

# 2010 Labor Film Series

**All films shown at the Eastman House Dryden Theater, 900 East Avenue.**

Sponsoring organizations receive complimentary tickets. Other admission is by GEH pass or tickets at the box office.

**Friday, September 3, 8:00 p.m.**

**THE BOSS OF IT ALL** (Lars von Trier, Denmark/Sweden 2006, 99 min., Danish and Icelandic with subtitles). "It's a comedy and harmless," is how Von Trier introduces this film, described by one reviewer as " 'The Office' Viewed Through the Looking Glass." In this dark satire, filmed entirely in an office, an out-of-work actor, hired by the director of a Danish IT company to impersonate its non-existent CEO, bumbles through meetings with senior employees and negotiations with an Icelandic businessman who wants to buy the firm. The film's off-kilter visual style (a computer randomly determined when to tilt, pan or zoom the camera) works in the film's favor, uncannily echoing the nonsense and frustration of our everyday lives.

**Friday, September 10, 8:00 p.m.**

**THE PEOPLE SPEAK** (Howard Zinn, Chris Moore, & Anthony Arnove, US 2009, 113 min., Digital Projection) The late historian and activist Howard Zinn is our host for this inspiring and moving film derived from his celebrated book, *A People's History of the United States*. In songs, letters, essays, poems, speeches, and manifestos, we hear the actual words of participants in the nation's struggles for social justice. Their revolutionary ideas, omitted from most textbooks and histories, are brought to life in dramatic and musical performances by Bob Dylan, Danny Glover, Sean Penn, Don Cheadle, David Strathairn, Kerry Washington, Marisa Tomei, Morgan Freeman, Viggo Mortensen, Bruce Springsteen and many, many more.

**Friday, September 17, 8:00 p.m. — Rochester Exclusive**

**ARAYA** (Margot Benacerraf, Venezuela 1959, 82 min., Spanish with subtitles) Araya, a peninsula in northeastern Venezuela, has been mined for its salt for over 500 years. This gorgeously photographed poem of a movie captures the life and backbreaking work of the Arayan salineros and fishermen in breathtaking black-and-white images. Although it shared the International Critics Prize at the Cannes Film Festival (with *Hiroshima, Mon Amour*), Araya was never released theatrically in the United States. Now it can be seen in all of its visual splendor in a new print from Milestone Films.)

**Friday, September 24, 8:00 p.m.**

**LA DANSE: THE PARIS OPERA BALLET** (Frederick Wiseman, France/ US 2009, 159 min., French/subtitles) Having tackled subjects ranging from inner-city high schools and hospitals to public housing, renowned documentarian Frederick Wiseman shifts his gaze to the Paris Opera Ballet. This portrait of a very traditional institution investigates a wide range of the labor necessary to sustain it—not only the dancers, dance coaches and artistic directors, but janitors, maintenance and cafeteria workers, and even union benefit reps. Thus Wiseman forges a very personal connection to his extraordinary footage.

**Friday, October 1, 8:00 p.m.**

**HEADING SOUTH (VERS LE SUD)** (Laurent Cantet, France 2005, 105 min., English and French with subtitles) Ignoring the rising violence of Baby Doc Duvalier's dictatorship, an international tourist group of wealthy and lonely middle-aged women descend upon poverty-stricken Haiti in the early 1980s to indulge in sex with local men, whom they pay only a few dollars. Tensions mount between two of the women (played by Charlotte Rampling and Karen Young) when they both set their sights on one man (Menothly Cesar) who, in turn, is getting tired of being treated like a stud. Director Cantet, whose work (*Human Resources*, *Time Out*) has been featured in previous labor film series, focuses as much on his characters' psychologies and interrelationships as he does on the global economics at work.

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**Friday, October 8, 8:00 p.m. — *New 35mm restoration!***

**NORTHERN LIGHTS** (John Hanson & Rob Nilsson, US 1978, 95 min.) Winner of the Cannes Film Festival's coveted Camera d'Or prize, this film dramatizes the organizing efforts of the Nonpartisan League, an early 20th-century Socialist movement originating among North Dakota farmers. Co-directors John Hanson and Rob Nilsson, both from Upper Midwest Scandinavian backgrounds, secured funding for this deeply personal project through the North Dakota Committee on the Humanities and Public Issues. In a Mother Jones interview Hanson highlighted the abundant empathy at the film's core, stating that, "The problems for farmers in 1916 and the problems for people like us, trying to make independent films, are really very similar." Print courtesy of the Academy Film Archive.

**Friday, October 15, 8:00 p.m.**

**CONRACK** (Martin Ritt, US 1974, 107 min.) Jon Voight plays Pat Conroy, author of the novelistic memoir *The Water is Wide*, which acclaimed director Ritt (Norma Rae, *The Molly Maguires*,) adapted as his follow-up to *Sounder*. The young and idealistic Conroy takes on the task of educating a group of impoverished black children on an island off of the South Carolina coast. He discovers that most of them have been so neglected by the educational bureaucracy that they are unable to count past four and know the name of neither their country nor the ocean that washes up against their beach. Facing opposition from the school district, Conroy (whom the kids call 'Conrack') turns his classroom into a place for learning not only academics but basic life skills.

**Friday, October 22, 7:00 p.m.**

**LAST TRAIN HOME** (Lixin Fan, Canada 2009, 87 min., Mandarin with subtitles) The annual migration of millions of factory workers, returning to their provincial villages from large cities for Chinese New Year, provides the stirring backdrop for this documentary look at one couple's dramatic journey to be reunited with their children. Because their jobs dictate long separations, the Zhangs have only seen their son and daughter once a year since they were born. Now a teenager largely being raised by her grandmother, daughter Qin is hoping to leave school and find a factory job herself, despite the protests of her parents who believe that education is the only way out of this tragic cycle. With a visually poetic style and an observant eye, director Lixin Fan builds to a series of heartbreaking scenes that put in very human perspective this epic movement of people.

**Friday, October 29, — *Double Feature! Two films for one series ticket!***

**7:00 p.m.**

**MAN'S CASTLE** (Frank Borzage, US 1933, 66 min.) In the first of these two fast-paced social dramas from Hollywood's pre-code era of the early 1930s, Spencer Tracy and Loretta Young star as lovers who transcend the Depression in a New York shantytown.

**8:15 p.m.**

**AMERICAN MADNESS** (Frank Capra, US 1932, 81 min.) Despite pressures from his managers, a robbery and a run on the bank, a good-hearted president (Walter Huston), strives to keep his bank solvent for the "little people" who rely upon it.

**Plus: BETTY BOOP FOR PRESIDENT** (Dave Fleischer, US 1932, 7 min.)