

Labor and Working-Class History Association Schedule
100th Anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire
March 24-26, 2011
New York City, New York

UPDATE March 10, 2011

Friday-Sunday, March 24-26, 2011

100th Anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, March 25, 1911

The weekend of March 24-26, 2011 there will be a variety of activities sponsored by dozens of organizations and unions to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, March 25, 1911, in which 146 young workers lost their lives and which forever changed the relationship of American government to the workplace.

The schedule listed below focuses on the LAWCHA events. Many other events will take place over the three days. For the full schedule and updates for Triangle Commemoration and March 24-26th, see: www.rememberthetrianglefire.org/category/events/upcoming

Thursday March 24 | 9am-8:30pm

Legacy of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire
Day-long conference at CUNY Grad Center
365 Fifth Ave

Sponsored by the Murphy Center for Labor Studies CUNY
Co-sponsored by the Labor and Working Class History Association [LAWCHA].
Conference is followed by an evening of presentations at the Gotham Center.
Full Schedule: <http://trianglefireconference.org/>

[Out of the Smoke and the Flame:](#)

The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire and its Legacy
March 24, 2011; 9 a.m. — 6:30 p.m.
CUNY Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY, 10016
Registration is Free and Open to the Public
[Register](#)

9 – 9:15 a.m. Cultural Presentation

- World premier of the dramatic oratorio, [Triangle: From the Fire](#)
Music by composer Elizabeth Swados.

9:15 – 9:25 a.m. Welcome

- *William Kelly, President, Graduate School & University Center, CUNY*

9:25 – 10:45 a.m. Plenary: The Political Significance and Present Day Legacy of the Triangle Fire

- **The Triangle Fire in its Historical Context**
Steve Fraser, New Labor Forum, Murphy Institute, CUNY
- **From Fire to Ashes: The Changed Contemporary Political Landscape**
Frances Fox Piven, Graduate Center, CUNY
- **The Unfinished Business of Triangle Protest: Challenges and Possibilities Confronting Labor Today**
Sarita Gupta, National Executive Director, Jobs with Justice

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Concurrent Panels

- **Global Perspectives on Sweatshops**
Trina Tocco, International Labor Rights Forum; Mary Frederickson, Miami University; Beth English, Princeton University; Robert Ross, Clark University.
- **Why No Fire This Time? Passivity and Resistance in Politics Today**
Stephen Pimpare, NYU; Gerry Hudson, SEIU; Liza Featherstone, Journalist.
- **Memorializing the Past: Using Memorials and Monuments to Teach NY History**
Ed O'Donnell, College of the Holy Cross; Christopher Moore, Historian; Ruth Sergel, Artist; Janet Zweig, Artist; Wendy Aibel-Weiss, Museum Curator; Public School Teacher (TBA).
Moderators: *Suzanne Wasserman and Julie Maurer, the Gotham Center for NYC History, CUNY Graduate Center.*
- **Labor and Immigration Politics: Past and Present**
Muzaffer Chishti, NYU, Migration Policy Institute; Janice Fine, Rutgers University; Mae Ngai, Columbia University, Ruth Milkman, Graduate Center/Murphy Institute, CUNY.
- **Labor Standards and the State**
Melvyn Dubofsky, SUNY Binghamton; Rory Lancman, NY State Assemblyman and Chair of the Subcommittee on Workplace Safety; Colleen Gardener, NY State Commissioner of Labor
- **Grassroots Organizing for Workers Health and Safety Today**
Barbara Rocky, United Auto Workers; Richard Witt, Justice for Farmworkers Campaign; Priscilla Gonzalez, Domestic Workers United; Eric Frumin, Health & Safety, Change to Win.

- **Triangle and Representations of Labor in 20th Century Art**
Ellen Todd, George Mason University; **Temma Berg**, East Carolina University;
Esther Cohen, Artist, cultural organizer.

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. Break

1:30 – 2:45 p.m. Plenary: The Global Sweatshop

- **Worker Protest Today in Bangladesh**
Kalpona Akter, Secretary General & Executive Director of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity
- **The Economic Role of the Global Sweatshop**
Saskia Sassen, Columbia University & London School of Economics
- **Workers' Resistance in the Chinese Sweatshop**
Ching Kwan Lee, University of California Los Angeles
- **Protecting Workers' Rights in the Global Economy**
Jennifer Gordon, Fordham University School of Law

3 – 4:30 p.m. Concurrent Panels

- **Garment Unionism and the Garment Industry: From Triangle to Today**
Andrew Ross, NYU; May Chen, former Vice-President Workers United, currently Murphy Institute, CUNY; Richard Greenwald, Drew University; Katie Quan, former organizer ILGWU, currently UC Berkeley
- **Teaching the Triangle Fire: A Conversation**
Stuart Eimer, Widener University; Kimberly Schiller, English Language Arts teacher in Huntington, New York; Rob Linne, Adelphi University.
- **Child Labor: Then and Now**
Kriste Lindenmeyer, University of Maryland Baltimore County; Laura Lovett, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Hugh D. Hindman, Appalachian State University; Sally Greenberg.
- **Global Sweatshops and International Solidarity: The Case of Bangladesh**
Bjorn Claeson, Sweatfree Communities, International Labor Rights Forum; Babul Akhter, former garment worker, Secretary of the Bangladesh Garments and Industrial Workers Federation; Mitch Cahn, President of Unionware, garment manufacturer in Newark, New Jersey.
- **Feminism, Low Wage Workers, and Organized Labor**
Ileen DeVault, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University; Annelise Orleck, Dartmouth College; Susan Feiner, Francis Perkins Center & University of Southern Maine.

- **Combating Domestic Sweatshops, a Roundtable**
Eileen Boris, University of California, Santa Barbara; Premilla Nadasen, Queens College, CUNY; Narbada Chhetri, Senior Community Organizer, Adhikaar for Human Rights and Social Justice, NYC; Jocelyn Gill-Campbell.
- **OSHA at 40: From Triangle to Today**
David Michaels, Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA; Gerald Markowitz, CUNY Graduate Center.
- **The Legacy of Triangle and Youth Labor Organizing in the US**
Jennifer Polish, Queens College, CUNY, **Laura Binger**, Food AND Medicine, Maine; **Theresa Cheng**, United Student Against Sweatshops; **Thenjiwe McHarris**, Field Organizer, Amnesty International.

4:45 – 6:30 p.m. Plenary: The Contemporary Legacy of the Triangle Fire

- **What is the Triangle Legacy?**
Alice-Kessler Harris, Columbia University
- **From the Triangle Fire to the BP Explosion: Protecting Workers Today**
David Michaels, Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA
- **Organized Labor and the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century**
Bruce Raynor, President, Workers United, SEIU

7 – 8:30 p.m. Gotham Center for NY History Plenary Discussion (Separate Free Registration Required)

www.gothamcenter.org/forums/current.shtml

- *Rich Greenwald, Drew University*
- *Annelise Orleck, Dartmouth College*
- *Ellen Todd, George Mason University*
- *Jennifer Guglielmo, Smith College*
- *David Von Drehle (Author)*
- *Ruth Sergel (Artist, Organizer, Remember The Fire Coalition)*

To Follow: Book signing of Arcadia Press' *The New York City Triangle Factory Fire*



Friday March 25

9:30 am - Union Square - March of the Shirtwaists

Brown Building

Green St and Washington Place (1 block off Washington Square Park)

Procession of 146 Shirtwaists and Sashes: In memory of the 146 victims of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire and the Labor movement that rose from the ashes is part of the Workers United Official Commemoration at the location of the former Triangle Waist Factory at Washington Place and Greene Street.

146 Volunteers including many family members of the victims will walk in the Procession carrying a bamboo pole aloft with a shirtwaist and a sash bearing the name of one of the victims. The Procession will depart from Union Square at 14th Street and proceed down Broadway to Washington Place to the commemoration site at Washington Place and Greene Street. Besides the Procession of Shirtwaist and Sashes the Procession will include student groups, theater and dance companies, and labor organizations. At the Commemoration Ceremonies Shirtwaist Bearers will stand as symbols of the 146 victims of the fire. Your participation in the Procession is an honor that entails a physical and time commitment. You must be able to walk the route of the procession carrying the shirtwaist on a bamboo pole and remain with the shirtwaist on display at the Commemoration site until the ceremonies end. At the end of the ceremonies there will be a symbolic climactic ritual with the Shirtwaists.

Please do not commit to being a part of this Procession unless you are able to do so.

Schedule:

9:30 AM Procession Marchers assemble at Union Square South at 14th Street
11AM Centennial Ceremonies begin at the site of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Building

12PM Speakers
12:30PM-1:30 PM The calling of the names of the victims of the fire by family members and school children accompanied by the sounding of a fire bell and the placing of a flower bearing the victim's name on the sidewalk by the factory building

2:00 PM Dispersal following the end of the ceremonies and the symbolic return of the Shirtwaists.

Please inform LuLo LoLo at www.lululolo.com if you wish to participate in this meaningful procession representing the 146 people who died in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire.

11 - am - 1 pm Workers United Official Commemoration,

Brown Building

Green St and Washington Place (1 block off Washington Square Park)

11am—Music and Procession

12-1:30pm—Speakers, including Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis

The Brown Building housed the Triangle Waist Company on the 8, 9 & 10th floors.

7 - 9:30 pm An evening of speeches and performances

Great Hall of the People, Cooper Union

7 East 7th Street

Featuring worker testimony about today's labor conditions around the world, this evening will include a talk by Katie Quan on the bridge program between garment union retirees in NYC and garment workers in the People's Republic of China today; Jim Green and Cecil Roberts on the history of disasters and mineworkers; Ai-jen Poo about domestic workers, Chaumtoli Huq about taxi workers. Jaribu Hill on the Catfish workers. The evening will also include Triangle storytelling by Gioia Timpanelli, spoken word performances of Triangle-era speeches as well as performances by labor and children's choirs, Metropolitan Klezmer orchestra, and Black 47. MC will be Brian Jones.

URGENT: Register for Tickets NOW!

<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/164102>

March 26, 2011 8:30-4:00

Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT)

7th Avenue at West 27th Street

Plenary and panels on **Contemporary Activism in the Labor Movement**. Historians and labor activists discuss a variety of contemporary labor struggles in the United States and around the world. Panelists will include Katie Quan, Ai-jen Poo, Jaribu Hill, Chaumtoli Huq, Rose Turner, Sarah White, and Cecil Roberts.

Sponsored by Labor and Working-Class History Association (LAWCHA)

Plenary Breakfast, 9-10:30 on **Contemporary Activism in the Labor Movement - featuring activists and organizers from many different industries.**

Panels, 10:30-12:00

1. Disaster and its Impact:

Howard Lupovitch, “‘Not So Golden After All’:” The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire in the European Jewish Press”;

Mark Noon, “Two Fires, Two Tragedies: Comparing Avondale and Triangle.”

2. Labor, Environment, and Public Health Movements in Working-Class Communities

Les Leopold, Director, Labor Institute and Public Health Institute, NYC;

William Brucher, Brown University, “From the Picket Line to the Playground: Labor, Environmental Activism, and the International Paper Strike in Jay, Maine;”

Merlin Chowkwaynun, University of Pennsylvania, “Labor and the New Environmental Health Risk: Regional Perspectives;”

Kevin C. Brown, Carnegie Mellon University, “‘Working Environments’ in Lumber: The Louisiana Experience, 1890-1920.”

3. “Safety in the Modern Plantation: Women's Agency and Workers' Conditions in the Mississippi Delta” Roundtable

Laura Lovett, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Francoise Hamlin, Rose Turner, United Food and Commercial Workers; Sarah White, Mississippi Catfish Workers; Jaribu Hill, Director, Mississippi Workers Center for Human Rights.

1:00pm-3:00pm

1. Teaching Tragedy: From Middle School to College

[Room 9205]

Patricia A. Reeve, Suffolk University; Cybèle Locke, Connecticut College; Kathleen Banks Nutter, Stony Brook University; Adrienne Andi Sosin, Education & Labor Collaborative, NYC; Maribeth Whitehouse, Bronx Intermediate School 190.

2. Practicing Historical Memory: Cultural Responses to the Triangle Fire

[Room 9206]

Annie Lanzillotto, Poet and Activist, Louisville, Kentucky; Janet Zandy, Rochester Institute of Technology; Florence Howe, emerita, Graduate Center, CUNY, emerita, Feminist Press; Ester Reiter, York University, “Zingen far Sholem, Zingen Far Broyt/ Sing for Peace, Sing for Bread: Culture and Political Activism among the Jewish Left in Canada, 1920s-1930s, and its Legacy;”

3. *Organizing the Usable Past*

Daniel Katz, SUNY, Empire State College; Lara Vapnek, St. John's University; Robbie Lieberman, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale; Paul Mishler, Indiana University, South Bend

4. Student Activism Workshops— 1:30-3:30

5. Screening of PBS American Experience *Triangle Fire*

Closing Talk - 3:15-4:00 pm -

Rich Greenwald - **Triangle in The Light of the 21st Century**

7:30-9pm Triangle: From the Fire

Judson Memorial Church

55 Washington Square South

Operetta by Elizabeth Swados, Cecilia Roberts, and Paula Finn
[tickets are \$5 and we have seats reserved. Please email Kim Phillips, klphil@wm.edu,
with your reservation]

www.trianglefromthefire.com/

Sunday March 27, 2011

Eldridge Street Synagogue

3 pm.

The Museum is honored to host the culminating event commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. We will present a beautiful, moving afternoon of music and poetry inspired by the conditions of the sweatshops and the tragic fire with actors portraying the 146 people who perished, mostly young Jewish and Italian women. Moderated by Yiddishist Caraid O'Brien and musicians Deborah Strauss and Jeff Warschauer.

Co-sponsored by the Remember the Triangle Fire Coalition and the National Yiddish Book Center

12 Eldridge St. NY, NY. For information contact@eldridgest.org