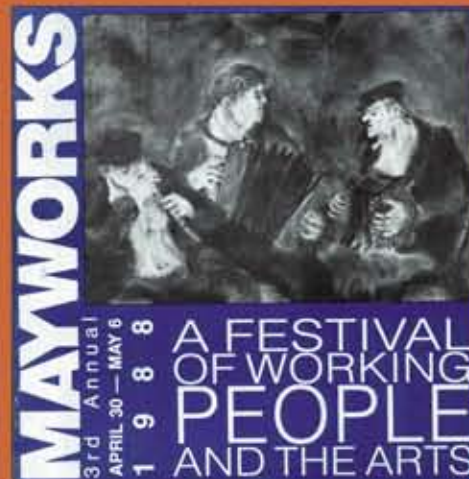
Window of Pages bookstore, Mayworks 1994.



The roots of Mayworks and the ideas of Mayworks go back a lot further than the 80s in Toronto. I actually put it right back to the beginning of the Arts and Crafts movement at the turn of the century in the U.K., and, I think, ideas of popular culture in Europe and the U.S. To me it's part of the development of an idea that

has brought us back to an idea of arts as a community right or a community avenue for expression. And the labour movement played an important role in that, but it was bigger than the labour movement. And, I'm actually really gratified to see the growth of the community arts sector.

—Catherine Macleod, writer and Mayworks founding director



Mayworks program guide, 1988.



Scene from Womantalk, Mayworks 1995.



Kiss My Ass, by Nancy Van Koerbergen, Mayworks 2002.

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Barnett Chow Olivia Chow Yuen-Ching Chow Paul Clifford Robin Cohen Darlyn Cohen Carole Cousins Mike Constable Nancy Cooper Terry Crack Iana Craig Nana Cristo Felipe Cruzatt Nora Currie Gary Dwyer Steve Davison Volfare De Lamo Vera DeSommer Raj Dhillon Ned Dickens Ron Dickson Tony Domicio Susan (Lily) Ditts Ars Divinity Stefan Dobson Glen Donald Rosemary Donagan Mike Dugoffe Penny East Conale Eckhart Mada El-Yassir Fran Enright Anne-Marie Estrada Left Eye Ann Eyerman David James Fernandes Cristiana Fernandez Dave Ferri Kalla Fong Jonathan Forbes Margot Francis Howard Friedlander Rebecca Friedlander Martha Fry Richard Fung Janice Galrey Joseph Galati Jorge Garcia-Orgales Louise Garfield