

I A H 2011 - 2012



The
STATE
THEATRE

PENNSTATE



IAH
FILM
FESTIVAL

WORKERS

OF THE WORLD

STATE THEATRE
SEPT 30-
OCT 2

Dancemaker
 9 to 5
 Nalini by Day,
 Nancy by Night
 Up in the Air
 Office Space
 Antz
 Norma Rae
 Matewan
 Tampopo
 The Wrestler
 Repo Man
 Modern Times
 Maria Full of Grace
 Hollywood Shuffle
 Glengarry Glen Ross
 On the Waterfront

Workers of the World
Second Annual IAH Film Festival
Sept 30 - Oct 2

Work is central to our place in nature and in culture: our relations to each other, and to the biosphere at large, determine and are determined by the kind of work we do. The nature and cultures of work have been transformed by successive phases of capitalism—mercantile, industrial, welfare-state, and post-industrial; but the idea of work also informs the spiritual teachings of Buddhism, and underlies the precise, exacting disciplines of the performing arts.

Work can be mere drudgery: “shift work,” as Kenny Chesney puts it (7 to 3, 3 to 11, 11 to 7), or, if you prefer the more traditional 9 to 5, Dolly Parton is on the job. Work can be the soul-crushing routine of “Dilbert” or *Office Space*, or it can involve the kind of invention, craft, and dedication that engages all our energies and produces not only a living wage but a meaningful life, as in *Dancemaker*. Work defines play, and not only by negation: our work determines how much, or when, or even whether we can engage in play— and some of us find to our dismay or delight that playing, or playing at playing, or putting on plays, is really hard work.

Following on the success of our inaugural Fall Film Festival, “Bad Futures,” we’ve assembled sixteen terrific films about the world of work— ranging from the coal mines of West Virginia and the textile mills of Alabama (no surprise there) to the wrestling rings of New Jersey and the noodle shops of Tokyo (OK, we hope those will surprise you). And as we slogged through the hard, hard work of watching dozens of movies about work, we were struck by two things.

One: almost every one of these films features stunning, virtuoso acting. Marlon Brando in *On the Waterfront*, Jack Lemmon in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Mickey Rourke and Marisa Tomei in *The Wrestler*, Catalina Sandino Moreno in *Maria Full of Grace*— each of these performances testifies eloquently to the craft, to the work, of acting. Critics have remarked that *Tampopo* is implicitly a film about the work of filmmaking, even though it’s explicitly a film about food; we might add that all the films we’re screening this weekend are implicitly films about the meticulous labor that goes into making a work of art.

Two: it’s remarkable how funny many of these films are. *Repo Man* and *Office Space* are cult classics precisely for their wry, offbeat humor, and of course *Modern Times* consists

of one brilliant comedy routine after another. *9 to 5* is still fresh and hilarious 30 years later, and *Antz* is a classic in its genre– or it would be, if anyone could figure out what genre it inhabits. But we did not expect to laugh out loud at *Up in the Air*. We won't tell you why– we think you need to see the film, and all these films, for yourself.

After all, it's the weekend: decades ago, workers organized and fought for your right to take some time off between Friday and Monday. Celebrate their historic victory: join us for a wonderful weekend– and join the workers of the world!

And if you'd like to continue the conversation, please join us Monday, October 3 at 7:30 p.m. in the Alumni Lounge of the Nittany Lion Inn! We'll convene a panel of faculty across the disciplines to lead a discussion of the festival -- and of the many meanings of "work."

Michael Bérubé, Director
Renée Kredell, Interim Associate Director

Acknowledgments

Many thanks to the indefatigable IAH staff: Associate Director Dan Willis, who helped plan the whole thing; Interim Associate Director Renée Kredell, master coordinator and organizer; Kristin Barry, 24/7 graphic designer extraordinaire; Laura March, queen of all social media; Sue Reighard, administrative assistant, advisor, and queen of everything else. Thanks also to Michelle Rodino-Colocino for all her great suggestions.

This festival is supported by a National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grant.
Program notes by Michael Bérubé.

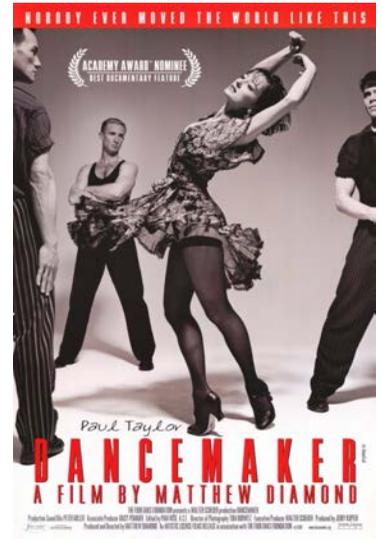
***Dancemaker* (1998)**

Friday 3 p.m.

Introduced by Amy Vashaw (Center for the Performing Arts)

A finely detailed, brilliantly realized documentary about the life and work of modern dancer/choreographer Paul Taylor— and a vivid exploration of the work of dancers, artists, and musicians. You didn't expect a film about dance to have a tense scene about union musicians? Expect again.

Paul Taylor is the recipient of the 2011 Institute for the Arts and Humanities Medal for Distinguished Achievement, which will be awarded Thursday, October 13, at the Eisenhower Auditorium at 7:30 p.m. *Dancemaker* will also be shown on Sunday, October 9, at 2 p.m., so if you miss it this time (and there is no better introduction to Taylor's work), there's a second chance.



***9 to 5* (1980)**

Friday 5 p.m. (of course!)

Introduced by Jennifer Rhee (IAH Postdoctoral Fellow)

Among the first (and funniest) representations of sexism and sexual harassment in the workplace, *9 to 5* combines revenge fantasies, screwball comedy, and the reliably sleazy-despicable Dabney Coleman suspended from the ceiling of his spacious suburban home. If you've never seen this modern classic, with its inspired performances from Dolly Parton, Jane Fonda, and Lily Tomlin, now's the time.

But for the record, the Institute for the Arts and Humanities wants to make it clear that we do not endorse the wanton smoking of marijuana and subsequent elaboration of plots to spike the boss's coffee with rat poison with the help of Disneyesque animated woodland creatures. Because there are some bright moral lines *we will not cross*.



***Nalini by Day, Nancy by Night* (2005)**

Friday 7:30 p.m.

It's dinnertime. The phone rings. It's the only person who ever calls you at home anymore– the telemarketer. But oddly, this time, when you pick up, the person on the other end doesn't butcher your name: she says "Sonali Gulati" as if she knows you personally. Weirder still, she pronounces your name in an impeccable American accent. Who is this anonymous telemarketer, and where did she learn such rarified skills?



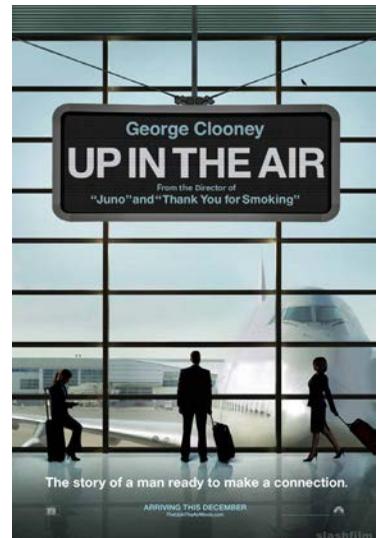
This short, witty, innovative documentary opens with this question– and takes us to the world of Indian call centers. The good news is that the question gets answered in the course of the film. The even better news is that acclaimed director Sonali Gulati will be here for the screening, and she'll host a question/answer session afterwards. Come join us for our first "director's event"!

***Up in the Air* (2009)**

Friday 9:30 p.m.

Introduced by Dorn Hetzel (Department of Film-Video and Media Studies)

Jason Reitman's response to the epochal crash of '08, adapted from Walter Kirn's 2001 novel. George Clooney is a professional downsizer and dedicated *isolato*, Vera Farmiga is an equally rootless frequent flyer (or is she?), and Anna Kendrick is a sharp, brittle twentysomething just out of school with a plan for downsizing the downsizers. Also including, along the way, the real-life accounts of 22 people who were fired in the course of the Great Recession. To get those interviews, Reitman placed ads in St. Louis and Detroit newspapers asking if recently-fired people wanted to be in a documentary about job loss. Why a documentary? So that real people– i.e., not actors– would respond to the ad. Over a hundred people replied, and sixty were filmed– in what was reportedly a cathartic experience for all involved.



Office Space (1999)

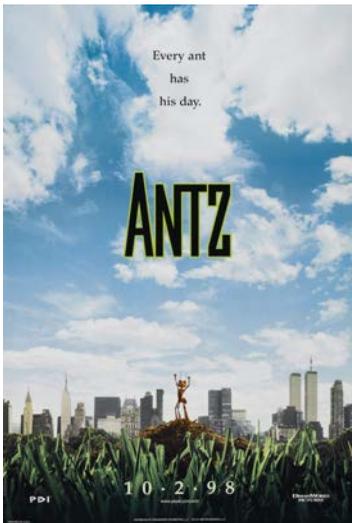
Friday midnight

Introduced by Michael Elavsky (Department of Film-Video and Media Studies)

Um, we need to talk about your TPS reports.... Mike Judge's caustic take on the drudgery of cubicle life is already a cultural touchstone—not only for its smarmily laid-back Lumbergh, its mumbling, neurotic Milton, and its cast of nebbishes, nerds, ne'er-do-wells, and Michael Bolton fans, but also for what may be the most disturbing scene of wanton office-equipment destruction ever filmed. It's like "Dilbert" meets Sam Peckinpah, to the dulcet sounds of the Geto Boys. We wish Jennifer Aniston's role were more substantial, especially since the world of "casual dining" restaurants is at least as ripe for parody as the world of white-collar tech firms. But we heart this movie all the same. How can you not love a film that pays homage to *Superman III*?



The Institute for the Arts and Humanities requests that you bring at least fifteen pieces of flair to this screening. Of course, fifteen is just the minimum, and if you're satisfied just to do the bare *minimum*....



Antz (1998)

Saturday noon

Introduced by Renée Kredell

Woody Allen, Sharon Stone, Jennifer Lopez, Gene Hackman, Christopher Walken, Danny Glover, Sylvester Stallone, and Anne Bancroft as the Queen ... has there ever been a more illustrious cast assembled for a film about ants? Woody Allen is Z, the *schlemiel* among the worker ants who just doesn't get the whole "digging" bit; Sharon Stone is Bala, the princess with whom he falls in love after a most improbable rendezvous at the after-work bar. Z switches identities with a soldier ant, searches for Insectopia, and unravels the ancient hierarchies of the ant colony ... while unbeknownst to our heroes, the evil General develops his genocidal plan to wipe out the colony's workers altogether. There's fun—and radical insect egalitarianism!—for kids of all ages.

Children under 12 free.

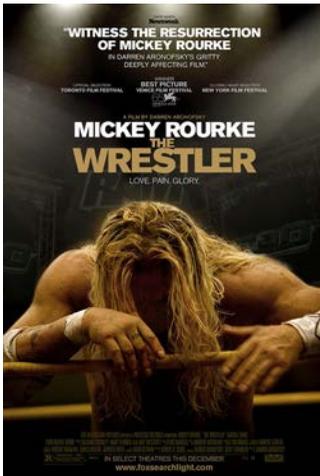
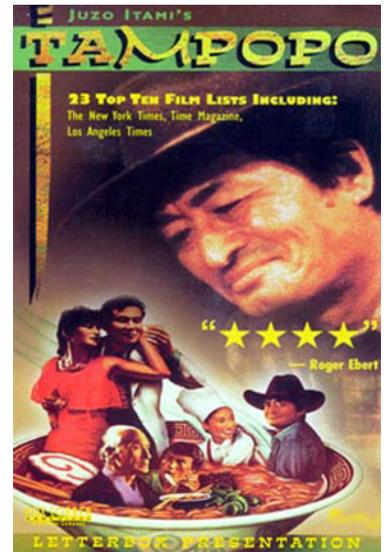
Tampopo (1985)

Saturday 7 p.m.

Introduced by Kevin Hagopian (Department of Film-Video and Media Studies)

The lights go down– the movie begins. We're in a movie theater somewhere in Japan, where the lights are about to go down, and the movie is about to begin. The *yakuza* gangster in the front row approaches the screen, addressing us directly, sternly reminding us to be quiet during the film. Then the film begins. Two truckers are driving in torrential rain; one is reading the other a novel about a wise old ramen noodle master, and the film cuts to the scene in the novel. The reading makes them hungry for noodle soup, so they stop at a shop called (after its owner) *Tampopo*.

From this whimsical and delightfully disorienting opening sequence, director Juzo Itami crafts a hilarious and delectable treat (with plenty of side dishes) about food, food preparation, food fetishes, and (believe it or not) Westerns. But it's not a spaghetti Western– no, *Tampopo* is that far rarer thing, the world's only noodle Western. And as critic Hal Hinson pointed out at the time, it's also a film about the sheer joy of filmmaking. Make your reservations for *Tampopo* now– 7 p.m. on Saturday evening. We'll save a seat for you.



The Wrestler (2008)

Saturday 9:30 p.m.

Introduced by Michael Bérubé

Whatever happened to Mickey Rourke? In the early 80s, he was a bad-boy heartthrob who stood out from the brat-packers like the second coming of James Dean. He was the enigmatic loner in *The Diner* and the enigmatic big brother in *Rumble Fish* and the enigmatic lover in *9½ Weeks* and the alcoholic writer in *Barfly* and ... a few years later, he simply dropped out of sight. To become a *boxer*. You know, because *there's* a fun, glamorous career. After winning eight fights and breaking his nose and his cheekbone, Rourke went to a butcher for some exceptionally bad plastic surgery, and now, here he is again– barely recognizable as a faded professional wrestler whose life outside the ring consists of asking

his boss for a few more hours a week at the deli counter. Rourke won his first Golden Globe and earned his first Academy Award nomination for this role; Marisa Tomei is pitch-perfect as his strip-club counterpart– working, like Rourke, in a business where it's hell to be over 40. A searing film featuring two veteran performers who really know how to work at their craft.

Repo Man (1984)

Saturday midnight

Introduced by Kevin Hagopian (Department of Film-Video and Media Studies)

Some films are born cult classics (*Napoleon Dynamite*), some achieve cult status (*The Big Lebowski*), and some have cult status thrust upon them (*Blade Runner*). This one's a mix of all three. From its thrilling opening credits to its utterly crazed final sequences, *Repo Man* has something for everyone—mystery cars, lunatic conspiracy theories about time travel and South America, running sight gags about generic food, a death scene with a memorable Final Peroration, and the unlikely duo of Emilio Estevez and Harry Dean Stanton. (And watch

for the weird coincidence involving a plate of shrimp! Don't blink or you'll miss it.) So what if no one but skate punks, Circle Jerks fans, and film students saw this one when it came out? It has made its influence felt ever since, in dozens of subsequent movies. For example. Do you want to know where Quentin Tarantino got the idea for that eerie, glowing suitcase in *Pulp Fiction*? Just look in the trunk of that 1964 Chevy Malibu. Oh, no, wait, *don't* look in the trunk....

Modern Times (1936)

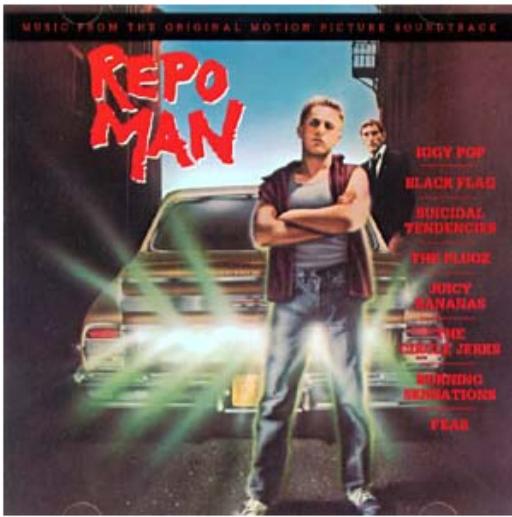
Sunday noon

Introduced by Michelle Rodino-Colocino (Department of Film-Video and Media Studies)

The funniest movie about the Depression ever made.

No, really, think for a moment about the premise: Charlie Chaplin is a hapless assembly-line worker with only two talents— he's a whiz on roller skates (the department-store-at-night scene is universally, and justly, acclaimed), and he really knows how to screw things up bigtime. No, wait, he has a third talent— he's remarkably adept at getting arrested. How can this possibly be funny? How in the world does someone make a raucous, laugh-til-you-cry comedy about global financial collapse and hungry homeless women and profound personal incompetence? The answer, my friends, is Charlie Chaplin— and Paulette Goddard, as his crafty and charming soulmate.

Modern Times is, by the way, the only film in which Chaplin speaks. Actually, he sings. The point is that you're in for a rare treat, any way you look at it.



***Maria Full of Grace* (2004)**

Sunday 2 p.m.

Introduced by Naomi McCormack (Department of Film-Video and Media Studies)

You think *you* have a lousy job. Well, you know what's worse? Working for pennies a day in Colombia's cut-flower industry. And you know what's worse than that? Quitting your job in the cut-flower industry and working instead as a mule in the Colombian drug trade, swallowing 63 condom-esque pellets of heroin in order to sneak them by U.S. customs. And you know what's worse than *that*? Having one of those pellets burst inside you. Even if you avoid that sorry fate, you may wind up friendless and lost in the wilds of inner Queens....

Interestingly enough, there are people who think this film paints *too rosy* a picture of the workers in the drug trade (the scene in question comes late in the film– no spoilers here!). But this much is certain: Catalina Sandino Moreno was nominated for an Academy Award for her vivid portrayal of Maria Álvarez– the first Colombian actress (and only the third Latina, after Salma Hayek and Penelope Cruz) so honored by the Academy.



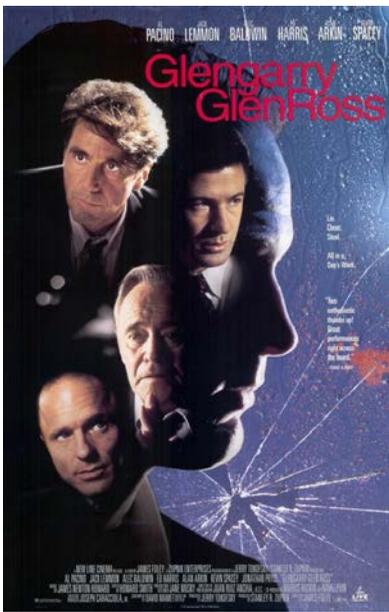
***Hollywood Shuffle* (1987)**

Sunday 4:30 p.m.

Introduced by Michael Bérubé

In his 1912 novel, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, James Weldon Johnson wrote, “there was one man, a minstrel, who, whenever he responded to a request to ‘do something,’ never essayed anything below a reading from Shakespeare.... Here was a man who made people laugh at the size of his mouth, while he carried in his heart a burning ambition to be a tragedian; and so after all he did play a part in a tragedy.”

Seventy-five years later, actor and comic Robert Townshend, fed up with being rejected for film roles because he wasn't “black” enough (i.e., “ghetto” enough), decided to write a scorching satire of Hollywood's treatment of black actors. On a shoestring budget of \$100,000 (\$60,000 of which was his own credit-card debt), Townshend co-wrote, directed, and produced this film– and helped kick-start the first real African-American film “boom” in US history. Keenan and Damon Wayans worked on this film and went on to make the blaxploitation parody *I'm Gonna Get You Sucka* the following year; in 1989 Lee's *Do the Right Thing* appeared, in 1990 the Wayans-powered “In Living Color” debuted on Fox, in 1991 John Singleton did *Boyz N the Hood*, and suddenly America had itself an African-American mainstream way beyond the precincts of the Huxtables. Come see where it all began– in the *Hollywood Shuffle*.



Glengarry Glen Ross (1992)

Sunday 6:30 p.m.

Introduced by Russell Frank (Department of Journalism)

Three words, people: *always be closing.*

A brutal, unflinching look at the world of high-pressure real estate sales and real estate salesmen. Adapted by David Mamet from his 1984 play, which in turn was based partly on his work in a Chicago real estate office in the late 1960s. Featuring yet another first-rate cast, with Jack Lemmon at his most riveting— and desperate. Kevin Spacey, Jonathan Pryce, Alan Arkin, Alec Baldwin, Ed Harris, and Al Pacino (yes, it's an all-male cast) show us what “ensemble acting” can mean— even Pacino’s manic intensity is restrained (there’s none of that *Scent of a Woman* hallooing and barking here), and Arkin’s timing (with possibly the least desirable lines in the film) is deadly accurate. And as if all that weren’t enough, pay attention to the

lighting. The lighting is stunning. Let me put it this way: Jack Lemmon’s sad, purple face. In the phone booth. In the rain. That is all.

On the Waterfront (1954)

Sunday 9 p.m.

Introduced by Matt Jordan (Department of Film-Video and Media Studies)

Sometimes you feel like a rat, sometimes you don’t....

What, you thought we were going to open with “I coulda been a contender?” You’d see that one coming a mile away. Now, Terry Malloy, *he* coulda been a contender— if only he weren’t surrounded by crooks and thugs and that rotten brother of his. The first version of the script, written by Arthur Miller and titled *The Hook*, was vetted by the FBI, who wanted the movie’s Mob crooks to be rewritten as Communists instead. Miller bailed on the project, but director Elia Kazan picked it up and transformed it into American cinema’s epic tale of courage and corruption on the docks. The film proceeded to win eight Academy Awards, but Kazan’s relationship to the film industry remained troubled for decades, thanks to his testimony to the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1952. *On the Waterfront* is usually seen as Kazan’s allegorical self-defense, but you’ll just have to decide for yourself whether rooting out Mafia infiltration of the longshoremen’s union is analogous to ratting out old friends and colleagues who had briefly been Communists fifteen years earlier. Suffice it to say that there are some who never forgave Kazan— and that *On the Waterfront* is nevertheless a brilliant, provocative film by any political or artistic standard. With stellar supporting performances by Karl Malden and Eva Marie Saint.



About the Institute

FOUNDED IN 1966, Penn State's Institute for the Arts and Humanities is one of the oldest and most distinctive interdisciplinary centers in the nation. Over the past fifty years, major American universities have created dozens of advanced research institutes in the humanities and/or centers for the fine and performing arts, but most universities have kept their arts and humanities centers separate. Penn State, by contrast, is one of a handful of universities whose interdisciplinary institute was designed from the outset to bring together innovative work in the arts and humanities— under one roof, across two colleges.

The Institute for the Arts and Humanities organizes conferences and exhibitions, hosts performances and visiting professorships, and awards faculty and graduate student fellowships. In all our programming, we are committed to fostering collaboration and dialogue between artists and humanists. By supporting the work of Penn State faculty and graduate students across the disciplines of the arts and humanities, and by putting that work in conversation with scholars and artists from across the nation and around the world, the IAH enhances the intellectual life of the campus, and offers a model for collaborative, interdisciplinary research, teaching, and public engagement.

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