

PANEL DISCUSSION: The panel discussion, with Sally Field and other guests, will be held on Friday, March 24th, at 8:00 pm. Please see Panels page for more information.

The American labor movement is at a crisis: Fifty years ago, 1 in 3 Americans belonged to a labor union; today, that number is only 1 in 12. American corporations haven't been this rabidly anti-union since the 1930's, and outsourcing work to foreign shores has astoundingly become within the realm of acceptable business practice. But with the moral priorities of the present presidential administration turning social progress on its head—tax breaks for the wealthy, public programs for working people and the poor being obliterated right and left—organized labor has more than ever become a critical component in the striving to achieve a just and equitable America. What has wrought this change? What must unions do to engage and embrace new membership? And what is the dance between history and the labor movement which has drawn the attention of Hollywood filmmakers in depicting this important facet of American life?

SLFF 2006 presents State of the Union, a curated program of important films from the past and present and a panel discussion with political and labor leaders that capture the struggle of the labor movement to stay relevant in our changing times.

**NORMA RAE**

Friday, March 24th, 5 pm; ArcLight Cinemas

(USA, 1979, 110 mins)  
Director: Martin Ritt

This landmark union activism film not only netted Sally Field her first Oscar win, it was also nominated for Best Picture and Best Adapted Screenplay. (Sally Field also won Best Actress at the Cannes Film Festival and a Golden Globe.) A real-life story of courage and leadership, "Norma Rae" portrays the struggle of a young, working-class textile factory worker to unionize her factory in the South. With Beau Bridges, Ron Leibman and Pat Hingle.



expressing the important substantive message Iraqi workers want to convey to all Americans: end the occupation; oppose the privatization of Iraqi national resources; and support the right of all Iraqi workers to organize free and independent trade unions.

**CLASS DISMISSED: HOW TV FRAMES THE WORKING CLASS**

Saturday, March 25th, 4:45 pm; ArcLight Cinemas

(USA, 2006, 62 mins)  
Director/Producer: Loretta Alper;  
Screenwriter/Producer: Pepi Leistyna

Based on the forthcoming book by Pepi Leistyna, the documentary CLASS DISMISSED breaks important new ground in exploring how the working class is negatively portrayed on TV sitcoms, reality shows, police dramas, and daytime talk shows, and the ways in which race, gender, and sexuality intersect with class to induce and perpetuate demeaning working class stereotypes.

Featuring interviews with noted media analysts and cultural historians, including best-selling Nickel and Dimed author Barbara Ehrenreich, Robin Kelley (Columbia University), and Michael Zweig (Center for Working Class Life, State University of New York-Stony brook), this documentary examines the patterns inherent in TV's disturbing depictions of working class people as either clowns or social deviants—stereotypical portrayals that reinforce the myth of meritocracy. The documentary also links television portrayals to negative cultural attitudes and public policies that directly affect the lives of working class people.

**WAL-MART: THE HIGH COST OF LOW PRICE**

Sunday, March 26th, 10:15 pm; ArcLight Cinemas  
(USA, 2005, 98 mins)  
Director/Producer: Robert Greenwald; Producers: Jim Gilliam, Devin Smith, Kristy Tully

Robert Greenwald's ("UNPRECEDENTED", "OUTFOXED") latest documentary exposes the lies behind the bargain-



basement prices of "the world's meanest corporation." Ignoring the talking heads (economists and the like) in favor of personal stories, and using dozens of film crews on three continents, Greenwald takes the viewer on a journey into the everyday lives of people struggling to fight a behemoth's assault on them, their families and on American values. Wal-Mart's long litany of offenses includes not only vanquishing small businesses, and sex and racial discrimination, but also sweatshop working conditions in America and abroad in factories. "WAL-MART: THE HIGH COST OF LOW PRICE" is an engrossing, muckraking documentary about the retail giant." – Kenneth Turan, Los Angeles Times. "WAL-MART" makes its case with breathtaking force." – Anita Gates, New York Times.

**TAKING THE HEAT: THE FIRST WOMEN FIREFIGHTERS OF NEW YORK CITY**

Wednesday, March 29th, 9:30 pm; ArcLight Cinemas

(USA, 2005, 110 mins)  
Director: Bann Roy

What if your gender was a disqualifying factor in applying for a job? And what if when you were eventually allowed to apply, the rules were changed to make it impossible for you to qualify? What if after taking legal action you got the job, but then faced overwhelming discrimination and hostility from your co-workers? What if you became the lightning rod—and remained one for more than 20 years—because you stood up to voice concern? All of these questions and more are answered in TAKING THE HEAT, the untold true story of Brenda Berkman and the first women firefighters of New York City. Narrated by Susan Sarandon, this is their story—told in their own words—about how they survived in one of the most macho organizations in the country, the Fire Department of New York (FDNY).

